

RECOVERY OUTLINE

Golden Whistler (Norfolk Island)

1	Family	Pachycephalidae
2	Scientific name	<i>Pachycephala pectoralis xanthoprocta</i> Gould, 1838
3	Common name	Golden Whistler (Norfolk Island)
4	Conservation status	Vulnerable: D2

5 Reasons for listing

A decline in the population now appears to have halted leaving a small, stable population at a single location (Vulnerable: D2).

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

6 Intraspecific taxa

There are about 70 other subspecies in other parts of Australia and on islands in the south-west Pacific Ocean. *P. p. contempta* (Lord Howe I.) is Vulnerable. All other Australian subspecies (Schodde and Mason, 1999) are Least Concern, including *P. p. queenslandica* (wet tropics), *P. p. pectoralis* (central Queensland to northern New South Wales), *P. p. youngi* (south-eastern mainland Australia), *P. p. glaucura* (Tasmania) and *P. p. fuliginosa* (mallee regions).

7 Past range and abundance

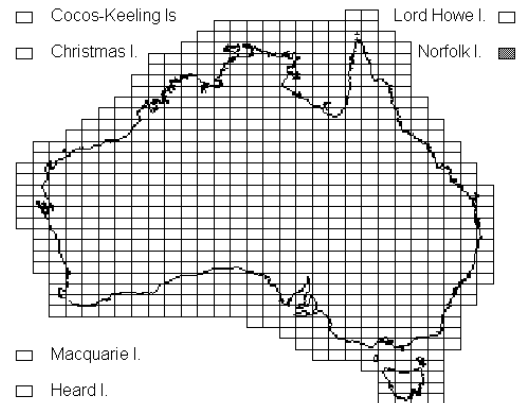
Endemic to Norfolk I., where it probably occurred in all forest habitats.

8 Present range and abundance

Largely confined to the Norfolk Island National Park and nearby forested areas. A steady decline recorded through 1960s and 1970s, but subspecies still present over nearly half the island in 1978 (Schodde *et al.*, 1983). By 1990, virtually confined to Norfolk Island National Park (Bell, 1990) and the population reduced to 535 pairs (Robinson, 1988). Recent estimates suggest the population has now stabilised (Robinson, 1997).

9 Ecology

The Norfolk Island subspecies of Golden Whistler prefers the shrubby understorey of rainforest, palm forest and indigenous pine forest (Smithers and Disney, 1969), but also uses plantations of exotic species. It has been recorded in, or at the edges of, pockets of suitable habitat throughout the island, but does not occur near gardens (Schodde *et al.*, 1983).



10 Threats

Much suitable habitat has been cleared or fragmented, and the subspecies appears to be confined to the largest tract of remaining forest. The reason for the recent population decline, and the principal continuing threat is probably predation by Black Rats *Rattus rattus* (introduced in the mid 1940s; Robinson, 1988). Cats may also take some birds (Bell, 1990).

11 Information required

None.

12 Recovery objectives

- 12.1 Maintain a stable population in Norfolk Island National Park.
- 12.2 Introduce subspecies to Phillip I.

13 Actions completed or under way

- 13.1 Progressive weed removal is taking place in the National Park.
- 13.2 Rat baiting and cat trapping is occurring in Norfolk Island National Park.
- 13.3 Responsible cat ownership on Norfolk I. is being encouraged through sponsorship of a cat de-sexing clinic, and a ban on the importation of reproductively-competent cats is being supported.
- 13.4 Rabbits have been removed from Phillip I.

14 Management actions required

- 14.1 Monitor population using bird-watchers' records and through census every 5 years.
- 14.2 Introduce to Phillip I. following revegetation.

- 14.3 Impose strict quarantine on any vessels visiting Phillip I.
- 14.4 Establish cooperative rodent control programs island wide, with a view to rat eradication.
- 14.5 Enhance rat baiting and cat trapping on Norfolk I. and monitor its efficacy.

15 Organisations responsible for conservation
Environment Australia, Norfolk Island Administration.

16 Other organisations involved
Norfolk Island Fauna and Flora Society, Norfolk Island Conservation Society.

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

<i>Staff resources required 2001-2005</i>	1.0	<i>Project Officer</i> ¹
	1.0	<i>Technical Officer</i> ¹
<i>Financial resources required 2001-2005</i>		

<i>Action</i>	<i>Conservation agencies</i>	<i>Other funding sources</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Monitoring</i> ²	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$20,000
<i>Introduce to Phillip I.</i> ²	\$18,000	\$0	\$18,000
<i>Rat baiting in Norfolk Island National Park</i> ¹	\$10,000	\$0	\$10,000
<i>Cooperative rodent control on Norfolk I.</i> ¹	\$10,000	\$0	\$10,000
<i>Cat trapping Norfolk I.</i> ¹	\$5,000	\$0	\$5,000
<i>Encourage responsible cat ownership on Norfolk I.</i> ¹	\$2,000	\$0	\$2,000
<i>Total</i>	\$55,000	\$10,000	\$65,000

¹ Cost divided among all threatened taxa on Norfolk I.

² Cost divided among all threatened terrestrial taxa on Norfolk I.

18 Bibliography

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