

RECOVERY OUTLINE

Brown Thornbill (King Island)

1	Family	Pardalotidae
2	Scientific name	<i>Acanthiza pusilla archibaldi</i> Mathews, 1910
3	Common name	Brown Thornbill (King Island)
4	Conservation status	Critically Endangered: D

5 Reasons for listing

If this subspecies is still extant, it is desperately scarce (Critically Endangered: D). The only reason that it does not fit categories A, B or C is that, if its past decline has not stabilised, it would have to be extinct.

	Estimate	Reliability
Extent of occurrence	5 km ²	low
trend	stable	low
Area of occupancy	5 km ²	low
trend	stable	low
No. of breeding birds	50	low
trend	stable	low
No. of sub-populations	1	low
Generation time	4 years	low

6 Intraspecific taxa

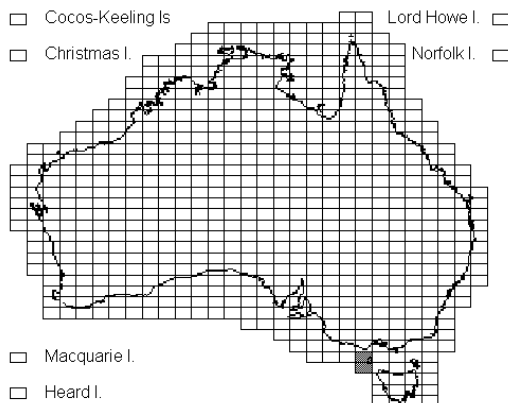
A. p. dawsonensis (eastern Queensland), *A. p. pusilla* (south-eastern Australia), *A. p. diemenensis* (Tasmania) and *A. p. zietzi* (Kangaroo I.) are all Least Concern.

7 Past range and abundance

Endemic to King I., Tas. (Boles, 1983, Schodde and Mason, 1999).

8 Present range and abundance

Last records are from Pegarah Forestry Reserve in 1968 (Green and McGarvie, 1971) and at Loranra about 20 km away in 1971 (McGarvie and Templeton, 1974). Not recorded since, despite searches (P. Brown).



9 Ecology

The King I. subspecies of the Brown Thornbill is a woodland bird. It evidently persisted in the one remaining forest fragment on the island until 1968 (Green and McGarvie, 1971) and was netted in a garden among open farmland in 1971 (McGarvie and Templeton, 1974). Otherwise, the subspecies' ecology is unknown.

10 Threats

It has been suggested that the Brown Thornbill on King I. is suffering from competition with the Tasmanian Thornbill *Acanthiza ewingii rufifrons* (Green and McGarvie, 1971). Though in Tasmania the Tasmanian Thornbill usually favours rainforest, on King I., it appears to have flourished despite extensive clearance, which is undoubtedly the primary cause of the Brown Thornbill's decline. Uncontrolled fire is a threat to remaining pockets of natural habitat, though both species have been recorded in remnants of taller vegetation within the open farmland that now predominates on the island (McGarvie and Templeton, 1974). The abundance of ticks on King I. specimens of Scrubtit *Acanthornis magnus* and White-browed Scrubwren *Sericornis frontalis tregellasi* (Schodde and Mason, 1999) suggests that ticks may be an additional threat to remaining Brown Thornbills.

11 Information required

11.1 Determine causes of rarity.

12 Recovery objectives

12.1 Secure remaining population, if extant.

13 Actions completed or under way

13.1 A survey was undertaken in Pegarah Forestry Reserve, but failed to locate any birds.

14 Management actions required

14.1 Search for subspecies during surveys for Scrubtit.

14.2 If population discovered, attempt management, possibly including treatment for ectoparasites or localised removal of competitors.

15 Organisations responsible for conservation
Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service.

16 Other organisations involved
Local Government, Tasmanian Forestry Commission, bird-watching societies.

17 Staff and financial resources required for recovery to be carried out

Staff resources required 2001-2005 0.2 Project Officer¹

Financial resources required 2001-2005

Action	Conservation agencies	Other funding sources	Total
Determine population size and management requirements ¹	\$10,000	\$1,500	\$11,500
Undertake active management as appropriate ²	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$100,000
Monitoring ¹	\$500	\$1,500	\$2,000
Total	\$60,500	\$53,000	\$113,500

¹ Costs shared among all six threatened King I. taxa: Green Rosella, Orange-bellied Parrot, Scrubtit, Brown Thornbill, Yellow Wattlebird and Black Currawong

² Costs only incurred if subspecies rediscovered

18 Bibliography

Boles, W. E. 1983. A taxonomic revision of the Brown Thornbill *Acanthiza pusilla* (Shaw) 1790 with description of a new subspecies. *Emu* 83:51-58.

Green, R. and McGarvie, A. M. 1971. The birds of King Island. *Rec. Queen Vic. Museum* 40:1-42.

McGarvie, A. M. and Templeton, M. T. 1974. Additions to the birds of King Island, Bass Strait. *Emu* 74:91-96.

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

Comments received from Peter Brown, Sally Bryant, Mark Holdsworth.