

TAXON SUMMARY

Rufous Bristlebird (Coorong)

1	Family	Pardalotidae
2	Scientific name	<i>Dasyornis broadbenti broadbenti</i> (McCoy, 1967)
3	Common name	Rufous Bristlebird (Coorong)
4	Conservation status	Least Concern

5 Reasons for listing

This species occupies only 600 km², but there is a stable population of about 12,000 mature individuals (so not Vulnerable: C), nor is the population either severely fragmented (so not B) or restricted to a single location (so not C2b). Nor can it be listed as Near Threatened, as neither range nor density has declined by over 50% (so not a or c), and the population is more than 3,000 (so not d).

	Estimate	Reliability
Extent of occurrence	2,500 km ²	medium
trend	stable	medium
Area of occupancy	600 km ²	low
trend	stable	medium
No. of breeding birds	12,000	low
trend	stable	medium
No. of sub-populations	2	low
Largest sub-population	8,000	low
Generation time	5 years	low

6 Intraspecific taxa

D. b. litoralis (south-western Western Australia; Schodde and Mason, 1999) is Extinct, *D. b. caryochrous* (Otways, Vic.) is Vulnerable and the species as a whole is Near Threatened. Definition of subspecies follows Schodde and Mason (1999). The species as a whole is Near Threatened.

7 Past range and abundance

Near-coastal environments from Port Fairy, Vic., to the mouth of the Murray R., S. A., a distance of about 400 km (Schodde and Mason, 1999). Along the Coorong occurs both on mainland coast, and opposite, along the Younghusband Peninsula (Condon 1968, Parker and Reid, 1978). Near Portland it extends about 40 km inland (Emison *et al.*, 1987). Unconfirmed reports of previous occurrence further inland, in areas that have been cleared for agriculture (Parker and Reid, 1978).

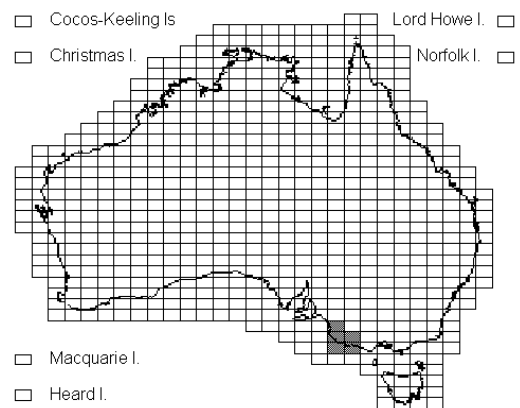
8 Present range and abundance

Coastal distribution as above, although distribution may now be interrupted around Kingston, Port MacDonnell, Portland and other coastal towns.

9 Ecology

Rufous Bristlebirds occupy dense thickets of coastal scrub and cliff-top heathland (Peter, 1999), as well as

dense tea tree *Leptospermum lanigerum* around coastal wetlands and in gullies (Emison *et al.*, 1987). Birds tolerate human settlement, if suitable habitat occurs, and forage in gardens near thick native vegetation (Parker and Reid, 1978, Reilly, 1991). The Rufous Bristlebird makes a nest near the ground in a grass tussock or dense bush. It lays 2 eggs, from which only one chick will usually fledge (Beruldsen, 1980).



10 Threats

Historically, Rufous Bristlebirds have declined as a result of clearance for agriculture and coastal urban development. Although this has largely stopped, the population has been fragmented. Grazing by rabbits and modification of habitat by exotic weeds could also have long-term effects (SAOA, 1991). Predation is thought to be a threat, particularly by foxes (SAOA, 1991), but the species persists in areas that have been occupied by foxes for 150 years. Concern has also been expressed about rates of infertility (SAOA, 1991): although the normal clutch size is two, one egg is invariably infertile (n=10 nests; Beruldsen, 1980).

11 Recommended actions

- 11.1 Monitor persistence at a sample of sites throughout range.
- 11.2 Proscribe further clearance of coastal vegetation.
- 11.3 Encourage planting of corridors to link sub-populations.

12 Bibliography

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Cox and Garnett (1992).

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