

CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSALS FOR AMENDMENT OF APPENDICES I AND II

Other proposals

A. PROPOSAL

Transfer of *Amazona agilis* from Appendix II to Appendix I

B. PROPONENT

Germany

C. SUPPORTING STATEMENT

1. Taxonomy

- | | | |
|-----|----------------------|---|
| 1.1 | Class: | Aves |
| 1.2 | Order: | Psittaciformes |
| 1.3 | Family: | Psittacidae |
| 1.4 | Genus: | Amazona |
| | Species: | A. agilis (Linné, 1758) |
| 1.5 | Scientific synonyms: | - |
| 1.6 | Common names: | English: Black-billed Amazon, Jamaican Black-billed Amazon, Active Parrot, All green Parrot |
| | | French: Amazone agile |
| | | Spanish: Amazonico jamaica, Amazonico todo verde, Amazonico activo |
| | | German: Rotspiegelamazone, Jamaikaamazone, Schwarzschnabelamazone |
| | | Others: Amazzone a becco nero |
| 1.7 | Code numbers: | A-218.003.005.003 |

2. Biological Parameters

2.1 Distribution:

Amazona agilis is endemic to Jamaica's mountain regions. The species is restricted to humid forests of medium height formed from limestone (COLLAR et al. 1994). The species occurs in altitudes between 500-800 m and only comes down occasionally to the low land (Robiller 1990). The species' ancestors are known to come from the following regions: Cockpit Country, Dry Harbour Mountains, Long Mountain and east of Mount Diablot (CRUZ & GRUBER 1981). The highest density of the species occurs in Cockpit Country (VARTY 1991). The species is very rare in the eastern part of Jamaica. Records for this part of the island only refer to Port Antonio, Corn Puss Gap and the John Crow Mountains. There had been no new data from the John Crow Mountains for a longer period of time (CRUZ & GRUBER 1981). VARTY (1991) was the first to sight there some birds in 1989. He assumes that the birds he saw might have drifted to the region by cyclones and that the region is not colonised permanently by *A. agilis*.

2.2 Habitat Availability

The whole of Jamaica was formerly covered with tropical rain forest. Only 24% of the island were covered with forest in 1981 and only 7% of this area consisted of natural forests (CRUZ & GRUBER 1981). Deforestation continued between 1980 and 1986 by an annual rate of 3,3 % (VARTY 1991).

2.3 Population Status

LAMBERT et al. (1993) give a number of less than 5000 birds for the species' total population. No current data is available regarding the population size or the number of breeding pairs (NRCA 1996).

2.4 Population Trends

CRUZ & GRUBER (1981) state that *Amazona agilis* is still relatively common in the forested areas of Jamaica. The species is classified as endangered by Jamaica's Natural Resources Conservation Authority (NRCA) because of the rapid loss of habitat (NRCA pers. comm).

2.5 Geographic Trends

2.6 Role of the Species in its Ecosystem

2.7 Threats

Wood cutting, damage caused by hurricanes as well as the capture for food consumption and the pet trade are the biggest threats for *Amazona agilis* (DOWNER & SUTTON 1990, VARTY 1991, ROBILLER 1990). The main reason for the decrease of suitable habitat for the species is the destruction of the forests through clear felling and slash- and -burn methods. What was once forest is than used temporarily as extensive agriculture land (VARTY 1991). The parrots will be able to gather food on these patches of land once agricultural uses have ceased, but due to the lack of old trees the birds will have no nesting sites (FAIRBAIRN 1981).

Long-term loss of habitat is caused to the Coffee Industry Development Corporation (CIDCO) (VARTY 1991). Further habitat loss is caused by the destruction of forests for the production of charcoal; natural forest is also converted into pine forests by the Forest Industries Development Corporation (FIDCO) (FAIRBAIRN 1981, VARTY 1991).

Nesting trees are felled by poachers in order to get to the young birds which causes the loss of many nesting sites (CRUZ & GRUBER 1981, ROBILLER 1990). A potential threat is the tapping of larger deposit of bauxite which is close to the actual species' habitats (FAIRBAIRN 1981, CRUZ & GRUBER 1981).

Threat status according to COLLAR et al. (1994): Vulnerable: C2a.

The species meets the following criteria in accordance with the "Criteria for Amendment of Appendices I and II, Annex 1": A i, v, B i, iii.

3. Utilization and Trade

3.1 National Utilization

Even though it is illegal to own Black-billed parrots, the NRCA believes that the species is nevertheless caught and sold as pets (NRCA 1996).

3.2 Legal International Trade

The exports of parrots from Jamaica is forbidden.

