

AMENDMENTS TO APPENDICES I AND II OF THE CONVENTION

Other Proposals

A. PROPOSAL

Inclusion of Conepatus spp in Appendix II.

B. PROPONENT

The Argentine Republic.

C. SUPPORTING STATEMENT

1. Taxonomy

11. Class: Mamamia
12. Order: Carnivora
13. Family: Mustelidae
14. Species: Conepatus castaneus
Conepatus chinga
Conepatus rex
Conepatus humboldtii
- 15: Common Names: English: hog-nosed skunk, Patagonian skunk
French: moufette à nez de cochon
Spanish: Zorrino, Zorrillo, Chingue, Chiné (Chile), Añatuya, Mepurtie (Venezuela y Colombia), Mofeta (Mexico)
Portuguese: jaritaca ; yaguaritaca o maritaca

16. Code Numbers:

2. Biological Data

21. Distribution: The genus Conepatus is distributed throughout South America to the Strait of Magellan, but is absent from Tierra del Fuego.

The species C. chinga has the largest distribution occurring in south-east Brazil, west Bolivia, south-west Peru, north Chile and Uruguay. In Argentina, it occurs in the centre and the north of the country, including areas of high altitude in the Salta and Jujuy Provinces, as well as in low prairie areas in la Pampa, Mendoza, Nenquén and Río Negro Provinces, in addition to the Chaqueña and Mesopotamica.

The distribution of the Patagonian skunk Conepatus humboldtii extends from Río Colorado in the Río Negro Province to the southern Buenos Aires Province as far as the Chubut and Santa Cruz Provinces and reaching the Strait of Magellan. Outside Argentina it exists also in southern Chile.

The species C. castaneus, is distributed from the Río Colorado northwards, including the Río Negro, Buenos Aires, Córdoba and La Rioja Provinces.

The range of Conepatus rex, in Argentina is restricted according to Olog and Lucero (1981) to the Peneña Region, i.e. north and west of Jujuy, east of Salta and north of Catamarca Province.

22. Population: No reliable population estimates exist.
23. Habitat: Conepatus humboldtii occurs in scrub zones, on rocky ground pampas and open areas in general.

Conepatus chinga occurs in savannahs and woodlands, on hills up to 3,000 m above sea level.

Conepatus castaneus lives in open fields, while C. rex occurs in arid zones between 3,500 and 4,000 m in the high mountains.

3. Trade Data

31. National Utilization: In Argentina, the skin is used in the fur industry to manufacture coats and blankets. In the past, the meat was consumed, though never on a large scale.
32. Legal International Trade: According to Ojeda and Mares (1982), 1,243,129 skins were legally exported during the period 1972-1979, including specimens of the four skunk species, without knowing the proportions of each of them.

The noticeable decrease in the number of skins exported from 1983 may be due in part to the protection afforded by Argentina with the inclusion of Conepatus humboldtii in CITES Appendix II, and partly to a reduction of the skin market.

All skunk skins exported after the inclusion of C. humboldtii in Appendix II went out with this name. This lets one suppose that the other species were traded but not identified.

33. Illegal Trade: There are no precise figures regarding illegal trade. In some cases where there have been confiscations, the amounts of skunk skins were not significant.

34. Potential Trade Threats:

341. Live Specimens: The trade in live animals is almost non-existent.
342. Parts and Derivatives: At present the species are not much used in the fur industry.

4. Protection Status

41. National: Resolution 793/87 prohibits the export, interprovincial trade and trade under federal jurisdiction of products and subproducts of all skunk species, until the legally declared stocks will be exhausted.

In Brazil, Paraguay and Bolivia the commercial use of wild fauna is prohibited.

In Chile, the whole genus Conepatus is protected under Decreto No. 40 of 22 January 1972.

42. International: Since September 1983, the species Conepatus humboldtii has been included in CITES Appendix II.
43. Additional Protection Needs: The inclusion of all Conepatus species in CITES Appendix II is considered necessary to obtain data on the trade in the different species, assess the level of exploitation and improve the controls of the specimens which, as already indicated, are exported without being adequately distinguished under the name of C. humboldtii.

5. Information on Similar Species

The genus Conepatus is represented in Argentina by four species, although some experts consider that there are only two species, each of them with two or more subspecies (Canevari, pers. comm.).

The following table shows a comparison of the main features of the four species considered as valid by Orlog and Lucero (1981).

	<u>C. castaneus</u>	<u>C. chinga</u>	<u>C. rex</u>	<u>C. humboldtii</u>
Total length	30 cm	40 cm	46 cm	40 cm
Tail length	20 cm	30 cm	35 cm	20 cm
Body colour	Dark chestnut with a narrow white line on flank, which can be missing at times	Black with a wide white line from head to tail, sometimes covering all the back	Black with a larger white line which covers the back up to the rump	Black to dark grey or reddish with a white line divided in two on the back
Tail	Grey with white hairs	Black and white	Black	Black and white

As indicated in the table, the coloration of these animals, although following a general pattern, presents a marked variability, not only between the species but also within the species, as well as between populations of the same species. Changes may also be observed on the same individual at different times of the year. This situation complicates more the taxonomic differentiation of the genus.

The identification difficulty is even more problematic when the skins are part of a garment.

6. Comments from Countries of Origin

The opinion of the range states sharing the genus (Paraguay, Brazil, Bolivia, Venezuela and Colombia, among others) has been requested.

7. Additional Remarks

Since 1990, an increase in the demand for skunk skins has been noted, and it is hoped that such a trend will continue in the future.

8. References

- Allen, J.A., 1905. Mammalia of Southern Patagonia. Report of the Princeton University Expedition to Patagonia 1896-1899. Vol. III. Zoology, Part I, Princeton, New York.
- Cabrera, A. and J. Yepes, 1940. Mamíferos Sudamericanos. Ediar, Buenos Aires.
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- Ojeda, R.A. and M.A. Mares, 1982. Conservation of South American mammals: Argentina as a paradigm. En: Mares, M.A. and H.H. Genoways (Eds.). Mammalian biology in South America. Vol. 6: Special Publication Series. Pymatuning Laboratory of Ecology, University of Pittsburgh, 539 pp.
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