

RUDDY DUCK - Q&A

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Q30: Are other ducks affected/will other species of duck be culled?

Q31: Are you sure UK ruddy ducks did move into Continental Europe and that they continue to do so? Where is the evidence?

Q32: Isn't there a possibility that other European countries have self-sustaining populations of ruddy duck that are invading Spain, and therefore the UK population is not the problem?

Q33: Are you sure that in Spain there are not captive stocks of ruddy duck escaping into the wild?

Q34: Will the threat posed by hybridisation recede as numbers of white-headed ducks increase in Spain?

Q35: If the problem is really hybridisation in Spain, then why not control the problem there and not in the UK?

Q36: Isn't it possible that ruddy ducks have colonised Europe from North America naturally and therefore hybridisation with white-headed duck is a natural process of nature?

Q37: What is important is that individual ducks are allowed to live a life in peace. Just because two species produce hybrid young is no case for a campaign which might lead to extinction.

Q38: Why should we care if the white-headed duck becomes extinct anyway?

Why should we interfere with a natural course of events?

Q39: Are there any other examples of introduced species causing the extinction of others by hybridisation?

Q40: Isn't your control programme going to involve shooting birds with the attendant risk of injury or death of other wildlife or even people?

Q41: Isn't the source of the problem the fact that ruddy ducks are escaping from avicultural collections and so all you need to do is stop that happening?

Q42: Do we have support from other European countries in taking this decision?

Q43: Are steps being taken to control ruddy ducks anywhere else in Europe?

Q44: Why is so much money and effort being put into a project which will save a single species in Spain by killing hundreds of another species in the UK? Isn't habitat protection more important than single species protection?

Q45: How many ruddy ducks have so far been culled?

Q1: Why is the ruddy duck a problem?

A: The ruddy duck is an American species that was introduced into wildfowl collections in the UK in the 1940s. Some birds escaped or were released and formed a feral population. Since then, it has bred very successfully here and its range has spread onto the continent, where it has encountered the closely related white-headed duck. The white-headed duck is a globally threatened species, with a population of only 2,500 in Western Europe, concentrated in Spain, but with separate small populations in Eastern Europe. Ruddy ducks in Spain mate successfully with the white-headed duck and their offspring are fertile. The Bern Convention has concluded that this hybridisation (interbreeding) is the greatest threat to the long term survival of the white-headed duck as a distinct species.

Q2: Where did ruddy ducks come from? When did they arrive?

A: The ruddy duck is a native of North America where it has a population of more than 500,000. It was introduced into wildlife collections in the UK in the 1940s and 1950s, from which it escaped.

Q3: Where are ruddy ducks found in the UK?

A: Ruddy ducks are now very well established within the UK and populations can be found in most lowland areas.

Q4: Where else are ruddy ducks found in Europe and the rest of the world?

A: The ruddy duck is a native of North and Central America and the northern part of South America. Feral birds in Europe initially occurred mainly in countries closest to the UK, such as France, the Netherlands and Belgium. However, ruddy ducks have now been recorded in 21 Western Palearctic countries, with breeding records in at least 12 and regular breeding attempts in six - France, Ireland, Morocco, Netherlands, the UK and Spain.

Q5: How did ruddy ducks become a problem?

A: A small number were brought to the UK and introduced into waterfowl collections in the 1940s. Approximately 70 individuals escaped or were released in the 1950s, thus allowing the establishment of a feral population. By January 2000 the UK population was estimated at almost 6,000 birds.

Q6: How many ruddy ducks are there in the UK today?

A: Current figures suggest there were about 6,000 ruddy ducks in the wild in the UK in January 2000. By January 2007 this was estimated to have been reduced to around 2,000.

Q7: How many UK ruddy ducks migrate to Spain?

A: Over the last 10 years whilst there has been control of ruddy ducks in the UK, numbers of ruddy ducks arriving in Spain have fluctuated between 7 and 27 birds annually. Hybridisation occurs even at these low levels, and would increase if more ruddy ducks reached Spain. The Spanish authorities believe their task will become progressively more difficult and ultimately impossible if ruddy ducks are allowed to increase in the UK and continental Europe.

Q8: Will milder winters in the UK cause ruddy ducks to remain here in future instead of migrating further south?

