

## TAXON SUMMARY

# Grey-crowned Babbler (eastern)

1	Family	Pomatostomidae
2	Scientific name	<i>Pomatostomus temporalis temporalis</i> (Vigors & Horsfield, 1827)
3	Common name	Grey-crowned Babbler (eastern)
4	Conservation status	Near Threatened: a

### 5 Reasons for listing

Although the subspecies is abundant and widespread in northern Queensland, there has been a considerable and continuing decline in southern part of its range (Near Threatened: c), though not at a rate or scale that warrants listing as Vulnerable. The status is assessed separately for Australia and New Guinea populations, which are genetically isolated (as per Gärdenfors *et al.*, 1999). However, since at least 90% of the population occurs in Australia, the global status of the subspecies is probably also Near Threatened.

Australian population	Estimate	Reliability
Extent of occurrence	2,000,000 km <sup>2</sup>	high
trend	decreasing	high
Area of occupancy	1,000,000 km <sup>2</sup>	low
trend	decreasing	high
No. of breeding birds	30,000,000	low
trend	decreasing	high
No. of sub-populations	20	low
Largest sub-population	25,000,000	low
Generation time	5 years	low
Global population share	90 %	medium
Level of genetic exchange	low	high

### 6 Intraspecific taxa

*P. t. rubeculus* (Pilbara, Kimberley, W. A., Northern Territory and north-western Queensland) is Least Concern.

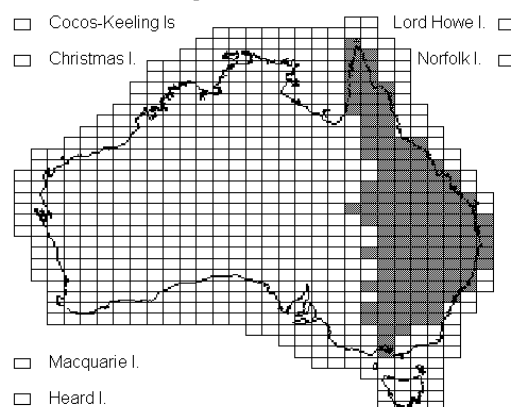
### 7 Past range and abundance

Eastern Australia: from Mt Lofty Ra. to Cape York Peninsula, through most of zone receiving average annual rainfall between 250 and 1,000 mm, but excluding east Gippsland and south-eastern New South Wales (Blakers *et al.*, 1984, Schodde and Mason, 1999). The same subspecies occurs in southern New Guinea. *P. t. temporalis* intergrades with *P. t. rubeculus* in a broad zone between Karumba, Burketown and Longreach (Schodde and Mason, 1999).

### 8 Present range and abundance

Extinct in South Australia (Robinson and Traill, 1996) where last bird recorded at Bangham in 1980 (Houston, 1981), and in the Australian Capital Territory, where last seen about 1970 (A. Overs). Endangered in Victoria (Emison *et al.*, 1987, Schulz, 1991, Davidson and Robinson, 1992), where about

2,000 individuals remain (Emison *et al.*, 1987, Traill *et al.*, 1996). Also declining in New South Wales and south-east Queensland (Robinson and Traill, 1996, Reid, 1999, Traill and Duncan, 2000, C. Stephens, A. Overs) but over remainder of range in Queensland common and widespread.



### 9 Ecology

Grey-crowned Bblers live in open forest and woodland, acacia shrubland and adjoining farmland (Blakers *et al.*, 1984, Emison *et al.*, 1987), feeding on invertebrates taken from the ground or the trunks and foliage of the vegetation (Blakers *et al.*, 1984). They live in extended family parties, which are essential for both the co-operative feeding of young, and predator avoidance (King, 1980).

### 10 Threats

The Grey-crowned Babbler is one of a suite of species that have declined in woodlands in south-eastern Australia (Robinson, 1994, Robinson and Traill, 1996, Reid, 1999). Habitat not already cleared is in fragments from which the bblers gradually disappear. The primary cause of disappearance is the social consequences of fragmentation, including smaller group size and reduced breeding success, less effective immigration and emigration and stochastic events that affect small populations. Once lost from a fragment, natural recolonisation is unlikely (Robinson and Traill, 1996, D. Robinson).

### 11 Recommended actions

- 11.1 Determine characteristics of biology that make species susceptible to fragmentation.

- 11.2 Protect all woodland in which Grey-crowned Babblers are known to be resident from clearing, monitoring compliance biennially.
- 11.3 Secure all Grey-crowned Babbler sub-populations found on public land through conservation management, particularly those in timber reserves or transport corridors or on local government land.
- 11.4 Within the babbler's range, manage at least 15% of the pre-European area of all woodland communities on public or private land for nature conservation, using incentives where necessary.
- 11.5 Using appropriate incentives, undertake extension with land-holders that have suitable woodland habitat to promote sound management of remnants and encourage greater connectivity between sub-populations.
- 11.6 Promote revegetation and land reclamation that recreates woodland habitat with a full complement of biodiversity, including the babbler.
- 11.7 Control and reduce firewood collection from areas occupied by Grey-crowned Babblers, promoting wood-lot development close to markets, and reduce grazing densities where necessary.
- 11.8 Undertake long-term monitoring of remnant sub-populations.
- 11.9 Investigate the feasibility of consolidating small sub-populations into high quality remnants.

## 12 Bibliography

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### Comments received from

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