

TAXON SUMMARY

White-throated Pigeon (Lord Howe Island)

1	Family	Columbidae
2	Scientific Name	<i>Columba vitiensis godmanae</i> (Mathews, 1915)
3	Common Name	White-throated Pigeon (Lord Howe Island)
4	Conservation status	Extinct

5 Reasons for listing

The last reports of this species were in the 1850s.

6 Intraspecific taxa

Other subspecies are present on islands from South-east Asia to the Pacific, but none reaches Australian territory. Global status of species is Least Concern.

7 Past range and abundance

This subspecies of the White-throated Pigeon was endemic to Lord Howe Island. Some of the first visitors to the island described it as abundant (Hindwood, 1940). Others, even as early as 1791, had difficulty obtaining live specimens (McKean and Hindwood, 1965). Hindwood (1940) suggests thousands were killed for food, but this would have to have been over many years as it is unlikely the island could have sustained such a large population (J. Disney). The subspecies was certainly very rare by 1853 and there are no subsequent records (Hindwood, 1940). No specimens are extant, and the subspecies' identity is known only from paintings.

8 Ecology

The White-throated Pigeon evidently occurred throughout the lowlands of Lord Howe I. and was probably in all wooded habitats. It is likely that the pigeons fed on fruits and seeds (Hutton, 1991).

9 Reasons for extinction

Large numbers of White-throated Pigeons were killed for food, and this was probably the reason for the bird's extinction (Hindwood, 1940).

10 Bibliography

Hindwood, K. A. 1940. The birds of Lord Howe Island. *Emu* 40:1-86.

Hutton, I. 1991. *Birds of Lord Howe Island, Past and Present*. The Author, Coffs Harbour.

McKean, J. I. and Hindwood, K. A. 1965. Additional notes on the birds of Lord Howe Island. *Emu* 64:79-97.

Comments received from
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