



BIRD

Daphoenositta chrysoptera chrysoptera

Varied Sittella

AUS	SA	AMLR	Endemism	Residency
-	-	U	-	Resident



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

Conservation Significance

The species has been described as 'probably declining' within the AMLR.² 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'.³

Description

Small, short-tailed, dumpy bird usually heard before it is seen in the upper branches. Five subspecies, differing in the patterns on the head and neck, the amount of streaking and in the wing patterns. Iris orange-yellow; eye-ring, legs and feet yellow. Bill long and slender, slightly up-turned. All adults are greyish above and white below, with varied streaking. Upper tail coverts are pale, with dark-barring underneath. Tail is dark with a white tip. Usually seen in flocks, moving swiftly between trees or foraging busily over branches or the trunk. The distinctive shape, size, calls and foraging behaviour make this species unmistakable.¹

Distribution and Population

Endemic and widespread on mainland Australia.¹

Breeding populations probably now no longer occur on the Adelaide Plains.⁴

Post-1983 AMLR filtered records scattered throughout the region, excluding the Adelaide metropolitan area and northern plains. Most records from the central spine of the MLR.³

Pre-1983 AMLR filtered records limited.³

Habitat

Found in Eucalypt woodlands and forests preferring rough-barked trees such as Stringybarks and Ironbarks or mature trees with hollows or dead branches.¹

Within the AMLR the preferred broad vegetation groups are Heathy Woodland, Grassy Woodland and Mallee.³

Biology and Ecology

Feed mainly by gleaning on tree trunks or branches, moving downwards or along branches, searching for insects. They land at the top of a tree and work downwards, searching and poking into cracks and under bark, chattering noisily.¹

Nest a deep open cup, like a cone, of bark and spider web, decorated on the outside with long pieces of bark, camouflaged to look like the fork or branch where it is placed. Usually breeds cooperatively, with the breeding pair having several helpers. Will sometimes also breed as pairs. Only the breeding female incubates the eggs and broods the young.¹

Aboriginal Significance

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

Threats

Range-wide may have declined in some areas following the clearing of habitat and removal of woodland.¹

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



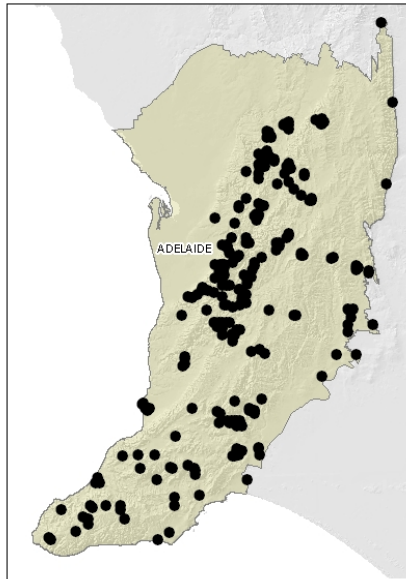
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ADELAIDE AND MOUNT LOFTY RANGES SOUTH AUSTRALIA Threatened Species Profile

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 (2006). *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.

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

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