

TAXON SUMMARY

Brown Treecreeper (Cape York Peninsula)

1	Family	Climacteridae
2	Scientific name	<i>Climacteris picumnus melanotus</i> Gould, 1847
3	Common name	Brown Treecreeper (Cape York Peninsula)
4	Conservation status	Near Threatened: c

5 Reasons for listing

This subspecies' relatively large and widely distributed population appears to have declined in density over more than half its historical range (Near Threatened: c).

	Estimate	Reliability
Extent of occurrence	250,000 km ²	high
trend	stable	high
Area of occupancy	20,000 km ²	low
trend	decreasing	medium
No. of breeding birds	20,000	low
trend	decreasing	medium
No. of sub-populations	1	medium
Generation time	5 years	medium

6 Intraspecific taxa

C. p. victoriae (subcoastal eastern Australia) is also Near Threatened. *C. p. picumnus* (inland eastern Australia, eastern Queensland) is Least Concern.

7 Past range and abundance

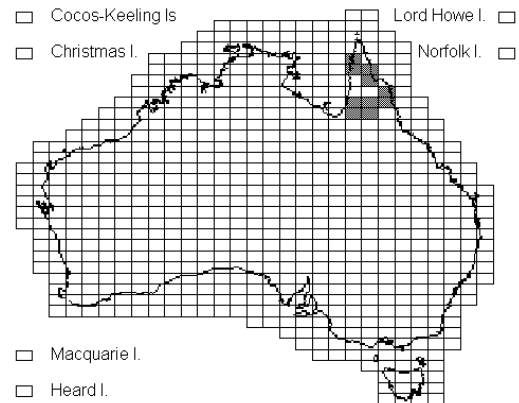
Cape York Peninsula, with a broad zone of intergradation with *C. p. picumnus* as far south as the Burdekin-Lynd Divide (Ford, 1986, Schodde and Mason, 1999). Historically, reported as numerous, particularly "between Coen and Ebagoola, and along the length of the Archer River" (Thomson, 1935, p. 64).

8 Present range and abundance

Still relatively common north of Archer R. and in southern part of range (Blakers *et al.*, 1984, Garnett and Crowley, 1995). Now very scarce in the centre of Cape York Peninsula, reported from 3 out of 15 possible degree squares between 1977 and 1981, and in 1999, not found near Hann R., where present in 1993, but still present near Lukin R. (S. Garnett).

9 Ecology

Found in open eucalypt woodland, primarily in areas dominated by Darwin Stringybark *Eucalyptus tetradonta* (Garnett and Crowley, 1995a). The birds often nest in association with Black-faced Woodswallows (White, 1922). They nest in tree hollows, and lay with 2-3 eggs.



10 Threats

The decline of the Cape York Peninsula subspecies of Brown Treecreeper is probably a result of an altered fire regime. It has been linked to homogenisation of the habitat by occasional widespread fires (Garnett and Crowley, 1995a), but the increasing stem density through grassy woodlands on Cape York Peninsula may be equally threatening (Stanton, 1992, Crowley and Garnett, 1998). Both processes result from a shift in fire regime (Crowley and Garnett, 2000), with a reduction in mosaic burning that is needed to break up large fires and to leave fuel for storm-burns in the early wet season (Crowley, 1995, Garnett and Crowley, 1995b).

11 Recommended actions

11.1 Encourage mosaic burning, including storm-burning, to provide unburnt refuges from late dry season fires.

12 Bibliography

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