

Ferruginous Duck (*Aythya nyroca*)

Situation in Israel: Critically Endangered.

Maybe extinct as a nesting bird

Threats: Destruction of wetland habitats and vegetation, hunting.

The Ferruginous duck is one of the smallest species of duck. It is characterized by white stripes on its wings and the bottom part of its abdomen is white too. The species is usually active at night and can dive to a depth of up to 10 meters.

In the past, dozens or even hundreds of couples of this species nested in Israel, but destruction of wetland habitats and sealing of some of Israel's water reservoirs with plastic sheets, preventing the growth of water bank vegetation, have presumably stopped nesting in Israel in recent years, harming the wintering population.

At the Jerusalem zoo - a first group of Ferruginous duck, captive born, has been brought to the Marsh aviary. In 2010, nine chicks hatched at the breeding core established at the zoo. The success of the only breeding core in Israel and its increase have brought the zoo, together with the Israel Nature and National Parks Protection Authority to study the option of releasing of the Ferruginous duck back to the wild, directly from the zoo. This action, together with habitat conservation efforts (including the zoo lake) and the prevention of hunting, will enable initiation of the rehabilitation of the population of this species in Israel.

