

RECOVERY OUTLINE

Grey Ternlet (western Pacific)

1	Family	Laridae
2	Scientific name	<i>Procelsterna cerulea albivitta</i> Bonaparte, 1856
3	Common name	Grey Ternlet (western Pacific)
4	Conservation status	Endangered: B1+2e

5 Reasons for listing

Within Australian territory, this subspecies is confined to a small area of occupancy at two breeding localities (Endangered: B1) and a continuing decline is projected in the number of mature individuals. Levels of genetic interchange are assumed to be low so the status of the Australian population has been assessed independently from the global status (as per Gärdenfors *et al.*, 1999), which is Least Concern.

Australian breeding colonies	Estimate	Reliability
Extent of occurrence	1,000,000 km ²	low
trend	stable	high
Area of occupancy	15 km ²	high
trend	stable	high
No. of breeding birds	2,000	low
trend	decreasing	high
No. of sub-populations	2	high
Largest sub-population	1,000	low
Generation time	5 years	low
Global population share	20 %	low
Level of genetic exchange	low	low

6 Intraspecific taxa

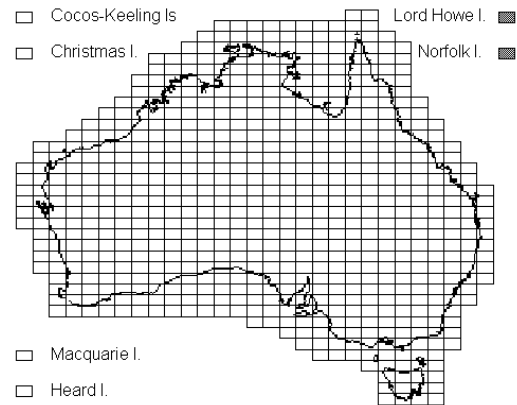
The other six subspecies are restricted to islands in the central and southern Pacific Ocean. The species is Least Concern.

7 Past range and abundance

Breeding recorded Lord Howe I., Balls Pyramid, Norfolk I., Nepean I., Phillip I. and nearby islets in Australian territory and Kermadec Is, Three Kings Is and Bay of Plenty, New Zealand. Non-breeding birds disperse within Pacific Ocean and across Tasman Sea to Australian mainland and offshore islands. Recorded regularly between Brisbane and Sydney, and less often between Rockhampton, Qld, and Mallacoota, Vic. (Higgins and Davies, 1996). No historical measures of abundance.

8 Present range and abundance

Distribution as above. Population estimates: 100-1,000 breeding pairs in vicinity of Lord Howe I. (Fullagar and Disney, 1975, Brown, 1979, Hutton, 1991) and 2,000 birds in vicinity of Norfolk I. (O. Evans).



9 Ecology

Grey Ternlets live on rocky islands in the tropics and subtropics, nesting primarily on cliffs or steep rock-faces. They feed on crustaceans, fish and squid, mainly taken from inshore waters (Higgins and Davies, 1996).

10 Threats

Though spread between two isolated sub-populations, the small size of the Australian population makes it Vulnerable to catastrophe. Scarcity of breeding birds on main islands of Lord Howe and Norfolk Is. suggests vulnerability to rat predation. Population size may have been reduced on Norfolk I. as a result of predation by self-introduced Nankeen Kestrels *Falco cenchroides*, and Marsh Harriers *Circus approximans*, visiting from New Zealand, take some birds (M. Christian, O. Evans).

11 Information required

- 11.1 Determine breeding success on Lord Howe and Norfolk Is. in comparison with their smaller satellite islands.
- 11.2 Assess the need to control Nankeen Kestrels on Norfolk I. and nearby islands.

12 Recovery objectives

- 12.1 Maintain protection for current breeding population, to enable expansion.
- 12.2 Expansion of population on main islands.

13 Actions completed or under way

- 13.1 Strict quarantine is maintained on any vessels visiting Roach I. or Phillip I.

