

Hooded Grebe, Podiceps gallardoi



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1. STATUS REVIEW

1.1 Taxonomy:

Hooded Grebe (*Podiceps gallardoi*) is basal species of the *Podiceps* genus, with no known closely related species. Isolation due to glacial activity and adaptation to remote lakes has resulted in its separation from the rest of the grebes. Grebes are a homogeneous group, but several behavioural differences have been detected in the Hooded Grebe, mostly due to adaptations to the remoteness and strong weather conditions. Among the most important differences, to the importance for its conservation, is that the Hooded Grebe regularly moult while breeding, i.e. not the typical moult migration as most of the other species of the same genus. Furthermore, its breeds in aggregated colonies in small and mid size lakes.

1.2 Distribution and population status: The global population is located in Austral Patagonia, mostly in Argentina, within Santa Cruz province. Breeding grounds are located in highland basaltic plateaus in the western part of that province, near the Andes. The population has experiences an 80% decrease since 1985 (Roesler et al. 2012a). Currently the population is stable with 400 breeding pairs (Roesler 2016). Wintering grounds are in the estuaries of three important rivers in the Atlantic Coast (Santa Cruz, Coyle and Gallegos). Some juveniles overwinter in the Cardiel Lake. A small Chilean population is known from a small set of lakes nearby and within Torres del Paine National Park, but no reproduction has been detected to date at these locations. Threats to the hooded grebe are mostly from invasive species, climate change and habitat modification (e.g. hydroelectric dams).

Country	Population estimate (plus references)	Distribution	Population trend (plus references)	Notes
Argentina	800 (Roesler et al. 2012a)	Santa Cruz province	Stable	Population censuses since 2009.
Chile	c. 20 (Roesler 2015)	Magallanes Region	Unknown	No population monitoring. No records of breeding populations but highly likely to breed in remote lakes nearby in Torres del Paine NP.

1.2.1 Global distribution:







1.2.2 Local distribution:

Country	Region / province	Site	Level of Protectio n	Population size	Reference(s)	Notes
Argentina	Santa Cruz province	Six highland plateaus of western part of the province. Winterin g at three main estuaries in the Atlantic Coast. Lowland lakes (juvenile s)	One national park (Patagoni a NP), protects 40% of the global breeding populatio n.	800 breeding individuals	Roesler, I., S. Imberti, H. Casañas, B. Mahler, and J. C. Reboreda. 2012. Hooded Grebe <i>Podiceps</i> <i>gallardoi</i> population decreased by eighty per cent in the last twenty- five years. Bird Conservation International 22 :371–382.	Regular monitoring of the breeding populations may indicate that the population is slowly growing at a rate of 2-3% per year. This may be a result of long term conservatio n and managemen t actions.
Chile	Magallan es Region	Scattere d lakes south of Torres del Paine National Park	Some lakes within Torres del Paine NP.	c. 25 individuals. No breeding records in the country.	Roesler, I. 2015. The status of Hooded Grebe (<i>Podiceps</i> <i>gallardoi</i>) in Chile. Ornitologia Neotropical 26 :255–263.	This populations may represent relict individuals of the type locality population of Las Vizcachas plateau.

1.3 Protection status:

The Hooded Grebe is considered Critically Endangered by the IUCN and also by the Argentinean Environmental Legislation. It is considered a Natural Monument of Santa Cruz Province. The Patagonia National Park (Santa Cruz province, Argentina) protects 40% of its population in the breeding grounds. In Chile Torres del Paine NP protects some lakes with regular presence of few individuals. Historically, Perito Moreno NP (Argentina) supported a







small breeding population (+- 15 pairs) but the last known record of the species in that area is more than 20 years old.



1.4 Ecology, behaviour and habitat requirements:

It is a medium size grebe (approx. 500 grs; males 600 grs and females 450grs). Its biology and ecology are similar to the rest of the grebes, with some important differences, mostly at a behavioural scale. Its breeding colonies are compact (nests are 20 to 100 cm apart), with a high number of breeding pairs per colony. Parents raise a single chick (2% of the breeding pairs raise a second chick). Moulting during







migration is not part of its behaviour as in the other grebes, since the moult of Hooded Grebe occurs during the breeding period. Most of the fat is accumulated during the winter period in the estuaries, since in these locations they prey on small fishes

The Hooded Grebe inhabits approximately 25 highland lakes across five highland plateaus during the breeding period. Its habitat requirements are crystal clear lakes, with a 50% of coverage of water Milfoil and a maximum size of 50 hectares (for reproduction). It feeds on macro invertebrates (mostly snails and crustaceans) associated with the milfoil. In winter the grebes rely on the estuaries of big rivers.

