

## RECOVERY OUTLINE

# Black-faced Sheathbill (Heard Island)

1	Family	Chionididae
2	Scientific name	<i>Chionis minor nasicornis</i> Reichenow, 1904
3	Common name	Black-faced Sheathbill (Heard Island)
4	Conservation status	Vulnerable: D1+2

### 5 Reasons for listing

The subspecies has a single, small population (Vulnerable: D1) at a single location (D2).

	Estimate	Reliability
Extent of occurrence	80 km <sup>2</sup>	high
trend	stable	high
Area of occupancy	50 km <sup>2</sup>	medium
trend	stable	high
No. of breeding birds	500	medium
trend	stable	medium
No. of sub-populations	1	high
Generation time	10 years	low

### 6 Intraspecific taxa

The three other subspecies, *C. m. minor* (Kerguelen Is), *C. m. crozettensis* (Crozet Is) and *C. m. marionensis* (Prince Edward I.) are not found in Australian territory. Species status is Least Concern.

### 7 Past range and abundance

Endemic to Heard I., foraging along the shoreline, probably staying near the island at all times (Marchant and Higgins, 1993). Population estimated at 100-1,000 (Woehler, 1991).

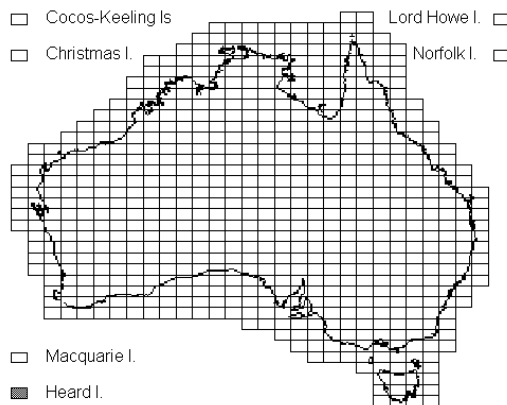
### 8 Present range and abundance

As above.

### 9 Ecology

Black-faced Sheathbills are omnivorous scavengers found on subantarctic islands (Marchant and Higgins, 1993, Jouventin *et al.*, 1996). In the warmer months, they mainly scavenge from seals and birds, taking meat, blood, eggs, excreta and/or milk. During winter, when few other vertebrates remain on the islands, algae taken from rocks. They also take a range of invertebrates and, on other islands, scavenge among human refuse. Breeding pairs are highly territorial, and make their nests under rocks on scree slopes (Marchant and Higgins, 1993, E. Woehler). Their

breeding coincides with that of other seabirds, especially penguins, on which they prey to provide food for nestlings (Marchant and Higgins, 1993, Jouventin *et al.*, 1996).



### 10 Threats

Any taxa represented only by a small, isolated population is vulnerable to catastrophe. Decreases in the number of either seabirds or seals could have an adverse impact on the Black-billed Sheathbill.

### 11 Information required

None.

### 12 Recovery objectives

12.1 Maintenance of the existing population.

### 13 Actions completed or under way

13.1 Population is surveyed opportunistically.

### 14 Management actions required

None.

### 15 Organisations responsible for conservation

Australian Antarctic Division.

### 16 Other organisations involved

None.

17 Staff and financial resources required for recovery to be carried out  
*Staff resources required 2001-2005* 0.1 *Technical Officer (monitoring)*<sup>1</sup>  
*Financial resources required 2001-2005*

<i>Action</i>	<i>Conservation agencies</i>	<i>Other funding sources</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Monitoring breeding population</i> <sup>1</sup>	\$6,100	\$0	\$6,100
<i>Total</i>	\$6,100	\$0,000	<b>\$6,100</b>

<sup>1</sup> Costs of monitoring shared among 17 threatened taxa

## 18 Bibliography

Jouventin, P., Bried, J. and Ausilio, E. 1996. Life-history variations of the Lesser Sheathbill *Chionis minor* in contrasting situations. *Ibis* 138:732-741.

Marchant, S. and Higgins, P. J. (eds) 1993. *Handbook of Australian, New Zealand and Antarctic Birds. Vol. 2. Raptors to Lapwings*. Oxford University Press, Melbourne.

Woehler, E. J. 1991. The status and conservation of seabirds of Heard Island and the McDonald Islands. Pp. 263-277 in *Seabird Status and Conservation*. ICBP Tech. Publ. No 11. Croxall, J.P. (ed.). ICBP, Cambridge, U.K.

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