

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

A. **PROPOSAL:** Inclusion of Chlidonias hybridus hybridus (Western Palearctic populations) and Chlidonias hybridus sclateri in Appendix II.

B. **PROPONENT:** Government of the Federal Republic of Germany

C. **SUPPORTING STATEMENT**

1. **Taxon**

1.1. Classis	Aves
1.2. Ordo	Charadriiformes
1.3. Familia	Laridae
1.4. Genus/Species/Subspecies	<u>Chlidonias hybridus</u> (Pallas) 1811 ssp. <u>hybridus</u> and <u>sclateri</u>
1.5. Common names	
English:	Whiskered Tern
Spanish:	Fumarel Cariblanco
French:	Guifette moustac

2. **Biological data**

2.1. Distribution

Two subspecies occur. The nominate race breeds widely across southern Europe and Southwest Asia to the South Caspian region and also in East Asia. West Eurasian populations winter mainly in subsaharan Africa south to Zaire and Kenya. Three main breeding groups are identifiable: (i) birds which breed in Southwest Europe and Tunisia, and winter in tropical West Africa east to Chad and Zaire; (ii) birds which breed in Southeast Europe and Turkey, and winter mainly from the Nile Delta and Sudan to Ethiopia and Kenya; and (iii) birds which breed in the Caspian Region, Aral Sea, Iraq and Iran, and winter from lower Iraq and southwestern Iran to Pakistan and India. Some of these birds may also reach East Africa. C. h. sclateri (syn. delalandii) occurs widely in Eastern and Southern Africa from Kenya to South Africa, and also in Madagascar. Most populations appear to be highly nomadic or migratory, and there appears to be a regular movement of birds between Southern Africa and Madagascar.

2.2. Population

Four populations are recognized.

- Southwest Europe/Tunisia/West Africa: Uncertain; in the range 30,000-300,000.
- Southeast Europe/Turkey/Northeast & East Africa: 100,000 (Rose & Scott 1993).
- Caspian Region/Aral Sea/Iraq to northwest India: In the range 25,000-100,000 (Rose & Scott 1993).
- Southern & Eastern Africa/Madagascar (sclateri): Unknown (over 10,000).

Unpublished data suggest that the breeding population in Southwest Europe is currently between 6,000 and 10,000 pairs, which, allowing for the very small number of pairs breeding in Northwest Africa, would give a total population of only about 30,000 birds. However, these figures contrast markedly with some earlier estimates which indicated that there might be as many as 100,000 pairs in Spain alone (Cramp 1985). Perennou (1991) has recently estimated the numbers wintering in West Africa to be between 150,000 and 300,000 birds, a figure which lends support to the earlier estimates of the breeding population. Numbers in some countries fluctuate widely from year to year, but no long term trend is discernible. The Southeast European/Turkish population has been estimated at between 30,000 and 40,000 pairs, or about 100,000 birds. Up to 25,000 birds from this population have been found wintering in Egypt. At least 8,000 pairs breed in the Caspian Region and Iran. The breeding population in Iran alone in the 1970s was estimated at 3,600-7,000 pairs, very largely in the South Caspian region (Scott 1992). At least 3,000 birds winter in Southwest Asia, mainly in Iraq and Iran, with smaller numbers in Oman and Saudi Arabia. No information is available on trends in these two populations.

No information is available on the numbers of C. h. sclateri or trends in the population. It is reported to be widespread but generally not very common (Urban et al. 1986).

### 2.3. Habitat

Breeds in the temperate and, especially, Mediterranean and steppe zones, at freshwater wetlands with rich emergent and floating vegetation, preferably lakes with clear water, but also in extensive marshes and quiet backwaters of rivers, and locally at fish-ponds. Nests in small groups and in large, loose colonies, on floating and emergent aquatic vegetation; forages not only over lakes and marshes but also over rice fields and arable land. Outside the breeding season, frequents rivers, floodplains, marshes and flooded rice-fields, as well as coastal lagoons, salt-pans, estuaries and tidal mud-flats (Cramp 1985).

