

TAXON SUMMARY

Emu (mainland)

1	Family	Casuariidae
2	Scientific name	<i>Dromaius novaehollandiae novaehollandiae</i> Latham, 1790
3	Common name	Emu (mainland)
4	Conservation status	Least Concern

5 Reasons for listing

Although Emus have disappeared from closely settled parts of the country, they persist throughout arid and semiarid Australia. In neither range nor density has there been a 50% decline (so not Near Threatened: a or c).

	Estimate	Reliability
Extent of occurrence	8,000,000 km ²	high
trend	stable	medium
Area of occupancy	6,000,000 km ²	low
trend	stable	medium
No. of breeding birds	600,000	medium
trend	stable	medium
No. of sub-populations	10	low
Largest sub-population	500,000	low
Generation time	4 years	medium

6 Intraspecific taxa

D. n. diemenensis of Tasmania is Extinct.

7 Past range and abundance

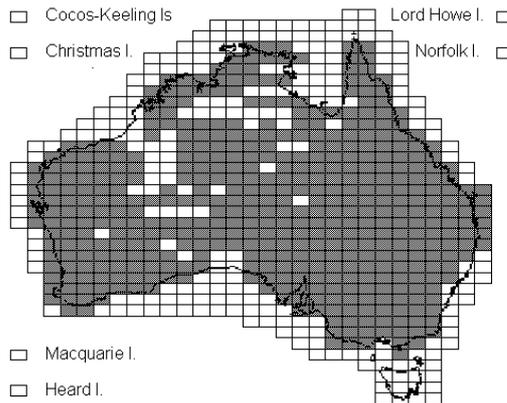
Throughout mainland Australia.

8 Present range and abundance

Absent from closely settled areas, but persists over at least 90% of continent. Many sub-populations now isolated (eg. Grampians, Vic., Australian Alps). Population estimated at 100,000-200,000 in Western Australia and 525,000 in the rest of Australia, principally New South Wales and Queensland (Marchant and Higgins, 1990).

9 Ecology

Emus live in forest and woodland through to open grassland, from above the snowline to the arid zone and tropics, avoiding only rainforest. The males incubate clutches of 4-13 eggs, which are laid on the ground. Birds can be highly nomadic, particularly in arid areas, sometimes assembling in flocks of thousands after rain or when moving towards wetter regions in dry spells (Marchant and Higgins, 1990).



10 Threats

Close settlement, cropping and intensive agriculture have excluded the Emu from much of the eastern and south-western parts of its range, either through destruction of habitat or active hunting. However, Emus have benefited from the provision of artificial watering points in pastoral country, particularly where dingos are scarce (Marchant and Higgins, 1990, K. Johnson).

11 Recommended actions

11.1 Monitor along roadsides at the same time as monitoring Australian Bustards.

12 Bibliography

Marchant, S. and Higgins, P. J. (eds) 1990. *Handbook of Australian, New Zealand and Antarctic Birds. Vol. 1.* Oxford University Press, Melbourne.

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