ABOUT THE GROUP

The Threatened Waterfowl Specialist Group (formerly Threatened Waterfowl Research Group) was established in October 1990 and is coordinated from The Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust at Slimbridge, UK, as part of the IUCN-SSC/Wetlands International waterbird network. The TWSG and its bulletin aim to identify those Anatidae taxa across the world that are threatened with extinction, to gather and exchange information on these taxa and to promote their conservation. We also cover other waterbird families not covered by other Specialist Groups (Anhimidae, Rallidae, Heliornithidae, non-marine Laridae). Membership is worldwide and includes over 600 organisations, groups and individuals who are active or interested in threatened waterfowl research and conservation. Addresses of TWSG members can be obtained by contacting the relevant Regional Assistant Coordinator below.

Anyone wishing further information about the TWSG and its bulletin, and/or a membership form, should contact Janet Hunter at the address below.

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Assistance in the editing and production of this issue was given by
Des Callaghan, Baz Hughes, Louisa Beveridge, Rachael George and Rebecca Woodward.

Front cover: Brown Teal *Anas chlorotis* (Paul Johnsgard)
EDITORIAL

This is the second issue of our bulletin with its new format, which has been unanimously welcomed as a significant improvement by our readers. The TWSG continues to change to meet an evolving set of challenges, and we have now appointed Tom Rothe and Murray Williams as TWSG regional representatives for North America and Oceania (including Australasia) respectively.

Murray and Tom are both heavily involved in the conservation of threatened Anatidae in their regions, and will help us to give a more global perspective to TWSG coordination. In particular, this change helps us to meet the needs of the three Wetlands International regional offices (The Americas/Asia-Pacific/Africa-Europe-Middle East), as we now have a focus point in each region. We encourage TWSG members in their regions to contact Tom or Murray to share views with them about the TWSG or any aspect of threatened waterfowl conservation.

As the TWSG grows, so do the costs of producing and distributing our bulletin. We are keen to reach as many readers as possible, particularly in economically developing countries where so many threatened Anatidae are found, and have no plans to charge subscription for the bulletin. However, we need sponsorship to cover our costs, and if anyone is interested in helping, please contact me.

Andy Green, TWSG Coordinator
TAXA FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE THREATENED WATERFOWL RESEARCH GROUP

The following list of globally threatened and near threatened Anseriforme species and subspecies was prepared using the new IUCN Red List Categories (IUCN 1994), during the compilation of the IUCN-SSC Anseriforme Action Plan (currently being finalised). At the species level, there are a number of disagreements between this list and the official IUCN Red List (Baillie & Groombridge 1996), but it is anticipated that the list below will be adopted as the official list in 1998 (subject to minor alterations). Any queries over categorisation should be directed to the editors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Subspecies</th>
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<td>Extinct (since A.D. 1600)</td>
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<td>Mariana Mallard</td>
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<td>Réunion Island Sheldgoose</td>
<td>Rennell Island Grey Teal</td>
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<td>(Anas gibberifrons remissa)</td>
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<td>Chatham Island Shelduck</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Pachyanas chathamica)</td>
<td>(Anas chlorotis ssp. nov.)</td>
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<td>Niceforo's Pintail</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Anas theodori)</td>
<td>(Anas georgica niceforo)</td>
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<td>(Anas marecula)</td>
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<td>(Camptorhynchus labradorius)</td>
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<td>(Anas cyanoptera borreroi)</td>
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<td>Recherche Cape Barren Goose</td>
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<td>(Anas wyvilliana)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Madagascar Teal</td>
<td>Peruvian Torrent Duck</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Anas bernieri)</td>
<td>(Merganetta armata leucogenis)</td>
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<td>Colombian Torrent Duck</td>
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<td>Merida Teal</td>
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<td>(Anas andium altipetens)</td>
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<td>Kerguelen Islands Pintail</td>
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<td>(Anas cyanoptera tropical)</td>
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<td>Andaman Teal</td>
<td>Tule Greater White-fronted Goose</td>
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<td>(Anas gibberifrons albogularis)</td>
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<td>(Branta canadensis occidentalis)</td>
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<td>(Anas eatoni drygalskii)</td>
<td>(Merganetta armata leucogenis)</td>
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<td>Colombian Ruddy Duck</td>
<td>Colombian Torrent Duck</td>
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<td>(Oxyura jamaicensis andina)</td>
<td>(Merganetta armata colombiana)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Australian Cotton Pygmy Goose</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(Nettapus coromandelianus albipennis)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Merida Teal</td>
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<td>(Anas andium altipetens)</td>
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<td>Kerguelen Islands Pintail</td>
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<td>(Anas eatoni eatoni)</td>
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<td>Low Risk (Conservation Dependent)</td>
<td>Low Risk (Conservation Dependent)</td>
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<td>Freckled Duck ( (Stictonetta naevosa) )</td>
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<th>Low Risk (Near-threatened)</th>
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<td>American Comb Duck ( (Sarkidiornis melanotus sylvatica) )</td>
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<td>Orinoco Goose ( (Neochen jubata) )</td>
<td>Florida Duck ( (Anas fulvigula fulvigula) )</td>
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<td>White-headed Steamer-duck ( (Tachyeres leucocephalus) )</td>
<td>Australian Black Duck ( (Anas superciliosa rogersi) )</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hartlaub's Duck ( (Pteronetta hartlaubi) )</td>
<td>Lesser Grey Duck ( (Anas superciliosa pelewensis) )</td>
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<td>Mandarin Duck ( (Aix galericulata) )</td>
<td>Andean Teal ( (Anas andium andium) )</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bronze-winged Duck ( (Anas specularis) )</td>
<td>South Georgian Pintail ( (Anas georgica georgica) )</td>
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<td>Mexican Duck ( (Anas diazi) )</td>
<td>South American Pochard ( (Netta erythropthalma erythropthalma) )</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eaton's Pintail ( (Anas eatonii) )</td>
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<tr>
<td>Steller's Eider ( (Polysticta stelleri) )</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spectacled Eider ( (Somateria fischeri) )</td>
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**References**


COMMENTS ON PREVIOUS ISSUE

It was interesting for me to read the account of White-headed Ducks in Azerbaijan by Paynter et al. in TWSG News No.9. I would like to point out that it is too early to make assumptions on the decline of the species in Azerbaijan, especially as the surveys did not include Lake Aggel, where a record count of White-headed Ducks was made in 1991, and southern Lake Sareesy where they are known to occur regularly, though in small numbers. Moreover, I think the timing for such surveys would have been better in December and January when the majority of previous counts were made.

M. Petrikeev
CCIW, Canada

WETLANDS INTERNATIONAL OFFICES MOVE TO WAGENINGEN

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In March 1996, the Executive Committee took the historic decision to accept a generous offer from The Netherlands to relocate the Wetlands International (formerly IWRB) offices, which were previously at Slimbridge, to Wageningen. The move took place at the end of September 1996, with the new office operational from 2 October 1996.

The Netherlands (a wetland itself) has a strong history of commitment to international wetland conservation issues, participating actively in all of the international treaties concerning wetlands. Wetlands International has enjoyed a long and productive cooperation with Dutch colleagues, notably on international wetland inventory programmes, waterbird flyway conservation, regional wetland action plans and numerous workshops, training programmes and publications.

Wetlands International will initially be based in the Staring Centre which is home to the Integrated Land, Soil and Water Research Institute. In early 1998 we will move to an exciting new building. This new office facility is being built to the highest environmental standards and will be a prestigious site for Wetlands International into the next millennium. If you are in The Netherlands, you are most welcome to visit Wetlands International staff at their new headquarters.

Acknowledgements

A consortium of Dutch agencies have financed the relocation and covered the increased operational costs for the next five years. These include the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries; the Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management; the Provincial Council of Gelderland; the Municipality of Wageningen; and the World Wide Fund for Nature -The Netherlands. In addition to supporting the relocation, firm pledges of support for regional programme activities have been made, as well as offers of secondments. Over the last six months Wetlands International has been given the highest level of support from Dutch officials - we are extremely grateful to them for their enthusiastic and professional support.

REGIONAL NEWS

AFRICA

Morocco: Seven hundred Marbled Teal were seen at Barrage Youssef Ben on the Massa
river on 9.1.97, a record count for that site. Five hundred and fifty were seen the same day in coastal lagoons 3 km east of the mouth of Oued Bou Issafene. After being dry for several years, Dayet Merzouga has been flooded recently with 39 Marbled Teal on 13-17.2.96, 120 on 11.7.96 and 300 on 8.11.96. On 25.2.97 it was almost dry, with only three Marbled Teal. Source: David Tomlinson, Chris Magin, Peyo d’Andurain, Bertrand Larmothe and LPO Lorraine Delegation

Sudan: At the recent Ferruginous Duck workshop in Hungary, new information about high numbers of Ferruginous Ducks in Sudan was presented. At least 5,000 ducks are known to winter in the Sudan region, an area that has never previously been recognised as important for the species. Source: Costas Papaconstantinou (Hellenic Ornithological Society)

Tunisia: Ferruginous Ducks are now confirmed to be breeding in Tunisia, at Houareb Barrage. Marbled Teal and White-headed Duck also breed regularly at this site (see page 37, this issue). Source: Wetlands No.1, September 1996. L’Unite de recherche sur les oiseaux d’eau, WRUT, Tunisia

ASIA

Israel: During 1995/96, numbers of White-headed Duck wintering in Israel increased. At Tishlovet and Lake Baruch, a total of 580 ducks were counted. Source: Dan Alon, Israeli Ornithological Center

