

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

- A. PROPOSAL: Inclusion of Ardeola ralloides (populations breeding in the Western Palearctic) in Appendix II.
- B. PROPONENT: Government of the Federal Republic of Germany
- C. SUPPORTING STATEMENT

1. Taxon

1.1. Classis	Aves
1.2. Ordo	Ciconiiformes
1.3. Familia	Ardeidae
1.4. Genus/Species/Subspecies	<u>Ardeola ralloides</u> (Scopoli) 1769 Monotypic
1.5. Common names	
English:	Squacco Heron
Spanish:	Garcilla Cangrejera
French:	Crabier chevelu

2. Biological data

2.1. Distribution

Monotypic, breeding widely in Africa and in southern Europe and Southwest Asia as far east as 67°E in central Kazakhstan and northeastern Iran. Populations breeding south of the Sahara are largely sedentary, with possibly some local seasonal movements. The Northwest African and West Eurasian populations winter mainly in Africa south of the Sahara where they mix with the resident populations.

2.2. Population

Two migratory populations are recognized in the Western Palearctic.
- South & West European/Northwest African breeders (wintering mainly in West Africa): 30,000; increasing, at least locally.
- Southwest Asian breeders (wintering mainly in East Africa): In the range 10,000-100,000; poorly known.

The Western Palearctic breeding populations have shown marked fluctuations in recent times. Persecution for the plume trade brought numbers in Europe down from an estimated 16,400 pairs in the period 1850-1900 to only 6,800 by 1920. Subsequently, habitat destruction has continued to affect the population, with the number of colonies falling from 115 (1900-1920) to 60 (1920-1940). Numbers increased again during the period 1940-1960 to an estimated 8,200 pairs in 71 colonies. Unpublished data suggest that the total breeding population in Europe excluding Turkey is currently between 9,000 and 13,000 pairs, mainly around the Black Sea. The species appears to be on the increase again in Central and Western Europe, where there are now an estimated 4,000 pairs, e.g. the population in Italy has increased from 30 pairs in 1950 to 270 pairs in 1970, and the population in Spain from 100-200 pairs in 1963 to 800 pairs in 1990. It bred for the first time in Israel in

1959, and there were estimated to be 100 pairs there by the end of the 1970s (del Hoyo et al. 1992). The species is common in parts of Southwest Asia, especially in the Caspian Region; at least 4,500 pairs breed in the Caspian region, including an estimated 1,200 pairs in Iran (Scott 1992). No information is available on trends in this Southwest Asian population.

2.3. Habitat

Occurs in a wide variety of freshwater wetland habitats, including swampy plains, marshy river valleys, deltas, lake margins, ponds, canals, ditches and rice fields, especially in areas with abundant emergent aquatic vegetation. Scarce in coastal areas, where it occurs mainly in estuaries, but occasionally also on inshore reefs and islets. Nests in small to large colonies in reed-beds, dense thickets or trees, usually in company with other species (del Hoyo et al. 1992).

2.4. Migrations

Western Palearctic breeding populations are migratory and dispersive; post-breeding dispersal of juveniles takes place from July, with birds moving on to their winter quarters south of the Sahara in August-November. Only small numbers remain in the Mediterranean Basin and Southwest Asia throughout the winter.

3. **Threat data**

3.1. Direct threats to the population

Like many other herons and egrets, heavily persecuted for the plume trade in the late 19th century. Locally, human disturbance at nesting colonies can be a problem.

3.2. Habitat destruction

There has been widespread loss and degradation of wetland habitats throughout the range of the species. This is believed to have checked the recovery of the species in Europe following the cessation of market hunting in the early part of the century. However, the species is currently on the increase in parts of Europe, possibly because it is adapting to man-made wetlands such as rice fields and irrigation ponds, and can accept a wide range of nesting sites.

3.3. Indirect threats

Possibly at risk from contamination of wetlands with pesticides and other chemicals, but details lacking.

3.4. Threats connected especially with migrations

None known.

3.5. National and international utilization

Some hunting of adults for food probably still occurs, especially in parts of Southwest Asia, but the numbers taken are likely to be small.

4. Protection status and needs

4.1. National protection status

Protected under national legislation in all twelve member states of the EEC. In Africa, protected under national legislation in Angola, Botswana, Ethiopia, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Tunisia, Uganda and Zambia; partially protected as a game species in Benin, Cote d'Ivoire and Nigeria.

4.2. International protection status

Ardeola ralloides is listed in Appendix II (strictly protected fauna) of the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Berne Convention), and is also listed in Annex I of the EEC Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds (79/409/EEC).

4.3. Additional protection needs

The populations in question are considered to have a favourable conservation status, and are not in need of any additional special protection measures at the present time.

5. Range States

See attached table.

6. Comments from Range States

7. Additional remarks

8. References

- Brown, L.H., Urban, E.K. & Newman, K. (1982). The Birds of Africa. Volume I. Academic Press, London & New York.
- Cramp, S. & Simmons, K.E.L. (eds). (1977). Handbook of the Birds of Europe, the Middle East and North Africa. Vol.1: Ostrich to Ducks. Oxford University Press. Oxford, London and New York.
- del Hoyo, J., Elliott A. & Sargatal, J. (eds). (1992). Handbook of the Birds of the World. Volume 1: Ostrich to Ducks. Lynx Edicions, Barcelona.
- Hancock, J. & Elliott, H. (1978). The Herons of the World. London Editions, London.
- Scott, D.A. (1992). Summary of Waterfowl Counts in Iran in the 1970s. Unpublished manuscript on file at IWRB, Slimbridge, U.K.

Taxon: <i>Ardeola ralloides</i>		
Population		
(a) S & W Europe/NW & W Africa		
(b) SW Asia/E Africa		
State	Pop.	Status
Albania	a	S
Armenia	b	S
Azerbaijan	b	S
Bahrain	b	Pw
Benin	a	W
Bosnia & Herzegovina	a	S
Bulgaria	a	S
Burkina Faso	a	W
Cameroon	a	W
Central African Republic	a	W
"	b	W
Chad	a	W
Cote d'Ivoire	a	W
Croatia	a	S
Djibouti	b	W
Egypt	b	R
Ethiopia	b	W
France	a	S
Gambia	a	W
Georgia	b	S
Ghana	a	W
Greece	a	S
Guinea	a	W
Guinea-Bissau	a	W
Hungary	a	S
Iran	b	Sw
Iraq	b	Sw
Israel	b	S
Italy	a	S
Jordan	b	S
Kazakhstan	b	S
Kenya	b	W

Kuwait	b	P
Liberia	a	W
Macedonia	a	S
Madagascar	b	Rw
Mali	a	W
Mauritania	a	W
Moldova	a	S
Morocco	a	S
Niger	a	W
Nigeria	a	W
Portugal	a	S
Qatar	b	P
Romania	a	S
Russian Federation	a	S
"	b	S
Saudi Arabia	b	Pw
Senegal	a	W
Sierra Leone	a	W
Slovenia	a	S
Somalia	b	W
Spain	a	S
Sudan	b	W
Syria	b	S
Togo	a	W
Turkey	a	S
"	b	S
Turkmenistan	b	S
Ukraine	a	S
United Arab Emirates	b	P
Uzbekistan	b	S
Yugoslavia	a	S

Key to Status	
<i>S/s</i> Breeding summer visitor	<i>R/r</i> Resident
<i>W/w</i> Winter visitor	<i>V</i> Vagrant
<i>P/p</i> Passage migrant	<i>?</i> Status uncertain
Upper case = primary status Lower case = secondary status	