

CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES
OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA



Sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties
Bangkok (Thailand), 3-14 March 2013

CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSALS FOR AMENDMENT OF APPENDICES I AND II

A. Proposal

Removal of *Ithaginis cruentus* (blood pheasant) from Appendix II, in accordance with provisions of Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev CoP15) Annex 4 measures A4 and A5. This locally common gamebird of India, Nepal, Bhutan, Myanmar and China no longer merits listing as per Article II, paragraph 2(a), of Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP 15), because there is no reason to infer or project that the regulation of trade in the species is still necessary to avoid it becoming eligible for re-inclusion in the Appendices in the near future. Since 2000, there has been minimal trade in the species (4 trophies). Although this bird may be in gradual decline and its habitat subject to timber extraction and agricultural pressures, IUCN still regard the species as being of “Least Concern” due to its large range and large overall population size. This species is protected in India and China, and its range through Nepal and Bhutan includes many protected areas, such as National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries.

The species does not merit listing in the Appendices according to look-alike provisions of Article II, paragraph 2(b), of Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP 15) because the males of the species is readily identifiable and there are no look-alike species for this part of the population, which are the ones sought after for their brightly-coloured feathers.

Within the last two intervals between meetings of the Conference of the Parties, this species has not been subject to a recommendation under the provisions of the Review of Significant Trade to improve its conservation status.

B. Proponent

Switzerland*, as Depositary Government, at the request of the Animals Committee (prepared by New Zealand)

C. Supporting statement

1. Taxonomy

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|--------------------------|--|
| 1.1 Class: | Aves |
| 1.2 Order: | Galliformes |
| 1.3 Family: | Phasianidae |
| 1.4 Species: | <i>Ithaginis cruentus</i> Hardwicke 1821 |
| 1.5 Scientific synonyms: | none |

* The geographical designations employed in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the CITES Secretariat or the United Nations Environment Programme concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The responsibility for the contents of the document rests exclusively with its author.

1.6 Common names:	English:	Blood pheasant
	French:	Ithagine ensanglanté Faisan sanguin
	Spanish:	Faisán ensangrentado Faisán sangrante Faisán sanguineo

1.7 Code numbers: A-214.003.036.001

2. Overview

Ithaginis cruentus is found in northern India, Nepal, Bhutan, extreme northern Myanmar, and southwestern and central China. It was listed in CITES Appendix II on 1 July 1975 as part of a group of Phasianidae species, due to concerns about the international trade of live specimens for private aviary holdings and their feathers for use in the manufacture of fly-fishing lures. The species is classified as of 'Least Concern' on the IUCN Red List (BirdLife International 2012).

The Periodic Review of the Appendices, as currently agreed by the Parties, is designed to review species already included in the Appendices to determine whether their listings continue to be appropriate, based on current biological and trade information and utilizing the provisions in Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP12) on Criteria for amendment of Appendices I and II [see: AC20 Document 10 (Rev. 1)]. At the 22nd meeting of the Animals Committee (Lima, 2006) *Ithaginis cruentus* was one of 18 species of Galliformes chosen to be reviewed between CoP13 and CoP15.

At AC25 (Geneva, 2011), to help facilitate the review of the remaining 16 species of Galliformes under the Periodic review process, an Intersessional Periodic Review Working Group was created to address these Galliformes species. The United States approached the World Pheasant Association for their assistance in undertaking these reviews. Species accounts were compiled using information readily available from the BirdLife International species assessments for the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Red Data Lists and the World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC) trade database. These accounts were then circulated to members of the IUCN-Species Survival Commission / World Pheasant Association Galliformes Specialist Group who had particular knowledge about the species.

The final species accounts were presented in an Annex to AC26 Doc 13.3.1. At AC26 (Geneva, 2012) the Animals Committee studied the information provided and recommended that *Ithaginis cruentus* should be deleted from Appendix II (see AC26 WG1 Doc 2).

3. Species characteristics

3.1 Distribution

Ithaginis cruentus has a large distribution of about 800,000 km² along the Himalayas from Nepal through Bhutan and extreme northeast India to extreme northern Myanmar, and northward into to southern China.

3.2 Habitat

Temperate to high altitude (2500 – 4500 m) coniferous and mixed coniferous-deciduous forest, subalpine shrubland, and occasionally in alpine meadows; seldom in forest with dense stands of bamboo. Generally associated with dense cover of trees, shrubs or tall herbaceous plants, such as alongside streams or at ecotones (Jia *et al.* 2005; K. Poudyal, in litt. 2012).

