

## TAXON SUMMARY

# Speckled Warbler

1	Family	Pardalotidae
2	Scientific Name	<i>Chthonicola sagittata</i> (Latham, 1801)
3	Common Name	Speckled Warbler
4	Conservation status	Near Threatened: c

### 5 Reasons for listing

This species has declined over most of its range (Near Threatened: c), though not at a rate or scale that warrants its listing as Vulnerable.

	Estimate	Reliability
Extent of occurrence	800,000 km <sup>2</sup>	high
trend	stable	high
Area of occupancy	40,000 km <sup>2</sup>	low
trend	decreasing	high
No. of breeding birds	80,000	low
trend	decreasing	high
No. of sub-populations	10	low
Largest sub-population	40,000	low
Generation time	4 years	low

### 6 Intraspecific taxa

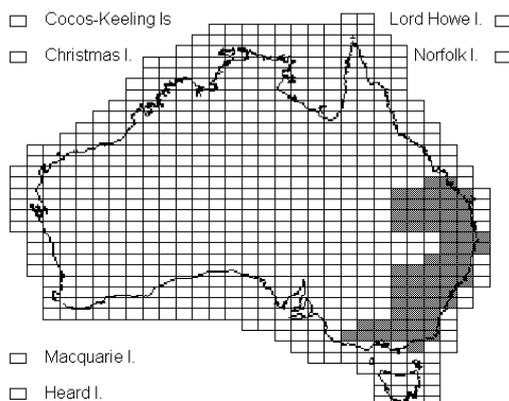
None recognised (Schodde and Mason, 1999).

### 7 Past range and abundance

South-eastern Australia, from south-west Victoria, through eastern New South Wales to central Queensland, mostly on the western slopes and tablelands of the Great Dividing Ra., and on driest sections of coast (Blakers *et al.*, 1984, Traill and Duncan, 2000).

### 8 Present range and abundance

As above, but there appears to have been a decline in density throughout range (Reid, 1999, Traill and Duncan, 2000). There has been a decline of 40% in the last decade in places where no habitat fragments larger than 100 ha have been left (Traill and Duncan, 2000).



### 9 Ecology

Speckled Warblers live in a wide range of eucalypt-dominated vegetation that have a grassy understorey, often on rocky ridges or in gullies. They feed on seeds and insects. The warblers build domed nests on the ground and usually lay 3-4 eggs (Beruldsen, 1980, Tzaros, 1996).

### 10 Threats

Speckled Warblers are one of a suite of species that have declined from woodlands in south-eastern Australia (Robinson and Traill, 1996, Reid, 1999, Traill and Duncan, 2000). Much of the habitat has been cleared. Clearance continues, with smaller fragments gradually losing remnant sub-populations, sometimes more than 30 years after they have been isolated (N. Schrader in Traill and Duncan, 2000). Because the warblers occur at low densities, small patches may contain sub-populations that are vulnerable to local extinction as a result of normal fluctuations, and are unlikely to be recolonised because dispersal abilities across open land appear to be poor. Birds in fragments are particularly vulnerable to nest predation (Gardner, 1998), and nest failure rates of Speckled Warbler can reach 80% (J. Gardner in Traill and Duncan, 2000), which is unlikely to be sustainable. Grazing by stock, kangaroos and rabbits is concentrated in fragments, and results in the loss of the moderately dense ground cover that the warblers require, probably leading to increased nesting failure (Traill and Duncan, 2000).

### 11 Recommended actions

- 11.1 Protect all woodland in which Speckled Warblers are known to be resident from clearing, monitoring compliance biennially.
- 11.2 Secure all Speckled Warbler sub-populations found on public land through conservation management, particularly those in timber reserves or transport corridors or on local government land.
- 11.3 Within the warbler's range, manage at least 15% of the pre-European area of all woodland communities on public or private land for nature conservation, using incentives where necessary.
- 11.4 Using appropriate incentives, undertake extension with land-holders that have suitable

- woodland habitat to promote sound management of remnants and encourage greater connectivity between sub-populations.
- 11.5 Promote revegetation and land reclamation that recreates woodland habitat with a full complement of biodiversity, including the warbler.
- 11.6 Control and reduce firewood collection from areas occupied by Speckled Warblers, promoting wood-lot development close to markets, and reduce grazing densities where necessary.
- 11.7 Undertake long-term monitoring of remnant sub-populations.

## 12 Bibliography

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