

TAXON SUMMARY

Dusky Honeyeater (Torres Strait)

1	Family	Meliphagidae
2	Scientific name	<i>Myzomela obscura fumata</i> (Bonaparte, 1850)
3	Common name	Dusky Honeyeater (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	200 km ²	high
trend	stable	high
Area of occupancy	100 km ²	high
trend	stable	high
No. of breeding birds	20,000	low
trend	stable	high
No. of sub-populations	2	high
Largest sub-population	12,000	low
Generation time	5 years	low
Global population share	< 1 %	high
Level of genetic exchange	high	high

6 Intraspecific taxa

M. o. obscura (near-coastal Northern Territory) and *M. o. harterti* (near-coastal Queensland) are both Least Concern. There are five other subspecies on islands off New Guinea.

7 Past range and abundance

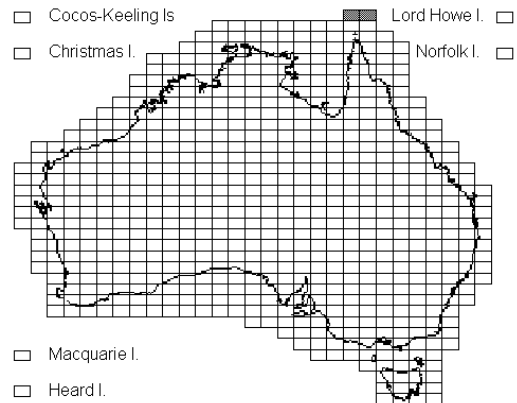
A New Guinea subspecies whose distribution extends to Saibai and Boigu Is (Draffan *et al.*, 1983, Schodde and Mason, 1999).

8 Present range and abundance

As above.

9 Ecology

On the Torres Strait on which it occurs, this subspecies of Dusky Honeyeater lives in most available habitat, ie. mangroves and *Melaleuca* savanna woodland. Dusky Honeyeaters feed on nectar and insects and lay two eggs in cupped nests built in trees (Beruldsen, 1980, Blakers *et al.*, 1984).



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.

Comments received from

Geoff Dews, Stan Wright.