

RECOVERY OUTLINE

# White-throated Grasswren

1 Family	Maluridae
2 Scientific name	<i>Amytornis woodwardi</i> Hartert, 1905
3 Common name	White-throated Grasswren
4 Conservation status	Vulnerable: B1+2bcde

5 Reasons for listing

The small area of suitable habitat occupied by this species has been fragmented by fire (B1) and, without proper fire management, a continuing decline is projected (B2) in area of occupancy (b), quality of habitat (c), number of sub-populations (d) and thus number of mature individuals (e).

	Estimate	Reliability
Extent of occurrence	5,000 km <sup>2</sup>	medium
trend	stable	medium
Area of occupancy	2,000 km <sup>2</sup>	low
trend	decreasing	low
No. of breeding birds	8,000	low
trend	decreasing	low
No. of sub-populations	10	low
Largest sub-population	3,000	low
Generation time	3 years	low

6 Intraspecific taxa

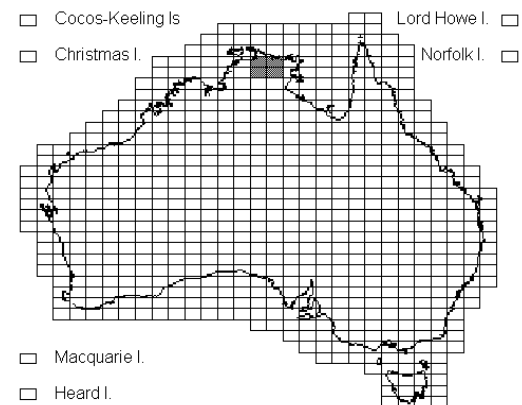
None described.

7 Past range and abundance

North-western Arnhem Land, N. T., on and around the Arnhem Land escarpment, between Katherine and Maningrida (Noske, 1992).

8 Present range and abundance

As above, although a decrease is inferred from the frequency with which the habitat is burnt by late fires and the rate of spread of annual sorghum.



9 Ecology

White-throated Grasswrens occur on bare flat plateaus and stepped or terraced hillsides along broad valleys,

with or without narrow rocky gullies (Schodde and Mason, 1975, Noske, 1992). The habitat is characterised by mature spinifex *Triodia microstachya*, which is used for nesting, and bare rock, with most occupied sites containing bare pavement and/or boulders (Noske, 1992).

10 Threats

Although the rocky escarpment habitat offers protection from most fires (Schodde, 1982, Noske, 1992), the high frequency of extensive hot fires at the end of the dry season and the progressive replacement of spinifex by annual sorghum, means this protection may be only partial, and that gradual attrition of the population is likely (Russell-Smith *et al.*, 1997, J. Russell-Smith).

11 Information required

11.1 Determine extent of movement between sub-populations, using banding and genetic analysis.

12 Recovery objectives

12.1 Retain all known sub-populations.

13 Actions completed or under way

13.1 Baseline surveys have been completed (Noske, 1992).

14 Management actions required

14.1 Repeat surveys of Noske (1992), at each site determining fire history and making recommendations on appropriate conservation management.

14.2 Continue intensive fire management of Kakadu.

14.3 Promote and support traditional fire management throughout western Arnhem Land.

15 Organisations responsible for conservation

Environment Australia (Parks North), Parks and Wildlife Commission of the Northern Territory.

16 Other organisations involved

Traditional owners, mining companies, Northern Territory Bushfires Council.

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

Staff resources required 2001-2005

None

Financial resources required 2001-2005

Action	Conservation agencies	Other funding sources	Total
Determine extent of movements between sub-populations	\$5,000	\$15,000	\$20,000
Repeat surveys	\$10,000	\$0	\$10,000
Arnhem land fire management <sup>1</sup>	\$0	\$0	\$0,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$15,000</b>	<b>\$15,000</b>	<b>\$30,000</b>

<sup>1</sup> Fire management part of routine activities of management authorities

## 18 Bibliography

Noske, R. A. 1992. The status and ecology of the White-throated Grasswren *Amytornis woodwardi*. *Emu* 92:39-51.

Russell-Smith, J., Ryan, P. G. and Durieu, R. 1997. A LANDSAT MSS-derived fire history of Kakadu National Park, monsoonal northern Australia, 1980-94: Seasonal extent, frequency and patchiness. *J. Appl. Ecol.* 34:748-766.

Schodde, R. 1982. *The Fairy-Wrens. A Monograph of the Maluridae*. Lansdowne Editions, Melbourne.

Schodde, R. and Mason, I. J. 1975. Occurrence, nesting and affinities of the White-throated Grasswren *Amytornis woodwardi* and White-lined Honeyeater, *Meliphaga albilineata*. *Emu* 75:12-18.

### Comments received from

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