A: There is no guarantee of this. We cannot predict exactly how ruddy ducks will react to milder winters. One major incursion could provide ruddy ducks with a foothold in Spain – which the Spanish authorities have denied them. The only sensible and sustainable course of action is to eradicate ruddy ducks from the UK and elsewhere in continental Europe.

Q9: What has Defra been doing to control ruddy duck numbers?

A: In 1992, the Government set up a task force to investigate the best possible way for the UK to help conserve the white-headed duck. Between 1992 and 1996, a research project looked at a range of methods for control of ruddy ducks in the UK. This suggested that breeding season shooting was feasible and would not cause significant disturbance to other species. Live trapping was shown to be ineffective. Following the recommendations of this task force, the Government announced in 1999 that it would undertake a control trial in three areas, to assess whether eradication was feasible. The report, published in July 2002, indicated that eradication within the UK was feasible and that shooting was the most effective means of control tested. On 3 March 2003 Elliot Morley announced that the Government agreed in principle to the eradication of the ruddy duck in the UK.

Since then, further research into control techniques has been carried out. In addition, Defra has issued a general licence to allow the shooting or taking of ruddy ducks by landowners (a similar licence has been issued in Wales by the Welsh Assembly Government).

In autumn 2005, following a successful bid for European funding, the ruddy duck eradication programme in the UK began.

Defra has supported the listing of ruddy ducks on Annex B of the European regulations implementing CITES (which has the effect of banning the import of this species into the EU); and is currently consulting on the use of other measures under the CITES regulations that would effectively ban the possession and sale of ruddy ducks. Defra also commenced a public consultation in November 2006 on a review of Schedule 4 to the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. The consultation includes a proposal to add the ruddy duck to the schedule, which if implemented, could require the registration of captive specimens and would therefore inform Defra as to the extent of the captive population.

Q10: Why do ruddy ducks need to be culled?

A: Hybridisation between ruddy ducks and white-headed ducks is thought to represent a serious threat to the long-term survival of white-headed ducks. In addition, hybrid ducks are fertile and act to further threaten the long-term survival of white-headed ducks through further interbreeding and competition for breeding grounds and food. This threat of extinction is most immediate in Spain, which holds the entire European breeding population of white-headed ducks. We have a responsibility to help conserve and enhance biodiversity globally as well as within the UK. As numbers of ruddy ducks increase, hybridization with white-headed ducks will increase. If the ruddy duck is allowed to establish larger numbers in the rest of Europe, control would be impossible, so urgent action is needed to prevent the further spread of the UK population.

Q11: If ruddy ducks and white-headed ducks interbreed to produce fertile offspring, then how can they be regarded as different species?

A: Evolutionary ornithologists have concluded that ruddy ducks and white-headed ducks are genetically different species. As such, we have a clear duty to ensure that white-headed ducks are protected from interbreeding to maintain them as a biologically diverse species.

Q12: Surely the white-headed ducks' genes will be retained in the hybrids so there is no need to worry?

A: It is useful to look at what has happened in New Zealand where mallards were introduced over 100 years ago. Gradually they dispersed and began to breed with indigenous grey ducks, producing fertile hybrids. The proportion of pure grey ducks, assessed genetically, has now fallen to 4.5% of the total mallard and grey duck population - this is below the level that is considered essential for the continued existence of this species.

Like mallards, ruddy ducks are the dominant species which means that their genes are selectively being carried forward through the generations. If the situation evolves as in New Zealand, then we can predict that ruddy ducks and hybrids will become more numerous and the genes of the white-headed duck will become so diluted that they will be untraceable.

Q13: How long will the eradication programme take?

A: Following a full assessment of population modelling and control techniques it is estimated that with the correct funding the eradication programme should be completed in about 5 years. It should be noted, however, that modelling could not predict below a population level of 100 individuals, even though full eradication is the aim. Therefore, further modelling may be required in order to establish appropriate action and timeframes for any remnant populations. Good progress was made in the first year of the eradication programme, with 1,500 ruddy ducks culled on 40 sites in England and Wales, representing approximately 34% of the estimated total UK population. Co-ordinated population counts at the top 50 ruddy duck sites in the UK in December 2006 and January 2007 suggested there had been a significant reduction in the national population to approximately 2,000.

Q14: Is it an issue for the whole of the UK?

