

## TAXON SUMMARY

# Little Kingfisher (Torres Strait)

1	Family	Alcedinidae
2	Scientific name	<i>Alcedo pusilla pusilla</i> (Temminck, 1836)
3	Common name	Little Kingfisher (Torres Strait)
4	Conservation status	Near Threatened: e

### 5 Reasons for listing

The Australian population of this subspecies probably contains fewer than 1,000 mature individuals (Vulnerable: D1) and is confined to two small islands with a combined area of less than 100 km<sup>2</sup> (D2). The global status, however, is Least Concern and genetic interchange is likely to be substantial. The Australian status has therefore been downgraded (as per Gärdenfors *et al.*, 1999) to Near Threatened: e (genetic interchange beyond borders).

Australian population	Estimate	Reliability
Extent of occurrence	300 km <sup>2</sup>	high
trend	stable	high
Area of occupancy	95 km <sup>2</sup>	high
trend	stable	high
No. of breeding birds	1,000	low
trend	stable	high
No. of sub-populations	2	high
Largest sub-population	1,000	low
Generation time	4 years	low
Global population share	< 1 %	high
Level of genetic exchange	high	high

### 6 Intraspecific taxa

*A. p. halli* (eastern Queensland and now known from west coast Cape York Peninsula: M. Todd) and *A. p. ramsayi* (north-western Australia) are both Least Concern. Six other subspecies from New Guinea, eastern Indonesia and the south-west Pacific; global status of species is Least Concern.

### 7 Past range and abundance

Northern Torres Strait islands, extending to New Guinea and islands of the Arafura Sea, possibly to the Moluccas (Schodde and Mason, 1997). Mixing with *A. p. halli* may occur across Torres Strait.

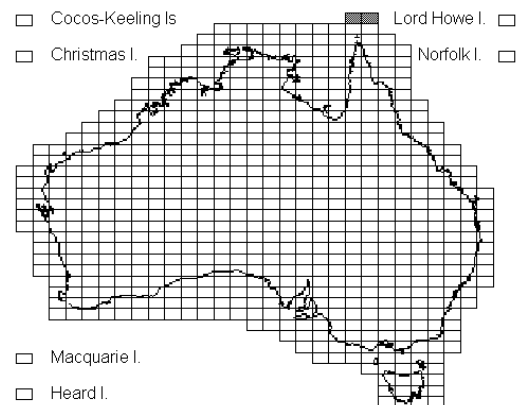
### 8 Present range and abundance

As above.

### 9 Ecology

This subspecies of Little Kingfisher lives in mangroves, feeding along sheltered waterways and

nesting in tunnels in stream banks (Draffan *et al.*, 1983, Schodde and Mason, 1997).



### 10 Threats

There are no immediate threats except, perhaps, those posed to low islands by rising sea levels.

### 11 Recommended actions

- 11.1 Initiate community-based ecotourism business promoting the islands' unique avifauna. Monitoring of sub-populations and habitat could then be undertaken by visiting bird-watchers and local rangers.

### 12 Bibliography

- Draffan, R. D. W., Garnett, S. T. and Malone, G. J. 1983. Bird of the Torres Strait: An annotated list and biogeographic analysis. *Emu* 83:207-234.
- Gärdenfors, U., Rodriguez, J.P., Hilton-Taylor, C., Hyslop, C., Mace, G., Molur, S. and Poss, S. 1999. Draft guidelines for the Application of IUCN Red List Criteria at National and Regional Levels. *Species* 31-32:58-70.
- 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  
Geoff Dews, Stan Wright.