

## COORDINATED CONSERVATION PLAN

# Lord Howe Island

### 1 Description

Lord Howe I. Group, a volcanic island chain in the Tasman Sea. Formerly connected, via the Lord Howe Rise, to New Zealand and also has close affinities to Norfolk I. The vegetation is rainforest and cloud forest and scrub, swamp forest, mangrove forest coastal and cliff-top scrub, inland scrub and herbland, tussock grassland, and shoreline and beach vegetation (Pickard, 1983). Ten species of bird have become extinct as a result of hunting, introduced predators and competitors.

### 2 IBRA Regions

Not applicable.

### 3 Core taxa

#### Extinct

White Gallinule

White-throated Pigeon (Lord Howe Island)

Red-crowned Parakeet (Lord Howe Island)

Southern Boobook (Lord Howe Island)

Lord Howe Gerygone

Grey Fantail (Lord Howe Island)

Vinous-tinted Thrush

Robust White-eye

Tasman Starling (Lord Howe Island)

#### Locally Extinct

Pycroft's Petrel

#### Critically Endangered

Kermadec Petrel (western)

#### Endangered

Lord Howe Woodhen

Grey Ternlet

Pied Currawong (Lord Howe Island)

#### Vulnerable

Providence Petrel

Little Shearwater (Tasman Sea)

White-bellied Storm-Petrel (Tasman Sea)

Masked Booby (Tasman Sea)

Golden Whistler (Lord Howe Island)

Silvereye (Lord Howe Island)

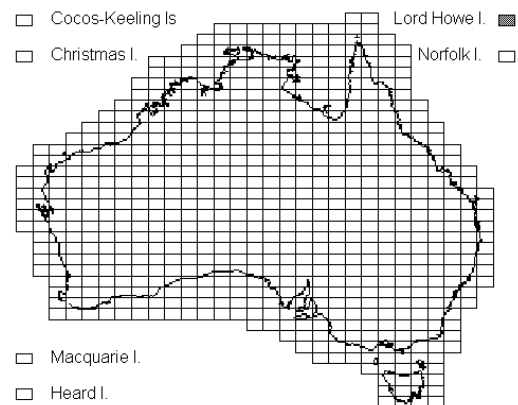
#### Near Threatened

Red-tailed Tropicbird

Sacred Kingfisher (Tasman Sea)

### 4 Conservation issues

The first wave of extinctions followed the landing of the first fleet and earliest visits of whaling vessels when White Gallinules, White-throated Pigeons and Red-



crowned Parakeets were hunted to extinction. The self-introduced Sacred Kingfishers and endemic Pied Currawongs, killed as they were believed to kill poultry, have proved more resilient.

A second suite of species, Lord Howe Gerygone, Grey Fantail, Vinous-tinted Thrush, Robust White-eye and Tasman Starling, and probably Pycroft's Petrel, which is known only from subfossils, became extinct after Black Rats *Rattus rattus* were accidentally introduced from a wrecked ship in 1918. Rats are also thought to have eliminated Kermadec Petrels, Little Shearwaters and White-bellied Storm-Petrels from the main island but they persist on Ball's Pyramid, Roach I. and associated islets. Attempts to control the rats by introduction of the Masked Owl possibly contributed to extinction of the local subspecies of Boobook. Cats, pigs, dogs and goats, also introduced to Lord Howe I. contributed to the decline of the Woodhen and possibly to extinctions of other taxa.

Birds that persist on Lord Howe I. have done so despite predation and competition by introduced species, but small and restricted distributions make the Providence Petrel, Masked Booby, Sacred Kingfisher, Golden Whistler and Silvereye vulnerable to extinction. The inherently small population size of Pied Currawongs, and significant reductions of numbers Grey Ternlets and Lord Howe Woodhens since human settlement, result in these taxa being classified as Endangered.

Control of introduced animals, including the elimination of pigs and near-elimination of goats, has made the island more secure for all threatened species. Lord Howe Woodhen numbers have also been replenished using captive breeding and release. However, such a small island is always liable to catastrophe, such as disease or a new predator.

Strict quarantine is maintained on any vessels visiting offshore islands to prevent the accidental introduction of rats. Masked Boobies still breed on Lord Howe I., despite the presence of rats and cats.

- 5 Recommended management
  - 5.1 Ensure threatened species management is considered in planning and management of Lord Howe I.
  - 5.2 Continue control of introduced predators and goats, and monitor its efficacy.
  - 5.3 Monitor population size and trends, and distribution of terrestrial core taxa.
  - 5.4 Maintain existing bird populations.
  - 5.5 Census seabird populations at least once every five years.
  - 5.6 Develop and implement appropriate land management guidelines
  - 5.7 Involve the island community in conservation management, particularly in predator control.
  - 5.8 Assess the risk of catastrophe, and develop contingency planning.

## 6 Organisations responsible for conservation

New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service.

## 7 Other organisations involved

Lord Howe I. residents, Lord Howe I. Board.

## 8 References

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