

## RECOVERY OUTLINE

# Southern Emu-wren (Eyre Peninsula)

1	Family	Maluridae
2	Scientific name	<i>Stipiturus malachurus parimeda</i> Schodde & Weatherly, 1981
3	Common name	Southern Emu-wren (Eyre Peninsula)
4	Conservation status	Vulnerable: D2

### 5 Reasons for listing

This subspecies is listed as Vulnerable (D2) because it occurs at few locations in an area of occupancy of less than 100 km<sup>2</sup>. It could possibly be listed as Endangered, as the single area of occupancy covers only 100 km<sup>2</sup> (B1), and a single major fire could cause a decrease in area of occupancy (B2b), quality of habitat (c) and number of mature individuals (e). Vulnerability to fire would further reduce the single population of about 2,000 mature birds (C2b). However, recent fire history within this subspecies' range suggests that no fire will burn all the habitat, and that habitat from one fire will recover before the next fire occurs in the same area, allowing recolonisation of the population from remnants. Any decline from fire will thus be temporary and can be considered part of the natural variation, though status after a fire would need immediate reassessment.

	Estimate	Reliability
Extent of occurrence	1,200 km <sup>2</sup>	medium
trend	stable	medium
Area of occupancy	100 km <sup>2</sup>	low
trend	stable	low
No. of breeding birds	2,000	low
trend	stable	low
No. of sub-populations	1	low
Generation time	2 years	low

### 6 Intraspecific taxa

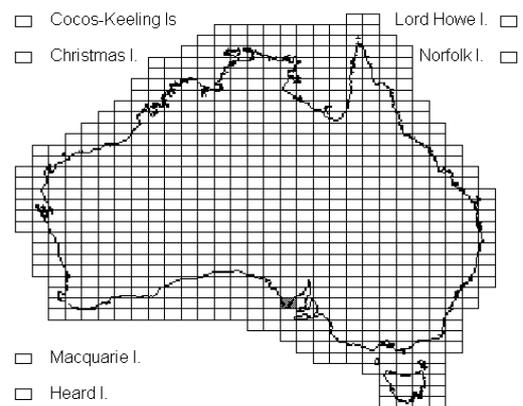
*S. m. intermedius* (Fleurieu Peninsula) is Critically Endangered and *S. m. hartogii* (Dirk Hartog I.) is Vulnerable. The remaining subspecies *S. m. malachurus* (south-eastern Australia), *S. m. littleri* (Tasmania), *S. m. halmaturina* (Kangaroo I.), *S. m. westernensis* (south-western Australia) and *S. m. polionotum* (south-eastern S. A. and western Vic.; Schodde and Mason, 1999) are Least Concern, as is the species.

### 7 Past range and abundance

Southern Eyre Peninsula, S. A., from Coffin Bay and Wanilla to Sleaford Bay, West Point and the Koppio Hills. Undoubtedly more widespread, but no further historical records available (Storr, 1947, Schodde and Weatherly, 1981, Schodde, 1982, Morgan, 1982, Schodde and Mason, 1999).

### 8 Present range and abundance

Range contracted to south coast of Eyre Peninsula, including Coffin Bay, Wangary, Wanilla, Sleaford Bay and West Point, though some intervening areas that have been cleared are unoccupied.



### 9 Ecology

The damp coastal and subcoastal heath occupied by the Southern Emu-wren on Eyre Peninsula is dominated by cutting grass *Gahnia* and paperbark *Melaleuca* (Storr, 1947). The subspecies also occurs in drier habitat on sand dunes in which low dense bushes are separated by bare ground, including areas of heath dominated by mallee eucalypts. The emu-wrens may use this habitat when it is regenerating from fire (Morgan, 1982). The emu-wrens build domed nests in dense vegetation and usually lay 3-4 eggs (Rowley and Russell, 1997).

### 10 Threats

In the past, patches of suitable habitat were probably continuous, but they have since been fragmented by clearance for agriculture and altered fire frequency outside conservation reserves. As a result, when isolated sub-populations are extirpated, recolonisation is prevented. Though clearance has now largely ceased, extensive fire remains a threat to those patches of habitat that remain (Garnett, 1992).

### 11 Information required

11.1 Determine current distribution and abundance.

## 12 Recovery objectives

- 12.1 Secure existing sub-populations.  
12.2 Re-establish extirpated sub-populations where suitable habitat exists.

## 13 Actions completed or under way

- 13.1 None.

## 14 Management actions required

- 14.1 Institute appropriate fire management at remaining sub-populations.  
14.2 Investigate former habitat to test whether reintroduction possible.

- 14.3 If population found to be dangerously small and if suitable habitat is available, use techniques developed in Western Australia for captive breeding and release.

## 15 Organisations responsible for conservation

South Australian Department of Environment and Heritage.

## 16 Other organisations involved

Bird-watching societies, Adelaide Zoo, aviculturists, private land-holders.

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

Staff resources required 2001-2005 0.5 Project Officer<sup>1</sup>

Financial resources required 2001-2005

Action	Conservation agencies	Other funding sources	Total
Survey of sub-populations and habitat suitability	\$15,000	\$5,000	\$20,000
Fire management	\$30,000	\$0	\$30,000
Captive breeding and release <sup>1</sup>	\$10,000	\$100,000	\$110,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$55,000</b>	<b>\$105,000</b>	<b>\$160,000</b>

<sup>1</sup> Costs apply only if surveys indicate action is necessary

## 18 Bibliography

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Morgan, T. D. 1982. Further sightings of the Southern Emu-wren from Eyre Peninsula. *S. Aust. Ornithol.* 29:22.

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Schodde, R. 1982. *The Fairy-Wrens. A Monograph of the Maluridae*. Lansdowne Editions, Melbourne.

Schodde, R. and Mason, I. J. 1999. *The Directory of Australian Birds: Passerines*. CSIRO, Collingwood, Victoria.

Schodde, R. and Weatherly, R. G. 1981. A new subspecies of the Southern Emu-wren *Stipiturus malachurus* from the Eyre Peninsula with notes on its affinities. *S. Aust. Ornithol.* 28:169-170.

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### Comments received from

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