Uzbekistan: An expedition by the Institute of Zoology, Uzbek Academy of Sciences revealed that Kyzylkum wetlands are important to Marbled Teal and Ferruginous Ducks. Though many breeding sites for waterbirds have been flooded due to the increased level of the Aydar Lake, new wetlands created by the construction of the Amu-Bukhara canal are providing new habitat for species such as the Marbled Teal and Pygmy Cormorant. Larger lakes of the Bukhara region such as Dengizkul, Tudakul and Karakul are also important wintering areas. In September 1996, 166 Ferruginous Ducks were counted on Lakes Aydar and Tudakul, and on the small shallow lakes along the Amu-Bukhara canal (see page 25). On the Amu-Bukhara lakes and on artificial pools near Bukhara, 31 Marbled Teal were recorded. Source: Elena Mukhina, Uzbek Academy of Sciences, Uzbekistan

EUROPE

Greece: A record count of 2,213 White-headed Ducks was made at Lake Vistonis on 16.1.97. This increase in Greece is perhaps owing to a relocation of birds wintering in Turkey. Unfortunately, no midwinter count was made at Burdur Lake this year. Source: G.J. Handrinos

Romania: Through the new law of game and game protection (Law No. 107/1996), the Romanian Parliament has given legal protection from hunting to over 140 bird species, including the Red-breasted Goose, the Lesser White-fronted Goose and the White-headed Duck. The Ferruginous Duck, however, appears on the list of huntable game species. Source: Romanian Ornithological Society

Spain: Marbled Teal numbers started to recover in 1996 following the end of the recent drought, and 480 were seen at El Hondo Natural Park, Alicante Province on 12.9.96 (highest ever count in the Valencian Community). Following strong lobbying by Marmaronetta Ornithological Society, Asociación de Amigos de los Humedales del Sur de Alicante, SEO/BirdLife and many international organisations, the regional
government banned hunting this winter in the central part of El Hondo where Marbled Teal and White-headed Ducks were concentrated (see page 21).

Spain: SEO/BirdLife have declared the Marbled Teal as their Bird of the Year for 1997. Funding for the conservation of the Marbled Teal in Valencia has been provided from the EC LIFE programme. An excellent monograph on the Marbled Teal in Spain, "La Cerceta Pardilla Marmaronetta angustirostris en España" has recently been published by ICONA, Madrid (175pp., 13 tables, 25 graphs, 33 colour photographs, in Spanish with English summary and table and figure legends). Written by many authors and edited by José-Damien Navarro and Francisco Robledano, it includes chapters on status, habitat, biology and conservation problems. It is a must for anyone interested in that species. It can be ordered from Librería Linnea, Madrid, Fax 34 1 3803250, E-mail revista@quercus.es, reference 06.08.005, price 2,600 ptas including postage.

Spain: The cold winter weather in northern Europe appears to be the cause of the appearance of record numbers of North American Ruddy Ducks (NARDs) in Spain. Over 30 individuals have been recorded in the 1996-97 winter, of which 15 have been shot. Action to reduce NARD populations in Europe must be stepped up if White-headed Ducks are to be saved (see page 19).

Turkey: An Oxford University expedition to survey breeding White-headed Ducks on the Central Plateau in Turkey summer 1996 discovered that several of the wetland sites suspected or known to hold breeding ducks were completely dry and others were much smaller than expected. Of 18 sites surveyed, three had completely dried up, and nine held a total of 300-400 ducks. It is thought that the low numbers of ducks encountered was due to the low water levels, owing largely to reduced precipitation. Source: The Anatolian Duck Project, University of Oxford

Ukraine: Changes in agricultural practices, pressure from farmers, foresters and hunters for new legislation to allow the shooting and scaring of feeding geese, and an increase in tourist hunting, are creating new dangers to Red-breasted and Lesser White-fronted Geese. In winter, the duration of the hunting season and hunters' bag limits have already been increased and it is thought that as many as 150-200 Red-breasted Geese are illegally shot annually. Source: European Union for Coastal Conservation, Ukraine


General: An international workshop to discuss the status and conservation of the Ferruginous Duck was held in Tokaj, Hungary, on 10-12 November 1996. New information arising from the meeting will be incorporated into the Council of Europe/BirdLife International action plan for the Ferruginous Duck in Europe. Further information from the workshop will be presented in the next issue of TWSG News. Source: The Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust
collaboration with the Gosse Bird Club and the Natural Resource Conservation Authority, Jamaica, with the aim of assessing the numbers and distribution of West Indian Whistling Duck at 12 sites in western Jamaica. Eleven of the sites were known to have held the species in the recent past. The survey indicated that the populations at ten of those 11 sites had declined, and that the duck was in danger of imminent extinction at one site. The principal threat is believed to be illegal shooting, which occurs at all of the sites found to hold the species. Source: Iola Williams & David Rees, RSPB Wales

General: The West Indian Whistling-duck Working Group was established by The Society of Caribbean Ornithology at its annual meeting in Nassau, Bahamas (Aug 1996). The purpose of the working group is to promote research, public education, law enforcement and habitat protection throughout the range of the species. The group is chaired by Patricia Bradley (Cayman Is.). Other members include: David O. Hill (USA), Mars van Liefde (Cayman Is.), Kevel Lindsay (Antigua-Barbuda), Pericles Maillis (Bahamas), Lourdes Mugica and Martin Acosta (Cuba), Victor Regis (Saint Lucia), Lisa Sorenson (USA), Nancy Staus (USA), Ann Sutton (Jamaica), and David Wege (UK). The group has nearly completed an Action Plan for the WIWD. In addition, the group recently received a USFWS grant which will fund a region-wide public education programme. Persons wishing to assist in any of these efforts are encouraged to contact the WIWD Working Group, P.O. Box 907 GT, Cayman Islands, BWI (ph/fax 809-947-5925).

FEATURES

ANALYSES OF GLOBALLY THREATENED ANATIDAE IN RELATION TO THREATS, DISTRIBUTION, MIGRATION PATTERNS AND HABITAT USE

Owing to its special relevance to the work of the TWSG, below we reproduce the abstract of this recent paper by A.J. Green from Conservation Biology 10:1435-1445 (1996). Photocopies of this paper are available from Andy Green.

New IUCN criteria for globally threatened status were applied to the Anatidae (ducks, geese and swans) at the subspecific level. Various characteristics of the 48 threatened taxa were considered. These taxa were compared to the 180 taxa that are non-threatened to explain what aspects of a taxon's distribution, migration pattern and habitat use make it likely to be globally threatened. Habitat loss, hunting and exotic introductions are the major causes of globally threatened status, affecting 73%, 48% and 33% of threatened Anatidae respectively. Although the habitat use of threatened and non-threatened Anatidae are similar, inland lentic wetland and forest habitats are the most threatened by habitat loss whereas marine ecosystem, grassland, tundra, arable land and scrub habitats are the least threatened. Insular taxa are more likely to be threatened or extinct than taxa occurring on continental land masses. Non-migratory taxa are more likely to be threatened or extinct than migratory taxa, but there is no significant difference when insular taxa are excluded from the analysis. taxa with their breeding distribution centred above a latitude of 20° north are less threatened than those found farther south. Taxa with their breeding distribution centred at or above 55° north are even less threatened. Russia holds 14 threatened Anatidae taxa, more than any
other country. There is an exceptional concentration of seven threatened, migratory taxa confined to the east Asian flyway. Despite the fact that the Ramsar Convention was established with the conservation of the Anatidae in mind, only 31% of globally threatened taxa have ever been recorded on the world's 685 Ramsar sites. For the 21 highly threatened taxa, this proportion drops to 10%. Compared with globally threatened birds in general, the threatened Anatidae have a different geographical distribution, but share habitat loss as the most important threat. Hunting and introductions were relatively more important threats to the Anatidae, and trade and smear ranges or populations were relatively less important. All these findings have important implications for waterbird and wetland conservation programmes.

THE STATUS OF THE RED-BREASTED GOOSE IN AZERBAIJAN*

Michael Patrikeev, 118 Grant Avenue, Hamilton, Ontario L8N 2X7, Canada. E-mail: michael.patrikeev@cciw.ca

Status: Former common migrant and wintering species. Likely to have now almost entirely disappeared from Azerbaijan.

Former winter distribution: Until the 1960s, the most important wintering area of the species was in southeast Azerbaijan. The geese could be found at Lake Novogolovskaya-chala, north of Lenkoran in southern Mughan, and along the western shore of Kizil Agach Bay, including the Babiya spit. Red-breasted Geese were often seen foraging on islands in the Kizil-Agach Bay, before the water level fell and the islands became part of the mainland. Severe winter storms would force the geese to seek refuge at freshwater lakes and marshes of Kizil Agach Reserve. During very cold periods, the Red-breasted Geese would sometimes move south of the Lenkoran lowlands (Radde 1884; Tygarinov & Kozlova-Pushkareva 1938; Verestchagin 1950; Vinogradov & Tcherniavskaya 1965). The species also wintered in the Saliyan Steppe, southeastern Shirvan, at Lake Haddikabul during the day (Satynin 1907; Verestchagin 1950), and at lakes Aggel, Saraesy and Mekhman, on the Mil Steppe.

Former winter numbers: During the late 1800s-early 1900s, the geese were common along the Caspian Sea shore where "huge flocks occurred at the Mughan lakes". In the late 1800s, flocks of thousands "shadowed the sun" near the village of Astrakhanovka (Radde 1884; Satynin 1907, 1912). In the 1930s-1940s, flocks observed at the Mughan lakes varied from several dozen to several thousand individuals (Verestchagin 1950).

Kizil Agach Reserve. During the late 1950s and 1960s, wintering Red-breasted Geese recorded in the Kizil Agach Reserve numbered between 2,000 and 23,000 (Table 1). In January 1967, the Red-breasted Goose was the most common wintering goose species in the Kizil Agach Reserve, with a maximum count of 23,800.

During the late 1960s and 1970s, wintering numbers decreased dramatically. Less than 300-500 individuals were recorded in the Kizil Agach Reserve during the 1970s. By the late 1980s, only individual birds were seen in the reserve, and not in every year (Vinogradov et al. 1990). According to several unconfirmed reports, 300-500 Red-breasted Geese may still occasionally winter in the southern Mughan, at for example Lake Mahmud-chala and in Masally district.

