

TAXON SUMMARY

Pictorella Mannikin

1	Family	Ploceidae
2	Scientific name	<i>Heteromunia pectoralis</i> (Gould, 1841)
3	Common name	Pictorella Mannikin
4	Conservation status	Near Threatened: c

5 Reasons for listing

The species' distribution is patchy but, its density has arguably declined by at least half (Near Threatened: c).

	Estimate	Reliability
Extent of occurrence	1,000,000 km ²	high
trend	stable	high
Area of occupancy	50,000 km ²	low
trend	decreasing	medium
No. of breeding birds	50,000	low
trend	decreasing	medium
No. of sub-populations	1	medium
Generation time	2 years	low

6 Intraspecific taxa

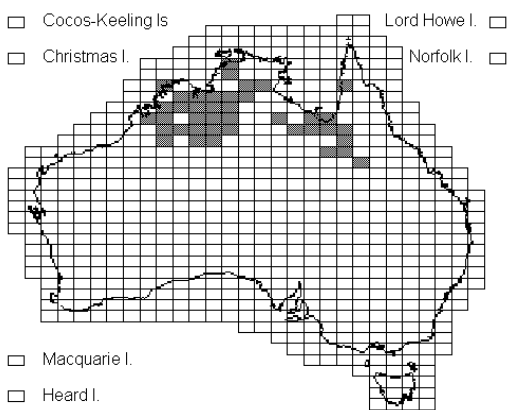
None described.

7 Past range and abundance

Fitzroy R. valley, W. A., to upper Burdekin, and central-western Cape York Peninsula (Blakers *et al.*, 1984).

8 Present range and abundance

As above, but no recent records from the Barkly Tableland or north-east Queensland (Blakers *et al.*, 1984).



9 Ecology

Pictorella Mannikins are found near water in acacia shrublands that have a grassy understorey and in *Triodia* hummock grassland, where they feed on seeds on the ground, as well as insects (Keast, 1958, Immelmann, 1982, Blakers *et al.*, 1984). They appear to be highly mobile, sometimes breeding in eucalypt woodland well north of their usual range (Woinarski and Tidemann, 1991). They build domed grass nests

in low trees or shrubs and lay up to 6 eggs (Immelmann, 1982).

10 Threats

The mobility of *Pictorella* Mannikins (Blakers *et al.*, 1984) makes their status difficult to assess and the analyses of changes in distribution and reporting rate were inconclusive (Franklin, 1999). An increase in the incidence of airsac mite (Bell, 1996), which also affects Gouldian Finch, may be indicative of an imminent decline or environmental stress from other causes. Changes in the burning regime and the introduction of stock including cattle, sheep and horses are likely to have affected the finches, but the mechanism by which this has occurred is unknown.

11 Recommended actions

- 11.1 Determine the effects of patch burning and of grazing on granivorous birds.
- 11.2 Pending the results of research, encourage mosaic burning in the early dry season and early wet season and the spelling of pasture from continuous grazing.

12 Bibliography

Bell, P. J. 1996. Survey of the nasal mite fauna (Rhinonyssidae and Kytoditidae) of the Gouldian Finch, *Erythrura gouldiae*, and some co-occurring birds in the Northern Territory. *Wildl. Res.* 23:675-686.

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Smedley, J. H. 1904. Finches in northern Queensland. *Emu* 4:68-69.

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