

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 idae 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 idae</u> (Hartlaub) 1860<br>Monotypic |
| 1.5. Common names             |  |
| English:                      | Madagascar Pond-Heron                            |
| Spanish:                      | Garcilla Malgache                                |
| French:                       | Crabier blanc                                    |

2. Biological data

2.1. Distribution

Confined as a breeding species to Madagascar and Aldabra (where it has bred since 1967). Formerly ranged throughout Madagascar, although it was rather rare in the south, but now confined as a breeding species to the west. Almost the entire population migrates to winter in East and Central Africa, mainly in the southern half of Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda and eastern Zaire, but also less commonly in the eastern half of Zambia, northeastern Zimbabwe, northern Mozambique and southern Uganda (Langrand 1990).

2.2. Population

Only one population is recognized.

- Entire population: Probably less than 10,000; decreasing (Rose & Scott 1993).

Formerly common and widespread in Madagascar, occurring on the breeding grounds between May and October, but has decreased dramatically over the past 50 years, and now breeds only in the west, although here it is still reported to be relatively common. Numbers at the best known breeding grounds at Antananarivo in central Madagascar dropped from 1,500 birds in 1945 to only 50 in 1970 (del Hoyo *et al.* 1992).

2.3. Habitat

Occurs at shallow water bodies fringed with emergent vegetation or with floating vegetation, including marshes, lakes, ponds, slow-flowing rivers and rice fields, typically in forested areas. Generally takes refuge in trees when disturbed. Outside the breeding season, also occurs along the banks of small streams. Rarely found on coastal mud-flats or in mangroves. Nests colonially in trees, bushes or shrubs near

water, usually in association with other species (del Hoyo et al. 1992).

#### 2.4. Migrations

Outside the breeding season, almost the entire population migrates to East and Central Africa, with only a few birds remaining in Madagascar. Most birds are absent from the island between October and May (Langrand 1990). Immature birds apparently remain on the mainland of Africa during their first summer (del Hoyo et al. 1992).

### 3. **Threat data**

#### 3.1. Direct threats to the population

The dramatic decline in numbers in Madagascar is thought to be due to competition with Ardeola ralloides, which seems to be a recent colonist to the island and has adapted better to man's modification of the landscape, e.g. transformation of wetlands into rice fields and intensive deforestation (del Hoyo et al. 1992).

#### 3.2. Habitat destruction

The extensive transformation of natural wetlands to rice fields in Madagascar is believed to be one of the main factors in the dramatic decline of the species. The creation of rice paddies is usually accompanied by the disappearance of woodlands, which the species likes to have near the feeding grounds (Langrand 1990).

#### 3.3. Indirect threats

Competition with Ardeola ralloides in its breeding areas. 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

No information.

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

#### 4.1. National protection status

In Africa, protected under national legislation in Kenya, Mozambique, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia.

#### 4.2. International protection status

None known.

#### 4.3. Additional protection needs

Ardeola idae is listed as 'Near-threatened' in Collar and Andrew (1988), indicating that it was a strong candidate for treatment as a threatened species. It is listed in the category 'Threatened' in the Draft Management Plan for the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds, because it is a species which is thought to number less than 25,000 individuals and appears to be declining throughout all or a large part of its range. 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.
- Collar, N.J. & Andrew, P. (1988). Birds to Watch. The ICBP World Checklist of Threatened Birds. ICBP Technical Publication No.8. ICBP, Cambridge, U.K.
- 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.
- Langrand, O. (1990). Guide to the Birds of Madagascar. Yale University Press, New Haven & London.
- Rose, P.M. & Scott, D.A. (1993). Waterfowl Population Estimates. Draft report presented at the Fifth Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention, 9-16 June 1993, Kushiro, Japan. IWRB, Slimbridge.

Taxon: <i>Ardeola idae</i>		
Population		
(a) Entire population		
State	Pop.	Status
Burundi	a	W
Comoros	a	P
Kenya	a	W
Madagascar	a	S
Malawi	a	W
Mozambique	a	W
Rwanda	a	W
Seychelles	a	V
Tanzania	a	W
Uganda	a	W
Zaire	a	W
Zambia	a	W
Zimbabwe	a	W

  

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