Lakes Aggel and Saraesy. At Lake Aggel on the Mil Steppe, wintering Red-breasted Geese varied between 210 and 4,800 individuals, over the period 1961-1965 (Table 1). In the late 1960s, fewer than 100 individuals
wintered at Lake Saraesy (Tyaev 1975). From the 1970s onwards, there were no records of Red-breasted Geese from this area.

Table 1. Maximum wintering numbers of Red-breasted Geese recorded at the Kizil Agach Reserve and Lake Aggel, Azerbaijan, 1958-1983.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Winter</th>
<th>Kizil Agach</th>
<th>Lake Aggel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1958/59</td>
<td>2,000-2,400</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959/60</td>
<td>11,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960/61</td>
<td>4,200</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961/62</td>
<td>7,500-8,000</td>
<td>1,050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962/63</td>
<td>4,800</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963/64</td>
<td>4,500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964/65</td>
<td>3,300</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966/67</td>
<td>23,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973/74</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974/75</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978/79</td>
<td>65</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979/80</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1980/81</td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981/82</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982/83</td>
<td>45</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The exact cause of the dramatic decline and extinction of Red-breasted Geese in Azerbaijan is not understood. The decline is usually attributed to changes from cereals to cotton crops in the early 1970s, conversion of semi-desert into fields of vegetables, fruit and vineyards, intensive grazing, poaching, disturbance on the wintering grounds and habitat loss due to encroaching reeds in the Kizil Agach Reserve (Vinogradov & Morozkin 1979; Babaev 1984 1990). However, these changes are also likely to have affected other goose species wintering there, and though numbers of other geese have somewhat declined, none of them has disappeared entirely from Azerbaijan.

Winter habitat and behaviour: The geese occurred on shallow wetlands, semi-deserts, rice fields and cereal fields (Verestchagin 1950), and fed mainly on the karagan steppe south of Lake Saraesy (Vinogradov 1967). In the Kizil Agach Reserve, the geese would migrate to open water in the Kizil Agach Bay at sunrise and remain there for 1.5-2 hours. From the open water, they moved to islands to feed and at midday, the geese flew to fresh water to drink, before returning to their feeding grounds. Night roosts were on sand banks and islands (Tygarinov & Kozlova-Pushkareva 1938).

On the Mil steppe, the geese headed to the feeding grounds at sunrise, and returned to lakes to rest and drink by 1000-1100 hrs. From 1400-1500 hrs until dusk, they foraged on karagan steppe along with other geese. On cloudy days, Red-breasted Geese remained on the steppe all day. In February and March, they would rest on lakes during the day (Vinogradov 1967).

Migration: Spring migration. In mid-March, the geese departed from lakes Aggel and Saraesy in flocks of 20-30 (Vinogradov 1967). By 17 March, they had left the Kizil Agach Reserve (Vinogradov & Tchernievskaya 1965), and in March-April, Red-breasted Geese were recorded at the Divichi Liman (Tyaev 1965). The last known records of migrating Red-breasted Geese during autumn, were of 80 individuals at the Samur Delta on 9 April 1982, and one bird at Cape Pirsagat on 20 May 1989 (Bytiev et al. 1989; Parikeev 1991).

Autumn migration. Red-breasted Geese would first arrive in November with mass migration occurring in mid-November. They would fly continuously over the Samur Delta and Divichi Liman, to the Mil Steppe, southern Mugan and Kizil Agach Reserve, often with other migrating geese (Verestchagin 1950). The last known records of migrating Red-breasted Geese during autumn, were of 80 individuals at the Samur Delta on 30 November 1967, 17
on 7 November 1972 and one on 31 October 1989 (Bytiev et al. 1989). In January 1988, a flock heading towards the Caspian Sea was observed in the Stavropol Region, on the northern Caucasus Plain, Russia (Khokhlov 1989).

Population losses: In the 1800s, Red-breasted Geese would often be caught with nets during winters of deep snow. From 60 to 200 geese could be caught at once. They were taken for their feathers only, as their meat was considered unpalatable (Radde 1884). In winter 1879/80, hunters from the village of Astrakhanovka organized a cull of Red-breasted Geese, during which a minimum of 200 birds were bagged per hunter per day (Radde 1884). During the mid-1960s, 50 to 250 Red-breasted Geese were annually caught at Lake Aggel in order to provide birds for zoos.

* Adapted from The Birds of Azerbaijan by M. Patrikeev (in prep.).

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DUCKS UNLIMITED AND BLUE DUCK CONSERVATION

Dr Grant Dumbell & David Smith, Ducks Unlimited New Zealand Inc, PO Box 9795, Newmarket, Auckland, New Zealand.

Introduction

During the past century, the Blue Duck Hymenolaimus malacorhynchos has faced environmental pressures which have caused a severe reduction in range and numbers. Human development of New Zealand’s lowlands has destroyed forested river margins, whilst large hydroelectric schemes have dammed many rivers and diverted water away from others. Flood protection measures have severely modified the character of rivers, and introduced trout may directly compete with the Blue Duck for food. River siltation has also had an impact on food availability, and predation of adults by introduced mammals has directly reduced duck populations and nesting success.

Blue Duck numbers have probably declined to less than 4,000-5,000 in the wild. Of greater concern is the reduction of the duck’s range which has become fragmented and contracted into the head waters of many river systems. The average size of each population is now very small, and therefore more prone to extinction as a result of single catastrophic events. This became evident during the early 1980s, when volcanic activity decimated the resident Blue Duck population on the Manganui-a-te-ao River, in central North Island. The population took more than a decade to recover.

On North Island, Blue Duck are now only found on the western side of the volcanic plateau and along the axial ranges, from the Ruahine Range to the East Cape region. On South Island, they are found on the western side of the Main Divide, in North West Nelson and Fiordland. Only remnant populations persist in Canterbury and Otago, in contrast to the historic range which stretched down into the lowlands, and in some cases, all the way to sea level.

Ducks Unlimited’s involvement

Ducks Unlimited New Zealand Inc is New Zealand’s only conservation charity committed to the preservation, restoration, development and management of wetland habitat, the conservation of New Zealand’s threatened waterfowl, and the advocacy of wetlands as a valuable natural resource. The New Zealand Waterfowl And Wetlands Trust is a non-profit charitable trust, established by Ducks Unlimited in 1990, and is charged with the development of secure funding bases for each of Ducks Unlimited’s conservation projects.

Ducks Unlimited has been involved with the conservation of the Blue Duck for much of its 22 year history. The project is known as Operation Whio, the Maori name for Blue Duck. In its early years, Ducks Unlimited supported visiting researchers who studied Blue Duck ecology and behaviour (Eldridge...
1985, 1986), supported an attempt by a Churchill Fellow from The Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust (WWT) to collect fertile eggs for export to Britain (Hall 1984), and attempted to breed the birds despite the very low numbers of birds in captivity.

Prior to 1988, the most significant achievement for Operation Whio was gaining approval to export two breeding pairs of Blue Duck to WWT in Britain. In 1988, Operation Whio took a leap forward when the Department of Conservation held a comprehensive seminar to bring together everyone interested in Blue Duck conservation (Williams 1988a). From this meeting came the first integrated strategy to nationally coordinate Blue Duck conservation efforts (Williams 1988b), and Ducks Unlimited was charged with captive management through the establishment and support of a Blue Duck Captive Breeding Group.

Operation Whio has since made a number of achievements including establishment and maintenance of the Captive Breeding Group, placement of all captive birds within Ducks Unlimited’s network of breeders, expansion of the captive population from 11 to 18 pairs, establishment of a stud book, successfully raising up to seven ducklings in any one year, and the collation of all available data on the captive breeding performance of Blue Ducks. In addition, Ducks Unlimited has provided financial and logistical support for research investigating feeding competition between Blue Duck and trout (Towers 1992, 1995), and has published and distributed a public information pamphlet.

Planning for the future
Operation Whio has so far been developed through the goodwill of captive breeders, and others, who have provided aviary space and funding for feed, transport and other operating costs. Ducks Unlimited has received a $20,000 donation from DowElanco (NZ) Ltd to The New Zealand Waterfowl And Wetlands Trust, which will provide Ducks Unlimited with the long-term financial security needed to develop Operation Whio, thus providing greater assistance to breeders and the information needs of the captive management programme.

In its current form, Operation Whio is an ex-situ captive management programme which lacks an in-situ recovery programme, and moving beyond this limitation must be a priority. Any field based programme must necessarily contain elements of both habitat management and research, as it is only by integrating these that new populations can be established.

Advocacy and education is the third area of development for Operation Whio. Many of the people who see Blue Ducks in the wild do not realise that the birds are endangered. Many more people are simply not aware of the duck.

Key captive management needs
- Coordinate a seminar to collate the collective experience of Blue Duck breeders, including The Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust.
- Ensure the genetic viability of the British captive population through the export of additional male birds.
- Transfer the current manual stud book to computerised format.
- Complete and add individual lifetime breeding histories to the stud book.
- Initiate research to develop an improved dietary regime and to investigate the low level of production in captivity.
- Review the changing demographics of the captive population.
- Develop, write, and seek approval for a Blue Duck captive management plan and a husbandry manual, according to approved Department of Conservation criteria.
Key recovery and research needs
- Develop a strategy for releasing birds.
- Identify potential release sites.
- Investigate habitat protection needs at key Blue Duck sites on private land.
- Consider habitat enhancement and protection needs on private land at sites both adjacent to, and remote from, existing populations, and link in with the release strategy.

Key advocacy and education needs
- Seek the completion and approval of a Blue Duck Recovery Plan.
- Develop resource material for circulation to schools, using input on resource needs from teachers.
- Develop and produce a general information pamphlet for distribution through public information centres in Blue Duck areas.
- Undertake periodic media releases to publicise the achievements of Operation Whio.