### 2.4. Migrations

Nominate hybridus is migratory. Southwest European breeders winter mostly in tropical West Africa, especially Ghana, but also southeast to northern Zaire. A small number of birds from this population winter in the West Mediterranean, mainly Spain, Algeria and Tunisia. East European birds probably winter mainly from the Nile Delta and Sudan to Ethiopia and Kenya. Birds breeding in Southwest Asia winter from lower Iraq and southwestern Iran to Pakistan and India, with some of these birds possibly also reaching East Africa. The migration routes are mainly inland, along major river courses and associated wetlands, although some Southwest European birds take a coastal route along the Atlantic seaboard of West Africa. Wintering in the Niger inundation zone and Chad suggests some trans-Saharan migration. Birds from the Southeast European population reach East Africa via the Nile Valley. Most populations of C. h. sclateri appear to be highly nomadic or migratory, but the movements are poorly understood. There appears to be a regular movement of birds between southern Africa and Madagascar.

### 3. Threat data

#### 3.1. Direct threats to the population

No information.

#### 3.2. Habitat destruction

The widespread loss and degradation of freshwater wetlands are doubtless having a negative impact on populations in many parts of the species' range, but details are lacking. Local declines in some parts of Europe have been attributed to wetland drainage, but in other areas, the species is thought to have benefitted from changes in habitat, e.g. proliferation of fish-ponds (Cramp 1985).

#### 3.3. Indirect threats

The widespread application of pesticides and other agricultural chemicals in and around wetlands may be having a harmful effect on some populations.

#### 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

Protected under national legislation in all twelve member states of the EEC. In Africa, fully protected under national legislation in Benin, Ethiopia, Gambia, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique, Somalia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania and Tunisia; partially protected as a game species in Ghana.

#### 4.2. International protection status

Chlidonias hybridus 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

- Cramp, S. (ed.). (1985). Handbook of the Birds of Europe, the Middle East and North Africa. Vol.4: Terns to Woodpeckers. Oxford University Press. Oxford, London and New York.
- Harrison, P. (1983). Seabirds: an identification guide. Croom Helm Ltd., Beckenham, U.K.
- Perennou, C. (1991). Les recensements internationaux d'oiseaux d'eau en Afrique tropicale. IWRB Special Publication No.15. IWRB, Slimbridge, U.K.
- 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.
- Scott, D.A. (1992). Summary of Waterfowl Counts in Iran in the 1970s. Unpublished manuscript on file at IWRB, Slimbridge, U.K.
- Urban, E.K., Fry, C.H. & Keith, S. (1986). The Birds of Africa. Volume II. Academic Press, London & Orlando.

Taxon: <i>Chlidonias hybridus</i> (ssp <i>hybridus</i> & <i>sclateri</i> )		
Population		
(a) SW Europe/NW & W Africa		
(b) SE Europe/Turkey/NE & E Africa		
(c) Caspian/SW Asia (to NW India)		
(d) S & E Africa/Madagascar (ssp <i>sclateri</i> )		
State	Pop.	Status
Algeria	a	Pw
Angola	a	W
"	d	?
Azerbaijan	c	S
Bahrain	c	P
Benin	a	W
Botswana	d	?
Bulgaria	b	S
Burkina Faso	a	W
Burundi	b	W
Cameroon	a	W
Central African Republic	a	W
"	b	W
Chad	a	W
"	b	W
Congo	a	W
Cote d'Ivoire	a	W
Croatia	b	S
Djibouti	b	V
Egypt	b	W
Equatorial Guinea	a	W
Ethiopia	b	W
France	a	S
Gabon	a	W
Gambia	a	W
Ghana	a	W
Greece	b	S
Guinea	a	W
Guinea-Bissau	a	W
Hungary	b	S

Iran	c	Sw
Iraq	c	Sw
Italy	a	S
Kazakhstan	c	S
Kenya	b	W
"	d	?
Kuwait	c	P
Liberia	a	W
Madagascar	d	?
Malawi	d	?
Mali	a	W
Mauritania	a	Pw
Morocco	a	P
Mozambique	d	?
Namibia	d	?
Niger	a	W
Nigeria	a	W
Romania	b	S
Russian Federation	b	S
"	c	S
Rwanda	b	W
Saudi Arabia	c	P
Senegal	a	W
Seychelles	b	V
Sierra Leone	a	W
South Africa	d	?
Spain	a	S
Sudan	b	W
Tanzania	b	W
"	d	?
Togo	a	W
Tunisia	a	S
Turkey	b	S
Turkmenistan	c	S
Uganda	b	W
Ukraine	b	S
United Arab Emirates	c	P
United Kingdom	-	-

Gibraltar	a	P
Uzbekistan	c	P
Yugoslavia	b	S
Zaire	a	W
"	b	W
"	d	?
Zambia	d	?
Zimbabwe	d	?

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
<b>Upper case = primary status    Lower case = secondary status</b>	