

RECOVERY OUTLINE

Eastern Bristlebird (northern)

1	Family	Pardalotidae
2	Scientific name	<i>Dasyornis brachypterus monoides</i> Schodde & Mason, 1999
3	Common name	Eastern Bristlebird (northern)
4	Conservation status	Critically Endangered: A1bc+2bc, B1+2bde, C2a, D, E

5 Reasons for listing

This subspecies' population size has decreased by more than 80% over the last 3 generations (15 years; Critically Endangered: A1), as indicated by counts of singing birds (b) and a decline in the area of occupancy (c). A continued decline is likely (A2bc). Extent of occurrence is less than 10 km² and severely fragmented (B1). There is a continuing decline in area of occupancy (B2b), number of locations (d) and number of mature individuals (e). The population contains fewer than 50 mature individuals (D), and is both declining and severely fragmented (C2b). Given the above, extinction in the wild within the next 3 generations is highly likely (E).

	Estimate	Reliability
Extent of occurrence	600 km ²	medium
trend	stable	high
Area of occupancy	9 km ²	medium
trend	decreasing	high
No. of breeding birds	32	medium
trend	decreasing	high
No. of sub-populations	6	medium
Largest sub-population	24	medium
Generation time	5 years	low

6 Intraspecific taxa

This subspecies is well-isolated from *D. b. brachypterus* (Sydney to East Gippsland; Endangered). The subspecies is based on phenotypic analysis, and not supported by preliminary genetic analysis (M. Elphinstone).

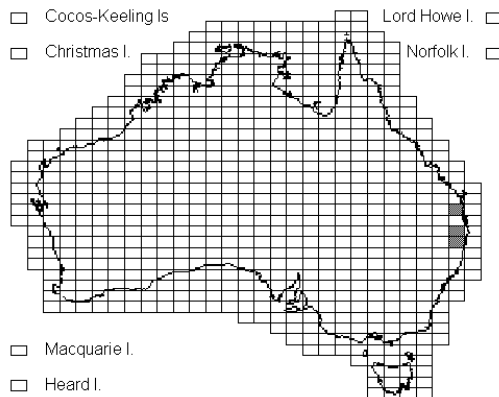
7 Past range and abundance

Recorded from isolated upland areas between Conondale Ra., Qld, and Dorrigo Plateau, N. S. W., up to 1160 m elevation (Chaffer, 1954, Holmes, 1989).

8 Present range and abundance

Extant sub-populations known at Conondale National Park, Green Mountains, Mt Barney, Mt Gipps-Mt Hutley, Bald Knob, Long Creek, and the Pinnacle (Holmes, 1989). Rapidly declining, with 154 individuals located in 103 territories in 1988, including a maximum of 35 territories at Spicer's Gap, and seven at Stretcher Track (Holmes, 1989). Over same area, only 36 birds found in 30 territories in late 1996, with a maximum of 12 territories

occupied at any one site (Holmes, 1997). Only 26 birds were found in 16 of these territories in 1997 to 1998, and none at Spicer's Gap or Stretcher Track (Stewart 1997, 1998). Presumed locally extinct at Razorback Mountains, Mt Burrell and Big Scrub as well as on Dorrigo Plateau, where last seen in 1947 (Holmes, 1989, 1998, D. Stewart).



9 Ecology

This subspecies of Eastern Bristlebird usually inhabits grass tussocks, notably of *Sorghum leiocladum*, in open forest/woodland, close to rainforest, which provides fire refuge. It breeds annually in spring, laying two eggs, but rarely raises more than one fledgling (Holmes, 1989).

10 Threats

In the past, habitat was lost to clearance for forestry, agriculture and settlement (Holmes, 1989). Now the main threat is a change in fire regime, with fires either too frequent, thereby eliminating tussocks, or too infrequent, leading to dense shrubberies unsuitable for nesting (Holmes, 1989). Feral pigs also damage habitat by uprooting sorghum, opening habitat, and possibly disturbing breeding (Stewart, 1997). Secondary threats include grazing, weed invasion, predation by cats and foxes, and the disruption of breeding by bird-watchers that use taped calls to attract birds (Stewart, 1997). The birds apparently have limited dispersal ability, so are unlikely to recolonise lost sub-populations.

11 Information required

- 11.1 Develop a fire management strategy to maintain grassy habitat without destroying its suitability for bristlebirds.
- 11.2 Investigate causes of mortality.

- 11.3 Determine feasibility of captive breeding and translocations, including consolidation of small sub-populations.
- 11.4 Determine dispersal patterns and causes of mortality of young birds.
- 12 Recovery objectives
- 12.1 To maintain sub-populations at all sites with more than one extant territory.
- 13 Actions completed or under way
- 13.1 Surveys of known sites and other apparently suitable habitat are being undertaken.
- 13.2 All known territories in Qld are mapped on a GIS.
- 13.3 Access to Snake Ridge and Mt. Gipps has been restricted to reduce disturbance.
- 13.4 Some pig control is being undertaken in the Conondale Ra.
- 13.5 Feral cats are being controlled at Richmond Gap.
- 13.6 Genetic samples have been analysed for taxonomic studies.
- 13.7 Critical habitat is being fenced against grazing.
- 13.8 Critical habitat is being protected by firebreaks.

- 13.9 Vegetation monitoring sites have been established at most currently occupied sites.
- 13.10 A Regional Fire Management Plan has been prepared for the Scenic Rim.
- 13.11 A management Plan has been prepared for Lamington National Park, and further plans are being developed for Mt Barney N. P., Conondale N. P. and Main Range N. P.
- 13.12 A Recovery Plan is being prepared, and a Recovery Team has been established (NSW NPWS).

14 Management actions required

- 14.1 Secure occupied habitat on private land by purchasing land or developing Conservation Agreements.

15 Organisations responsible for conservation

New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service, Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service.

16 Other organisations involved

Birds Australia, other bird-watching societies, University of Queensland, University of New England, Queensland Department of Natural Resources, State Forests New South Wales, Southern Cross University, Threatened Species Network, private land-holders.

17 Staff and financial resources required for recovery to be carried out ¹

Staff resources required 2001-2005

1.0

Project Officer²

Financial resources required 2001-2005

Action	Conservation agencies	Other funding sources	Total
Demographic studies	\$68,300	\$0	\$68,300
Surveys and monitoring ²	\$144,500	\$55,000	\$199,500
Mapping ²	\$9,000	\$0	\$9,000
Fire planning and construction of firebreaks ²	\$47,000	\$7,000	\$54,000
Feral animal control	\$10,000	\$0	\$10,000
Fencing	\$37,500	\$15,000	\$52,500
Vegetation monitoring ²	\$77,000	\$0	\$77,000
Public information ²	\$5,000	\$0	\$5,000
Recovery process ²	\$128,300	\$2,000	\$130,300
Total	\$526,600	\$79,000	\$605,600

¹ Costs derived largely from Holmes (1998)

² Costs shared with Rufous Scrub-bird (northern)

18 Bibliography

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Comments received from

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