Conclusions
DowElanco’s donation is the largest single contribution to Blue Duck conservation and is delivering immediate benefits to Operation Whio. Ducks Unlimited has already obtained approval to export additional breeding stock to The Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust, in order to broaden the genetic base outside New Zealand, and has funded new research on predator management techniques that could benefit the development of a release strategy.

In the short term, Ducks Unlimited will focus on the captive management tasks, especially the captive management seminar. In the longer term, this focus will widen to ensure that the recovery and research tasks, and the advocacy and education tasks, are undertaken as and when they are needed. This will maintain the transition of Operation Whio from a narrowly focussed ex-situ programme to an integrated programme complementing the Department of Conservation’s Blue Duck recovery programme.

References


FUNDING BOOST FOR BROWN TEAL CONSERVATION

Murray Williams, Department of Conservation, PO Box 10-420, Wellington, New Zealand. E-mail: murrayw@xtra.co.nz

The Brown Teal Anas (aucklandica) chlorotis is one of a handful of New Zealand’s threatened species to have benefited from the
New Zealand government's recently announced "green package" that will add $NZ 17 million to threatened species conservation programmes over the next three years.

Two full-time management positions have been created to implement the combined research and management programmes for the teal on Great Barrier Island (the species' last stronghold) and in Northland on the New Zealand mainland. Funding for the 1996-97 financial year totals $NZ 200,000 to cover field research, predator control, habitat creation and enhancement and population re-establishment attempts. Considering that two years ago there was no funding for management and only one small research project in operation, this turn-around represents much greater awareness within the Department of Conservation of the plight of this endemic waterfowl, occasioned by the publication of a comprehensive recovery plan (Williams & Dumbell 1996).

This funding boost has come just in time. The species is on the brink of extinction on the New Zealand mainland. In the far south of the country, the formerly vigorous population in Fiordland National Park has dwindled to, perhaps, one small remnant group on a remote lake. Attempts are being made to capture some of these birds for genetic comparisons with North Island specimens and, if different, to establish a breeding programme for them. Meanwhile, in Northland at the tip of the North Island, the decline over the past decade has been little short of catastrophic. One local population after another has shown a steady decline and then a final abrupt crash. Habitat destruction and predation have been identified as the agents of this decline. Breeding sites along streams and in swamps have been steadily destroyed by persistent cattle grazing so that, annually, the teal breeding range and density have contracted. Predators, mostly feral cats, have taken toll of some adults but have been particularly severe on juveniles - to the extent that there has been no recruitment into most local populations for years, and the final "crash" is seen as the combined result of ageing and recruitment failure. But one Northland population hangs on, at Mimiwhangata, and this is where the final defense of the bird on the New Zealand mainland is being attempted.

Mimiwhangata is a 400 ha coastal farm owned by the Department of Conservation. As a conservation area it is not in very good shape but nevertheless approximately 50 teal live on some scattered stock ponds, wetlands and along a small but badly degraded stream. By means of concerted year-round predator trapping, creation of many new small wetlands, restoration of stream margins, and close monitoring of birds throughout the annual cycle, teal numbers are predicted to climb as the birds colonise adjacent bush and farmland. Radios have been fitted to about half of the resident adult teal and at least half of the fledglings will also receive the 12g "backpacks". Monitoring of range, habitat use and behaviour occurs weekly for all transmittered birds. A dog is used to locate non-transmittered birds whenever necessary to check survival, location, breeding performance, and partnerships. Without the dog, many aspects of the behaviour of this crepuscular species, with a liking for densely vegetated wetlands, would remain unknown. Indeed, without dogs (of pointing breeds), Brown Teal conservation efforts would still be struggling along in a research rather than a management phase.

On Great Barrier Island, a dog is also part of the team. Here the emphasis is on protection of all existing habitats and the dog is used to detect teal hiding during the day. This population may be constrained by a shortage of breeding sites, especially on the swampy lowlands, and a large reservoir of
non-breeders may exist in some of the estuarine areas. If this is so, then perhaps the Great Barrier Island population is capable of directly fuelling population establishment attempts on the mainland or on other islands. This could be a most useful alternative to releasing captive-raised birds for this purpose which, over ten frustrating years, have failed to gain any new foothold.

With both projects now having assured funding for the next three years, real advances in the conservation of Brown Teal should result. A new intensity of study and of management experiment is now possible and there is an opportunity to share skills and outcomes with other threatened species programmes within New Zealand and beyond.

References

URGENT ACTION NEEDED TO SAVE THE WHITE-HEADED DUCK

Juan Criado; SEO/BirdLife; Ctra. de Húmera, 63, 1; 28224 Pozuelo de Alarcón, Madrid, Spain. Email: seo@quercus.es

In Spain, large amounts of government money have been invested in conservation of the White-headed Duck Oxyura leucocephala which has allowed the population to recover from near extinction (22 birds in 1977) to over 700 individuals today. However, this population may still be lost by hybridization with the introduced North American Ruddy Duck O. jamaicensis jamaicensis, which is the biggest threat to the White-headed Duck at a global level (Green & Hughes 1996). International cooperation and action are urgently required to save White-headed Ducks from extinction by eradicating exotic populations of the Ruddy Duck in Europe and North Africa.

The latest censuses coordinated at a national scale confirm the recovery of the Spanish White-headed Duck population, with counts of 787 and 932 in September and November 1996 (J.A. Torres, pers.comm.). However, numbers of the exotic Ruddy Duck in Spain are also increasing, with a substantial increase in records since November 1995. By the end of 1994, 53 pure Ruddy Ducks and hybrids had been shot in Spain, but then no more Ruddy Ducks or hybrids were observed until the end of 1995. In contrast, over the period from November 1995 to January 1997, 51 Ruddy Ducks and hybrids have been recorded. By the end of January 1997, an overall total of 71 hybrids and Ruddy Ducks had been shot. At the beginning of the current breeding season, yet more Ruddy Ducks were being observed.

The recent increase in Ruddy Duck records from all over Spain is extremely worrying for the conservation of the White-headed Duck. SEO/BirdLife have requested immediate culling of the Ruddy Duck in the Palearctic. Some countries, such as The Netherlands and France have recently adopted legislative measures to permit the control of Ruddy Ducks but, so far, not one has been eliminated. The Ruddy Ducks were originally introduced into the UK, from where they have been allowed to expand all over Europe. The UK has a far bigger feral population of Ruddy Ducks than other countries, and recent research suggests that control of its population is feasible (Anon. 1996). However, regrettably, no measures were taken to control the UK Ruddy Duck population in 1996. Furthermore, it now seems clear that no action will be taken during 1997 to control Ruddy Ducks in the UK.
SEO/BirdLife has requested international organisations such as the Council of Europe and the European Commission to comply with recommendations given in the International Action Plan for the White-headed Duck in Europe (Green & Hughes 1996), prepared by BirdLife International, Wetlands International and WWT with the support of the European Commission, and endorsed by the Council of Europe. This plan has to be implemented successfully if we are to save White-headed Ducks from extinction.

SEO/BirdLife request people who support conservation of the White-headed Duck to write a letter to the UK Secretary State of the Environment asking that the UK government proceeds with control of Ruddy Ducks. Express your great concern about this issue and point out that immediate action to cull Ruddy Ducks is essential to save the White-headed Duck from extinction. Please send this letter to:

The Secretary of State for the Environment
Department of the Environment
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 3EB
UK

Please also send copies to Juan Criado at the above address and to:

Christine Harry
European Wildlife Division
Department of the Environment
Tollgate House
Houlton Street
Bristol BS2 9DJ
UK

References


CALL FOR HELP TO CONSERVE MARBLED TEAL IN ALICANTE, SPAIN

José-Damian Navarro, Sociedad Ornitológica Marmaronetta, Apartado 3004, 30080 Murcia, Spain. E-mail: som@ctv.es

El Hondo and the Santa Pola Salines are two wetlands located in the south of Alicante Province (Valencian Community, Spain) that are protected as Natural Parks, EC-SPAs and Ramsar Sites. These sites are extremely important for their breeding populations of Marbled Teal and White-headed Duck, and are now the most important breeding site for Marbled Teal in Spain and the EC (Navarro et al. 1995). About 50 pairs bred there in 1996, with over 400 ducklings hatching. Almost 20 pairs of White-headed Ducks bred in 1996. Other important breeding species include the Squacco Heron and probably the Crested Coot.

Although these wetlands are protected on paper since 1988, hunting of waterbirds is still permitted in winter. There are 16 hunting estates that cover almost the entire protected area, in which over 300 hunters hunt 12 days during each season (late October to the end of January), killing over 7,000 waterbirds some years. According to a 1994 study, the accumulation of leadshot in the sediments causes the death of another 4,000 birds a year by lead poisoning. Marbled Teal are shot or die from lead poisoning on a regular basis (Navarro et al. 1995). The hunting mortality is impossible to quantify because the hunters are
aware of the protected status of the species and do not therefore declare the numbers they shoot. However, the hunters are known to shoot Marbled Teal as readily as the unprotected duck species. White-headed Duck are also shot, and are probably affected by lead poisoning.

Last autumn, various NGOs launched a campaign to ask for a temporary hunting ban at El Hondo owing to the presence of extremely large numbers of Marbled Teal (over 500 in September 1996). This campaign was supported by numerous Spanish and international organizations (including BirdLife International, TWSG, Ramsar Bureau, WWT, Council of Europe, International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation, etc). In response to the protests, the regional government banned hunting this winter in the hunting estate most important for the Marbled Teal, and delayed the start of hunting in the other estates. As a result, over 150 Marbled Teal remained in the area throughout the winter, whereas in previous years the great majority have disappeared after the first days of hunting (Navarro et al. 1995).

To ensure the conservation of the Marbled Teal in Europe, a permanent hunting ban is required in the Natural Parks of El Hondo and Santa Pola Salines, as recommended in the Council of Europe/BirdLife Action Plans compiled by WWT (Green 1996; Green & Hughes 1996). Furthermore, the drainage canal (Azarbe del Convenio) in which numerous broods of Marbled Teal are trapped every year (Navarro et al. 1995) urgently needs modification so that broods and other animals can climb out easily.

