

Introduction

AIMS OF THE ACTION PLAN

This is the third iteration of the *Action Plan for Australian Birds*, updating Garnett (1992) and Garnett and Crowley (2000), and follows much the same form and style to provide consistency. The aims of these Action Plans are to:

- provide a national overview of the conservation status of all birds occurring in Australian territory against IUCN Red List categories and criteria
- identify threats and recommend actions to minimise those threats
- identify habitats or areas of particular importance for bird
- identify information gaps, recommend conservation research and management actions.

The IUCN Red List is not a statutory list. As such we often are able to be more precautionary than is possible in legislative schedules, as well as react more quickly to threats, or the diminution of those threats. Some of the recommendations of this Action Plan may be incorporated into the *Environmental Conservation and Biodiversity Protection Act 1999* and other equivalent legislation in the States and Territories. However, such legislative procedures must usually take account of more than the risk of extinction if they are to be legally binding. However, what this Action Plan does is provide a picture of the status of Australia's birds as of 2010 against a single set of criteria using a consistent methodology.

METHODS

Reassessment of the status of Australian species and subspecies of birds was undertaken in four stages.

In early 2010, a complete list of the species and subspecies of Australian birds was assembled. Each taxon was

assessed against the IUCN Red List Guidelines Version 8.1 (IUCN Standards and Petitions Subcommittee 2010). The IUCN Red list protocols consist of a set of rules that make up a logic tree; if a species is assessed to be consistent with the specifications of any one of five rule sets, it may be classified at that level. Interpretations of the rules require data on a range of features that reflect the likelihood of extinction including adult population size, geographic range and occupancy, trends in population size and habitat, severe fluctuations and habitat fragmentation. The guidelines used in 2010 have been refined significantly from the version of the IUCN Red List Guidelines used for *The Action Plan for Australian Birds 2000* (IUCN 1994).

The initial assessments were tested in workshops held in all Australian State and Territory capital cities as well as in Townsville, Queensland. Knowledgeable individuals from state and federal governments and the wider ornithological community were invited to these workshops to discuss the status of all taxa in their area, and any other taxa on which they had particular expertise. At the same time the draft list was widely disseminated among the birdwatching community, soliciting comments, as well as being sent to members of the Birds Australia Threatened Species Committee. There was also discussion outside the workshops with experts holding particular knowledge of specific taxa.

Detailed texts were prepared for all taxa that were to be listed as threatened or near threatened in the 2010 Action Plan. In the course of preparing these texts some new information came to light. When this occurred, experts were again consulted to determine whether they concurred with the interpretation of the new material. While the status is current as of 31 December 2010, final comments were incorporated up to 1 June 2011.

For all but nine taxa, agreement was reached during workshops or in subsequent discussions. For these nine,