

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

A. PROPOSAL: Listing of the Capuchino Corona Gris (*Sporophila cinnamomea*) in **Appendix I** of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals.

B. PROPONENT: **Government of the Argentine Republic**

C. SUPPORTING STATEMENT

1. Taxonomy

1.1_	Class:	Aves
1.2	Order:	Passeriformes
1.3	Family:	Emberizidae (Subfamily: Emberizinae)
1.4	Genus & Species:	<i>Sporophila cinnamomea</i> (Lafresnaye, 1839)
1.5	Common name:	Capuchino Corona Gris (Spanish) Chestnut Seedeater (English)

2. Biological data

2.1 Distribution (present and historical)

It is found in the Northeast of the Argentine, in the provinces of Misiones, Corrientes, Entre Ríos, eastern section of Formosa, and north-eastern part of Buenos Aires. It is also found in Eastern Paraguay, in Uruguay, and in Brazil (Goias, Minas Gerais, Mato Grosso do Sul, Sao Paulo and Rio Grande do Sul).

2.2 Population (estimates and trends)

There are no estimates of population sizes or trends. It is a rare species, with very sporadic sightings of ten individuals at most.

2.3 Habitat (short description and trends)

The most common habitat is that of long grasses (*Paspalum*, *Eryngium*) with isolated acacia and solanum clumps, usually flooded or near streams and marshlands (Collar *et al.* 1992, Pearman & Abadie 1993). Other species of the same genus (*S. hypochroma*, *S. zelichi*, *S. palustris*) are also present in the same habitat.

2.4 Migrations

This species carries out regular migrations between the northern and southern extremes of its range areas (Ridgely & Tudor 1989). The winter records refer to the central Brazilian high plateau (Goias), and to Paraguay, whereas the summer ones refer mainly to the province of Entre Ríos in the Argentine. As for other species of the genus, general

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range and migration zones are linked to the influence of the Paraná, Paraguay and Uruguay Rivers. There is confirmation that the migration of individuals of the species, together with related *S. palustris*, *hypochroma*, *ruficollis* and *hypoxantha* reaches the central eastern part of Brazil (for instance Sick 1985). Latitudinal migration along the corridors provided by the Paraná-Paraguay and Uruguay rivers constitutes a behaviour shared with some species of the *Sporophila* genus as well as other species of the same family. We know little about their movements, though a recent study gave an idea of the importance of the migration of this group of species (Di Giacomo & Contreras 1998).

3. Threat data

3.1 Direct threats

The species, as other species of the same genus, is coveted by bird collectors and dealers.

3.2 Habitat destruction

The habitat of the species is under direct threat due to changes in land use, at present from grazing fields for cattle to eucalyptus plantations. We do not know what are going to be the consequences of the draining of the marshlands where the species has been sighted. In the wintering area, in the Brazilian plateau, only 5% of the total surface has not undergone changes (Cavalcanti 1988).

3.3 Indirect threats

Intoxication by pesticides in Entre Ríos province, also affecting doves (*Zenaida auriculata*) has been observed, though the toxicity effects on this species are unknown (Iolster & Krapovickas 1999). In the eastern part of the province of Córdoba, the frequent sprinkling of the sides of wire fences with pesticides and herbicides in order to keep locusts and weeds under control, is the likely cause of the abandoning of nests by the *Sporophila* species, which often nest there, as observed (personal observation by Di Giacomo).

3.4 Threats connected especially with migrations

In the wintering zone in the Brazilian plateau, only 5% of the surface has not suffered any alteration (Cavalcanti 1988). It may well be that these species of the *Sporophila* genus have a phenology which adjusts to the periodic fluctuations of the water levels of the Paraná-Paraguay rivers and the consequent changes in substratum and vegetation. Far reaching changes to the complex river dynamics (such as those caused by dams, for instance) might affect more severely the environment of the species than any direct low scale intervention (such as the disappearance of the natural grazing lands) because of the migratory character of these species (Di Giacomo & Contreras 1999).

3.5 National and international utilisation

The species of the *Sporophila* genus are often caged, on account of their singing abilities and their colourful plumage. Capuchino de Corona Gris is a species much sought after by commercial hunters.

4. Protection status and needs.4.1 National protection status

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To date the species has been recorded in the following protected areas: El Palmar National Park, (Entre Ríos), Iguazú National Park (Misiones), Otamendi Strict Nature Reserve (Buenos Aires), El Bagual Private Ecological Reserve (Formosa), and Costanera Sur Nature Reserve (Buenos Aires). In Argentina the species is considered to be of vulnerable status (Fraga 1997) in the Red Data Book, and is considered to be a rare species by the National Wild Fauna Directorate (Dirección de Fauna Silvestre Nacional).

4.2 International protection status

The species has a near threatened status (Collar et al 1992) but at present it is being considered for inclusion in the list of endangered species (BirdLife International, in preparation). Not listed by CITES.

4.3 Additional protection needs

All commercial capture must be prohibited, as well as any commercial dealing in this species and in others of the same genus which might be under permanent threat. It is also important, in the management of this group of threatened species, to consider the importance of the idea of environmental planning and regulation in rural areas with greater activity (in the vicinity of roads and rivers). For this purpose account should be taken of the need to preserve some areas of unused grazing lands, for instance, and to appropriately manage the land to the side of roads, the shores of streams and the borders of clumps of trees, which are all used by the species for protection and reproduction. We must try to acquire more information on the selection of habitat, shelter food and migration in order to detect the causes of the likely decrease of the population.

5. Range States

Argentina, Paraguay, Brazil, Uruguay.

6. Comments by the range states

7. Other comments

8. References

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- Collar, N.J., L.P. Gonzaga, N. Krabbe, A. Madroño Nieto, L.G. Naranjo, T.A. Parker III & D. Wege. 1992. Threatened Birds of the Americas. The ICBP/IUCN Red Data Book. Smithsonian Inst. Press.
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