1.5 Threat analysis:

Several threats have been proposed to explain the decline of Hooded Grebe populations, combined into three main categories: biotic, abiotic and incidental.

The first category includes: a) depredation of eggs and chicks by Kelp Gulls (*Larus dominicanus*), b) competition and depredation by rainbow trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*), c) depredation of eggs, chicks and adults by American mink (*Neovison vison*) and d) competition or interference with other waterfowl over nest sites.

The second category includes: a) soil erosion caused by overgrazing, which may result in colmatation and changes in physicochemical conditions of lakes, b) volcanic eruptions, which also may affect, at least temporarily, the availability of suitable breeding lakes, as a result of the influx of volcanic ash, c) an apparent increase in the average wind speed during the breeding season (Global Climate Change), which may cause an increase in damage to nests, and d) a drought cycle, which may reduce availability of lakes suitable for breeding (Global Climate Change).

The third category includes: a) bycatch in fisheries at the estuaries of the rivers Coyle, Gallegos and Santa Cruz, b) harmful effects of artificial lights in cities near the wintering grounds, which may confuse migrants and produce collisions (e.g. there are two records for Hooded Grebes at Río Gallegos city, and it has been reported as an important threat for some migratory grebes of North America), and c) habitat modification due to hydroelectric dams to be constructed in the Santa Cruz River (i.e. habitat modification of the Santa Cruz River estuary).

1.6 Stakeholder analysis:

Country	Stakeholder	Stakeholder's interest in the species' conservation	Current activities	Impact (positive, negative or both)	Intensity of impact (low, medium, high or critical)
Argentina	National Park Administration (NPA). They are the	Enforcement of National Parks and protection of native	Enhancement of the Patagonia National Park	Positive	High/critical







	national agency that control and run all national parks in Argentina.	species.	(from 50.000 ha to 250.000 ha.). Support on the invasive species control programmes (American Mink).		
Argentina	Consejo Agrario Provincial (CAP) (Provincial Agricultural Council). They are a provincial agency that is in charge of the reserves and wildlife in Santa Cruz province.	Improve the knowledge of the wildlife in Santa Cruz in order to protect it. Enforcement of the provincial natural reserves.	Not many activities due to the lack of capacities (i.e. no field technicians nor personnel in important towns nor vehicles to access to Hooded Grebe areas). I have been supporting their activities and incentivising to improve their presence in the field.	Positive	Low
Argentina	Sociedad Rural Argentina (SRA). A national organisation that congregates landowners all over the country, promoting new productive activities and techniques.	The creation of Protected areas and the implementation of new laws and regulations could restrict their economic activities. The project has no real impact on their interest, although the Hooded Grebe has become a local symbol that community is proud of.	Improve activities to increase sustainable use of the land. Working on ecotourism opportunities. Coordination to control of invasive species (American Mink) and avoidance of stocking rainbow trout	Both	Medium





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		Presence of HG on their land could eventually reduce the productive opportunities in relation to aquaculture activities (freshwater fisheries)	on important Lakes.		
Argentina	Local NGOs (Ambiente Sur, Asociación Identidad, Iocal Club Andinos (2), Club de Observadores de Aves – COA– (6)) and national NGOs (Aves Argentinas, Fundación Flora y Fauna Argentina and Banco de Bosques).	Conservation of the wildlife and protected area enforcement. Some NGOs work on the protection of natural and cultural heritage.	The activities are based on increasing the capacities of the NGOs and the participant. Building local capacities and generation of local leaders. Furthermore interaction with national NGOs will promote activities and conservation at a larger scale (National and international).	Positive	High
Argentina	Local governments (municipal and provincial)	Political visibility and resources from ecotourism.	Promotion of the interaction with other provincial and national agencies. The Hooded Grebe is becoming an important income for many localities due to the	Positive	Medium







			increase of the		
			-		
Argentina	Independent landowners (not members of the SRA).	Similar to the ones of SRA: The creation of Protected areas and the implementation of new laws and regulations could restrict their economical activities.		Positive	Medium
			fisheries) due to restriction on the uses		
			of the waterbodies. A positive		
			aspect is that the project could		
			generate new resources for ecotourism.		
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1.7 Context and background information that will affect the success of any conservation action for this species:

