THE BRAZILIAN MERGANSER (MERGUS OCTOSETACEUS), THE MOST THREATENED DUCK IN SOUTH AMERICA

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SUMMARY

The Brazilian merganser (Mergus octosetaceus) is a poorly known merganser from the central-southeastern parts of South America. With the extinct Auckland Islands merganser (Mergus australis), from New Zealand, it is the only representative of the genus of this unique group of ducks in the Southern Hemisphere.

The species lives in freshwater and rapid rivers of Brazil, Argentina and Paraguay (PARTRIDGE, 1956; SICK, 1985; YAMASHITA and VALLE, 1990; COLLAR et al., 1992). In Brazil, it lives in the states of Minas Gerais (southern part of the state, including the Pantanal National Park, which is an important breeding ground), the states of Paraná and São Paulo (Paranapanema and Paraná rivers), and the states of Rio Grande do Sul and Santa Catarina (Mergus octosetaceus sp. sp. sp.).

The species avoids areas with large dams and has been observed in several locations in Brazil, including the Pantanal National Park, the Paraguay River, and the Paraná River. The species is also known to breed in the Cuiabá River (COLLAR et al., 1992).

The species is threatened by habitat loss, pollution, and climate change, and its conservation status is listed as critically endangered. The species is also known to feed on fish, which can be problematic for local fisheries.

REFERENCES

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DER DUNKELSÄGER (MERGUS OCTOSETACEUS), DER GEFAHRDESTEN ENTENVOGEL IN SÜDAFRIKA

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