A: Yes. Ruddy ducks have been reported from nearly all parts of the UK and if we are to successfully protect the Spanish population of white-headed ducks through eradication of ruddy ducks, then that will need to be carried out across the whole of the UK, as well as the rest of Europe.

Q15: How will Defra stop more ruddy ducks coming in?

A: Ruddy ducks have been listed on Annex B of the EU regulations implementing CITES and their import into the EU banned as a result. Furthermore, Defra is currently undertaking a consultation on using further provisions of the CITES regulations for banning the possession and sale of invasive non-native species, which could include ruddy ducks.

Q16: Is this an extension of the cormorant policy?

A: No. The purpose of eradicating ruddy ducks in the UK is to prevent the extinction of a native European species (the white-headed duck), whereas action on cormorants has been instigated to assist with the problems they cause to fisheries.

Q17: How do you plan to cull ruddy ducks?

A: The following methods of control were tested in a research project carried out under contract to the Government:

Shooting using shotguns and rifles.

Trapping in winter for humane dispatch.

Dipping eggs in liquid paraffin BP to prevent them from hatching.

Trapping females on the nest for humane dispatch.

This research has indicated that egg control is unlikely to be effective in terms of reducing the population of ruddy ducks, as it is not possible to gain access to all nesting sites, either because access is not granted or for health and safety reasons. Attempts to catch live birds in winter were not successful and do not appear to be applicable to widespread controls. Attempts to catch female ruddy ducks on the nest have been more successful, but again, this is unlikely to provide an effective means of reducing the threat to white-headed ducks without other control methods for the same reasons as egg control. The primary method of control will therefore be shooting, although the other methods may be appropriate or necessary at particular sites.

Q18: Have non-target species been killed?

A: The killing of non-target birds is taken very seriously and every effort is made to minimise such losses. The Standard Operating Procedures make it clear that there should be a high degree of vigilance over identification and that shooting should only take place if safe to do so without causing injury or death to non-target species. During the three year trial between 1999 and 2002 there were a total of 15 non-target casualties, this is in comparison to 2,651 ruddy ducks culled, a proportion of less than 0.006. Where non-target birds were killed during shooting operations, the circumstances surrounding each case were fully investigated and field procedures amended to further reduce risk to other species. Over half the non-target casualties occurred during trials of breeding

season traps in spring 2002, the design of which was significantly amended to reduce the risk to other species and the use of which will be very limited for the continued programme. At 31 December 2006 a total of 14 non-target birds had been taken since the eradication programme began.

Q19: Who is undertaking the eradication programme?

A: The contract for the earlier control work of ruddy ducks was awarded to the Central Science Laboratory (CSL), an Agency of DEFRA. The field officers were recruited by advertising in the press. Minimum requirements were to hold or have recently held and remain eligible for a police-issued firearms certificate. Previous experience with wildfowl was essential, both in terms of shooting and identification. Both shooting skills and identification skills were tested at interview and comprehensive training undertaken to ensure no unnecessary suffering was caused to target birds. CSL is also taking forward the full eradication programme.

Q20: How much will the eradication programme cost?

A: The five year programme aimed at the full eradication of ruddy ducks in the UK will cost about £3.337million. About half of that figure will be provided by LIFE-Nature funding, with the remainder as matching funding from Defra.

Q21: How much has been spent on ruddy duck control trials?

A: A total of about £1.35million has been spent. This includes the initial research by the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust as well as the control trials carried out by CSL since 1999.

Q22: Why do we care about white-headed ducks?

A: The white-headed duck is a globally threatened species. There are estimated to be only 2,500 in Western Europe, and no more than 15,000 globally. Formerly found throughout southern Europe and much of central Asia, the breeding areas of the white-headed duck is now highly fragmented, principally due to over-hunting and habitat loss. This does not compare favourably with the North American population of ruddy ducks, which is estimated at over 500,000. In Europe, hybridisation with the non-native ruddy duck is the major threat to the long-term survival of the white-headed duck. The Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats - also known as the Bern Convention - was adopted in September 1979 in Bern (Switzerland) and came into force on 1 June 1982. The Convention considered the issue of conservation of the endangered white-headed duck and concluded that the ruddy duck is the main threat to the species. The Convention recognised the importance of the UK ruddy duck population and called on all contracting parties to implement control strategies.

