

RECOVERY OUTLINE

Painted Button-quail (Houtman Abrolhos)

1	Family	Turnicidae
2	Scientific name	<i>Turnix varia scintillans</i> (Gould, 1845)
3	Common name	Painted Button-quail (Houtman Abrolhos)
4	Conservation status	Vulnerable: D2

5 Reasons for listing

The subspecies is confined to four locations (Vulnerable: D2).

	Estimate	Reliability
Extent of occurrence	20 km ²	high
trend	stable	high
Area of occupancy	12 km ²	high
trend	stable	high
No. of breeding birds	2,000	low
trend	stable	high
No. of sub-populations	4	high
Largest sub-population	1,000	low
Generation time	3 years	low

6 Intraspecific taxa

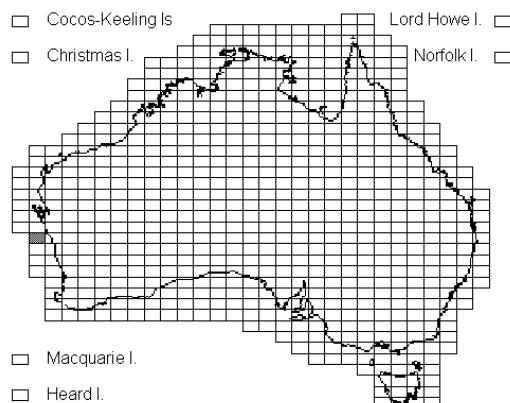
T. v. varia (south-west Australia, Tasmania and eastern Australia) has declined, but is still Least Concern. The species as a whole is also Least Concern.

7 Past range and abundance

Found on North I., East and West Wallabi Is, Seagull I. and Pigeon I. in the Houtman Abrolhos, off central Western Australia (Storr and Johnstone, 1984, Storr *et al.*, 1986).

8 Present range and abundance

As above.



9 Ecology

This button-quail occupies all available habitats on the islands, excluding bare limestone pavements. It particularly favours *Spinifex longifolius* grasslands and flats of coral grit that support Grey Saltbush *Atriplex cinerea* and *Halosarcia halocnemoides* shrubland. It feeds on seeds, small insects and scraps from around fishing camps (Storr *et al.*, 1986), and lays 3 eggs in scrapes under vegetation (Johnstone and Storr, 1998).

10 Threats

The main threats are thought to be fire, introduced predators and introduced competitors. However, the button-quail survived severe fires on North I. in 1935 and 1946, though its numbers may have been temporarily reduced (Storr *et al.*, 1986). House Mice have been introduced to North I. and possibly East Wallabi I. and may compete with the button-quail for food (R. Johnstone), or prey on eggs (P. Moors). None of the islands have larger introduced predators and their accidental introduction could be devastating.

11 Information required

11.1 Study impact, if any, of House Mouse on breeding success and recruitment.

12 Recovery objectives

12.1 Maintain existing sub-populations.

13 Actions completed or under way

13.1 None.

14 Management actions required

14.1 Monitor islands biennially for predators and presence of button-quail in association with other monitoring for conservation purposes.

15 Organisations responsible for conservation

Western Australian Department of Conservation.

16 Other organisations involved

Fisheries Western Australian.

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

Staff resources required 2001-2005 0.05 *Technical Officer*

Financial resources required 2001-2005

<i>Action</i>	<i>Conservation agencies</i>	<i>Other funding sources</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Monitoring population¹</i>	\$5,000	\$0	\$5,000
<i>Determine effects of House Mouse</i>	\$0	\$25,000	\$25,000
<i>Total</i>	\$5,000	\$25,000	\$30,000

¹ In combination with other monitoring for conservation purposes

18 Bibliography

Johnstone, R. E. and Storr, G. M. 1998. *Handbook of Western Australian Birds. Vol. 1. Non-passerines (Emu to Dollarbird)*. W. A. Museum, Perth.

Storr, G. M. and Johnstone, R. E. 1984. The subspecific status of the Painted Button-quail of the Houtman Abrolhos, Western Australia. *Rec. W. Aust. Mus.* 11:315.

Storr, G. M., Johnstone, R. E. and Griffin, P. 1986. Birds of the Houtman Abrolhos, Western Australia. *Rec. W. Aust. Mus. Suppl.* 24.

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