

PREVENTING EXTINCTIONS

Junin Grebe *Podiceps taczanowskii*



The current population of Junin Grebe is between 100 and 300 individuals (© Alejandro Tello / www.rarebirdsyarbook.com).



Background

Junin Grebe is a flightless species endemic to Peru, where it is confined to Lake Junín in the west-central highlands. It was considered extremely abundant in 1938, but the population has shown consistent decline since the 1960s and continues to fall rapidly. It is now estimated at around 200 individuals, all of which are restricted to the south of the lake.

The species relies on the reedbeds on the edge of the lake for its food, primarily small *Orestias* fish. This leaves it particularly vulnerable when water levels drop in dry years as part of the El Niño Southern Oscillation. However, the main threats appear to be a deterioration of water quality resulting from mining activities, and predation by introduced mink.

Actions being implemented

1. The **Action Plan for Threatened Junín Species** has been published, with support from the Peruvian National Parks Authority.
2. A series of **workshops** have been held to discuss conservation in Junín, with participation from local authorities and the media. These were successful in raising awareness of the problem of pollution in the lake, and resulted in the authorities committing to its protection.
3. Important contacts have been made with **mining companies**, whose cooperation will be important to the conservation of Lake Junín. A meeting with various multinationals has been scheduled in Lima.

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