

TAXON SUMMARY

Crested Bellbird (southern)

1	Family	Pachycephalidae
2	Scientific name	<i>Oreica gutturalis gutturalis</i> (Vigors & Horsfield, 1827)
3	Common name	Crested Bellbird (southern)
4	Conservation status	Near Threatened: a

5 Reasons for listing

This subspecies has disappeared from well in excess of 50% of its historical range, particularly along the periphery (Near Threatened: a).

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

6 Intraspecific taxa

O. g. pallescens of central and northern arid zone is Least Concern. It has a broad zone of hybridisation with *O. g. gutturalis* that may be clinal (Schodde and Mason, 1999).

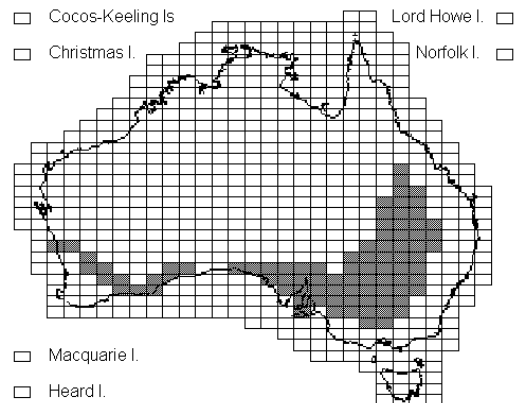
7 Past range and abundance

Drier parts of southern Australia, generally south of 30°S, but north to tropic around Longreach. Extending from south-west Western Australia, south of Nullarbor Plain, across south-central South Australia to northern Victoria and New South Wales west of the Great Diving Ra., extending to coast along Hunter R. valley, north through central Queensland to Longreach (Blakers *et al.*, 1984, Schodde and Mason, 1999). Given the correlation between phenotype and rainfall this subspecies may also have been that represented at Herberon, west of the Atherton Tablelands.

8 Present range and abundance

Has contracted towards the inland in south-western Australia (Saunders and Ingram, 1995), South Australia, Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland (Blakers *et al.*, 1984, Traill and Duncan, 2000). Declines recorded at Langhorne Ck. and Clements Gap, Port Broughton, S. A., where disappeared from one 1,000 ha remnant in early 1980s (L. Pedler). In Victoria, became extinct in 1991 from 5,000 ha Chiltern State Forest (Traill *et al.*, 1996). Other birds in north-central Victoria becoming increasingly isolated. No longer found east of the Great Dividing Ra. in

New South Wales, and rapidly contracting from the western slopes where there were numerous local extinctions from large fragments during the 1980s (Reid, 1999, Traill and Duncan, 2000). The range has also contracted in south-eastern Queensland (Blakers *et al.*, 1984). Disappeared from near Herberon in the 1940s (L. Stewart).



9 Ecology

Crested Bellbirds live in the shrub-layer of eucalypt woodland, mallee, acacia shrubland, *Triodia* hummock grassland, saltbush and heath, where they feed on a variety of insects and seeds (Blakers *et al.*, 1984). A clutch of 2-4 eggs is laid in a cup nest (Beruldsen, 1980).

10 Threats

The Crested Bellbird has been eliminated from much of its former range by clearing. It seems particularly sensitive to subsequent fragmentation, with areas of apparently suitable habitat as large as 5,000 ha now unoccupied (Reid, 1999, Traill and Duncan, 2000). The pattern of contraction of the species from the periphery of its range is characteristic of arid zone birds in Australia (Reid and Fleming, 1992). Clearance and fragmentation does not explain the decline in eastern Queensland, which occurred before the clearing in the area was widespread.

11 Recommended actions

- 11.1 Determine characteristics of biology that make subspecies susceptible to fragmentation.
- 11.2 Protect from clearing all woodland fragments in which subspecies is known to be resident, monitoring compliance biennially.

- 11.3 Where Crested Bellbirds occur on public land, secure habitat with conservation management, particularly in timber reserves, transport corridors and local government land.
- 11.4 Within the range of the southern subspecies of Crested Bellbird, 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.
- 11.5 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.
- 11.6 Promote revegetation and land reclamation that recreates woodland habitat with a full complement of biodiversity, including the bellbird.
- 11.7 Control and reduce firewood collection from areas occupied by Crested Bellbirds, promoting wood-lot development close to markets, and reduce grazing densities where necessary.
- 11.8 Undertake long-term monitoring of remnant sub-populations.

12 Bibliography

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