To help us lobby to achieve these aims, please send letters to the regional government addressed to Sr. President de la Generalitat Valenciana, Palau de la Generalitat, Valencia, Spain, asking for a permanent end to hunting both in El Hondo Natural Park and in Santa Pola Salines Natural Park (Alicante), and modification of the Azarbe del Convenio. This letter should mention the importance of the sites for Marbled Teal and the severe threat they face from hunting. It should also point out that the hunting and lead-poisoning of a globally threatened species in a Ramsar site contravenes the "wise use" principle of the Ramsar Convention. Please send us a copy of your letter.

References


REQUEST FOR HELP: MOVEMENTS OF MARBLED TEAL

Andy Green, Estación Biológica de Doñana, Avda. María Luisa, Pabellón del Perú, 41013 Sevilla, Spain. E-mail: andy@ebd03.ebd.csic.es

In order to design effective conservation plans
for Marbled Teal *Marmaronetta angustirostris*, it is essential to improve our poor understanding of the biology of this species. For this reason, we are now marking wild Marbled Teal in Spain, and we need your help to study their movements. To date, the main information on movements comes from birds ringed with metal rings during the breeding season in Doñana. Four of these birds have been recovered in winter in northern Morocco, one in winter in northwest Algeria, one in September in Valencia and one in September in France. These few observations are enough to confirm that the Marbled Teal in the western Mediterranean region are highly mobile within and between countries. However, many questions remain unanswered. For example: Where do the birds breeding in Valencia winter? Do Marbled Teal return to breed in the wetlands where they were born, or do they breed anywhere where they find suitable habitat?

To address these kinds of questions, Marbled Teal are now being marked in El Hondo, Alicante and other sites in Spain. So far, most birds that have been marked are young birds rescued from drainage canals in El Hondo in which they fall and cannot escape. These birds are maintained in captivity until they are fledged, and then released back into the wild. Since 1994, Marbled Teal have been marked with the following types of leg rings:

a) A single yellow PVC ring on the left leg.  
b) A single white PVC ring on the right leg.  
c) Two coloured PVC rings together on the right leg.  
d) A single light-blue PVC ring with an individual combination of black letters and numbers (e.g. 21, 2A etc) on the right leg.  
e) A single black PVC ring with an individual combination of white letters and numbers (e.g. 21, 2A etc) on the right leg.

All birds also carry a metal leg ring on the other leg. In addition, in 1996 birds carrying the light-blue rings with letter-number codes have also been fitted with white plastic wing tags that carry black numbers (from 00 to 99). These wing tags have been fitted to either the left or right wing. They are much more visible than leg rings, and are clearly visible in flight.

We ask you to make an effort to see if any Marbled Teal that you observe in the field anywhere in the western Mediterranean or west Africa are carrying a ring or a wing tag. These marked birds may be observed in any of the following countries: Spain, Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, France, Senegal, Chad, Mali, Nigeria. Please provide us with full details of any observations, i.e. date, location, time, total number of Marbled Teal observed, colour and position of mark, letter-number code (if this was legible), comments on the behaviour of the marked bird (was the mark causing any problems? was it mixed with unmarked birds?) and the legibility of the tag.

It is extremely important to send us the information even if it was not possible to read the letter-number code on the wing-tag or ring. The colour and position of the mark will still be enough to identify the location and time of marking.

Please send all records to the above address. We will reply with full details of the time and place at which your bird was marked. Please also publicise this request anywhere where other birdwatchers are likely to see it.

**ECOLOGY OF THE MARBLED TEAL AND FERRUGINOUS DUCK IN THE GÖKSU DELTA, TURKEY**

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A study of the ecology of the Marbled Teal and Ferruginous Duck was made in the latter part of their breeding season at the Göksu Delta from 10 July to 6 August 1995. Comparative data were also collected on post-breeding Mallard and Garganey.

The Gökusu Delta is located on the Turkish Mediterranean coast. It is a Ramsar site, a Specially Protected Area and an Important Bird Area. It supports internationally important breeding populations of Marbled Teal (c.50 pairs) and Ferruginous Duck (c.30 pairs). About 50 pairs of Mallards breed in the delta, but numbers increase in July due to the influx of post-breeding birds from other areas. Garganey begin to arrive in early July and numbers peak at 3,000-5,000 in late August. The largest wetland in the delta is Lake Akgöl, a permanent, well vegetated, fresh to brackish, eutrophic lake (1,400 ha) with extensive beds of Phragmites australis, Typha, Scirpus (= Schoenoplectus) litoralis and Potamogeton pectinatus.

During this study, all Anatidae species were highly concentrated in well-vegetated parts of Lake Akgöl, avoiding open, saline lakes and the open centre of Akgöl. The distribution of each species at Akgöl was very different, owing to differences in habitat selection. Mallard and Garganey were highly concentrated in a mixed emergent zone, which held a mixture of Phragmites, Typha and S. litoralis. Marbled Teal made much more use of an inner zone of Akgöl with monospecific stands of S. litoralis, whilst Ferruginous Duck were intermediate. Within the mixed emergent zone, Marbled Teal used microhabitats dominated by S. litoralis, whereas the other species were more associated with Phragmites and Typha. Mallard were observed closer to emergent vegetation than other species, and Garganey made the most use of open microhabitats away from emergent patches. Ferruginous Duck were observed at locations farther away from the lake edge than other species. Mallard and particularly Marbled Teal showed a relative preference for small pools around the edge of Akgöl, probably because they were much shallower than the lake itself and permitted a higher foraging intake. Marbled Teal broods were highly concentrated in a drainage canal where it entered the lake, possibly because the surrounding, shallow marsh provided suitable nocturnal feeding habitat.

Within Akgöl, all duck species selected dense beds of Potamogeton pectinatus for feeding, but each used different foraging methods, feeding in different parts of the water column. Marbled Teal were the most active feeders, and probably took more insects than the other species. They fed highest in the water column, and also took Scirpus seeds, which made up 95% of their droppings (by dry weight). They fed in deeper parts of the lake (up to 66 cm) than other ducks, but were confined to sites where P. pectinatus beds filled the surface layer. In contrast, Mallards fed well down in the water column but in the shallower parts of the lake where they could reach the lake bottom by upending. Ninety three percent of their droppings (by dry weight) was made of green plant matter, which was dominated by P. pectinatus but also contained large amounts of charophytes.

Mallards were less active in the daytime than Marbled Teal and Ferruginous Duck. Each species showed a similar distribution of flock sizes, although Marbled Teal were the only species seen to form family parties of adults and fledgelings. Paternal care in Marbled Teal was observed repeatedly.

This study confirms that both Marbled Teal and Ferruginous Duck require structured habitats in densely vegetated wetlands. The restoration of such densely vegetated habitats
is essential for the recovery of both species in other areas such as parts of Andalusia, Spain. It is imperative that Akgöl is maintained in something like its current state, and that further eutrophication and succession in this lake be restricted if possible. Loss of Akgöl's submerged vegetation in a switch to a "turbid water" state dominated by phytoplankton is a future possibility that may devastate the populations of Marbled Teal and Ferruginous Duck.

A copy of a full 60 page report on this study is available on request. This project was financed by the Spanish Ministry of Education and Science; the Consellería de Medio Ambiente, Junta de Andalucía; the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries, The Netherlands; and the Royal Society for Protection of Birds. The fieldwork was conducted as part of The Netherlands contribution to the EC funded DHKD Göksu Delta project on integrated management, with the permission of the Authority for the Protection of Special Areas (APSA). The Turkish Society for the Protection of Nature (DHKDI) helped to organize the project. The Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust provided essential equipment. Special thanks to Güneşin Aydemir, Vincent van den Berk, Kerem Boyla, Hasan Günen, Borja Heredia, Fernando Hirelde, Sühendan Karaucz Kireç, Rosario Pintos, Laurence Rose, Gürdoğar Sargül, Janine van Vessem and Murat Yarar.

STATUS OF THE FERRUGINOUS DUCK IN UZBEKISTAN

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The Ferruginous Duck Aythya nyroca is a wintering, migratory and breeding species of Uzbekistan where it is widely, though irregularly, distributed. Numbers are small in most regions of Uzbekistan.

During the 1960s, the species was common on the Khoresm Oasis lakes, and it was the second most abundant nesting Anseriform species on the Amu-Darya delta. Now it is numerous on the lower Amu-Darya only during migration (Nikolsky 1892; Molchanov 1912; Zarudny 1916; Gladkov 1935; Salikhbaev 1950, 1961; Kostin 1956). It was a common breeder in the lakes of the Fergana valley (Ivanov 1940), but during the last few decades, the number of breeding Ferruginous Ducks in the reservoirs of the Fergana valley and Tashkent region have decreased considerably. On the Dalversin lakes, numbers have declined dramatically over the last 15-20 years (Kashkarov 1987). Numbers of Ferruginous Ducks have declined throughout Central Asia over the last few decades (Kadastre 1992).

Breeding

The breeding status of Ferruginous Ducks in Uzbekistan is insufficiently known. The species is known to have bred in the Surkhandarya River basin (Ivanov 1959; Salikhbaev 1964), and individual ducks were seen in the lakes of the Central Kyzylkum desert during summer (Salikhbaev 1961). Broods have been observed on the Dalversin lakes in the Sir-Darya River basin (Kashkarov 1987).

Ferruginous Ducks nest on deep-water lakes fringed with reeds. Nests are built on reed or rush hummocks. Gut content samples consisted of 22% aquatic insects and molluscs, and 78% shoots and seeds of pondweeds and other aquatic plants.
Figure 1. Map showing locations mentioned in text

(Kashkarov 1987). Ducks are rarely seen on open water during the breeding season.

