

Discover the Fauna of Our Campus

Grey Partridge - *Perdix perdix*

Kingdom: Animals
Phylum: Chordates
Class: Birds
Order: Galliformes
Family: Phasianidae
Genus: *Perdix*
Species: Grey Partridge

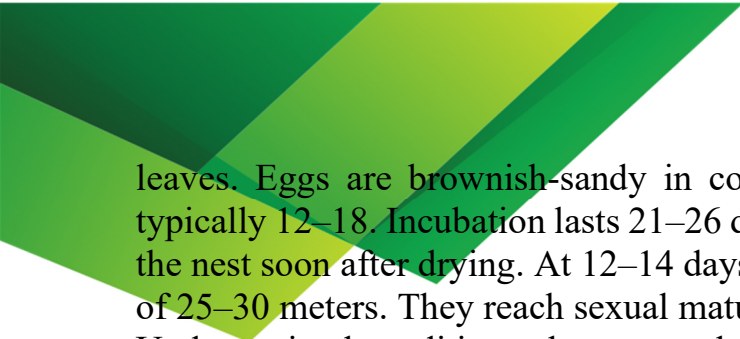
The male and female have similar coloration. The head is brownish, the neck is grey, and the back and saddle are brownish-grey. The beak is weak, and the area around the eyes is covered with rust-colored feathers. The wings are short and rounded, and the tail is short. On the belly, there is a chestnut-colored horseshoe-shaped marking. The sides of the body have light brown transverse stripes. The beak is grey, and the legs are greenish.

The Grey Partridge is distributed across Europe and Asia. In Azerbaijan, its distribution in the northeast extends up to the border with Dagestan. In the southeast, it ends in Shabran, while in the southern foothills of the Greater Caucasus it ranges from the Sheki region to Shamakhi. It is also found in the steppe zones around the Mingachevir reservoir up to the Agstafa region. In Nakhchivan, it occurs in the Nehramdag area, and in the Talysh Mountains it is found only in the Zuvand region.



It prefers habitats with tall grass and shrubs. Although it is a mostly sedentary bird, it may shift its location seasonally. In spring, it can move up to elevations of 2500 meters, while in winter it descends to foothill areas due to snowfall. It favors grain fields and steppe-transition habitats.

Grey Partridges live in small groups of 5–20 individuals. During the breeding season, they form pairs and are monogamous. The male participates in guarding the territory and helping raise and feed the chicks. The female builds a ground nest hidden in dense grass and lines it with dry grass and



leaves. Eggs are brownish-sandy in color, and each clutch contains 4–28 eggs, typically 12–18. Incubation lasts 21–26 days. Chicks hatch synchronously and leave the nest soon after drying. At 12–14 days old, chicks can already fly short distances of 25–30 meters. They reach sexual maturity at one year of age.

Under optimal conditions, there are only about 4–5 individuals per 100 hectares. In Azerbaijan, the total population is estimated at 2,000–5,000 individuals.

During long dry summer periods, drought can cause significant mortality. In snowy and harsh winters, weakened birds may die in large numbers. Overgrazing by livestock reduces key food plants such as bitter clover. Dogs accompanying sheep flocks may disturb them and force them away from their habitat. They are also preyed upon by raptorial birds, foxes, dogs, and cats. In Europe, the species is considered Near Threatened (VU) and is included in the Bern Convention.

Reintroduction is recommended in areas with low and unstable snow cover. To protect breeding habitats, strips of land (2–5 meters wide) should be ploughed in dense grass areas to reduce fire risk during the reproductive season.

