

# Japan Update

## Endangered bird stirs international attention

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The noguchigera is an endangered species.

The noguchigera is a bird living in the wilds of Okinawa's northern jungles, where it is struggling for its life. The bird is on Japan's designated national natural assets list, but still the numbers are dwindling.

An American environmental group is aligned with local environmentalists who are demanding the U.S. military take stronger actions to protect the noguchigera. Since 2003, the Arizona-based group has been hammering away at the American government, demanding the bird be placed in protective status by U.S. law. "If the American government will not listen to us to register the noguchigera as a nearly extinct bird, we will take the government to court," says a group official. The U.S. government response is that there's no need, because Japanese law is protecting the birds, so we don't have to register it."

Angry Okinawans say the bird, which lives in the northern forests, is threatened by the military's helicopter training area. They charge the military is actually trying to kill the birds, and they want that changed. The U.S. military says "we have concerns about the birds, and we know the birds should be listed on a list to prevent extinction, but not now."