In the Amu-Darya delta, pairs were observed near nesting areas in late April-early May (Salikhbaev 1961). Nests with newly laid eggs were found on 20 and 27 May, and 2 June. The first broods usually appear in mid June, with most appearing in late June/early July. Brood size is normally 4-6 ducklings. During the moulting period several broods may amalgamate for 1-2 weeks. A flock of 50-70 young and adult females were observed on 11 July (Kashkarov 1987). Young birds were recorded flying in small groups with single females in early August (Salikhbaev 1961).

Migration
Spring migration begins in late February and continues during March in southern and central Uzbekistan. In Karakalpakia and Khoresm, birds may remain in the area for two weeks. In the Bukhara region, the species can occur from the beginning of February until April (Maslov 1947). On the Golodnaya steppe and near Tashkent the species was recorded in late February and early March, and on the Dalversine lakes it occurred from late February onwards, with most birds leaving during March (Kashkarov 1987). On the lower Amu-Darya River, the first Ferruginous Ducks appear in late March-early April, with migration over by late April (Azhimuratov 1975, Adreimov 1976). On Lake Aydarkul (Djizak and Samarkand regions), Ferruginous Duck density is 3-4 individuals per km² during spring, with only single pairs remaining to nest.

Ferruginous Ducks begin their autumn
migration earlier than other diving ducks. At the beginning of August, birds from local populations flock together and move within their breeding areas. Birds were observed in the region of the Kashkadarya River in southern Uzbekistan in early August (Meklenburtzhev 1958). In early September, migration was recorded at the Arnasay lakes, and individuals and small flocks were observed in the Tashkent region (Kashkarov 1987). In October, the species was numerous on the Amu-Darya Delta (Kostin 1956). Migration in the basin of the Zeravshan River near Samarkand, begins in early October and ends in early November (Bogdanov 1956). Migration on the Dalversin Lakes occurs mostly from mid October to early November, with individuals leaving after the first snow and frost. In the Fergana valley, birds were observed in late October (Kashkarov 1987), whilst on lake Tudakul in the Bukhara region, birds were common in the second half of November (Kashkarov 1987).

In September 1996, we saw 28 Ferruginous Duck in Aydar lake (15-16 and 23-24 September), and 140 in the region of the middle Amu-Darya river (17-22 September). In the latter region, birds were observed in groups of 1-30 birds, mostly in small lakes along the Amu-Bukhara canal.

Wintering
The wintering status of Ferruginous Duck in Uzbekistan is unclear. The species has been observed during winter in the middle and upper reaches of the Sir-Darya River (Zarudny 1915), in the Fergana valley and the floodplains of the Surkhandarya River (Ivanov 1953), on the Kayrakum reservoir and on the Vakhsh River in the region of the Tigrovaya Balka Nature Reserve (Selesnev & Bidos 1984). During a mid-winter aerial count, 7,000 Ferruginous Ducks were counted on wetlands of the Bukhara region (Cedastre, 1992).

Lakes of the Amu-Bukhara canal region
On the small, temporary lakes near the Amu-Bukhara canal, the Ferruginous Duck is recorded in small numbers during the nesting period, during migration and during winter, when they may remain on the lake for one to several days. The lakes can decrease considerably in size during the summer, becoming completely dry in some years, as happened during 1985-1990. Broods were observed on small lakes fringed with reeds and occasionally on small shallow lakes with reed and rush hummocks. In 1993, broods first appeared on 24 June. Though the young's plumage was similar to the adults by 25 July, they could not fly until the first days of August.

Breeding records of Ferruginous Ducks on the Lakes of the Amu-Bukhara canal region, 1982-1994 (f = female, y = young)

<table>
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<tr>
<td>24 Jun 1993 (f+y); 27 Jun 1993 (f+y); 27 Jul 1991 (f+2y); 13 Jul 1992 (f+3y); 4 Jul 1993 (f+y); 25 Jul 1993 (f+y); 29 Jul 1993 (f+y); 1 Aug 1993 (f+y); 5 Aug 1993 (1+4 fledglings)</td>
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**STELLER’S EIDERS BREEDING IN WESTERN TAYMYR AND NORTHEAST EUROPEAN RUSSIA**

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The western breeding limit of the Steller’s Eider *Polysticta stelleri* is poorly known, with only a handful of documented records from the breeding season west of the Yamal Peninsula. Nygard et al. (1995) recently reviewed the known distribution of Steller’s Eider. The Taymyr Peninsula in arctic Russia was reported to hold a substantial but low density population of the species, while the lack of breeding records from the tundra of
neast European Russia suggests that it is very rare there, despite the presence of suitable habitat, although this could also be attributable to lack of search effort in some areas (Nygård et al. 1995).

Western Taymyr Peninsula
During the summer of 1996, WWT led an expedition to the Pura River Basin in western Taymyr to study the breeding ecology of Red-breasted Geese in collaboration with The Extreme North Agricultural Research Institute, Norilsk, Russia and Dutch scientists. The study area consisted of undulating tundra of wet rush/sedge, scrub willow and birch, many rivers and streams, drier ridges and cliffs, lakes and pools. We arrived in June to find the lakes and rivers still mostly frozen and that spring was about three weeks late. From 22 June to 15 August, we encountered the following Steller’s Eiders:

1) two to three pairs on 22 June on ice-free ponds at the Pura River biological station, 160km from the coast (72 16’N 85 50’E), though none yet showing any signs of nest building.

2) three Steller’s Eider nests on 6 July, 80km further north of the biological station, 100km from the coast (72 55’N 86 15’E). Two of these were within 50m of each other and the other about 300m away. Clutch sizes on 6 July were four, three and one. Egg laying may have still been in progress, or the nests had been predated, since a full clutch size normally approaches 10. At that time all nests were less than 5m from the edge of the lake, however, later in the season the water had retreated by 100-200m and it was impossible to find the nests again.

In addition, a single male was seen on a tributary of the Pura River (72 15’N 85 15’E), 160km from the coast during July 1995.

Northeast European Russia
Since 1991, WWT and the Russian Institute of Nature Conservation, Moscow, have been involved in a collaborative project with other Russian, Dutch and Danish scientists studying the summer ecology of the Bewick’s Swan on the Russkiy Zavorot Peninsula, Nenetski District, Russia, north of the Pechora Delta. The expeditions have been based at Khabuicka on the west shore of Pechora Bay (centred on 68 30’N 53 50’E) in an area of open maritime sedge/grass tundra interspersed with drier lichen and Empetrum-dominated ridges, and with frequent pools, lakes and drainage channels of varying size, but have also included trips south into the Pechora Delta and further north along the Russkiy Zavorot Peninsula. Over a period of five years (1991-1995 inclusive) the following records of Steller’s Eiders were logged:

1) a single moulting male on 4 August 1992 at the mouth of the Yan Guteii River (68 33’N 53 48’E),

2) seven females/immatures arrived at the mouth of the Khabuicka River (68 32’N 53 52’E) on 6 August 1992 and were still present upon our departure from the site on 11 August 1992,

3) a party of eight pairs (eight adult males and eight adult females) arrived on tundra pools at Khabuicka (68 32’N 53 52’E) on 5 June 1993 and remained until 13 June 1993. This small flock spent much time in communal breeding displays, but also grazed on sedges at the edges of pools, coming onshore as a group in the manner of Eurasian Wigeon. The flock slowly reduced in size during its stay so that just five pairs remained on 13 June 1993 and none were recorded for the rest of the summer.

Additional historical records from the area, include records of single birds and small
groups (3-5 individuals) both on the Russkiy Zavorot Peninsula itself and at the mouth of Kolokolkova Bay in the 1970's and 1980's (Mineyev 1995), a single mature bird on Vaigach Island (Karpovich & Khokhanov 1967), and single birds and flocks of 150 to 500 individuals during the breeding season in the rocky littoral zone of the Barents Sea on the northeast coast of the Kanin Peninsula (Zubovskiy & Raybiztev 1976).

The records given here strengthen the argument for extending the breeding range of the species west of the Lena River to include the whole of the Taymyr Peninsula and possibly as far west as the Kanin Peninsula. The observations in northeast European Russia suggest that a small breeding population could also possibly exist, either on the Russkiy Peninsula itself, and/or on the adjacent Maloszemelskaya and Bolshezemelskaya tundras.

References


THREATENED WATERFOWL IN THE LOWER YANA RIVER, YAKUTIA, RUSSIA

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Ornithologically, the lower reaches of the Yana River are one of the most poorly studied areas in Arctic Russia. From early June to August 1996 an International Arctic Expedition, lead by the Russian Academy of Sciences, visited the area to investigate the bird fauna and to collect data for proposed protected areas. Three species of globally threatened waterfowl were observed in the area.

Baikal Teal Anas formosa

Although the species has not been mentioned in earlier publications we encountered Baikal Teal in many places. During the breeding season it is found mostly in the forest-tundra mountains of Polousnyi Kryazh, around Deputatsky. On 7-18 June, six birds were recorded on lakes and along small rivers in the forest-tundra of a mountain depression near the settlement of Mamont (69N 140E). Several birds were shot by hunters. Later, two more birds were observed near Deputatsky and Tenkely settlements (100km north of Deputatsky). According to questionnaire data, the Baikal Teal breeds in low numbers on the shores of lakes in the forest-tundra and in the basin of the Uyendine and Selennyakh rivers, southeast of the Yana Delta. It is regularly found in the bags of local hunters, who shoot 1-2 Baikal Teal almost every year. Further
north, in the tundra of the Yana River Delta, the species is now rarer, though it was recorded breeding at the outer part of the delta near Nizhneyansk (71 50’N 137 E) in the early 1980s. From 23 June to 13 July we encountered 16 males and females, most probably non-breeders, in different parts of the outer delta. Of these birds, a flock of seven males was seen near the coast. In spring, Baikal Teal are rarely shot in the outer part of delta and near the Yukagir settlement (71 N 140E). However, near the forests, it is more frequently hunted.

