

TAXON SUMMARY

Black Butcherbird (Torres Strait)

1	Family	Artamidae
2	Scientific name	<i>Cracticus quoyi alecto</i> Schodde and Mason, 1999
3	Common name	Black Butcherbird (Torres Strait)
4	Conservation status	Near Threatened: e

5 Reasons for listing

The Australian population of this subspecies is confined to two small islands with a combined area of about 100 km² (Vulnerable: D2). The global status, however, is Least Concern and genetic interchange is likely to be substantial. The Australian status has therefore been downgraded (as per Gärdenfors *et al.*, 1999) to Near Threatened: e (genetic interchange beyond borders).

Australian population	Estimate	Reliability
Extent of occurrence	300 km ²	high
trend	stable	high
Area of occupancy	100 km ²	high
trend	stable	high
No. of breeding birds	1,000	low
trend	stable	high
No. of sub-populations	2	high
Largest sub-population	500	low
Generation time	5 years	low
Global population share	< 1 %	high
Level of genetic exchange	high	high

6 Intraspecific taxa

The three subspecies confined to Australian territory are all Least Concern. They are *C. q. spaldingi* (near-coastal Northern Territory and adjacent Western Australia), *C. q. jardini* (near-coastal Cape York Peninsula) and *C. q. rufescens* (near-coastal north and central Queensland). The nominate subspecies is found throughout New Guinea (Schodde and Mason, 1999)

7 Past range and abundance

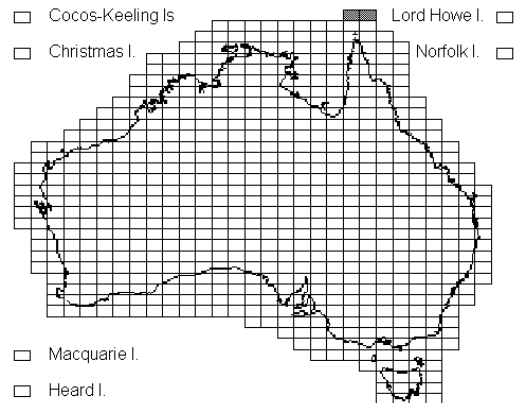
Southern New Guinea and Aru Is, extending to Australian territory on Saibai and Boigu Is, Torres Strait (Draffan *et al.*, 1983, Schodde and Mason, 1999).

8 Present range and abundance

As above.

9 Ecology

In Torres Strait, Black Butcherbirds are confined to mangroves. They feed on nestling birds and other small vertebrates, crabs, insects and fruits (Blakers *et al.*, 1984). They build open stick nests, in which they lay 2-3 eggs (Beruldsen, 1980).



10 Threats

There are no immediate threats except, perhaps, those posed to low islands by rising sea levels.

11 Recommended actions

11.1 Initiate community-based ecotourism business promoting the islands' unique avifauna. Monitoring of sub-populations and habitat could then be undertaken by visiting bird-watchers and local rangers.

12 Bibliography

- Beruldsen, G. R. 1980. *A Field Guide to Nests and Eggs of Australian Birds*. Rigby, Adelaide.
- Blakers, M., Davies, S. J. J. F. and Reilly, P. N. 1984. *The Atlas of Australian Birds*. RAOU and Melbourne University Press, Melbourne.
- Draffan, R. D. W., Garnett, S. T. and Malone, G. J. 1983. Bird of the Torres Strait: An annotated list and biogeographic analysis. *Emu* 83:207-234.
- Gärdenfors, U., Rodriguez, J.P., Hilton-Taylor, C., Hyslop, C., Mace, G., Molur, S. and Poss, S. 1999. Draft guidelines for the Application of IUCN Red List Criteria at National and Regional Levels. *Species* 31-32:58-70.
- Schodde, R. and Mason, I. J. 1999. *The Directory of Australian Birds: Passerines*. CSIRO, Collingwood, Victoria.

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