



BIRD

Coturnix ypsilophora

Brown Quail

AUS	SA	AMLR	Endemism	Residency
-	V	V	-	Nomadic



Photo: © Brian Furby

Conservation Significance

The AMLR distribution is part of a limited extant distribution in adjacent regions within SA. The species has been described as 'probably declining' within the AMLR.² Within the AMLR the species' relative area of occupancy is classified as 'Extremely Restricted'. Relative to all AMLR extant species, the species' taxonomic uniqueness is classified as 'High'.³

Description

Small, plump ground-dwelling bird, variable in colour, ranging from red brown to grey brown with fine white streaks and black barring above and chestnut brown below. Eye is red to yellow, bill black and legs and feet orange-yellow. Females are larger and may be more heavily marked with black and paler below than males. Young birds are like adult females, with less distinct markings and a dark brown eye. Quails rarely fly, preferring to hide unless flushed by an intruder; they then fly low to the ground, with a rapid whirring flight.¹

Distribution and Population

Found across northern and eastern Australia, from the Kimberley region in WA to VIC and TAS, as well as in south-western Australia. Also found in Papua New Guinea and Indonesia, and has been introduced to NZ.¹

Nomadic, moving to wherever suitable feeding and breeding conditions are available.¹

Post-1983 AMLR filtered records sparsely distributed

throughout the region from One Tree Hill in the north to Port Elliot in the south and from Onkaparinga in the west to Callington in the east.³

Pre-1983 AMLR filtered records indicate few occurrences; most in the Adelaide metropolitan area and one in the Willunga area.³

In the MLR it was once 'often seen' but now occurs irregularly. The movement of the species into SA is poorly understood, but influxes from outside SA occur irregularly, with populations persisting for several years at favoured sites (G. Carpenter *pers. comm.*).

Habitat

Cryptic species that occurs in dense crops (especially oats), irrigated pastures, rank grasslands and sedgeland, especially where native species predominate, and often bordering swamps (G. Carpenter *pers. comm.*).

Prefers dense grasslands, often on the edges of open forests and bracken.¹

Within the AMLR the preferred broad vegetation groups are Grassland, Grassy Woodland and Wetland.³

Biology and Ecology

Feeds in the early morning or evening, on the ground, mainly on seeds and green shoots, but also on insects. In some areas, quails will feed along roadsides.¹

Breeding season August to May, but can vary. Well-hidden nest is a scrape in the ground, lined with grass, hidden in thick grass under over-hanging vegetation and not far from water. Clutch size of seven to ten eggs with an incubation period of 14 days. Both sexes incubate the eggs. Young birds leave the nest straight after they hatch.¹

Aboriginal Significance

Post-1983 records indicate the AMLR distribution occurs in all Aboriginal Nations - Kurna, Ngadjuri, Nganguraku, Ngarrindjeri and Peramangk.³

Threats

Current direct threats have been identified and rated for this species. Refer to the main plan accompanying these profiles.

Further information:

Biodiversity Conservation Unit, Adelaide Region
Phone: (61 8) 8336 0901 Fax: (61 8) 8336 0999
<http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/>

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Prepared as part of the Regional Recovery Plan for Threatened Species and Ecological Communities of Adelaide and the Mount Lofty Ranges, South Australia 2009 - 2014



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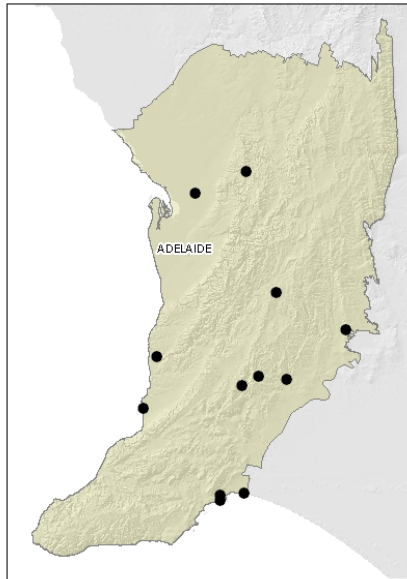


ADELAIDE AND MOUNT LOFTY RANGES SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Threatened Species Profile

Department
for Environment
and Heritage

Regional Distribution



Map based on filtered post-1983 records.³ Note, this map does not necessarily represent the actual species' distribution within the AMLR.

References

Note: In some cases original reference sources are not included in this list, however they can be obtained from the reference from which the information has been sourced (the reference cited in superscript).

1 Australian Museum (2005). *Birds in Backyards: Bird Finder*. Available from <http://www.birdsinbackyards.net> (accessed November 2007).

2 Cale, B. (2005). *Towards a Recovery Plan for the Declining Birds of the Mount Lofty Ranges*. Scientific Resource Document for Birds for Biodiversity. Unpublished Report.

3 Department for Environment and Heritage (2007). *Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges Regional Recovery Pilot Project Database*. Unpublished data extracted and edited from BDBSA, SA Herbarium (July 2007) and other sources.

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