

CANDIDATE ASSESSMENT AND LISTING PRIORITY ASSIGNMENT FORM

SCIENTIFIC NAME: Gallicolumba stairi

COMMON NAME: friendly ground dove (American Samoa pop.)

LEAD REGION: Region 1

INFORMATION CURRENT AS OF: February 2003

STATUS/ACTION (Check all that apply):

New candidate

Continuing candidate

Non-petitioned

Petitioned - Date petition received: ____

90-day positive - FR date: ____

12-month warranted but precluded - FR date: ____

Is the petition requesting a reclassification of a listed species?

Listing priority change

Former LP: ____

New LP: ____

Latest date species first became a Candidate: November 15, 1994

Candidate removal: Former LP: ____ (Check only one reason)

A - Taxon more abundant or widespread than previously believed or not subject to a degree of threats sufficient to warrant issuance of a proposed listing or continuance of candidate status.

F - Range is no longer a U.S. territory.

M - Taxon mistakenly included in past notice of review.

N - Taxon may not meet the Act's definition of a species. @

X - Taxon believed to be extinct.

ANIMAL/PLANT GROUP AND FAMILY: Birds, Columbidae

HISTORICAL STATES/TERRITORIES/COUNTRIES OF OCCURRENCE: American Samoa (Ofu)

CURRENT STATES/COUNTIES/TERRITORIES/COUNTRIES OF OCCURRENCE: American Samoa (Ofu)

LEAD REGION CONTACT (Name, phone number): Scott McCarthy, 503-231-6131

LEAD FIELD OFFICE CONTACT (Office, name, phone number): Pacific Islands (Ecological Services), Marilet A. Zablan, 808-541-3441

BIOLOGICAL INFORMATION:

The taxon is found in Fiji, Tonga, Western Samoa, American Samoa, and the Gilbert Islands. The friendly ground dove has been found in American Samoa only on Ofu, where it was first reported in 1976 (Amerson et al. 1982), but may also occur on Olosega (Amerson et al. 1982, Engbring and Ramsey 1989). The total population was estimated to number about 100 birds when it was first reported (Amerson et al. 1982). Engbring and Ramsey (1989) described the population on Ofu as **A**very small,**@**but did not attempt a population estimate. Current estimates indicate fewer than 10 individuals are present. The preferred habitat of the friendly ground dove is native forest on steep talus slopes, a habitat type that is rare in American Samoa. This may limit the distribution of the species. The population in American Samoa is threatened due to the low number of individuals, catastrophes such as hurricanes, and development of its preferred habitat for rock quarries and agriculture. The Ofu (American Samoa) population is the only population of this species under U.S. jurisdiction. The status of populations in other areas is not known.

THREATS:

A. The present or threatened destruction, modification, or curtailment of its habitat or range.

The species= very limited habitat is threatened by ongoing and projected development of talus slopes for rock quarries and agriculture. These activities can be expected to have a significant negative impact on this population. Clearing of lowland rainforests has been implicated as a limiting factor for these populations. Habitat loss is the primary threat to this species.

B. Overutilization for commercial, recreational, scientific, or educational purposes.

Incidental shooting of this species by hunters has been suggested as an important threat, but the friendly ground dove is actually rather shy and secretive, despite its name, so it is not likely that hunting is a primary threat.

C. Disease or predation.

Nest predation by rats (Rattus sp.) is an important threat to many Pacific island birds (Atkinson 1977, 1985), and may play a role in limiting populations of the friendly ground dove. Little is known about the distribution or importance of avian diseases in American Samoa (Atkinson 2000), but introduced diseases are a serious threat to birds in the Hawaiian Islands (Warner 1968; van Riper et al. 1986; Atkinson et al. 1995).

D. The inadequacy of existing regulatory mechanisms.

There are no regulations that provide protection to this species. While hunting bans have been instituted in American Samoa, it is important to note that they are not based on laws, and hence **A**bans**@**are not enforceable.

E. Other natural or manmade factors affecting its continued existence.

This population is at great risk of extinction due to the low number of individuals and the high frequency of catastrophic events such as hurricanes. Inbreeding and/or reduced likelihood of locating mates are potential threats.

