

TAXON SUMMARY

Eastern Rosella (Tasmanian)

1	Family	Psittacidae
2	Scientific name	<i>Platycercus eximius diemenensis</i> North, 1911
3	Common name	Eastern Rosella (Tasmanian)
4	Conservation status	Near Threatened: c

5 Reasons for listing

Though this subspecies still has a substantial population, observations suggest that this may have at least halved over the last century (Near Threatened: c).

	Estimate	Reliability
Extent of occurrence	60,000 km ²	high
trend	stable	medium
Area of occupancy	10,000 km ²	low
trend	decreasing	medium
No. of breeding birds	15,000	low
trend	decreasing	high
No. of sub-populations	1	high
Generation time	5 years	low

6 Intraspecific taxa

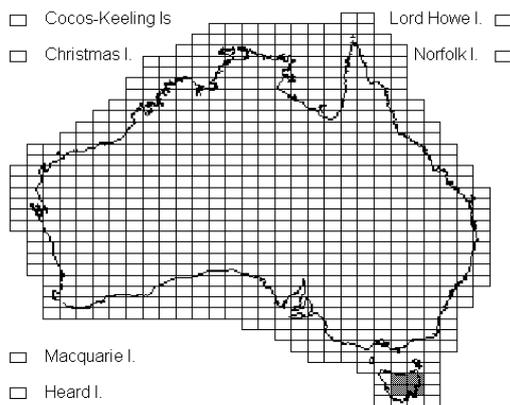
P. e. elecica (south-eastern Queensland, north-eastern New South Wales) and *P. e. eximius* (south-eastern Australia) are Least Concern, as is the species.

7 Past range and abundance

Endemic to eastern Tasmania, particularly the broad band of agricultural land between Hobart and Launceston and west along the north coast (Green, 1983, Schodde and Mason, 1997, Higgins, 1999).

8 Present range and abundance

Now scarce or gone from north coast west of Burnie. In the central valleys, abundance greatly reduced with local extinctions (Green, 1983, Higgins, 1999).



9 Ecology

The Tasmanian subspecies of Eastern Rosella prefers open woodland or lightly wooded grassland including

partly cleared farmland. It feeds on a wide range of seeds, fruits, flowers and insect larvae, including fruit from orchards and grain from crops (Green and Swift, 1965, Green, 1983, Higgins, 1999). Eggs, usually 5-7 per clutch, are laid in hollows in trees, stumps or artificial structures (Higgins, 1999).

10 Threats

Clearance of vegetation for agriculture has removed some habitat, but may also have created new habitat (Higgins, 1999). The main reason for the decline appears to be competition with Common Starling *Sturnus vulgaris* for nest hollows (Green, 1983).

Previously large numbers were shot to protect crops, which may have contributed to the contraction in range (Green, 1983).

11 Recommended actions

- 11.1 Monitor numbers in remaining strongholds.
- 11.2 Determine whether decline is caused by decline in hollow availability.
- 11.3 If hollow availability limiting, develop and implement means for starling control or for keeping starlings out of nest hollows and develop a community-based nestbox program.

12 Bibliography

Green, R. H. 1983. The decline of the Eastern Rosella and other Psittaciformes in Tasmania concomitant with the establishment of the introduced European Starling. *Rec. Queen Victoria Mus.* 62:1-4.

Green, R. H. and Swift, J. W. 1965. Rosellas as insect eaters. *Emu* 65:75.

Higgins, P. J. (ed.) 1999. *Handbook of Australian, New Zealand and Antarctic Birds. Vol. 4. Parrots to Dollarbird.* Oxford University Press, Melbourne.

Schodde, R. and Mason, I. J. 1997. Aves (Columbidae to Coraciidae). *Zoological Catalogue of Australia. Vol. 37.2.* W. W. K. Houston and A. Wells (eds). CSIRO Publishing, Melbourne.

Comments received from

Sally Bryant, Mark Holdsworth.