

# IUCN SSC Threatened Waterfowl Specialist Group



## 2019 Report



Baz Hughes



Glyn Young

### Co-Chairs

Baz Hughes (1)  
Glyn Young (2)

### Red List Authority Coordinator

BirdLife International (focal point: Eileen Rees)

### Location/Affiliation

(1) Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust, Slimbridge,  
Gloucester GL2 7BT, UK  
(2) Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust

### Number of members

268

### Social networks:

Website:

<https://www.wetlands.org/our-network/specialist-groups/threatened-waterfowl-specialist-group/>

### Mission statement

To conserve the world's most threatened waterfowl by focusing on direct action; developing, demonstrating and disseminating best conservation practice and processes; and actively promoting and encouraging information exchange on threatened waterfowl monitoring, research, conservation and public awareness worldwide. We will do this through producing and implementing international action plans, incorporating *in situ* and *ex situ* conservation tools, as necessary; by providing advice to policy makers, international conventions and practitioners; and by encouraging information exchange and cooperation amongst threatened waterfowl conservationists and with other relevant conventions and organisations.

### Projected impact for the 2017-2020 quadrennium

By the end of 2020, the Threatened Waterfowl Specialist Group (TWSG) will have held the Baer's Pochard (*Aythya baeri*) workshop, produced a prioritised list of conservation actions and fundraised for the highest conservation priority projects. Until the workshop is held in March 2018 it is not possible to say what these will be. By the end of 2020, we will have released over 100 Madagascar Pochard (*Aythya innotata*) into the wild at Lake Sofia, we will understand how best to release birds at Lake Sofia, and we will have developed clear targets for success. We will have a better understanding of the past ecology of the breeding site and will understand the impact of conservation interventions. By 2020 we hope that the population of Ruddy Ducks (*Oxyura jamaicensis*) in France will have been significantly reduced.

### Targets for the 2017-2020 quadrennium

#### Assess

Research activities: (1) Madagascar Pochard: conduct paleoecology PhD study to determine past ecology of Lake Sofia to inform future management of the lake; (2) Madagascar Pochard: conduct PhD study to understand the effect of conservation interventions at the last remaining breeding site.

#### Plan

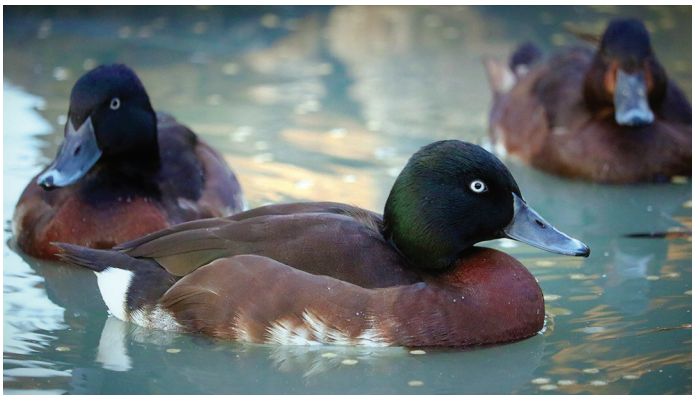
Planning: Baer's Pochard: hold a Baer's Pochard Action Plan implementation workshop in China.

#### Act

Conservation actions: (1) Baer's Pochard: maintain a viable captive population of Baer's Pochard at Slimbridge; (2) Madagascar Pochard: maintain a captive breeding population of Madagascar Pochard in Madagascar; (3) Madagascar Pochard: conduct Madagascar Pochard Disease Risk Assessment; (4) Madagascar Pochard: produce a Madagascar Pochard release plan; (5) Madagascar Pochard: begin releases of Madagascar Pochard into the wild; (6) Madagascar Pochard: release up to 40 Madagascar Pochard per annum into the wild at Lake Sofia; (7) Madagascar Pochard: conduct post-release monitoring to improve understanding of pochard ecology and inform future management of the lake; (8) Madagascar Pochard: maintain Aquaponics systems in the Slimbridge captive breeding facilities; (9) Madagascar Pochard: produce plan for how and when the Aquaponics system will be rolled out in Madagascar; (10) Madagascar Pochard: continue habitat management and restoration activities at the proposed release site, working through local associations; (11) White-headed Duck (*Oxyura leucocephala*): review implementation of the European Ruddy Duck eradication strategy and produce recommendations for its



White-winged Duck, *Asarcornis scutulata*, site at Nameri, Assam, India  
Photo: Glyn Young



Baer's pochard, *Aythya baeri*  
Photo: Jan Harteman



A family of Madagascar Pochards, *Aythya innotata*, in November 2019  
Photo: Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust

further implementation; (12) White-headed Duck: support the European Commission LIFE project to eradicate the Ruddy Duck from France, and provide advice as required.

Technical advice: provide information and technical advice in support of the programmes of IUCN SSC, Wetlands International, BirdLife International, Ramsar and others as necessary

#### Communicate

Communication: maintain the TWSG forum list server to facilitate communication between TWSG members.

### Activities and results 2019

#### Assess

##### Research activities

i. Madagascar Pochard: PhD thesis to be submitted in 2020: Etat des zones humides de Haut Plateau et de l'ouest et conservation des trois especes d'anatidae endemiques: *Aythya innotata* (Salvadori, 1894), *Anas bernieri* Hartlaub, 1860 et *Anas melleri* Sclater, 1864 (State of the high plateau and western wetlands and conservation of three endemic Anatidae: *Aythya innotata* (Salvadori, 1894), *Anas bernieri* Hartlaub, 1860 and *Anas melleri* Sclater, 1864). (KSR #32)

#### Act

##### Conservation actions

i. Two breeding centres established and running in Antsoihy, Madagascar. (KSR #25)

ii. Madagascar Pochard: Twenty-one Madagascar Pochard were released at Lake Sofia in December 2018. By 2019, nine birds were living on the lake and two females hatched 12 young in November. (KSR #25)

iii. Madagascar Pochard: Local monitoring team trained and in place throughout year. (KSR #25)

##### Technical advice

i. BirdLife Red List team: Species updates 2019–2020. (KSR #27)

#### Acknowledgements

TWSG would like to thank members for their regular updates and points of interest on the many taxa of concern to the group. We particularly want to thank Richard Hearn and Nigel Jarrett for their contribution to the understanding of Baer's Pochards, Diana Solovyeva for updates on Scaly-sided Mergansers (*Mergus squamatus*),

Iain Henderson for reports on Ruddy Ducks and Richard Lewis, Felix Razafindrajao and Floriot Randrianarimangason for news of Madagascar Pochard. We are also grateful to Vivek Menon, Rathin Barman and Wildlife Trust of India for inviting TWSG to take part in the White-winged Wood Duck (*Asarcornis scutulata*) Conservation Strategy workshop in Assam in 2019 and to William van Lint and Bernd Marcordes for including TWSG in the European Association of Zoos and Aquaria (EAZA) Waterfowl and Pelecaniformes Taxon Advisory Group (TAG) Regional Collection Plan workshop in the UK in 2019. We also thank Jan Harteman, Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust and Guido Vandenbroucke for photographs included in the report and Dan Wright for producing the group's first logo.

#### Summary of activities 2019

Components of Species Conservation Cycle: 2/5

Assess	1	
Act	4	
Network	1	
Communicate	5	

Main KSRs addressed: 25, 27, 32

KSR: Key Species Result