

TAXON SUMMARY

Short-tailed Grasswren

1	Family	Maluridae
2	Scientific name	<i>Amytornis merrotsyi</i> Mellor, 1913
3	Common name	Short-tailed Grasswren
4	Conservation status	Least Concern

5 Reasons for listing

Although this species is patchily distributed through apparently suitable habitat (suggesting fragmentation of a once more continuous range), it has disappeared from less than 50% of its known former range, and an isolated sub-population has been discovered recently. There are too many sub-populations and the total population is too large for the species to be considered Vulnerable.

	Estimate	Reliability
Extent of occurrence	40,000 km ²	medium
trend	stable	medium
Area of occupancy	500 km ²	low
trend	stable	low
No. of breeding birds	5,000	low
trend	stable	low
No. of sub-populations	10	low
Largest sub-population	2,000	low
Generation time	3 years	low

6 Intraspecific taxa

None described. Species has recently been re-separated from *A. striatus* (Christidis, 1999, Schodde and Mason, 1999).

7 Past range and abundance

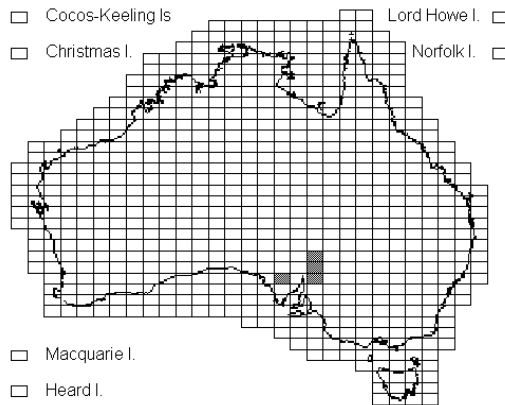
Flinders Ra., S. A. (Schodde and Mason, 1999), and a sub-population was found in the Gawler Ra. in 1997 (P. Paton, L. Pedler).

8 Present range and abundance

Isolated pockets in the Flinders Ra. between Mt Neil in the north and Nelshaby in the south, as well as Gawler Ra. May no longer occur at southern extremity of range near Nelshaby or at Ragless Ra. (Parker, 1982, Schodde, 1982, Blakers *et al.*, 1984, Rowley and Russell, 1997, G. Carpenter, L. Pedler).

9 Ecology

Short-tailed Grasswrens inhabit rocky hillsides covered in large clumps of *Triodia spinifex* (Parker, 1982, G. Carpenter, L. Pedler). They return to habitat about 5 years after a fire. Densities peak 7 years after fire, where large *Triodia* cover 65% of the ground (G. Carpenter). Short-tailed Grasswrens probably build domed nests within spinifex hummocks.



10 Threats

The species' fairly small range is disjunct and individual sub-populations could be extirpated if fires, usually lit by pastoralists, are too frequent (G. Carpenter, L. Pedler). Local extinctions, however, appear to have been few.

11 Recommended actions

- 11.1 Survey known and potential habitat to determine current range and status.
- 11.2 Assess effects of grazing and fire on habitat.
- 11.3 Prepare management guidelines for sub-populations.
- 11.4 Compare genetics and morphology of Gawler Ra. and Flinders Ra. sub-populations.

12 Bibliography

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