	Description	Barriers to conservation	Opportunities for conservation
Socio-cultural effects and cultural attitudes	Patagonian societies are "close" societies and very conservative in their behaviours.	Continuation with current activities and lack of dialogue to change cultural perception of opportunities (continuation of current activities and behaviours, such as fisheries, open sky city dumps, overgrazing)	The most important opportunity is that when you become a "member of their society" (after spending several years working in the area) your voice is heard by the local leaders. Changes in those close communities are only possible through the local leaders.
Economic implications	Changes in economical activities will take time since; the current economic activities are large-scale activities (Fisheries and cattle grazing).	The biggest threat is the long periods of time needed to change the economical activities.	Bringing new options for income that are easier to achieve at low cost with high-income rate (e.g. eco- tourism) will provide a powerful tool to discuss changes in their economic activities.









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Existing conservation measures	Creation of National Parks and invasive species control programmes.	The total area covered by nature reserves and the scale of the control programmes is not enough (it is less than 40% of HG distribution). Lack of conservation actions in the winter grounds. New mega dams proposed and almost certain to go ahead (despite campaigns) for part of the winter grounds.	The increasing interest on the conservation of the HG will favour the increase in the total area protected and will favour the extrapolation of the invasive species control programme to different areas.
Administrative/political set-up	Santa Cruz and National Governments have passed laws to protect the Hooded Grebe. The economic situation in Santa Cruz is poor, but the National Government has increased the funding to protect critically endangered species under the "Zero Extinction Programme"; the HG is one of the selected species.	The political differences between provincial and national government are probably reducing the chances to get enough funding to protect the complete distribution of the Hooded Grebe.	The high profile of the Hooded Grebe in the public eye will provide support and pressure to the governments to favour its conservation.
Local expertise and interest	Local expertise has grown since 2015 with several local leaders now participating in different localities of the province. Local leaders are getting attention through participating in COAs (Birding Clubs) and by working with local NGOs.	Lack of resources to support local leaders may reduce the support available and lead to the cancelation of current activities, undermining the current interest that inhabitants of the province have in the conservation of the Hooded Grebe	Local leaders are mostly born and raised in their hometown. That characteristic makes them a fundamental tool to reach every level of the community, even higher levels within political administration.









		The conflict of interest and	
Cultural attitudes	Hooded Grebe has become a local	The conflict of interest and	The importance of the HG
	symbol, changing the perception of the	perception of those conflicts	in the Santa Cruz (and
	importance of wildlife. Cultural perception	(between sheep production and	Argentinean) community
	of ranching is important, and sheep are	grebe conservation) could	will support conservation
	the most important animal for the region.	become an important problem	actions toward protection
		for the creation of nature	of the species.
			of the species.
		reserves.	
Appeal of species	The Hooded Grebe is the most well-	N/A	The species' popularity
	known bird species in the area. The		and high level of appeal
	species has received special attention by		will support conservation
	local communities.		actions.
Resources	The resources for HG conservation are	Political crisis, and economic	Popularity of HG and
	scarce, as most resources for	changes in the country could	national government
	conservation all over the country.	threaten current conservation	interest on the species
		actions.	could help to secure future
			funding.









