

Raso, one of the islands in the nation of Cape Verde off the west coast of Africa. This species was once common and widespread on Raso but declined drastically because of a severe drought in the 1960s (E). The population may have fallen to only about 20 individuals in 1981. Numbers subsequently increased, but the species is potentially threatened by climatic fluctuations (E), human settlement (A), and predation by introduced rats, dogs, and cats (C). Approximately 250 breeding pairs are now present (Cape Verde Wildlife Agency, in litt.).

Ibadan malimbe (*Malimbus ibadanensis*).—1991 petition, ICBP endangered, U.S. endangered; another small weaver of the family Ploceidae, about the size of a house sparrow and with red markings; known only from southwestern Nigeria. The restricted range of this species is subject to intensive forest clearing (A). Although considered common when it was first discovered in 1951, it subsequently became very rare and prospects for survival are not favorable.

Algerian nuthatch (*Sitta ledanti*).—1980 petition, ICBP rare, U.S. endangered; a member of the family Sittidae, about the size of a house sparrow but with a compact build, a long beak, and grayish coloration; known only from Mount Babor in northern Algeria. Discovered in 1975, this small arboreal species is dependent on forest habitat, including standing dead wood for nesting. Such habitat is being reduced by lumbering, fire, grazing of domestic livestock, and removal of dead wood for forestry management (A). About 80 pairs were estimated to survive in 1982. A recent survey found about 20 nests in each of three different areas (Algerian Agence Pour La Protection de la Nature, in litt.).

Canarian black oystercatcher (*Haematopus meadewaldoi*).—1980 petition, ICBP extinct, U.S. endangered; a shore bird of the family Haematopodidae, somewhat like a rail but with much stouter bill and legs, generally black plumage; known with certainty only from the eastern Canary Islands, a Spanish possession off northwestern Africa. This species seems always to have been uncommon and there have been no definite records since about 1913, though it was reported regularly in the eastern Canaries until about 1940. It may have disappeared because of human disruption of its limited habitat and harvesting of the mollusks on which it fed (A), and because of predation by introduced cats and rats (C). Four apparently genuine reports of black oystercatchers—two on Tenerife in the western Canaries and

two on the coast of Senegal in West Africa—were made from 1968 to 1981, and give hope that the species still exists. The species is being included in this rule based on the recent reports and on the reasonable prospect of rediscovery. Rare and elusive species are routinely found alive after years, decades, or even centuries of presumed extinction. Indeed, rediscovery of two of the other birds covered by this proposal—the Madagascar serpent-eagle and the Madagascar pochard—was announced while the proposal was being drafted. The October 1993 issue of the journal *Oryx* contains announcements that three species—a bird, a mammal, and a reptile—none of which had been seen for at least 30 years, had all been found alive. The U.S. List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife already includes many such rediscovered species. Examples are the parma wallaby (*Macropus parma*), which was thought extinct for 33 years; the dibbler (*Antechinus apicalis*), which was thought extinct for 83 years; and the mountain pygmy possum (*Burramys parvus*), which was thought to have disappeared many thousands of years ago in the Ice Age.

Seychelles lesser vasa parrot (*Coracopsis nigra barklyi*).—1980 petition, ICBP endangered, U.S. endangered; a member of the family Psittacidae, generally dark brown in color and about 25 centimeters (10 inches) long; known only from Praslin, one of the islands in Seychelles, a nation off the east coast of Africa. Originally common on the island, this species declined rapidly in the mid-20th century as its palm forest habitat was destroyed by human cutting and burning (A). The one remaining population was estimated to number about 30 to 50 individuals in 1965, though it subsequently may have increased to about 100 after efforts were made to protect it and its remaining habitat (King 1981, Silva 1989).

Madeira petrel or freira (*Pterodroma madeira*).—1991 petition, ICBP endangered, U.S. endangered; a small sea bird of the family Procellariidae (petrels and shearwaters); known to breed only in the mountains of Madeira, an island possession of Portugal in the Atlantic Ocean. It has declined because of human bird and egg collectors (B), predation by introduced rats (C), and possibly natural climatic changes (E). Only 20 breeding pairs may survive.

Mascarene black petrel (*Pterodroma aterrima*).—1980 petition, ICBP endangered, U.S. endangered; a small sea bird of the family Procellariidae; originally found on the islands of Reunion and Rodrigues, which are parts

of Mauritius in the Indian Ocean. It seems to have disappeared from Rodrigues by the 18th century and to have become extremely rare on Reunion. Reasons for the decline are not precisely known, but may involve human hunting (B) and predation by introduced rats and cats (C).

Pink pigeon (*Columba (=Nesoenas) mayeri*).—1980 petition, ICBP endangered, U.S. endangered; a member of the family Columbidae, about the size of the domestic pigeon (*Columba domestica*), but with shorter and more rounded wings and generally pink in color (Goodwin 1977); known only from southwestern Mauritius in the Indian Ocean. This species has declined because of the clearing of its native forest habitat by people (A), human hunting for use as food (B), and predation by introduced rats and macaques (C). Remnant populations also became more vulnerable to the effects of cyclones and natural food shortages (E). The pink pigeon already was rare by the 1830s and currently the single known wild group contains only about 20 birds. Larger numbers exist in captivity.

White-tailed laurel pigeon (*Columba junoniae*).—1980 petition, ICBP rare, U.S. threatened; a large member of the family Columbidae, closely related to the common Old World wood pigeon (*Columba palumbus*); known only from the Canary Islands, a Spanish possession off northwestern Africa. Early reports suggest that this species may once have occurred throughout the Canaries, though it is known with certainty only from the western islands of Tenerife, La Palma, and Gomera. It now is relatively common only on parts of La Palma. Elsewhere it has disappeared or declined in conjunction with human destruction of the endemic Canarian laurel forests (A). Some of the remnant populations appear to be stable, following legal measures to protect them and their forest habitat.

Madagascar pochard (*Aythya innotata*).—1991 petition, ICBP endangered, U.S. endangered; a diving duck of the family Anatidae; apparently confined to freshwater lakes and pools in the northern central plateau of Madagascar. Although still common around 1930, this species subsequently declined drastically because of large-scale hunting by people (B). It may also have been adversely affected by the introduction of exotic fish and accidental capture by people netting the fish (E). It probably is on the brink of extinction; there had been no definite records since 1970, but in August 1991 a specimen was captured alive and placed in the Botanical Garden at Antananarivo (*Oryx*, April 1992, 26:73).