Our observations show that the lower Yana area is probably the most important area for Baikal Teal in the northern part of its breeding range. In comparison to the more extensive surveys at Kolyma, Chaun and Anadyr (Kretchmar et al. 1991), the Indigirka Delta (A. Degtyarev pers.comm.), and the Lena Delta (Pozdnyakov pers.comm.), we recorded the species more often during our two month visit.

Steller’s Eider Polysticta stelleri

Kertell (1991) described the disappearance of the Steller’s Eider in Alaska and its decline in the easternmost part of its range. In the western Eurasia part of its range there has been evidence of an increase in the population (Nyrd et al. 1995). For the central part of the species range in Yakutia, there is no recent information about the population.

The Steller’s Eider is known to be the latest of the duck species to arrive on the breeding grounds. At Nizhneyansk, the first flocks normally arrive by 10-15 June when the river ice starts to break and flooding begins. In 1996, the first flock arrived on 12 June, and a westerly migrating flock, probably heading towards important breeding sites on the Lena Delta, was observed on 25 June. Steller’s Eiders most often breed on a 15-20km wide band of coastline, but can nest in more variable habitats and sometimes in the gull colonies. In average years, they are rarely seen further inland than 30 km. However in 1996, during abnormally cold mid-June weather, Steller’s Eiders were observed in high numbers as far south as the forest tundra near the Kular mountains, 120 km from the coast.

Spectacled Eider Somateria fisheri

The species has been considered to be endangered due to its decline in the Alaskan breeding sites (Stehn et al. 1993; Stehn 1994). Surveys have been undertaken recently in some parts of Yakutia (Pearce et al. 1995), though not in the Yana River area, the eastern edge of the eiders range. Normally arriving in the first ten days of June, Spectacled Eiders are rarer than other eider species and never form large flocks. In the last decade, maximum numbers were observed and shot by hunters from the Yakagir settlement. According to questionnaire data the species can, in some years, be almost as numerous as the King Eider Somateria spectabilis, the most common duck species in coastal areas.

In the last week of June 1996, when males and females remained together in the breeding areas, we counted all three eider species over approximately 150km of river branches. The ratios of male Spectacled, Steller’s and King Eiders on different parts of the delta were 1:3:29 and 1:3:23, and at Yukagir 1:3:30. Most of the breeding sites known to local people on the Yana River Delta were flooded by high water levels in 1996, and no nests were found. Several nests were found, however, by native people at the Ilin Shar Delta, about 40 km from the sea and the furthest inland breeding site known for this species. The habitats most commonly used for breeding are small low islands in lakes, branches of the river delta and on the sea.
coast. Spectacled Eiders can also often be found nesting within Herring Gull *Larus argentatus* colonies.

Hunting pressure on Spectacled and Steller's Eiders is high on the Yana River Delta. We estimate that at least 200-300 hunters encroach on the outer part of the delta in spring to shoot an average of 5-7 geese and 30-80 ducks per hunter. A rough estimate of 700-1500 Spectacled and 3000-4500 Steller's Eiders are shot every year by hunters from only four settlements. Eight Steller's Eider rings (American) have been collected from hunters. Five of these birds were ringed as adults in Alaska, at Izembek Lagoon (55.2N 163.3W) in September 1993-1995 and three in Nelson Lagoon (55 5 N 163 W) in September 1995.

Local people widely collect the eiders' eggs for food. Utilisation of eiders was greater in the past than now, and hopefully it will continue to decrease during the ongoing depopulation of Russian Arctic settlements. Regardless of the future establishment of protected areas, eiders will continue to be hunted as they constitute a large part of the diet of the local people.

Over the last five years, it has become known that several teams of illegal collectors of waterfowl eggs and young regularly visit the area from Moscow and Khartkov (Ukraine), selling them later to dealers mostly in Western European countries. The two rarer eider species are their main aim.

According to questionnaire data, the majority of hunters considered both eider species to be declining over the last few years. This information indicates a probable decline in local populations of eiders, though it may also indicate a trend in the huntability of the species, rather than a true change in the population.

In addition to the three species mentioned here, the lower Yana Delta is important for high concentrations of other waterfowl such as Brent Geese, King Eiders and Longtailed Ducks (among the highest numbers throughout Yakutia), and high numbers of breeding waders. We therefore propose that the lower Yana Delta area is listed as a Ramsar Site and Important Bird Area, and that protected areas should be established in the delta and in the as yet widely unspoilt mountains around Deputetsky.

**Acknowledgements**

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LE RÂLE D’OLIVIER AU LAC BEMAMBA, MADAGASCAR

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Summary
Of the 130 species of Railidae breeding in Madagascar, the endemic Sakalava Rail or Râle d’Olivier Amaurornis olivier is one of the rarest. During a survey of Madagascar Teal Anas bernieri in April-June 1995, a Sakalava Rail was observed twice on 8 May at 0850 and 1716 hrs, about 200m south of Antsalovakey, on a small island situated on the west side of Lac Bemamba in western central Madagascar. The species had not been seen for six years. According to local people, the rail had been seen feeding near the villages, usually in the morning. This, however, does not agree with my observations and it is suggested that the afternoon sightings were due to disturbances in the interior of the refuge.

La famille des Railidae est cosmopolotie et compte 130 espèces nichent à Madagascar, parmi lesquelles cinq espèces sont endérmiques à Madagascar (Langrand 1990). Parmi les espèces endérmiques, le Râle d’Olivier Amaurornis olivier est l’un des plus rares. Cette espèce connue sous le nom local de “Kibedabeda” n’est connue que de quelques spécimens dont sept récoltés par la Mission Franco-Anglo-Américaine à Ambararataba près de Soalala (Rabd 1936) et par les spécimens collectés et des observations réalisées à l’ouest du pays entre Mahajanga et Morombe, en particulier les sites du Lac Kinkony et du Lac Bamamba (Milon et al. 1973; Langrand 1990).

Du 17 avril au 14 juin 1995, alors que je cherchais des sites favorables à la Sarcelle de Bernier Anas bernieri dans le cadre d’une mission conjointe entre le Parc Botanique et Zoologique de Tsimbazaza (PBTZ) et Jersey Wildlife Preservation Trust (JWPT), j’ai rencontré de façon inopinée un Râle d’Olivier. Cette espèce a été observée à deux reprises le 8 mai 1995 à 8:50 et 17:16 à 200 m environ au sud d’Antsalovakey petit îlot situé sur la rive ouest du Lac Bemamba (44°22’E - 18°47’S) qui trouve au sud d’Antsalova dans le centre ouest de Madagascar, à proximité du village d’Ankililamamabilaisakoa (Fokontany de Bemamba).

Alors que pour se prendre dans la partie du centre-nord du lac la pirogue glissait lentement sur le lac bordé de végétation aquatique Typha angustifolia, Phragmites mauritianus, Moita Juncus sp. Je suis arrivé, dans une zone plus ou moins ouverte, couverte de Jijo Nymphaea stellata, Hetravo Nymphaea lotus, Fotsimbarin’ Akoho lahy Polygonum senegalense et bordée de grosses touffes de Saritherana Cyperus immensus, j’ai observé un râle de petite taille, identifié plus tard comme le Râle d’Olivier, qui semblait être dérangé de son logis et qui volait en poussant un cri ressemblant au son provoqué par le choc de deux bâtons frappés l’un contre l’autre “Kwook-Kwook-Kwook”. La description de l’oiseau était la suivante: tête et dos noirs.
Bec entièrement jaune poussin très clair, pas très long, de longueur similaire à celui de la Poule d'eau, surmonté d'aucune plaque rostrale commune chez d'autres Rallidae. Menton marqué d'une petite partie blanchâtre qui n'atteint pas la gorge. Poitrine portant un reflet vert foncé tendant vers le noir, ailes de la même couleur. Queue noire et courte. Pattes entièrement rosâtres.

Le nom local "Kibedabeda" vient de la racine "Beda" qui signifie "attraper à l'improviste par une partie du corps". Un informateur a par ailleurs précisé que la chair de cette espèce est tendre, de bonne qualité et grasse et qu'elle se raréfie depuis sa collecte par la Mission Franco-Anglo-Américaine en 1931 aussi devrait-elle être recherchée activement dans la zone d'Antsalovakely.

**Bibliographie**


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**STATUT ET CONSERVATION DES ANATIDÉS MENACÉS EN TUNISIE**

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La Tunisie comprend trois espèces d'anatidés menacées; Marmaronetta angustirostris, Oxyura leucocephala, Aythya nyroca.

Ce sont les rares anseriformes les plus menacées de même que leurs habitats détruits ou profondément dégradés pour les nécessités
des activités humaines. La préservation de ces espèces et de leurs habitats nécessite une mise en place urgente des mesures de gestion et de protection. Les causes essentielles du déclin de leurs effectifs sont: Le dérangement de toutes sortes; La pollution de leur habitats; Le drainage.

L'Oued Sed a connu un rapide déclin de l'effectif des sarcelles marbrées en l'espace de dix ans à partir de 1986 suite à la pollution des eaux et du dérangement.

Quantitativement et qualitativement la sarcelle marbrée est la plus répandue parmi les trois espèces citées. En Tunisie elle fréquentent 33 sites dont 18 sont réservés à la nidification. Seules deux vastes zones peuvent accueillir un bon nombre de sarcelles marbrées (Sebkhat El Kelbia et Sidi Mansour), la nidification est conditionnée par la présence d'eau et des roseaux jusqu'au mois d'août, dans la plupart des cas, on observe souvent un effectif important à Sebkhat El Kelbia en période prénuptiale (150-230 sarcelles marbrées en 1996). En mois de juillet 1996, environ 243 sarcelles marbrées ont nichée à Sebkhat El Kelbia alors que ce nombre est presque absent en juin.

La sarcelle marbrée hivernera en nombre assez important au sud-ouest du pays près des oasis du chott El Jerid dans les zones humides temporaires. L'effectif enregistré depuis 1990 démontre bien une tendance évolutive régulière en période hivernale.

