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**Société d'Ornithologie de l'Ouest**  
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## News & Letters — Nouvelles & Lettres

### **Biology of the Congo Peafowl *Afropavo congensis*: project supported by W.A.O.S. Research Grant**

The Congo Peafowl *Afropavo congensis* is the only pheasant native to Africa. It is endemic to the Democratic Republic of Congo and listed as Vulnerable on the IUCN red list. Its global population (2500–10000 individuals) is inferred to be declining from hunting and habitat loss.

The objective of this study is to gather data on the biology and ecology of the Congo Peafowl in the Salonga National Park and the Opienge forest, to assess its habitat requirements and identify current threats. Transect surveys and playback, with calls of as many individuals as possible recorded, will be used to identify individuals and define habitat use. Food remains and droppings will be collected and stomach contents analysed whenever a dead bird is found (*e.g.* as bush meat). We also hope to locate nests, when observations will be made on breeding behaviour. Questionnaires to Park Guards, their family members and the local population will be used to identify threats to the bird, and to strengthen its conservation strategy. Preliminary surveys in the Kisangani region from May 2003 showed that hunting pressure on the species is high. Consequently, the first signs of its presence in an area may be found in local markets (bush meat), in villages or in the forest (bone remains or feathers).

Emile Mulotwa  
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