



BIRD

Cacomantis flabelliformis

Fan-tailed Cuckoo

| AUS | SA | AMLR | Endemism | Residency |
|-----|----|------|----------|----------------------|
| - | - | V | - | Migratory Breeder |



Photo: © Tom & Marie Tarrant (www.aviceda.org)

Conservation Significance

The species is regarded as declining within the AMLR (D. Paton *pers. comm.*). Relative to all AMLR extant species, the species' taxonomic uniqueness is classified as 'High'.⁴

Description

Slender cuckoo. Adult bird is easily identified by yellow eye ring (slightly greenish in young birds), generally dark slate-grey back and wings, becoming pale rufous below, with a boldly barred black and white under tail. Younger birds are duller and browner in colour. Call is a mournful, descending trill.²

Distribution and Population

Found throughout eastern Australia, south-western WA and TAS. Birds in TAS migrate to the mainland in the non-breeding season. Also occur in New Caledonia, New Guinea, Fiji, NZ and other Pacific islands.²

Breeds in the AMLR and migrates inland over winter.^{1,5}

Post-1983 AMLR filtered records most densely distributed along the spine of the MLR from Rowland

Flat south to the tip of the Fleurieu Peninsula. Also multiple scattered records along the coast and near Monarto.⁴

Pre-1983 AMLR filtered records are limited to the Adelaide metropolitan area and surrounding MLR. Multiple records in the suburban Adelaide area suggests there has been a decline in this zone since 1984.⁴

Habitat

Among the more commonly seen members of the cuckoo family, especially in the favoured habitat of open forests, woodlands and similarly vegetated gardens. Individuals are often seen perched on an exposed branch when calling.²

Within the AMLR the preferred broad vegetation group is Heathy Forest.⁴

Biology and Ecology

Nationally, breeding season is August to December in the east; June to October in the south-west.

As with most other species of Australian cuckoos, is a brood parasite, laying its egg in the nests of other species of birds. Host species include flycatchers, fairy-wrens, scrub-wrens and thornbills, particularly the Brown Thornbill. A single egg is laid in the nest and one of the host's eggs is removed. The young cuckoo generally hatches earlier (incubation period of 13 days) than the host's eggs and proceeds to eject the other eggs or hatchlings. The seemingly unaware foster parents then rear the cuckoo chick.²

Prey on hairy caterpillars, but will also take a variety of other insects and their larvae. Food is located from an exposed perch and is seized in flight or on the ground, returning to its perch to eat.²

Aboriginal Significance

Post-1983 records indicate the AMLR distribution occurs in all Aboriginal Nations - Kurna, Ngadjuri, Nganguraku, Ngarrindjeri and Peramangk.⁴

Threats

Loss or degradation of its preferred habitat and that of the 'foster' parent species.³

Additional 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



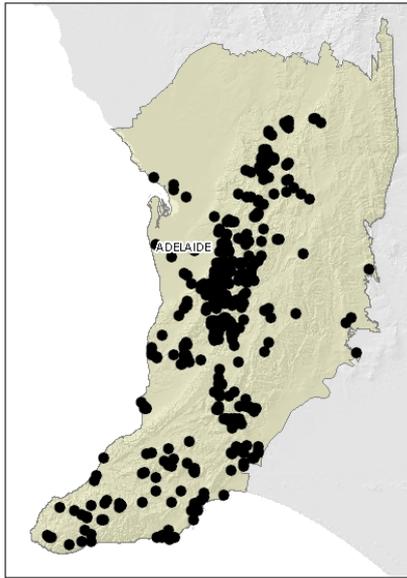


ADELAIDE AND MOUNT LOFTY RANGES SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Threatened Species Profile

Department
for Environment
and Heritage

Regional Distribution



Map based on filtered post-1983 records.⁴ 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 Armstrong, D. M., Croft, S. N. and Foulkes, J. N. (2003). *A Biological Survey of the Southern Mount Lofty Ranges, South Australia, 2000-2001*. Department for Environment and Heritage, South Australia.

2 Australian Museum (2006). *Birds in Backyards: Bird Finder*. Available from <http://www.birdsinbackyards.net> (accessed November 2007).

3 Brooker, M. and Brooker, L. (2003). Brood parasitism by Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo in a fragmented agricultural landscape in Western Australia. *Emu Austral Ornithology* 103 (4): 357-361

4 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.

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

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