

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

A. **PROPOSAL:** Inclusion of *Marmaronetta angustirostris* on Appendix I of the Bonn Convention

B. **PROPONENT:** Government of Spain

C. **SUPPORTING STATEMENT**

1. **Taxonomy**

- 1.1. Class: Aves
- 1.2. Order: Anseriformes
- 1.3. Family: Anatidae
- 1.4. Genus/species: *Marmaronetta angustirostris* (Menetries)
- 1.5. Common names:
  - English: Marbled Teal (Marbled Duck)
  - Spanish: Cerceta Pardilla
  - French: Sarcelle marbrée

2. **Biological data**

2.1. Distribution

Monotypic. The current global distribution of the Marbled Teal is fragmented, with three major centres in the Western Mediterranean/Tropical Africa, Eastern Mediterranean and Western/Southern Asia. The first and last of these regional populations are found partly within the Western Palearctic, while the second is found wholly within it.

2.2. Population

On the basis of recent mid-winter counts, the current world wintering population of Marbled Teal has been conservatively estimated at 34,000 birds. The Western Mediterranean/Tropical African population can be estimated at 3,000. The Eastern Mediterranean wintering population must be at least 600. The Western/Southern Asian wintering population can be conservatively estimated at 30,000. Many potential wintering sites in Asia still have an unknown fauna, particularly in Iraq, Afghanistan and the former USSR. The total breeding population has been estimated at 8-13,000 pairs.

Like those of other duck species, Marbled Teal populations must fluctuate considerably from one year to the next, and the above figures refer to estimates of peak population size within the range of current fluctuations. There are insufficient data to estimate the lower limit of this range, but it is likely to be less than 50% of the peak population.

However this figures for population zinc may now already be out of date and a population crash is likely to result from the destruction of Iraqi marshes since 1991 that may have supported over 10,000 of the world's Marbled Teal population in the breeding season. Most birds breeding in Iraq were thought to winter in Iran, and there is evidence for such a population crash from the extremely low recent winter counts from Iran in 1993 and 1994.

2.3. Habitat

Habitat requirement are poorly understood. Marbled Teal mainly use shallow, eutrophic wetlands, typically with dense emergent and submerged vegetation. Fresh to saline wetlands are used, but there is some evidence of a preference for slightly brackish wetlands. More permanent wetlands seen to be favoured for breeding while newly flooded areas seem to be preferred outside the breeding season. *Phragmites* sp., glasswort (e.g *Salicornia* sp.) or *Typha* sp. are typically dominant in wetlands favoured by the species, and typically when they offer densely vegetated, shallow areas that provide good cover. Many temporary wetlands that flood only in years of high rainfall are used throughout the life-cycle. This is particularly true in North Africa, where some of the most important breeding sites are dry in most years

2.4. Migrations

The movements that occur within and between the three regional populations are very poorly understood and open to speculation. Marbled Teal is migratory across its range in the sense that it undergoes frequent movements across national frontiers, but it is largely nomadic, making unpredictable, non-cyclical and opportunistic movements in relation to rainfall and flooding patterns that themselves are highly unpredictable in most of the range. There is a general migration southwards in winter, but the timing and extend of these winter movements varies considerably between years.

3. **Threat data**

3.1. Direct threats to the population

Hunting poses a poorly quantified but important threat, particularly as the Marbled Teal is relatively easy to shoot and relatively unknown. Although in winter Marbled Teal are typically found on wetlands that support many more ducks of other species, in summer it is one of only a handful of wildfowl species occurring in its range. As a result, it is particularly vulnerable to shooting and egg collection through the breeding season. Various other threats are causing very high mortality at some wetlands, such as crayfish nets and concrete canals in Spain.

3.2. Habitat destruction

This century, very large arctic wetlands of great importance for breeding and wintering Marbled Teal have been completely destroyed or degraded to such an extent that they have lost their value. This habitat loss has occurred across the species' range and is probably the single major cause of the decline in world population and in distribution.

No figures for the overall rates of habitat loss are available, but the destruction of Marbled Teal breeding habitat may well have exceeded 50% this century.

3.3. Indirect threats

Disturbance may have a negative impact on survival or breeding success at a number of sites. This includes disturbance from the normal activities of a high human population and disturbance from tourism.

There are no data of the importance of lead-poisoning as a cause of the mortality of Marbled Teal, but hunting is intense at many key sites, and the ingestion of lead shot could result in significant mortality at some of these sites.

3.4. Threats connected especially with migrations

3.5. National and international utilization

Hunting, poaching and egg collection are thought to be a continuing problem in every major range state, although there is very little quantitative information.

**4. Protection status and needs**

4.1. National protection status

The Marbled Teal is fully protected in Algeria, Iran, Israel, Morocco, Pakistan, Spain, Tunisia and Turkey. Current legal status in countries of the former USSR is unclear.

4.2. International protection status

*Marmaronetta angustirostris* is listed in Appendix 11 (strictly protected fauna) of the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Berne Convention), and it is also listed in Annex I of the EU Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds (79/409/EEC and 91/194/EC).

4.3. Additional protection needs

All range states should ratify the Bonn Convention.

**5. Range States**

Western Mediterranean population. Spain, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Senegal, Mali, Nigeria and Chad.

Eastern Mediterranean population: Turkey, Israel, Egypt and Syria. Western/southern Asian population Azerbaijan, Armenia, Russian Federation, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Iraq, Islamic Republic of Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India and China.

**6. Comments from Range States**

Additional remarks

**8. References**

Green, A. (1993). The status and conservation of the Marbled Teal *Marmaronetta angustirostris*. IWRB Special Publication n° 23, Slimbridge, UK, 107 pp.

Green, A. (in press). Action Plan for the Marbled Teal *Marmaronetta angustirostris*. Birdlife International, Cambridge, UK, 30 pp.