

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

A. PROPOSAL: Inclusion of Ixobrychus sturmii 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>Ixobrychus sturmii</u> (Wagler) 1827 Monotypic
1.5. Common names	
English:	Dwarf Bittern
Spanish:	Avetorillo Plomizo
French:	Blongios de Sturm

2. Biological data

2.1. Distribution

The species occurs widely in Africa south of the Sahara. Populations breeding in equatorial regions are mainly sedentary, while those breeding to the north and south are seasonal (rains) migrants. The two migratory populations probably do not overlap with one another to any great extent, but until more information becomes available on the limits of these populations, no separation is possible.

2.2. Population

Only one population can be identified, this containing sedentary as well as migratory birds.

- Entire population: Poorly known (minimum 10,000).

Widespread but uncommon to rare throughout its extensive range. The species appears to be commonest in northeastern Namibia and southern Angola during the breeding season. The breeding population in South Africa is estimated at about 200 pairs, and appears to be more or less stable. The only substantial count during the African Waterfowl Census of January 1993 was of 15 in Zambia (Taylor 1993). No information is available on population trends.

2.3. Habitat

Occurs in dense foliage along the margins of freshwater rivers, streams lakes and pools, generally in wooded areas or bush; less commonly also in grassy marshes, reed-beds, papyrus swamps, seasonally flooded areas, mangroves and rice fields. A solitary breeder, nesting in bushes or trees (del Hoyo et al. 1992).

## 2.4. Migrations

An intra-African migrant, with movements related to changes in water level due to seasonal rains. Equatorial populations are probably sedentary, with their numbers being boosted by the arrival of migrants from the north or south. Birds breeding in Southern Africa between October and April presumably move to the equatorial zone during the dry season. Similarly, birds breeding at the northern edge of the range during the rains (May to September) are thought to spend the dry season in humid equatorial regions.

## 3. **Threat data**

### 3.1. Direct threats to the population

None known.

### 3.2. Habitat destruction

Although wetland loss and degradation are occurring widely in Africa, there remains an apparent abundance of suitable habitat for the species, and the reasons for its scarcity are unknown.

### 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

None known.

## 4. **Protection status and needs**

### 4.1. National protection status

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 and Uganda; partially protected as a game species in Benin, Cote d'Ivoire and Nigeria.

### 4.2. International protection status

None known.

### 4.3. Additional protection needs

Ixobrychus sturmi is listed in the category 'Vulnerable' in the Draft Management Plan for the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds, because it is a species for which no numerical data are available but which appears to be scarce throughout

its range and which is dependent on a habitat type which is widely under threat. See attached note on additional protection needs for species and populations with an unfavourable conservation status.

**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.
- 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.
- Taylor, V. (1993). African Waterfowl Census 1993. IWRB, Slimbridge, U.K.

Taxon: <i>Ixobrychus sturmii</i>		
Population		
(a) Entire population		
State	Pop.	Status
Angola	a	Srw
Benin	a	Sr
Botswana	a	Sr
Burundi	a	Wr
Cameroon	a	Wrs
Central African Republic	a	Wrs
Chad	a	Sr
Congo	a	Wr
Cote d'Ivoire	a	Wrs
Equatorial Guinea	a	Wr
Ethiopia	a	Srw
Gabon	a	Wr
Gambia	a	Sr
Ghana	a	Sr
Guinea	a	Sr
Guinea-Bissau	a	Sr
Kenya	a	Wr
Lesotho	a	Sr
Liberia	a	Rw
Malawi	a	Sr
Mozambique	a	Sr
Namibia	a	Sr
Nigeria	a	Sr
Rwanda	a	Wr
Senegal	a	Sr
Sierra Leone	a	Wr
South Africa	a	Sr
Sudan	a	Wrs
Swaziland	a	Sr
Uganda	a	Wr
Zaire	a	Wrs
Zambia	a	Sr
Zimbabwe	a	Sr

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