The International White-headed Duck Action Plan (endorsed by the European Commission, Bonn Convention and African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement) states that the extinction of the white-headed duck is only likely to be prevented if rapid action is taken to control ruddy ducks in Europe. The UK holds the largest number of ruddy ducks and numbers are only kept at their present level by the ongoing control trials. A number of other European countries including Spain, Portugal, France, Iceland and Denmark have also taken positive action already, but are looking to the UK to take action as the source country of ruddy ducks.

Q23: How many white-headed ducks are there in Spain?

A: Following a peak of 4,489 in autumn 2000, having recovered from a low point in the late 1970s, peak annual counts of white-headed ducks between 2001 and 2005 averaged 2,470 birds. In global terms, it is the only expanding population, thanks to significant and sustained efforts by the Spanish authorities and conservationists leading to habitat protection and a ban on hunting. The global population is estimated at fewer than 15,000 individuals. Ruddy ducks are also spreading eastwards towards Turkey and central Asia where they will threaten the largest remaining population of white-headed ducks. Local control in Turkey and central Asia would be impossible because of the huge area of wetland and limited resources available. It is therefore essential that prompt action be taken to prevent ruddy ducks from becoming established in Europe.

Q24: Why can't the white-headed duck breeding programme be increased?

A: By increasing efforts to raise the numbers of white-headed ducks, one does not deal with the major threat to the survival of the species – the interbreeding with ruddy ducks. This has been recognised by the Bern Convention as the main threat to the survival of white-headed ducks.

Q25: Would it be better to clip the wings of ruddy ducks rather than shoot them?

A: The earlier research project looked at a range of methods for control of ruddy duck in the UK, including live trapping. This showed that it is not possible to catch sufficient birds to make this a realistic option. Similarly, it would not be possible to catch a sufficiently large number of birds to make wing clipping a viable alternative.

Q26: Why don't the Spanish tax payers pay?

A: Spain has already spent a considerable amount of time, money and effort into bringing their white-headed duck population up to its current level –around 2,500 birds. It is only right that other EU countries play their part in protecting that population, especially where the threat from hybridisation stems from the ruddy duck population of the UK.

Q27: Why doesn't the EU pay everything for the eradication programme?

A: It is not in the nature of EU funding that they fully fund a project, as it is important that the country from which an application for funding is made has a commitment to the project.

Q28: In relation to other non-native species, is the ruddy duck cull programme likely to serve as a model for reducing or eliminating these unwanted populations?

A: The issue of the ruddy duck arose in isolation and control has not been undertaken as a test case. That said, the control trial has thrown up examples of the sorts of issues that will need to be addressed when considering action for other non-native invasive species that threaten biodiversity and it would be negligent not to learn from this experience. The important lesson, though, must be that prevention is better than cure and that if introductions do occur, early action will be more effective and efficient.

Q29: How does culling the ruddy duck square with the UK's biodiversity commitments?

A: Conserving biodiversity is fully consistent with effective wildlife management. Control of individual species is recognised as sometimes being necessary to protect native biodiversity (for example, action against mink to protect riparian habitats and species).

Q30: Are other ducks affected/will other species of duck be culled?

A: No. Ruddy ducks are the only species that have been targeted as a threat to white-headed ducks.

Q31: Are you sure UK ruddy ducks did move into Continental Europe and that they continue to do so? Where is the evidence?

A: All the evidence points to a conclusion that UK ruddy ducks have been moving into Continental Europe and that they are continuing to do so. As the numbers of ruddy duck have increased in the UK, there has been a corresponding increase in the numbers of records of birds occurring in Europe. Records outside the UK are concentrated in countries such as France which are nearest to the UK; the number of records decrease in countries further away from the UK. Evidence of movement within Europe comes from Scandinavian countries and Iceland where the ruddy duck is a summer visitor. Iceland has no captive ruddy ducks and yet has had over 33 records, including up to ten birds.

Q32: Isn't there a possibility that other European countries have self-sustaining populations of ruddy duck that are invading Spain, and therefore the UK population is not the problem?