3.3 Biological characteristics

Ithaginis cruentus breed in pairs, but outside breeding they typically occur in coveys of 5-30 birds, but sometimes as many as 70 birds. They forage on the ground in the day for seeds, fruits, buds, leaves and invertebrates, and roost in trees or thickets. During breeding season (April to June) a clutch of 2-7 eggs is produced, and incubated solely by the female (Madge & McGowan 2002).

3.4 Morphological characteristics

A round partridge-shaped pheasant (40-45 cm in length) with a short tail, red feet, a short erectile crest, short decurved black bill with a red base and a bare patch around the red eyes outlined by a black line. Males have a range of colour variations from grey-olive types to bright crimson, but the typical pattern is a dark grey back with white longitudinal streaks, edged with dark green or black. The upper breast and neck are a very pale yellow, sometimes streaked with red. The lower breast and belly is green becoming buffish and then red on the undertail coverts. Red streaks on the upper tail coverts. The female is much more cryptic with grey on the top of the head and neck, and light rust on the rest of the face and throat; the remaining plumage is mottled shades of light and dark brown.

3.5 Role of the species in its ecosystem

This species has a useful role in seed dispersal, and is an indicator of good habitat quality and also forms a prey base for animals in a high altitude ecosystem (K. Poudyal in litt., 2012).

4. Status and trends

4.1 Habitat trends

Some loss of forest habitats due to forest clearance and degradation from grazing animals. Large areas are protected in National Parks, and in remote uninhabited areas.

4.2 Population size

The global population size has not been quantified although the species is reported to be common in some areas and rare in others.

4.3 Population structure

Jia et al. (2005) found that in winter, *Ithaginis cruentus* in southern China lived in small coveys which used a particular home range. As the spring breeding season approaches, the flocks break up and pairs form, except that immature males form bachelor flocks. They are monogamous, the female does all the incubation, but males assist with rearing the young, and the whole family moves as a group.

4.4 Population trends

The population is suspected to be slowly declining but BirdLife International (2012) do not consider that the decline is sufficiently rapid to approach the thresholds for Vulnerable under the population trend criterion (>30% decline over ten years or three generations).

4.5 Geographic trends

Information is not readily available.

5. Threats

Habitat loss and degradation caused by timber extraction for firewood, overgrazing and agricultural conversion. The species is also threatened by hunting. Blood pheasant are hunted for their bright plumage, and opportunistic collection of their eggs may occur (K. Poudyal in litt., 2012).

6. Utilization and trade

6.1 National utilization

Adults and juveniles are caught for human subsistence at a national level.

6.2 Legal trade

There has been virtually no international trade reported since 2000 (Table 1a). About half of the trade in the period 1975-1999 was of live birds raised in captivity in Germany and Japan, exported to the

United States and Switzerland, though many of these records of trade from non-range states appear to have been erroneously classified as being 'wild caught'.

Table 1a: <i>Ithaginis cruentus</i>		
CITES reported trade (sources = all) during 1975-1999 and 2000-2010 (all terms and units combined).		
Term	Total 1975-1999	Total 2000-2010
Bodies Total	1	0
Live Total	87	0
Specimens Total	1	0
Trophies Total	0	4
Grand Total	89	4

Source: UNEP-WCMC CITES Trade Database. Accessed on January 4, 2011. Gross Exports/Imports. In most cases, the unit value is the number of specimens.

The only exports of wild-caught live birds from a range state were of 42 birds exported from Nepal to Switzerland (20) and the United States (22) between 1984 and 1988. The four trophies traded since 2000 were exported from China to the United States in 2005 (Table 1b).

Table 1b: <i>Ithaginis cruentus</i>		
CITES reported trade (source = wild [W]) during 1975-1999 and 2000-2010 (all terms and units combined).		
Term	Total 1975-1999	Total 2000-2010
Bodies Total	1	0
Live Total	77	0
Specimens Total	1	0
Trophies Total	0	4
Grand Total	79	4

Source: UNEP-WCMC CITES Trade Database. Accessed on January 4, 2011. Gross Exports/Imports. In most cases, the unit value is the number of specimens.

6.3 Parts and derivatives in trade

See tables 1a and 1b in section 6.2.

6.4 Illegal trade

Information is not readily available, but not believed to be significant.