2. ACTION PROGRAMME

Vision (30-50 years)	
Recover Hooded Grebe populations numbers and occupancy area to similar levels known in the 1980's	
Goal(s) (5-10 years)	
Recover important population by controlling major threats and by creation of new protected areas.	
Objectives	Prioritisation (low, medium, high or critical)
Expansion and consolidation of invasive species control programmes	Critical
Understand biological characteristic fundamental for its conservation (e.g. migration patterns)	Critical
Creation of protected areas in breeding grounds (national and provincial)	Critical
Identification of threats in the winter grounds	High
Creation of protected areas in the winter grounds (national and provincial)	Critical
Reinforcement of the educational/divulgation programme at local, provincial, national and international level	High
Consolidation of local network of local leaders and local participant for the protection of important areas (winter and summer)	High
Promotion of sustainable activities (e.g. ecotourism)	High
Promotion of scientific research to different component of the ecosystem.	Medium







Activities	Country / region	Priority (low, medium, high or critical)	Associated costs (GBP)	Time scale	Responsible stakeholders	Indicators	Risks	Activity type
Objective 1: E	xpansion and	consolidation o	f invasive specie	es control pr	rogrammes			
Mink Control Programme	Argentina	Critical	70.000 Pounds/year	10 years	National Park Administration, CAP, INTA, RSA	Eradication of mink population from important areas for the HG	Opportunities: National programmes for controlling invasive species. Provincial law against American Mink. Threats: lack of resources for long- term conservation programmes.	Species Management / Law & Policy
Lake restoration programme (Trout removal)	Argentina	High	40.000 Pounds/year	10 years	CAP, Fresh water Provincial Administration	Lake without presence of Trout.	Opportunities: National programmes for controlling invasive species. Provincial law against American Mink. Threats: lack of resources for long- term conservation programmes.	Land/ Water Management
Kelp Gull population Control	Argentina	High	5.000 pounds/year	20 years	CAP, NPA, INTA, Local Municipalities.	Reduction of the number of inland colonies.	Opportunities: National programmes for controlling invasive species. Provincial law against American Mink. Threats: lack of resources for long- term conservation programmes.	Species Management







Activities	Country / region	Priority (low, medium, high or critical)	Associated costs (GBP)	Time scale	Responsible stakeholders	Indicators	Risks	Activity type		
Objective 2: Un	Objective 2: Understand biological characteristic fundamental for its conservation (e.g. migration patterns)									
Movement studies	Argentina	Critical	30.000 Pounds/year	5 years	CONICET, NGOs (COAs)	GIS with complete information of timing and distribution. Peer reviewed publications.	Opportunities: increasing interest in migratory movements of grebes. Increasing in the number of observers and local leaders. Increasing in the number of eBird users. Threats: difficulties to secure long term founds for research activities in developing countries.	Improving knowledge		
Habitat characteristics studies (site selection and lake characteristics)	Argentina	High	15.000 Pounds/year	5 years	CONICET	Peer reviewed publications.	Opportunities: increasing interest in the conservation of the Hooded Grebe. The Environmental Agency treats it as an important species. Threats: difficulties to secure long term founds for research activities in developing countries.	Improving knowledge		
Behavioural and biology studies	Argentina	High	18.000 Pounds/year	7 years	CONICET	Peer reviewed publications.	Opportunities: increasing interest on the conservation of the Hooded Grebe. The Environmental Agency treated it as an important species. Threats: difficulties to secure long term founds for research activities in developing countries.	Improving knowledge		







Activities	Country / region	Priority (low, medium, high or critical)	Associated costs (GBP)	Time scale	Responsible stakeholders	Indicators	Risks	Activity type
Objective 3: Cr	eation of prot	ected areas in b	preeding ground	s				
Identification of important areas and promotion of information to governmental agencies.	Argentina	Critical	8.000 pounds/year	5 years	NPA, CAP, Secretary of Environment (Santa Cruz), local municipalities.	Amount of hectares protected	Opportunities: increasing interest in the conservation of the Hooded Grebe due to the potential impact of the hydroelectric dams (compensation activities). The Environmental Agency treats it as an important species. Threats: Difficulties of the government to buy private land. Local rejection of creation of nature reserve in productive lands.	Law & Policy
Objective 4: Ide	entification of	threats in the w	/inter grounds			I	•	I
Site selection studies in the winter grounds	Argentina	High	15.000 pounds/year	2 years	CONICET. Universities. NGOs (COAs)	GIS (complete information of utilization). Peer reviewed article published.	Opportunities: increasing interest in the conservation of the Hooded Grebe. The Environmental Agency treats it as an important species. Threats: difficulties to secure long term founds for research activities in developing countries.	Improving knowledge









