

TAXON SUMMARY

Red-headed Honeyeater (Torres Strait)

1	Family	Meliphagidae
2	Scientific name	<i>Myzomela erythrocephala infuscata</i> Forbes, 1879
3	Common name	Red-headed Honeyeater (Torres Strait)
4	Conservation status	Near Threatened: e

5 Reasons for listing

The Australian population of this subspecies is confined to three small islands with a combined area of about 100 km² (Vulnerable: 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	210 km ²	high
trend	stable	high
Area of occupancy	100 km ²	medium
trend	stable	high
No. of breeding birds	3,000	low
trend	stable	high
No. of sub-populations	3	high
Largest sub-population	2,000	low
Generation time	5 years	low
Global population share	< 1 %	high
Level of genetic exchange	high	high

6 Intraspecific taxa

M. e. erythrocephala (northern coasts) is Least Concern. There is one other subspecies on the Sumba Is.

7 Past range and abundance

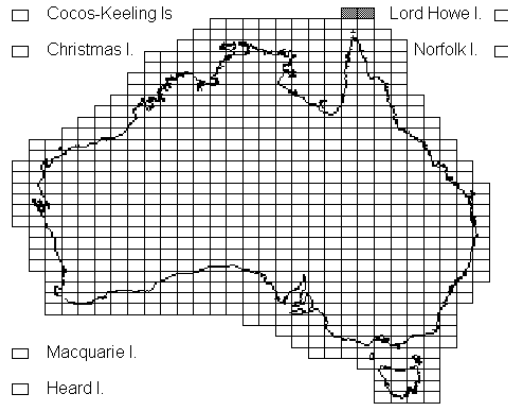
A New Guinea subspecies whose distribution extends to Boigu, Dauan and possibly Saibai Is (Draffan *et al.*, 1983, Schodde and Mason, 1999).

8 Present range and abundance

As above.

9 Ecology

In northern Torres Strait, this subspecies of Red-headed Honeyeater lives primarily in mangroves, although it is also widespread in other habitats (Draffan *et al.*, 1984). It builds a cupped nest, in which it lays 2 eggs (Beruldsen, 1980).



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

Beruldsen, G. R. 1980. *A Field Guide to Nests and Eggs of Australian Birds*. Rigby, Adelaide.

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., Rodríguez, 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. 1999. *The Directory of Australian Birds: Passerines*. CSIRO, Collingwood, Victoria.

Comments received from

Geoff Dews, Stan Wright.