

**PROPOSAL FOR INCLUSION OF SPECIES ON THE APPENDICES OF THE CONVENTION  
ON THE CONSERVATION OF MIGRATORY SPECIES OF WILD ANIMALS**

**A. PROPOSAL:** Inclusion of the total population of *Sporophila palustris* in Appendix I

**B. PROPONENT:** Government of Paraguay

**C. SUPPORTING STATEMENT**

**1. Taxon**

- |     |               |   |
|-----|---------------|---|
| 1.1 | Classis       | Birds   |
| 1.2 | Ordo          | Passeriformes   |
| 1.3 | Familia       | Emberizidae   |
| 1.4 | Species:      | <i>Sporophila palustris</i>                                   |
| 1.5 | Common names: | Guyra juru tu'i pytã, Capuchino pecho blanco, Marsh Seedeater |

**2. Biological data**

2.1 Distribution

The breeding area of the species is restricted to the grasslands of the Mesopotamia, in the Endemic Birds Area (EBA) 077 of BirdLife International (Stattersfield *et al.* 1998). It is an extremely local species in the range of its breeding populations, with small populations recorded in Argentina (Corrientes, Entre Ríos, and possibly Buenos Aires), Brazil (Rio Grande do Sul), Uruguay (basin of the Uruguay river and south-eastern wetlands), and south east Paraguay (probably in Ñeembucú, Misiones y Caazapá). The species has disappeared from several locations in Argentina, and within the basin of the Uruguay river.

Wintering takes place in Brazil (Bahía, Minas Gerais, Goiás, Mato Grosso do Sul) and perhaps in the extreme north-east corner of Paraguay. Migrating individuals have been recorded in several southern states of Brazil, eastern Paraguay (of late mostly in Canindeyú, Caazapá and Itapúa), and the northeast of Argentina.

2.2 Population

Estimated at between 1000 and 2499 individuals, decreasing. It is calculated that the population has suffered a loss of more than 20 % in the last 10 years and projections into the future suggest it will continue to dwindle.

2.3 Habitat

The species is dependent on grasslands and natural marshes. During the southern summer, when breeding, it remains in flooded grasslands and marshes. At other times it may settle in a variety of dry and wet grasslands.

2.4 Migrations

The species migrates between its nesting area, mainly in north-east Argentina, and the centre-south of Brazil. It should seem that the whole population migrates. Migrating individuals are regularly recorded in eastern Paraguay and northern Argentina. In Paraguay, most recordings take place in October and November.

### 3. Threat data

The species is in the endangered category in the UICN Red list, mainly on account of its constant decrease in total population, and its habitat fragmentation. All the sub-populations are of less than 250 individuals.

#### 3.1 Direct threats

Trapping has caused the disappearance of the species in certain regions of Argentina and threatens the populations of the Uruguay river basin.

#### 3.2 Habitat

The conversion of potential breeding grounds into pastures, and forestation with *Eucalyptus* and *Pinus* spp. in the valleys, directly encroach on the available habitat for the species. In particular, the transformation of wetlands in rice producing areas, and the flooding that results from hydroelectric dams, have greatly reduced its habitat (for instance the Yacyretá dam). There are very few areas of grassland, and untouched natural marshes in the species range. Mechanized agriculture, the invasion by exotic graminiae and annual fire clearances create additional threats for the breeding, migration and wintering grounds.

#### 3.3 Indirect threats

Pesticides and other chemicals drain towards the wetlands and marshes and pollute them.

#### 3.4 Threats connected especially with migrations

The species is under threat from habitat conversion all over its range. It is therefore dependent on conservation efforts in its nesting grounds, as well as in those it occupies during migration and wintering.

#### 3.5 National and international utilization

Individuals of the species are sold as pets.

### 4. Protection status and needs

#### 4.1 National protection status

The species is legally protected in Brazil and Uruguay. Trapping is prohibited in Argentina.

It breeds in the Reserva Potrerillo in Santa Teresa, Uruguay and in the Reserva Provincial Iberá, in Argentina. The Parque Nacional Emas, in Brazil, may well be an important wintering ground, whereas some Paraguayan and Argentine reserves are important for the survival of the species during migration, for instance Parque Nacional Paso Bravo and Reserva Natural del Bosque Mbaracayú, (both in Paraguay).

#### 4.2 International protection status

At present the species is not listed in the appendixes to the CMS or CITES. It appears in the annex to regulation 338/97 of the European Commission.

#### 4.3 Additional protection needs

It is necessary to develop an action plan that should include studies of the breeding populations in south-eastern Paraguay, and to afford protection to key sites, in particular Arroyo Capilla-Arroyo Sauzal-Puerto Boca (Argentina), as well as the elimination of incentives for the establishment of forestation in natural grassland areas, and the effective prohibition of trapping and commercial sales.

#### 5. **Range states**

Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay.

#### 6. **Comments from Range States**

#### 7. **Additional remarks**

#### 8. **References**

Stattersfield, A.J., Crosby, M.J., Long, A.J. & Wege, D.C. 1998. *Endemic Bird Areas of the World*. Cambridge, U.K.: BirdLife International (Conservation Series No. 7)

BirdLife International (2000) *Threatened Birds of the World*. Barcelona & Cambridge, UK: Lynx Edicions and BirdLife International.