



BIRD

Phaps elegans

Brush Bronzewing

AUS	SA	AMLR	Endemism	Residency
-	-	U	-	Resident



Photo: © Chris Ross

Conservation Significance

The species has been described as 'probably declining' within the AMLR.¹ Within the AMLR the species' relative area of occupancy is classified as 'Very Restricted'. Relative to all AMLR extant species, the species' taxonomic uniqueness is classified as 'High'.²

Description

Robust, medium sized pigeon with small rounded head, deep chest, short rounded wings and short tail. Uniform rich brown above and blue grey below, with a rufous brown to light brown forehead and dark maroon eye stripes that join on nape. Buff cheek stripe and chestnut chin. At rest wings appear rufous brown, boldly barred with blue-grey and black with iridescent patch of green/purple. Underwings rufous brown. Legs and feet red. Call is a repeated 'hoo, hoo, hoo, hoo'.³

Distribution and Population

Endemic to Australia. Found in SE QLD, NSW coastal areas and inland to the central and southern highlands. Occurs throughout VIC except in the northern regions. Also in south-west WA.³

Widespread in SA through southern regions from the South East through to Kangaroo Island and Yorke Peninsula to Streaky Bay. Infrequently found inland but recorded in the Murray Mallee region.³ Population size is unknown but thought to be in

decline due to habitat clearance.³ Uncommon in MLR.⁶

The coastal strip between Torrens Island and Port Gawler is significant for this species. Has also been sighted at Black Hill CP, Port Gawler CP, Horsnell Gully CP, Belair NP, Aldinga Scrub CP and Para Wirra RP.⁶

Post-1983 AMLR filtered records from Kaiserstuhl CP in the north to southern Fleurieu Peninsula.²

Habitat

Prefers habitats with a dense shrub layer, e.g. low grassy heathland often near coasts and wet or dry sclerophyll forests and woodlands with understorey of dense shrub or heath. Also occurs in dense mallee.³

Within the AMLR the preferred broad vegetation groups are Heathy Woodlands, Coastal and Shrubland.²

Biology and Ecology

Usually seen singly or in pairs and occasionally in family parties. Feeds on seed/grain from the ground by walking and pecking. Wary and secretive, often flushing at close range with a loud clatter of wings.³

Breeds in any month but mostly October to January. Nest is a shallow saucer of twigs in a dense, low shrub, sometimes on the ground in low cover. Clutch size is two eggs with the sexes sharing the incubation for 16-18 days. Young fledge by three weeks. If flushed from the nest, the adults will readily desert the nest.^{3,5}

Aboriginal Significance

Post-1983 records indicate the AMLR distribution occurs in all Aboriginal Nations - Kurna, Ngadjuri, Nganguraku, Ngarrindjeri and Peramangk.²

Threats

Reasons for population decline and continuing threats include:

- habitat loss due to land clearance
- predation (its low nest is easy for foxes and cats to access)
- climate change (adapted to cool moist environments and does not cope well with heat and water scarcity).⁴

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

Further information:

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Phone: (61 8) 8336 0901 Fax: (61 8) 8336 0999
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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



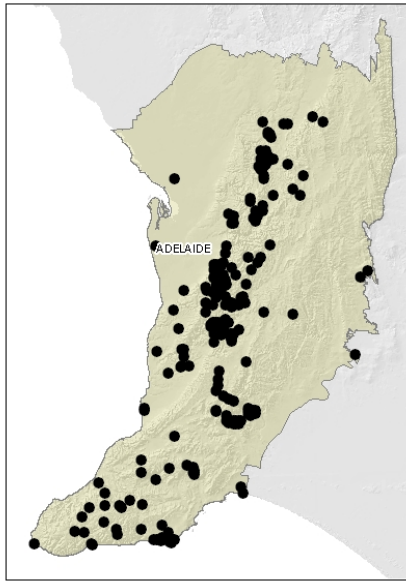
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ADELAIDE AND MOUNT LOFTY RANGES SOUTH AUSTRALIA Threatened Species Profile

Department
for Environment
and Heritage

Regional Distribution



Map based on filtered post-1983 records.² 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 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.

2 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.

3 Higgins, P. J. and Davies, S. J. J. F., eds. (1996). *Handbook of Australian, New Zealand and Antarctic Birds. Volume 3: Snipe to Pigeons*. Oxford University Press, Melbourne.

4 Larcombe, A. N., Withers, P. C. and Maloney, S. K. (2003). Thermoregulatory physiology of the Crested Pigeon *Ocyphaps lophotes* and the Brush Bronzewing *Phaps elegans*. *Journal of Comparative Physiology B* 173: 215-222.

5 Morcombe, M. (2000). *Field Guide to Australian Birds*. Steve Parish Publishing Pty Ltd, Queensland.

6 Turner, M. S. (2001). *Conserving Adelaide's Biodiversity: Resources*. Urban Forest Biodiversity Program, Adelaide.

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