

**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 Castaño (*Sporophila hypochroma*) 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

1.2_	Class:	Aves
1.2	Order:	Passeriformes
1.3	Family:	Emberizidae (Subfamily: Emberizinae)
1.4	Genus & Species:	<i>Sporophila hypochroma</i> (Todd 1915)
1.5	Common name:	Capuchino Castaño (Spanish) Rufous-rumped Seedeater (English)

2. Biological data

2.1 Distribution (present and historical)

It is found in North-eastern Argentina, in the provinces of Misiones, Corrientes, Entre Ríos, eastern part of Formosa, Eastern Chaco, and north-eastern section of Buenos Aires. It is also found in Eastern Paraguay, and in Presidente Hayes department in that country. In Brazil in Goiás, Minas Gerais and Mato Grosso do Sul, and in Bolivia in Beni, La Paz and Santa Cruz.

2.2 Population (estimates and trends)

There are no estimates of population size or of trends. It is a rare species, with very sporadic sightings of pairs during the summer season (Pearman & Abadie 1993). In a study carried out in the Kaempfer Mercado National Park in Bolivia the density was estimated to consist of 0.22 birds per hectare of grassland, which accounts for 15% of the *Sporophila* recorded in that locality (Pearce-Higgins 1996).

2.3 Habitat (short description and trends)

In the Argentine the most common habitat is that of long grasses (*Paspalum*, *Eryngium*) with isolated clumps of *Acacia* and *Solanum*, usually flooded or near streams and marshlands (Collar et al 1992, Pearman & Abadie 1993). In Eastern Bolivia it lives in the flood-prone grasslands of the savannahs (Pearce-Higgins 1996).

2.4 Migrations

Part of the population of this species carries out a long distance journey, since in winter it disappears from its habitat in the Argentine (Di Giacomo and Contreras 1998). The destination of the migrating population seems to be the flood-prone savannahs of Eastern

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Bolivia, where twenty individuals have been recorded between August and September 1994 within a multispecific group of migrating *Sporophila* (Pearce-Higgins 1996). As for other species of the genus, both their general range and migration zone are linked to the influence of the central section of the Paraná River, as well as the Paraguay and the lower course of the Uruguay Rivers. Latitudinal migration along the water corridors of the Paraná-Paraguay and the Uruguay, constitutes a shared behaviour by some species of the *Sporophila* genus and other species of the same family (Di Giacomo & Contreras 1999).

### 3. Threat data

#### 3.1 Direct threats

The species, like other species of the same genus, is coveted by 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 cattle grazing fields to plantations of eucalyptus trees. Unknown consequences will result from the draining of the marshlands where the species has been recorded.

#### 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

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. Deep alterations to the complex river dynamics (such as those created 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, because of their singing abilities and colourful plumage. Capuchino Castaño is a species much sought after by commercial hunters.

### 4. Protection status and needs

#### 4.1 National protection status

Up to the present the species has been recorded in the following protected areas: El Bagual Private Ecological Reserve (Formosa), Otamendi Strict Nature Reserve (Buenos Aires), San Juan Poriahú Private Refuge (Corrientes), Costanera Sur National Reserve (Buenos Aires). In Argentina the species is considered to be of vulnerable status (Fraga 1997).

#### 4.2 International protection status

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The species has a near threatened status but at present its inclusion in the list of endangered species is being considered (BirdLife International, in preparation). Not listed by CITES. In Brazil it is protected in the Das Emas National Park. In the Corumbá region, where it has been recorded, the species has no protection as yet (Wege & Long 1995). In Paraguay it has been found in the wetlands of the Mbaracayú National Park and in the proposed Tacuara National Park, as well as in other areas that afford no protection (Wege & Long 1995). In Bolivia it is found in the Beni and Kaempff Mercado National Parks.

### 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 interest of the idea of environmental planning and regulation of the rural areas of 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 borders of streams and 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, nourishment and migration in order to detect the causes of the likely decrease of the population.

### 5. Range States

Argentina, Paraguay, Bolivia, Brazil.

### 6. Comments by the range states

### 7. Other comments

### 8. References

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