

## RECOVERY OUTLINE

# Ground Parrot (western)

1	Family	Psittacidae
2	Scientific name	<i>Pezoporus wallicus flaviventris</i> North, 1911
3	Common name	Ground Parrot (western)
4	Conservation status	Endangered: B1+2abcde, C2a

### 5 Reasons for listing

The area occupied by the subspecies is little more than 10 km<sup>2</sup> and severely fragmented, with three relatively isolated sub-populations (Endangered: B1). Frequent fires mean that a continuing decline is expected in extent of occurrence (B2a), area of occupancy (b), quality of habitat (c), number of sub-populations (d) and number of mature individuals (e). The population numbers fewer than 500 mature individuals, is probably declining, and no sub-population exceeds 250 individuals (C2a).

	Estimate	Reliability
Extent of occurrence	1,000 km <sup>2</sup>	high
trend	decreasing	low
Area of occupancy	12 km <sup>2</sup>	low
trend	decreasing	low
No. of breeding birds	400	low
trend	decreasing	low
No. of sub-populations	3	medium
Largest sub-population	250	high
Generation time	5 years	low

### 6 Intraspecific taxa

*P. w. leachi* (Tasmania, including Bass Strait Is) is Least Concern. *P. w. wallicus* (south-east Queensland, eastern New South Wales, southern Victoria) Vulnerable.

### 7 Past range and abundance

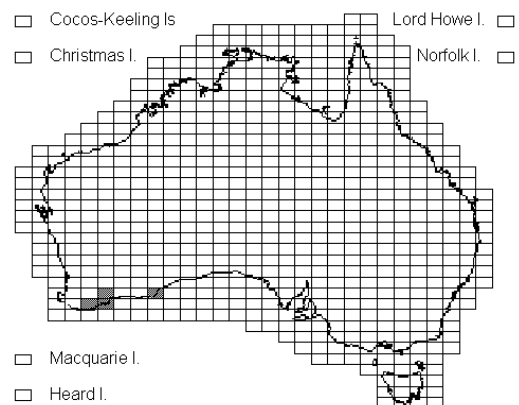
Coastal plains of south-west Western Australia from Perth to Dongara, and from Israelite Bay to Augusta: mean annual rainfall 400–1,300 mm: (Watkins, 1985, Burbidge *et al.*, 1997).

### 8 Present range and abundance

Last recorded on the coastal plain north of Perth at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and west of Albany in 1983. Now restricted to Fitzgerald River National Park (several locations), Cape Arid National Park and Waychinicup-Many Peaks area (Watkins, 1985, Burbidge *et al.*, 1990, 1997, Watkins and Burbidge, 1992, Burbidge, 1996, McNee, 1999). No recent records from Cape Arid National Park, where more comprehensive surveys are currently under way (A. H. Burbidge). Recent reports from west of Albany need confirmation (A. H. Burbidge).

### 9 Ecology

The western subspecies of Ground Parrot lives in floristically diverse heathlands, where it feeds on fruits, seeds and leaves, mostly taken green from the plants (Burbidge *et al.*, 1989). The role of fire may vary between sites. Birds have been recorded using habitat that was last burnt from 5-6 years ago, but the densest sub-populations occur in heath that has not been burnt for at least 35 years (Burbidge, 1999). A mosaic of burning that allows the movement between patches of different post-fire recovery may be more important than the actual time since burning (Burbidge, 1996, Burbidge *et al.*, 1997).



### 10 Threats

The population of the western subspecies of Ground Parrot is both small and fragmented. Clearance for grazing and agriculture is considered responsible for contraction of its distribution, but no longer a threat as most sub-populations now occur in conservation reserves (Burbidge *et al.*, 1997). Frequent burning may have eliminated the subspecies from many vegetation remnants. Fire continues to be the main threat: in December 1997, about 45% of the subspecies' habitat in Fitzgerald River National Park was burnt (Burbidge, 1998). Predation by introduced animals, particularly foxes, may be significant (Burbidge *et al.*, 1997). Suitable captive-breeding and release techniques have not been developed, and are of lower priority than is translocation of surplus birds between patches of suitable habitat (Burbidge *et al.*, 1997). However, management of the subspecies may benefit from development of such techniques using the eastern subspecies in preparation for its re-introduction into South Australia.

- 11 Information required
- 11.1 Elucidate interaction between vegetation structure and Ground Parrot abundance.
- 11.2 Develop alternative detection techniques, in particular use of a national team of dogs trained to locate threatened wildlife by scent.
- 12 Recovery objectives
- 12.1 Improve ecological knowledge required for management.
- 12.2 Obtain accurate information on size and trends in population and distribution.
- 12.3 Improve protection of existing sub-populations.
- 13 Actions completed or under way
- 13.1 Conservation reserves have been gazetted in part for Ground Parrots.
- 13.2 An additional sub-population has been located.
- 13.3 Some sub-populations have been surveyed on several occasions.
- 13.4 A preliminary study of habitat requirements has been undertaken.
- 13.5 *Phytophthora* hygiene programs have been implemented
- 13.6 Fire management guidelines have been produced.
- 13.7 A management plan have been developed for Fitzgerald River National Park, and interim guidelines for management developed for Cape Arid and Waychinicup National Parks that are consistent with the ecological needs of the subspecies.
- 13.8 Recovery of this subspecies is being managed by the Western Australian South Coast Threatened Birds Recovery Team.
- 14 Management actions required
- 14.1 Monitor population size.
- 14.2 Prevent and suppress wildfire.
- 14.3 Contribute to development of techniques for breeding the eastern subspecies of Ground Parrot in captivity.
- 14.4 Review Status after any fire.
- 15 Organisations responsible for conservation  
Western Australian Department of Conservation.
- 16 Other organisations involved  
South Coast Threatened Birds Recovery Team, Birds Australia, World Wide Fund for Nature (Australia).

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

<i>Staff resources required 2001-2005</i>	1.0	<i>Dog handler<sup>1</sup></i>
	0.2	<i>Technical Officer</i>
	0.3	<i>Curator<sup>2</sup></i>

#### *Financial resources required 2001-2005*

<i>Action</i>	<i>Conservation agencies</i>	<i>Other funding sources</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Monitor population by standard methods using volunteers, and analyse links between population size and vegetation structure</i>	\$65,000	\$60,000	\$125,000
<i>Train sniffer dogs<sup>1</sup></i>	\$10,000	\$50,000	\$60,000
<i>Develop captive breeding techniques using eastern subspecies<sup>2</sup></i>	\$9,000	\$50,000	\$59,000
<i>Manage fire in an appropriate manner</i>	\$12,000	\$0	\$12,000
<i>Control and monitor predators</i>	\$12,000	\$0	\$12,000
<i>Continue <i>Phytophthora</i> hygiene program</i>	\$3,500	\$0	\$3,500
<i>Manage the recovery process</i>	\$12,500	\$1,000	\$13,500
<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b>\$124,000</b>	<b>\$161,000</b>	<b>\$285,000</b>

1 Cost shared among Night Parrot, western subspecies of Ground Parrot and possibly button-quail spp., most of expense to be met by private sponsorship.

2 Cost equally shared between Night Parrot and western and eastern subspecies of Ground Parrot.

#### 18 Bibliography

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#### Comments received from

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