6.5 Impacts to look-alikes

Males of *Ithaginis cruentus* are distinctive, with no look-alike issues. Females have less distinct plumage, but size and shape of bare parts makes them quite recognisable.

6.6 Actual or potential trade impacts

Information is not readily available.

7. Legal instruments

7.1 National

In India, the species is protected on Schedule I of the Wild Life (Protection) Act 1972, and in China it is on the national list of second class protected species under the Law of the Peoples Republic of China on the Protection of Species 1988 (Zheng & Wang 1998) . In Nepal, Bhutan and Myanmar, it is protected within National Parks, Wildlife Sanctuaries and other conservation areas.

7.2 International

CITES Appendix II and EU Annex B.

8. Species management

8.1 Management measures

Information is not readily available.

8.2 Population monitoring

Information is not readily available.

8.3 Control measures

8.3.1 International

CITES, EU Commission Regulations implementing CITES

8.3.2 Domestic

In India, the species is protected on schedule IV of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, and in China it is on the national list of second class protected species under the Law of the Peoples Republic of China on the Protection of Species 1988 (Zheng & Wang 1998).

8.4 Captive breeding and artificial propagation

The World Pheasant Association captive census recorded about 100 *Ithaginis cruentus* in Europe in 2010/2011(<http://www.wpa-europe.ch.vu/> accessed on 31 July 2012). ISIS (2012) records no captive individuals in ISIS institutions; however it is held in Beijing Zoo. Both WPA and ISIS databases rely on voluntary submission of records.

8.5 Habitat conservation

Throughout its range, *Ithaginis cruentus* occurs in many protected areas, for example in Nepal, the species is found in four conservation areas, five national parks and one hunting reserve (Baral in litt., 2012; Birdlife International, 2012).

9. Information on similar species

It is difficult to confuse *Ithaginis cruentus* with other species. The male is very distinctive. The less brightly-coloured female is still readily recognisable because of its erectile crest, which means that it cannot be confused with female *Tragopan* and koklass pheasant *Pucrasia macrolopha* (Madge & McGowan, 2002).

10. Consultations

This proposal was based on a rapid review of 16 species of Galliformes by the World Pheasant Association. Their account was circulated to members of the IUCN-Species Survival Commission / World Pheasant Association Galliformes Specialist Group who had particular knowledge about the species, before being considered by the Animals Committee at AC 26 (Geneva, 2012). The proposal was sent to the Management and Scientific Authorities of India, Nepal, Bhutan, Myanmar and China on 17 August 2012. By 24 September 2012, responses had been received from Myanmar and China. Myanmar had no

comment on the merits of proposal and was not able to provide any information on the species in Myanmar due to the lack of scientific and systematic study. After consulting with the Scientific Authority of China and the domestic authorities of wildlife management, the Management Authority of China suggested that the species should be retained in Appendix II. This suggestion arose because, “although the scientists still have disputes about the taxonomy of subspecies of *Ithaginis cruentus*, the population and habitat situation of the subspecies is quite different. Some subspecies are distributed in a narrow range with very limited population. To retain *Ithaginis cruentus* in Appendix II is of great importance to the protection of these subspecies”.

11. Additional remarks

12. References

- BirdLife International (2012) Species factsheet: *Ithaginis cruentus*. Downloaded from <http://www.birdlife.org> on 31 July 2012.
- CITES trade statistics derived from the CITES Trade Database (see: www.unep-wcmc.org/citestrade), UNEP (United Nations Environment Programme) World Conservation Monitoring Centre, Cambridge, UK. Accessed 31 July 2012.
- ISIS (2012) International Species Information System species holdings. Downloaded from <https://www.isis.org/Pages/findanimals.aspx> on 31 July 2012.
- Jia, F.; Wang, N.; Zheng, G.M. 2005. Winter habitat requirements of white eared-pheasant *Crossoptilon crossoptilon* and blood pheasant *Ithaginis cruentus* in south-west China. *Bird Conservation International* 15: 303-312.
- Madge, S.; McGowan P. 2002. *Pheasants, partridges and grouse: A guide to the pheasants, partridges, quails, grouse, guineafowl, buttonquails and sandgrouse of the world*. Princeton University Press, Princeton.
- The World Pheasant Association European census database. 2012. Available online at <http://www.wpa-europe.ch.vu/> accessed 31 July 2012.
- Zheng, G.M.; Wang, Q.S. 1998. *China Red Data Book of Endangered Animals*. Science Press, Beijing.