La population hivernante ne représente qu'une partie de l'effectif des nicheurs; le reste hivernera probablement dans les zones humides temporaires du sud-est algérien. Le chott Melrir algérien situé sur le même parallèle que Chott El Jerid pourra être un quartier d'hivernage favorable du reste de l'effectif, cela est du probablement à la capacité d'accueil insuffisante du quartier d'hivernage en Tunisie.

En hiver l'effectif le plus important enregistré est de 268 sarcelles signalées en janvier 1994 à sebkhat Nouiel au sud de Chott El Jerid, et c'est grâce aux travaux de forage que la plupart des zones du sud tunisien ont été inondées d'eau douce provenant des nappes profondes, ces eaux on crée un habitat très favorable pour les sarcelles marbrées ainsi le sud-ouest tunisien est devenu un quartier d'hivernage et de nidification de grande importance pour l'espèce.

Au mois de juillet 1996 la sarcelle marbrée a niché pour la première fois avec succès près des oasis de Douz avec un effectif important de 32 individus.

Une autre espèce est en danger; l'erismature à tête blanche Oxyura leucocephala, plus menacée encore que la précédente, car ce canard hivernant reste un nicheur occasionnel qui risque de disparaître dans les années à venir s'il n'y aurait pas une intervention rapide. Sa répartition actuelle en Tunisie est concentrée dans les barrages qui représentent aujourd'hui 75% des sites fréquentés. Il niche régulièrement dans le barrage de Houarab. En 1990 l'effectif des nicheurs dans ce barrage est de 54 érismatures à tête blanche environ, c'est un effectif très encourageant pour l'avenir du site. On ignore jusqu'à ce jour l'effectif réel des nicheurs dans le reste des zones, car l'erismature à tête blanche est très dynamique et change rapidement de site en période prénuptiale et en période de reproduction. On estime que l'effectif actuel des nicheurs est entre 150 et 200 individus. Entre 1990 et 1993 l'erismature à tête blanche a été observée au printemps en moyenne de 30 individus dans la plupart des barrages; Barrage Masri, barrage Jedidi, sebkhat El Kelbia, en période de nidification, il y a eu une chute considérable de l'effectif. L'espèce se disperse sur plusieurs sites en
période hivernale et ne niche que dans des zones très localisées garantissant sa sécurité.

Aujourd'hui on compte 31 sites fréquentés par l'erisimature à tête blanche dont six sites réservés à la nidification. La dégradation de son habitat et le dérangement abusif des chasseurs et les braconniers a conduit au déclin de l'effectif en période hivernale, cette population reste essentiellement localisée dans les zones humides du Nort-Est du pays.

Enfin, le fuligule nyroca Aythya nyroca espèce peu connue quant à ses mouvements en Tunisie mais il est le plus menacé de ce groupe d'anatidé. Il hiverne en petits nombre parmi les fuligules milouins Aythya ferina. Il est localisé au centre-Est et au Nord du pays, il est fréquent plus en automne qu'en hiver.


La sarcelle marbrée, l'erisimature à tête blanche et le fuligule nyroca se localisent actuellement dans la majorité des zones non protégées, ainsi la dégradation de leurs habitats représente aujourd'hui une menace très sérieuse touchant à l'avenir de ses trois taxons.

Le lac de barrage de Houareb est reconnu depuis un certain temps en tant qu'un site important pour les trois taxons d'anatidés menacés d'extinction. Il représente non seulement un habitat favorable à leur nidification mais aussi pour le rassemblement post-nuptial des sarcelles marbrées et le fuligule nyroca pendant la migration. Ce site mérite d'être bien protégé car il constitue un refuge unique et exceptionnel pour les trois espèces.

**BULLETIN BOARD**

**ON THE INTERNET**

TWG Bulletin: We are planning to distribute the TWG Bulletin on the Internet, thus increasing the range and numbers of potential readers and minimising economic and environmental costs during production of the Bulletin. We therefore ask that those TWG members who have access to the Internet, and no longer need to receive the paper version of the Bulletin, to please let us know so that we can remove them from the bulletin mailing list. E-mail: Des.Callaghan@wwt.org.uk

**DUCK SPECIALIST GROUP**

Work has commenced to establish an international network of experts on the world's ducks. The Duck Specialist Group (DSG) will form part of the waterbird network of Wetlands International and IUCN's Species Survival Commission, and will be coordinated by The Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust at
Slimbridge, UK. The DSG will aim to:

- stimulate, coordinate and support duck research, monitoring/ringing, information exchange and conservation activity world-wide.

- provide appropriate information and advice to Wetlands International/IUCN and others in support of promoting the conservation management and wise use of ducks and their habitats.

The priority projects and issues for the Group will be determined through consultation with the DSG network. An important early goal will be to establish a directory of current projects on ducks, and a list of the expertise available amongst DSG members. The aim is also to establish and publish, at least annually, a DSG Bulletin for global circulation, and to organise conferences and technical workshops as appropriate and from time to time. The DSG will work closely with other Wetlands International/IUCN-SSC specialist groups to ensure maximum coordination and use of existing knowledge and expertise.

The DSG is open to individuals or institutes who are actively involved or interested in any aspect of the biology, conservation or management of ducks. If you would like to join the DSG please contact me at the following address. I would be delighted to hear from you!

Dr Jeff Kirby, The Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust, Slimbridge, Gloucester, GL2 7BT, United Kingdom.
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FORTHCOMING MEETINGS


INSTRUCTIONS FOR AUTHORS

The TWSG Bulletin publishes articles on globally threatened and near threatened Anatidae taxa (listed earlier), and other families of waterbirds (e.g. Rallidae, Anhimidae, Heliornithidae) not covered by other IUCN-SSC/Wetlands International Specialist Groups. We welcome reports on the status of taxa on a global or local scale, short papers with original data, reports on the progress of conservation projects, news items, requests for information etc. They should be in English, French or Spanish and no longer than 1,500 words, including references. Wherever possible, please send them by E-mail (UUENCODE or MIME encoded), or on disk as ASCII or WordPerfect files, to be accompanied by a hard copy printout. All disks will be returned. Figures should be drawn neatly in black ink and be of quality suitable for direct reproduction. Authors with an E-mail address are requested to provide it.

To be certain of inclusion in the next issue of the bulletin, submissions should be sent to the address below by 1 October 1997.

The opinions expressed in the articles in this bulletin are those of the authors, and do not necessarily represent those of the coordinators, WWT, Wetlands International or IUCN-SSC. The coordinators reserve the right to make minor changes to submitted articles without consulting the authors. We welcome letters or notes from readers with any comments on articles in the bulletin as well as copies of recent publications on threatened waterfowl for citation within the bulletin.

INSTRUCTIONS POUR AUTEURS

Le communiqué de TWSG publie des articles sur Anatidae taxa qui sont menacés dans le monde ou presque menacés (listé plus haut), et des autres familles des oiseaux d'eau (par exemple Rallidae, Leridae) qui ne sont pas couverts par autre groupes spécialisées comme IUCN-SSC ou Wetlands International. Des rapports sur la situation de taxa à l'échelle mondiale ou locale sont les bienvenues, ainsi que des articles courts avec des données originales, des rapports sur le progrès des projets de conservation, des nouvelles, des demandes pour information, et caetera. Ils devraient être écrit en français, en anglais ou en espagnol et ne devraient pas excéder 1500 mots y compris des références. Si possible, vous devriez les envoyer par e-mail (UUENCODE ou MIME encodé) ou sur disque comme des fichiers ASCII ou WordPerfect, avec un listage. Toutes les disques seront retournés. Il faut dessiner des figures avec ordre et en encre noir. Des figures doivent être d'une qualité qui est appropriée à la reproduction directe. Nous demandez à des auteurs de nous fournir leur adresse de e-mail.

Pour l'inclusion des articles dans le prochain numéro, il faut les envoyer à l'adresse comme indiqué ci-dessous, avant le 1 octobre 1997.

Les opinions exprimées dans les articles de ce communiqué sont celles des auteurs, et ne représentent pas nécessairement celles des coordinateurs, WWT, Wetlands International ou IUCN-SSC. Les coordinateurs réservent le droit de faire des changements mineurs aux articles soumis sans consulter des auteurs. Des lettres ou des notes de la part des lecteurs avec des observations sur des articles dans le communiqué sont les bienvenues, ainsi que des copies des nouvelles publications sur des oiseaux d'eau menacés pour citation dans le communiqué.
INSTRUCCIONES PARA AUTORES

El Boletín del TWSG publica artículos sobre taxones de anátidas que son amenazados o casi amenazados (listados arriba) a nivel mundial, así como sobre otras familias de aves acuáticas (por ejemplo, Rallidae, Anhímidae, Haliornithidae) no estudiadas por otros grupos especializados del UICN-CSE/Wetlands International. Serán bien recibidos los artículos sobre el estatus de taxones a nivel mundial o local, trabajos cortos con datos originales, informes sobre el éxito de proyectos de conservación, noticias, peticiones de información etc. Estos deben estar escritos en Español, Inglés o Francés en no más de 1.500 palabras, referencias incluidas. Cuando sea posible, mandenoslo por E-mail (UUENCODE or MIME encodificado), o en disquete en ASCII o WordPerfect, acompañados por una copia impresa. Se devolverán todos los disquetes recibidos. Las figuras deben ser en tinta negra y de una calidad adecuada para su reproducción directa. Solicitamos las direcciones de E-mail de los autores que lo tengan.

Para garantizar que su artículo se incluya en el próximo número del boletín, mándelo a WWT antes del 1 de octubre 1997.

Las opiniones expresadas en los artículos de este boletín son las de sus autores, y no necesariamente coinciden con las de los coordinadores, Wetlands International o UICN-CSE. Los coordinadores se reservan el derecho de hacer pequeños cambios en los artículos enviados sin consultarlos con los autores. Serán bien recibidas cartas o notas de lectores con comentarios sobre artículos publicados en el boletín, así como copias de publicaciones recientes sobre aves acuáticas amenazadas que podríamos citar en el boletín.

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TWSG NEWS
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