FOR RECYCLED PETITIONS:

- a. Is listing still warranted? ___
- b. To date, has publication of a proposal to list been precluded by other higher priority listing actions? ___
- c. Is a proposal to list the species as threatened or endangered in preparation? ___
- d. If the answer to c. above is no, provide an explanation of why the action is still precluded.

LAND OWNERSHIP: Populations are located on private land.

PRELISTING: The American Samoa government is actively conducting field surveys of habitat and has imposed a 3-year hunting ban to help all pigeons, doves, and bats recover from Hurricanes Ofa and Val. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) has a potential project in the vicinity of the only known population. The Corps has been notified that their actions may affect the survival or habitat of this species. Researchers from the U. S. Geological Survey, Biological Resources Division are beginning a study to assess the severity and urgency of the risk from avian diseases, especially avian malaria (Plasmodium relictum), in the National Park of American Samoa (Atkinson 2000).

REFERENCES:

- Amerson, A.B., Jr., W.A. Whistler, and T.D. Schwaner. 1982. Wildlife and wildlife habitat of American Samoa. II. Accounts of flora and Fauna. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 151 pp.
- Atkinson, I.A.E. 1977. A reassessment of factors, particularly Rattus rattus L., that influenced the decline of endemic forest birds in the Hawaiian Islands. *Pacific Science* 31:109-133.
- Atkinson, I.A.E. 1985. The spread of commensal species of Rattus to oceanic islands and their effects on island avifaunas. Pages 35-81 in P. J. Moors, ed. *Conservation of island birds*. Tech. Publ. No. 3, Int. Coun. Bird Preserv., Cambridge, England.
- Atkinson, C.T., K.L. Woods, R.J. Dusek, L. Sileo, and W.M. Iko. 1995. Wildlife disease and conservation in Hawaii: Pathogenicity of avian malaria (Plasmodium relictum) in experimentally infected Iiwi (Vestiaria coccinea). *Parasitology* 111:S59-S69.
- Atkinson, C.T. 2000. Risk assessment for selected avian diseases in Hawaiian and Pacific parks. United States Geological Survey, Biological Resources Division, unpublished research proposal.
- Engbring, J., and F.L. Ramsey. 1989. A 1986 survey of the forest birds of American Samoa. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 145 pp.
- Van Riper, C. III, S.G. van Riper, M.L. Goff, and M. Laird. 1986. The epizootiology and

ecological significance of malaria in Hawaiian land birds. *Ecological Monographs* 56:327-344.

Watling, D. 1982. *Birds of Fiji, Tonga, and Samoa*. Millwood Press, Wellington, New Zealand. 176 pp.

Warner, R.E. 1968. The role of introduced diseases in the extinction of the endemic Hawaiian avifauna.

LISTING PRIORITY (* after number)

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| THREAT |
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| Magnitude | Immediacy | Taxonomy | Priority |
|--------------------|--------------|-----------------------|----------|
| High | Imminent | Monotypic genus | 1 |
| | | Species | 2 |
| | | Subspecies/population | 3 |
| | Non-imminent | Monotypic genus | 4 |
| | | Species | 5 |
| | | Subspecies/population | 6 * |
| Moderate to Low | Imminent | Monotypic genus | 7 |
| | | Species | 8 |
| | | Subspecies/population | 9 |
| | Non-imminent | Monotypic genus | 10 |
| | | Species | 11 |
| | | Subspecies/population | 12 |

Rationale for listing priority number:

Magnitude:

Imminence:

APPROVAL/CONCURRENCE: Lead Regions must obtain written concurrence from all other Regions within the range of the species before recommending changes to the candidate list, including listing priority changes; the Regional Director must approve all such recommendations. The Director must concur on all additions of species to the candidate list, removal of candidates, and listing priority changes.

Approve: Rowan Gould March 6, 2003
Regional Director, Fish and Wildlife Service Date

Concur: _____
Director, Fish and Wildlife Service Date

Do not concur: _____
Director, Fish and Wildlife Service Date

Director's Remarks:

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Date of annual review: February 2003
Conducted by: _____

Comments:

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