CITES-reported trade between 1980-1992 : total of 164 birds:

Year	Country of Origin	Number of Birds
1980-1984	Jamaica	8
1985	Jamaica	1
1986	South Africa	1
1987	Argentina	150
1987	Jamaica	2
1987	unknown	1
1989	Mexico	1

3.3 Illegal Trade

FAIRBAIRN (1981) and VARTY (1991) both state that there are indicators that this species is exported illegally. Approximately 200 birds are thought to have been smuggled from the island between 1976-1979 (CRUZ & GRUBER (1981). Attempts have been made in recent years to import the species into the USA and Europe (BMU 1993).

3.4 Actual or Potential Trade Impacts

3.5 Captive Breeding for Commercial Purposes (Outside Country of Origin)

Only few birds are kept in captivity. 3 birds only were kept in zoological institutions in 1983 according to the International Zoological Yearbook, in 1984 only 8 birds were kept in two institutions and in 1985 only the Seffner-Zoo (USA) reported keeping 7 of these birds. According to information provided by parrot breeders from Switzerland one young bird was reared in captivity in 1985. Reproduction of these birds in captivity has proven to be very difficult (BMU 1993).

4. Conservation and Management

4.1 Legal Status

4.1.1 National

The species is protected by the Jamaican Wild Life Protection Act (WLPA) of 1975. The export and the possession of the live bird or of parts and derivatives is illegal. The WLPA is currently under revision.

4.1.2 International

Listed in CITES Appendix II.

4.2 Species Management

4.2.1 Population Monitoring

The Gosse Bird Club, the Wildlife Preservation Trust International and the NRCA of Jamaica are jointly running a monitoring project to determine the breeding biology and habitat of the Black-billed Parrot.

4.2.2 Habitat Conservation

The Blue Mountains, the John Crow Mountains and Cockpit Country are forest protection areas. The felling of trees in these areas is forbidden. But the enforcement and control of these provisions by the Forestry and Soil Conservation Department is not sufficient (VARTY 1991).

4.2.3 Management Measures

4.3 Control Measures

4.3.1 International trade

4.3.2 Domestic Measures

5. Information on Similar Species

Similar species are those amazon species with uniform green heads. This refers in particular to *Amazona vittata* (CITES Appendix I) and *Amazona tucumana* (CITES Appendix II).

6. Other Comments

Although contacted in October 1996 no comments were received by the authorities of Jamaica (Natural Resources Conservation Authority, Kingston).

7. References

- COLLAR, N.J., CROSBY, M.J. & STATTERSFIELD, A.J. (1994): Birds to watch 2: The world list of threatened birds. Cambridge, U.K.: BirdLife Conservation Series 4.
- CRUZ, A. & GRUBER, S. (1981): The Distribution, Ecology, and Breeding Biology of Jamaican Amazon Parrots. In: Pasquier, R.F. (ed.): Conservation of New World Parrots. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press for the International Council for Bird Preservation, Techn. Publ. 1: 103-131.
- DOWNER, A. & SUTTON, R. (1990): Birds of Jamaica: a photographic field guide. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press.

- FAIRBAIRN, P. (1981): Parrot Conservation in Jamaica. In: Pasquier, R.F. (ed.): Conservation of New World Parrots. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press for the International Council for Bird Preservation, Techn. Publ. 1: 95-101.
- LAMBERT, F., WIRTH, R., SEAL, U.S., THOMSEN, J.B. & ELLIS-JOSEPH, S. (1993): Parrots: an action plan for their conservation 1993-1998. Cambridge, U.K.: BirdLife International and International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (draft 2).
- NRCA (1996); Natural Resources Conservation Authority, A Government of Jamaica Agency, (pers. Comm.)
- VARTY, N. (1991): The status and conservation of Jamaica's threatened and endemic forest avifauna and their habitats following Hurrican Gilbert. Bird Conserv. Internatn. 1: 135-151.



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Ref. No. 18/30

March 6, 1997

Dr. Rainer Blanke
Head of German Scientific Authority to CITES
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53177 Bonn

Dear Mr. Blanke:

The Natural Resources Conservation Authority hereby acknowledges receipt of your letter dated October 15, 1996, and the enclosed proposal captioned "Transfer of *Amazona agilis* from Appendix II to Appendix I."

With regard to the above-mentioned subject, we wish to tender our support to the proposal prepared for consultation at the tenth CITES Conference of the Parties.

Yours sincerely

Y Strong
Yvette Strong (Miss)
for Executive Director

YS/dj

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Managing and protecting Jamaica's land, wood and water

A Government of Jamaica Agency