Activities	Country / region	Priority (low, medium, high or critical)	Associated costs (GBP)	Time scale	Responsible stakeholders	Indicators	Risks	Activity type
Social studies	Argentina	High	1.000 pounds/year	2 years	CONICET. Universities. NGOs (COAs)	Threats detected. Peer reviewed article published.	Opportunities: increasing interest in the conservation of the Hooded Grebe. The Environmental Agency treats it as an important species. Threats: difficulties to secure long term founds for research activities in developing countries.	Education & awareness
Identification of important areas and promotion of information to governmental agencies.	Argentina	Critical	8.000 pounds/year	5 years	wintering grounds NPA, CAP, Secretary of Environment (Santa Cruz), local municipalities.	Amount of hectares protected	 Opportunities: increasing interest on the conservation of the Hooded Grebe due to the potential impact of the hydroelectric dams (compensation activities). The Environmental Agency treated it as an important species. Threats: Difficulties of the government to buy private land. Local rejection of creation of nature reserve in productive lands. 	Land/ water protection







Activities	Country / region	Priority (low, medium, high or critical)	Associated costs (GBP)	Time scale	Responsible stakeholders	Indicators	Risks	Activity type
Educational programme	Argentina	High	4.000 Pounds/year	10 years	Education Secretary of Santa Cruz. National Agency of Education. Local education institutions.	Number of teachers trained (capacitated) and number of school children approached.	Opportunities: common content in the educational programme within the province. Popular interest in conservation aspects. Threats: hard to build teachers capacity over a large area	Education & awareness
Outreach programme	Worldwide	High	2000 pounds/year	10 years	NGOs (local, National and international).	Number publications and presence in global media per year.	Opportunities: global interest in worldwide conservation problems. Threats: difficulties to reach international audience with a local problem.	Education & awareness
Objective 7: Co Network	Argentina	f local network High	of local leaders	and local pa	NGOs, local	Number of	ortant areas (winter and summer) Opportunities: local increase in the	Education &
reinforcement	Луенина		pounds/year		municipalities.	local leaders and participants in the network	Threats: lack of funding to guarantee a permanent presence in the area.	awareness









Activities	Country / region	Priority (low, medium, high or critical)	Associated costs (GBP)	Time scale	Responsible stakeholders	Indicators	Risks	Activity type
Baseline information for potential tourism activities	Argentina	High	2500 pounds/year	3 years	CONICET, NGOs (local and national)	A complete report of potentially important species and sites.	Opportunities: local interest for new economic activities. Threat: difficulties to capacitate local people. Lack of political support. Available resources to support increase in tourism demand.	Livelihood, economic & other incentives
Promotion activities for develop tourism	Argentina/ worldwide	High	N/A	10 years	NGOs (local and national), provincial and national government.	Number of visitors to the HG area	Opportunities: growing ecotourism options in Patagonia. Worldwide interest increasing to ecotourism activities. Threats: lack of facilities to support the growth of the demand. Competition with more popular options.	Livelihood, economic & other incentives
Objective 9: Pr	omotion of sc	ientific researc	h on different co	mponents o	of the ecosystem.	4		I.
Bird community studies	Argentina	Medium	5000 pounds/year	5 years	CONICET. Universities.	Per reviewed articles published	Opportunities: connection with the conservation of the Hooded Grebe. Infrastructure and logistic provided by the Hooded Grebe Project. Threats: lack of resources for scientific research.	Education & awareness / Improving knowledge







Activities	Country / region	Priority (low, medium, high or critical)	Associated costs (GBP)	Time scale	Responsible stakeholders	Indicators	Risks	Activity type
Landscape ecological studies	Argentina	medium	6000 pounds/year	5 years	CONICET. Universities.	Per reviewed articles published	Opportunities: connection with the conservation of the Hooded Grebe. Infrastructure and logistic provided by the Hooded Grebe Project. Threats: lack of resources for scientific research.	Land / water management / Improving knowledge







3. LITERATURE CITED

Roesler, I., S. Imberti, H. Casañas, B. Mahler, and J. C. Reboreda. 2012. Hooded Grebe *Podiceps gallardoi* population decreased by eighty per cent in the last twenty-five years. Bird Conservation International **22**:371–382

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