A: It is highly likely that the majority of ruddy ducks arriving in Spain originate from the UK, which holds the bulk of the breeding population. At present the number of ruddy ducks breeding in the wild on the Continent is small and may not be self-sustaining. However, there is a danger that this will change if there are increasing numbers reaching the continent from the UK or if birds escape from captivity. Numbers in Europe are still small in comparison to the UK, but control of these ruddy duck populations would be compromised if the UK population is allowed to top-up Continental populations unchecked. Ten European countries and four international organisations were represented at a workshop in the UK in March 1993 which agreed unanimously that the population and range expansion of ruddy ducks in Western Europe should be halted and reversed. Action is already underway in other European countries (for example in

Q33: Are you sure that in Spain there are not captive stocks of ruddy duck escaping into the wild?

A: Spanish conservation authorities have investigated the possibility of captive stocks of ruddy duck escaping into the wild and can find no evidence of this occurring. Very few are kept in captivity in Spain.

Q34: Will the threat posed by hybridisation recede as numbers of white-headed ducks increase in Spain?

A: Hybridisation remains the most important threat to white-headed ducks. An understanding of the species' respective mating strategies confirms that an increasing population of white-headed ducks in Spain is no guarantee against extensive hybridisation. Male ruddy ducks are not territorial and many mate without forming stable pair bonds with females. Males attempt persistently to mate with females, of both their own and other species. Dominant male white-headed ducks form stable pair bonds, defending a territory containing their mate or mates. Because of these naturally differing mating behaviours there is a strong probability that, when hybridising freely, male ruddy ducks will experience much higher mating success than male white-headed ducks. The white-headed duck is in danger of becoming genetically 'swamped'. In such situations it is well documented that extinction can result. The mallard, which has a similar breeding strategy to the ruddy duck, now threatens seven waterfowl taxa with extinction through hybridisation and competition. Of these, the New Zealand Grey Duck is already nearly extinct. The ruddy duck's mating behaviour means that males are likely to out-compete white-headed duck males in the mating stakes – resulting in a rapid transfer of ruddy duck genes into the white-headed duck population. Once ruddy ducks are established on mainland Europe, it will be too late to contain the problem and therefore, the precautionary principle must apply.

Q35: If the problem is really hybridisation in Spain, then why not control the problem there and not in the UK?

A: There is an intensive programme of control already being undertaken by Spanish authorities. They are optimistic about being able to prevent ruddy ducks meeting and interbreeding with white-headed ducks in the short term. However, they also think their task will become progressively more difficult and ultimately impossible if ruddy ducks are not prevented from dispersing to Continental Europe. Between 1984 and May 2006 a total of 159 ruddy ducks and 65 hybrids were shot in Spain.

Ruddy ducks are also spreading eastwards towards Turkey and central Asia where they will threaten the largest population of white-headed ducks. Local control in Turkey would probably be impossible because of the huge area of wetland and the very limited resources available for conservation in that country.

Q36: Isn't it possible that ruddy ducks have colonised Europe from North America naturally and therefore hybridisation with white-headed duck is a natural act of nature?

A: There is no evidence that wild ruddy ducks have ever reached the UK or Continental Europe from North America. DNA fingerprinting has proved beyond reasonable doubt that ruddy ducks reaching Spain come from Europe and not from North America. The DNA fingerprints of wild birds from North America show that this population is highly out-bred, whereas the DNA fingerprints of ruddy ducks in Spain reveal a very inbred population. These DNA fingerprints cannot be distinguished from either feral or captive ruddy ducks from the UK, showing that all are highly related - not surprising considering that the entire captive and feral population in Europe is descended from 7 birds imported into the UK in 1948. Furthermore, there were no records of North American ruddy duck in Europe before they escaped from captive populations in the UK and there have not been any authenticated records indicating that birds from North America have reached Europe since then.

Q37: What is important is that individual ducks are allowed to live a life in peace. Just because two species produce hybrid young is no case for a campaign which might lead to extinction.

A: If ruddy ducks are not brought under control, the white-headed duck, as we know it, will almost certainly become globally extinct. The Government and a range of conservation organisations believe there is an extremely strong case for intervention, by man, in a wholly artificial and threatening situation caused exclusively by man in the first place. The rationale is that the killing of a number of individual birds will ultimately benefit the greater good of natural bird populations at large. The programme will not lead to the extinction of the ruddy

duck because it is common in its natural habitat, North America. It is the failure to implement a campaign for the control of the ruddy duck which would lead to the extinction of the white-headed duck.

