

## RECOVERY OUTLINE

# Antarctic Tern (Indian Ocean)

1	Family	Laridae
2	Scientific name	<i>Sterna vittata vittata</i> Gmelin, 1789
3	Common name	Antarctic Tern (Indian Ocean)
4	Conservation status	Endangered: D

### 5 Reasons for listing

The population contains only 50-250 mature adults (Endangered: D), but the subspecies' persistence suggests stability. Global status of the subspecies is Vulnerable: D1. As extralimital populations are probably no more than vagrant to Australian waters, it is assumed that there is little genetic interchange between sub-populations. Australian breeding populations are therefore assessed independently of global status (as per Gärdenfors *et al.*, 1999).

Australian breeding colonies	Estimate	Reliability
Extent of occurrence	60 km <sup>2</sup>	medium
trend	stable	high
Area of occupancy	2 km <sup>2</sup>	high
trend	stable	high
No. of breeding birds	200	medium
trend	stable	medium
No. of sub-populations	1	high
Generation time	10 years	low
Global population share	< 1 %	high
Level of genetic exchange	low	low

### 6 Intraspecific taxa

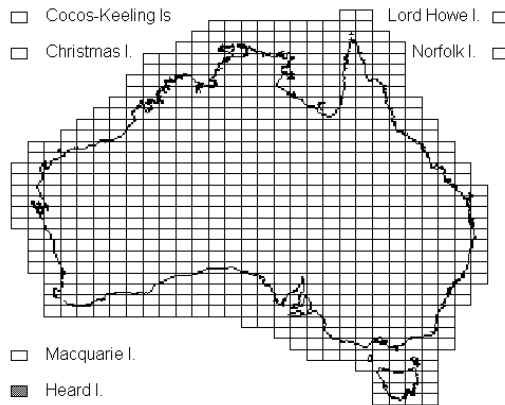
*S. v. bethunei* (Macquarie I, New Zealand subantarctic islands) is Endangered within Australian territory. Three other subspecies occur in the South Atlantic Ocean. Global status of species is Least Concern.

### 7 Past range and abundance

Breeding season: found on and around Heard I., and other subantarctic islands of Indian Ocean (Crozet Is, Kerguelen Is., Prince Edward Is.). Non-breeding season: most birds leave subantarctic islands in winter (Downes *et al.*, 1959). No population estimates before 1970s.

### 8 Present range and abundance

As above. Stephenson Glacier, Heard I. supported 48 nests in 1983 and 13 nests in 1987-8 (Woehler, 1991). Similarly low numbers found on Crozet Is and Prince Edward Is (Williams, 1984, Jouventin *et al.*, 1984). Bulk of population (1,000-2,000 pairs) found on Kerguelen Is (Weimerskirch *et al.*, 1989).



### 9 Ecology

Antarctic Terns nest among rocks and glacial moraine near the coast (Woehler, 1991). During the summer, they feed on fish, crustaceans and other marine invertebrates in kelp beds in waters close to the shore (Downes *et al.*, 1959, Higgins and Davies, 1996). In winter, they forage at the edge of the ice and in patches of unfrozen inshore water (Higgins and Davies, 1996).

### 10 Threats

The very small population on Heard I. is vulnerable to catastrophe. The principal potential threat is accidental introduction of rats, not present on Heard I., as rats prey on nests and may cause desertion of breeding sites (Higgins and Davies, 1996).

### 11 Information required

None.

### 12 Recovery objectives

12.1 Maintenance of the existing population.

### 13 Actions completed or under way

13.1 The population is monitored 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<sup>1</sup></i>	\$6,100	\$0	\$13,000
<i>Total</i>	\$13,000	\$0	<b>\$13,000</b>

<sup>1</sup> Costs of Heard I. monitoring divided among 19 threatened taxa

18 Bibliography

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Comments received from

Tim Reid, Eric Woehler.