

Threats to Kangaroo Island's birds cards



Photo: Ken Bissett


birdlife
AUSTRALIA

Activity 2: Musical habitats

In Activity 2: Musical habitats, students play a musical chairs game that illustrates the impact of threats on Kangaroo Island's birds. These cards are for the teacher to read out when students are eliminated from the game after the removal of their chair or 'habitat'.

Habitat loss

Birds like cockatoos, owls and even ducks need large hollows to nest in. Smaller birds and animals rely on standing or fallen hollows for shelter. Hollows take many years to form and many were burnt. They are removed for fences, road safety and firewood.

Habitat loss

To try to prevent it carrying fire, important understory vegetation is being removed. Many shrub-dependent species are being impacted.

Habitat loss

Plantation forest trees are being felled and burnt, with a change of land use back to farming. Many species have come to rely on plantations as they have replaced their natural habitats. These birds will be displaced by forest removal.

Habitat loss

When land is cleared for agriculture or other development, important habitat is lost. If areas of native vegetation are not retained and protected, our birds will not have the food, shelter or nest sites they need to survive.

Habitat loss

A wildfire burnt a large area of habitat, and the small areas that did survive are too far away for smaller birds to travel between. The habitat is 'fragmented' and the birds no longer have enough food or shelter. They cannot reach other birds of their species for breeding.

Disease

Vehicles and machinery move wet clay and soil over large areas. Some contains *Phytophthora cinnamomi*, a water mould in the soil, which kills native and agricultural plant species. Heathy shrubs are dying and there is less protection from predators.

Disease

Disease is being spread through unclean surfaces by birds gathering at bird feeders. Feeding wildlife changes natural behaviour and can also cause health and growth problems in young.

Feral animals

A feral cat has been roaming in the area, preying on birds and other wildlife. They are excellent hunters and very hard to catch or control.

Domestic pets

Uncontrolled pet dogs disturb nest sites, which makes breeding difficult for birds.

Pet cats that are allowed outside catch and kill birds and other wildlife.

Predation

A recent fire has left birds with little to eat so they gather around the food sources that are left. With nowhere else to hide, feral cats, goannas and birds of prey can find them more easily. Many birds fall prey to predators.

Habitat loss

Native vegetation is cleared for a new development. Birds and other wildlife have lost their habitat and have less food, water, shelter and nest sites.

Habitat loss and predation

Feral pigs have been in the area and have destroyed important habitat. Nests that are low or on the ground are trampled, or eggs eaten. This leaves few safe places for birds to nest and bring up the next generation.

Wildfire

A wildfire burns into important habitat. While some birds and wildlife perish, others are able to move to nearby habitat through roadside corridors of vegetation.

Competition for resources

Due to habitat loss nearby, more birds and wildlife have moved into this area. There is not enough food, shelter or nesting sites for all these species to survive.

Competition for resources

Due to a large bushfire that destroyed extensive habitat many birds did not survive. There is not enough food, shelter or space for the surviving birds to find the food, shelter and nesting sites they need.

Competition for resources

European Honeybees bees take over the hollows that birds need to nest and raise their young. There are less hollows now, and many birds can't find one in time to lay their eggs.

Competition for resources

European Honeybees compete with the native birds and insects for nectar. They are aggressive and feed early in the day and leave less for other species.

Overgrazing

Some birds and other wildlife can coexist with farming, but this area has been overgrazed and cleared of native vegetation. The food, shelter and nesting sites of birds has been destroyed. Smaller birds are the most impacted.

Climate change

The impacts of climate change are being felt. There are longer periods of drought and longer, hotter summers and some birds and other wildlife will be impacted.

Climate change

The impacts of climate change are being felt. There are more bushfires, and they are bigger, faster and hotter. There is less time in between fires for habitats, birds and wildlife to recover.

Climate change

The impacts of climate change are being felt. There are more severe weather events and coastal habitats are eroding.

Climate change

The impacts of climate change are being felt. There are more severe weather events and the seasons are changing. This changes normal flowering and breeding times and plants, animals, insects and fungi are impacted.

Weeds

After a recent fire, weeds are growing quicker and in higher numbers than native plants. Native trees, grasses, flowers and fungi species are affected, leaving less flowers, seeds and insects.

Chemicals

There is a mouse plague and people use poison baits to kill them in and outside. Some poisons kill the mice slowly, making them easy to catch for predators, like owls and birds of prey. These poisons can kill the native predators that help to control the mouse population.