



BIRD

Epthianura albifrons

White fronted Chat

AUS	SA	AMLR	Endemism	Residency
-	-	U	-	Resident



Photo: © Tony Crittenden (www.tcphotos.net)

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'.³

Description

Males have a white face, breast and belly, dissected by a distinctive black band across the breast that extends around to the back of the head. Females have similar markings but have gradations of grey-brown, rather than black-white, and the breast band is narrower. Immature birds are similar to the female, but the breast band is very faint or missing. Call is short 'tangs' sounding like a plucked rubber band.¹

Distribution and Population

Occur across southern Australia (including TAS) from Shark Bay in WA around to the QLD/NSW border. Mostly sedentary, although there may be some nomadic movements, particularly in the drier areas of its range.¹

Post-1983 AMLR filtered records focused around the coast to the north of Adelaide, and in pockets around Onkaparinga River, Aldinga and Waipinga. Scattered records also exist inland, around Mount Compass, Currency Creek, Monarto and in the

Barossa.³

Limited pre-1983 AMLR filtered records focused around Adelaide and surrounding Hills, with single records for Second Valley, Inman Valley, Myponga, Woodchester and Two Wells.³

Habitat

Occur in salt marsh and other damp areas with low vegetation such as swampy farmland and roadside verges. Sometimes occur on beaches and the edges of lakes.¹ In the AMLR mostly found in coastal shrublands, heaths and very low shrubland.⁴

Within the AMLR the preferred broad vegetation groups are Shrubland, Wetland and Coastal.³

Biology and Ecology

Often forage in flocks of around 20 birds that congregate in areas where there are temporary outbreaks of insects. They run along the ground, picking up small insects, usually less than 5 mm long. Midges, kelp-flies, plant bugs and beetles are popular food items.¹

Breeding season from August to January. Clutch size two to three with an incubation period of 14 days. Chicks are in the nest for 14 days.¹

Breeding adults form pairs towards the end of winter, while they feed in flocks. Sometimes nest in loose colonies, with nests as close as 5 m to each other. Males defend a small nest-site territory, but not necessarily for a whole breeding season. Second clutches will often be laid in locations that are different from earlier nests. Males follow their mates closely, during their fertile period, watching them from prominent perches, and chasing any males that may approach them. The female builds the nest (guarded closely by the male at all times), but both sexes take equal roles in incubation and feeding of young.¹

Aboriginal Significance

Post-1983 records indicate the majority of the AMLR distribution occurs in Kaurna Nation. Also occurs in Ngarrindjeri, Peramangk and Ngadjuri Nations.³

Threats

Draining and filling of swamps for housing has eliminated much of the habitat of this species in areas of high human population density.¹

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

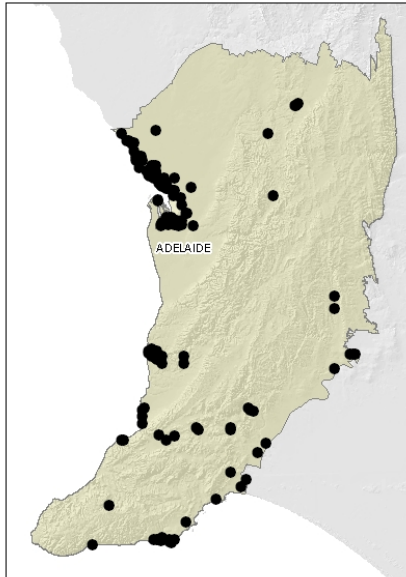


ADELAIDE AND MOUNT LOFTY RANGES SOUTH AUSTRALIA Threatened Species Profile

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

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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