Q38: Why should we care if the white-headed duck becomes extinct anyway? Why should we interfere with a natural course of events?

A: We are seeking to redress what we now know to be an environmentally damaging interference by human kind in nature's way, namely the release of a species in an environment where it did not occur naturally. The result of that activity is the threatened extinction of a European native species, the white-headed duck. Our sense of responsibility to future generations should not allow this to happen.

Q39: Are there any other examples of introduced species causing the extinction of others by hybridisation?

A: At the moment, the New Zealand grey duck is heading towards extinction due to hybridisation with the introduced mallard. In large areas of New Zealand there are now no pure grey ducks left. Control programmes for mallard have also started in Hawaii and South Africa where mallards similarly threaten the Hawaiian duck and yellow-billed duck respectively through hybridisation. Other species are similarly threatened by mallard hybridisation, including the American black duck, Mexican duck and Florida duck.

Q40: Isn't your control programme going to involve shooting birds with the attendant risk of injury or death of other wildlife or even people?

A: Strict controls on how the shooting is to be carried out will make the possibility of death or injury to other wildlife highly unlikely. The safety of people is paramount and the personnel carrying out such work will be highly trained and experienced.

Q41: Isn't the source of the problem the fact that ruddy ducks are escaping from avicultural collections and so all you need to do is stop that happening?

A: The original source of the problem was the escape into the wild of ruddy ducks from UK avicultural collections and it is possible that this is still occurring. Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 it is an offence to release ruddy ducks or allow them to escape into the wild. Aviculturists have been contacted to:

- a) ensure that they fully understand their obligations in respect of this species under the Act;
- b) explain the conservation problem posed by their escaping birds so that the urgent need to appropriately manage their collections of this species is fully understood.

A detailed code of guidance has been prepared for aviculturalists on the necessary standards for keeping ruddy ducks and related species in captivity. Aviculturists in the UK are now only allowed to sell ruddy ducks under licence and very few licences have ever been issued. These actions alone will not solve the problem as birds are dispersing in Europe from breeding populations already outside collections. Eradication of feral ruddy ducks should be seen as part of a package of measures to address the problem including those aimed at captive birds.

Q42: Do we have support from other European countries in taking this decision?

A: Action to conserve the white-headed duck would be in line with our international obligations under the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Bern Convention. Such control has wide support and at a meeting of the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention, not one country opposed the control of ruddy ducks.

Q43: Are steps being taken to control ruddy ducks anywhere else in Europe?

A: Yes, the Spanish authorities are already controlling all ruddy ducks and hybrids in Spain. Following an international meeting of conservation and government organisations, European states with ruddy ducks in the wild are now looking at undertaking similar measures.

By 2004, at least 14 countries in the Western Palearctic had taken some action to control ruddy ducks (Belgium, Denmark, France, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Morocco, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom). This compares with only six countries in 1999. At least 472 ruddy ducks and hybrids have now been controlled in six countries excluding the UK (Denmark – 1, France - 246, Iceland - 3, Morocco - 2, Portugal - 3, and Spain - 217) and a further three countries have indicated that attempts will be made to shoot birds if they occur (Hungary, Italy and Slovenia). Concerted eradication programmes are in operation in four countries (France, Portugal, Spain and the UK) and one is planned in Morocco.

Many other European countries are awaiting action to take place in the UK before embarking on a strategy for controlling ruddy ducks. It should be remembered that the UK is the source population for birds on the continent and unless action is taken here, efforts taken elsewhere on the continent will be futile.

Q44: Why is so much money and effort being put into a project which will save a single species in Spain by killing hundreds of another species in the UK? Isn't habitat protection more important than single species protection?

A: The white-headed duck is a symbol of successful conservation in southern Spain. A great deal of time and effort has been put into conserving the species by protecting habitat and controlling shooting. If it was to disappear as a result of hybridisation then a key argument used in achieving protection of wetland habitats and control of shooting would vanish. This could have serious consequences for these wetlands, their flora and fauna and for future conservation initiatives. Habitat protection and protection of the species using these habitats are inter-linked, they are both important.

Q45: How many ruddy ducks have so far been culled?

A: Between September 2005 when the eradication programme began and 15 January 2007 a total of 2,689 ruddy ducks have been shot in the UK.