



Convention on the Conservation
of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats

Standing Committee

**Recommendation No. 149 (2010) of the Standing Committee, adopted on 9 December 2010,
on the eradication of the Ruddy Duck (*Oxyura jamaicensis*) in the Western Palaearctic**

The Standing Committee of the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats, acting under the terms of Article 14 of the Convention;

Having regard to the aims of the Convention to conserve wild flora and fauna and its natural habitats;

Recalling that Article 11, paragraph *b*, of the Convention requires parties to strictly control the introduction of non-native species;

Recalling that Article 1, paragraph 2, of the Convention requires Contracting Parties to give particular emphasis to the conservation of endangered and vulnerable species;

Noting that the species *Oxyura leucocephala*, listed in Appendix II of the Convention, is endangered;

Recognising the efforts of Contracting Parties in preserving the populations of this species;

Noting, however, that the main threat to the long-term survival of the species is its hybridisation with American Ruddy Ducks *Oxyura jamaicensis* introduced in Europe;

Conscious of the need to arrest the expansion in Europe and Northern Africa of the Ruddy Duck;

Recalling Recommendation No. 48 of the Standing Committee, adopted on 26 January 1996, on the conservation of European globally threatened birds;

Recalling the International Single Species Action Plan for the Conservation of the White-headed Duck, prepared by BirdLife International, Wetlands International and the Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust and adopted by CMS, AEWA and the European Union;

Recalling Recommendation No. 61 (1997) on the conservation of the White-headed Duck (*Oxyura leucocephala*) which asked Contracting Parties to develop and implement without further delay national control programmes which could include the eradication of the Ruddy Duck from all the countries in the Western Palaearctic;

Recalling the Bern Convention Action plan for eradication of the Ruddy Duck (1999-2002) drafted by the Wildfowl & Wetland Trust [document T-PVS/Birds (99) 9];

Noting that the Bern Convention Action Plan for the eradication of the Ruddy Duck is an integral part of the International Single Species Action Plan for the Conservation of the White-headed Duck;

Welcoming the very effective control carried out in the United Kingdom, in the framework of the LIFE project, to drastically reduce the number of Ruddy Ducks in its territory;

Welcoming also the commendable efforts to control the species in the wild in other contracting parties;

Regretting, however, that delayed or insufficient action in some states following the Bern Convention eradication plan, has allowed the establishment of populations in mainland Europe and thereby made eradication more costly and difficult;

Noting that very little action has been taken to address the issue of Ruddy Ducks in captive collections;

Referring to the document “*Eradication of the Ruddy Duck (Oxyura jamaicensis) in the Western Palaearctic: a review of Progress and revised Action Plan 2011-2015*” by the Wildfowl & Wetland Trust [document T-PVS/Inf (2010) 21];

Conscious that, following present culling efforts, it is realistic to achieve a full eradication of the Ruddy Duck in the wild in the Western Palaearctic in the next five years;

Noting, however, that this commendable goal will only be reached if all states concerned collaborate in a common action plan for eradication of the species,

Noting that failure to act effectively and immediately will increase the threat to the White-headed Duck and increase the complexity and financial cost of eradication;

Recalling also Resolution 4.5 of AEWA, which, amongst others, strongly urges all countries with Ruddy Duck populations to establish or step up complementary eradication measures in order to prevent the spread of the species in Europe and towards its complete eradication in the AEWA area,

Recommend that:

All Contracting Parties:

1. Implement without delay the actions specified in the “Action Plan for the Eradication of the Ruddy Duck in the Western palaeartic, 2011-2015 enclosed as appendix to this recommendation;

Priority States:

2. Belgium urgently implement an eradication programme aimed at achieving the common target of eliminating annually at least 50 % of Ruddy Duck national population to achieve total eradication in its territory no later than 2015;
3. France intensify present efforts to eradicate Ruddy Duck and carry out an extensive public awareness campaign;
4. The Netherlands urgently implement the existing eradication programme, providing the resources needed for its completion; and as a matter of urgency establish the national co-ordination foreseen in the plan so as to facilitate its implementation, taking into account that delays will increase costs;
5. Spain continue its current policy to eradicate every single Ruddy Duck or hybrid detected in its territory;
6. United Kingdom continue present efforts to eradicate the remaining populations of Ruddy Duck and pursue them after the end of the very effective and positive LIFE project;

Other States:

7. Denmark, Czech Republic, Finland, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Norway, Portugal, Sweden and Switzerland eliminate systematically all Ruddy Ducks appearing in their territories;
8. Morocco control systematically Ruddy Ducks and hybrids in its territory;
9. Tunisia monitor White-headed Duck and eliminate systematically Ruddy Ducks and hybrids in its territory;

Invites Algeria to monitor White-headed Duck and eliminate systematically Ruddy Ducks and hybrids in its territory.

APPENDIX

Action Plan for the Eradication of the Ruddy Duck in the Western Palaearctic, 2011-2015

Goal Ruddy Ducks¹ stop being a threat to the White-headed duck
Target Long-term eradication of the Ruddy Duck in the western Palaearctic and establishment of measures to avoid new introductions of the species.

I. Actions concerning eradication of Ruddy Ducks in the wild

General target Eradication of the Ruddy Duck in the wild in the western Palaearctic by 2015
National targets Annual reduction of at least 50 % of the national wintering population
Action 1 Remove legal barriers that may hinder the control of Ruddy Ducks
Action 2 Monitor the status and distribution of Ruddy Duck in the wild
Action 3 Eliminate Ruddy Ducks in the wild following the national target
Action 4 Establish, as necessary, national working groups to guide the implementation of this eradication strategy and appoint a national focal point for international co-ordination.

II. Actions concerning Ruddy Duck in captivity

Goal Avoid any new escape of Ruddy Ducks to the wild in the Western Palaearctic
General target Phase out all captive populations of Ruddy Ducks, if possible by 2020
Action 5 Prohibit the release of Ruddy Ducks from captivity
Action 6 Prohibit trade in Ruddy Ducks by 2013
Action 7 Monitor the status of Ruddy Ducks in captivity
Action 8 Encourage the sterilisation and/or elimination of Ruddy Ducks in captivity

III. Actions concerning public awareness, reporting and international co-ordination

Goal Improve understanding by the public of the problem
Goal Follow the progress of the eradication plan and update it as necessary
Action 9 Implement public awareness activities on the need to control Ruddy Ducks.
Action 10 Report annually to the Bern Convention on national action and collaborate with other states, the Bern Convention, AEWA and other appropriate bodies in the implementation of this eradication plan and the Action plan for the conservation of the White-headed Duck.

¹ In the framework of this action plan the term « Ruddy Ducks » refers both to Ruddy Ducks and to the hybrids of Ruddy Ducks and White-headed Ducks.