



Department of
Environment and
Conservation

Our environment, our future

RECOVERY TEAM ANNUAL REPORT

THREATENED SPECIES AND/OR COMMUNITIES RECOVERY TEAM

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Recovery Team

South Coast Threatened Birds

Reporting Period

Submission date 31 March

DATE FROM: 1 January 2012

DATE TO: 31 December 2012

Current membership

Member**Representing****Chair**

Sarah Comer

Regional Ecologist, DEC South Coast Region, Albany.

Exec Officer

Abby Berryman

Conservation Officer (WGP Captive Project), DEC South Coast Region, Albany.

members

Deon Utber

Regional Leader, Nature Conservation, DEC South Coast Region, Albany.

Alan Danks

Community representative

Allan Burbidge

Principal Research Scientist, Wildlife Research Centre, DEC, Wanneroo.

Manda Page

Principal Zoologist, DEC Species and Communities Branch, Kensington

Brad Barton

Regional Leader Nature Conservation, DEC Warren Region, Manjimup.

Karlene Bain

District Nature Conservation Coordinator, DEC Warren Region, Walpole.

Juanita Renwick

Western Shield Coordinator, DEC Nature Conservation Division, Kensington.

Stephen Butler

District Nature Conservation Coordinator, DEC South Coast Region, Esperance.

John Blyth

Ex WATSCU, now community and Birdlife WA representative

Brenda Newbey

Birdlife WA representative, community member

Shapelle McNee

Consultant, Community member

Anne Bondin

Albany Birdwatchers Group, 'Friends of the

		Western Ground Parrot' representative, Community member
	David Edmonds	District Veterinarian (Denmark), Community member.
Dates meetings were held		3 April and 6 November 2012
Highlights of achievements for the previous 12 months suitable for publication in WATSNU and contribution to DEC annual report. Provide 1-2 paragraphs summarising total number of new populations located, surveys completed, list major management actions etc		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Second year of translocations of Noisy Scrub-birds to Angove completed, with initial signs that this reintroduction is progressing well. Four, and possibly six of the males released in 2011 were still singing in May 2012. Four females and two males, captured on Bald Island, were released in June 2012.• Surveys of Noisy Scrub-bird sub-populations were completed for Mt Gardner and Bald Island. While the index for Mt Gardner was low (111 singing males) Bald Island remains stable despite the removal of birds for translocations with 115 singing males.• Successful with several funding applications to allow continuation of the Integrated Fauna Recovery Project (IFRP) work targeting integrated predator management of key south coast conservation reserves and survey and monitoring of western ground parrots.• Maintenance of captive Western Ground Parrots, with one pair attempting to breed (unsuccessfully).• Automated Recording Units (ARUs) have proved to be very useful for detecting ground parrots, and are now being used regularly to provide an increased level of confidence in volunteer surveys and for surveys in remote areas.
List of recovery actions coordinated by Recovery Team Detail under the headings below the recovery actions undertaken during the reporting period. Provide separate detail for each species/community against each action. For species/community-specific recovery teams, the generic activity types below can be replaced by the specific recovery actions from the recovery plan where appropriate.		
Monitoring and survey of existing and new populations/ occurrences, targeted surveys, critical habitat mapped etc.	Western Ground Parrot <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Further trials of ARUs, which were distributed in Cape Arid National Park (CANP) Jan-Apr 2012• Survey with the Friends of the WGP to Nuytsland Nature Reserve in November 2012. This involved seven volunteers and use of ARUs. No WGPs were heard. One night spent listening at Pasley (CANP) during this trip – WGPs heard and flushed.• Fitzgerald River National Park (FRNP) - Hamersley Drive surveyed with six volunteers. Nothing heard at Hamersley Drive. Some listening also done at Short Rd, a few 'maybes' heard.• Cheynes swamp – nine ARUs deployed in this area, no calls recorded• ARUs were deployed in the FRNP Wilderness during biological survey work in November 2012, no WGPs were detected.• ARU monitoring points established in CANP in October 2012 in conjunction with predator work. This will allow access to a much larger area for monitoring of WGPs using ARUs, and also to assess habitat suitability for WGPs. Noisy Scrub-bird <ul style="list-style-type: none">• At the Angove Water Reserve (translocation site from 2011) at least four, possibly five out of six males released in 2011 were still present and singing in May 2012• The population index for Mt Gardner was 111 singing males	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Census of Bald Island was completed; with 115 singing males recorded (steady). <p>Western Bristlebird</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A survey of an area proposed in FRNP for a prescribed burn (FRNP_Cell8_HB01) was conducted and birds were heard in northern section. Burn delayed and further survey work required
<p>Threat amelioration eg weed control/mapping, fencing/ repairs, fire management disease management, feral/ introduced animal control, installation of roadside markers</p>	<p>Feral Predator Control</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 23 cats captured and radio-collared (18 of these were GPS collars) in CANP in January 2012 to assess baiting efficacy. Eradicat® baits dropped in CANP in mid-February. Eradicat® baits were dropped in FRNP Mid-March (coinciding with Western Shield fox baiting). Non-toxic Eradicat® baits dropped in Two Peoples Bay / Manypeaks 13th February to assess non-target uptake. Problems with the cat collars (collar failure, signals not able to be picked up or collars not dropping off on schedule) meant that limited data were collected. At least five of the ten cats with good collars are believed to have died as a result of baiting. Remote camera monitoring of introduced predator activity in CANP has been established for use in the 2013 baiting program to support collar data on baiting efficacy. 70 camera monitoring points established in October 2012 to test occupancy model for cats pre and post baiting. The access required for this has provided an opportunity to establish a network of ARUs for assessing habitat and monitoring WGP over a much larger area than has previously been possible. An amendment to register Eradicat® baits for use within Two Peoples Bay and Mt Manypeaks has been sought from the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority and it is hoped that the trials will be able to start in 2013. <p><u>Fire management</u></p> <p>Two Peoples Bay/Manypeaks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed introduction of fire onto Mt Gardner postponed until a third Gilbert's Potoroo population established. Burn will probably take place in 2014. Angove fire prescriptions on six year rotation but unlikely to affect NSB potential habitat as fire is unlikely to enter gully systems. Proposal for prescription at Manypeaks on east side of potoroo fence. Mermaid prescription to add to burn already completed to provide separation from Waychinicup. Another burn planned for west side of Cheynes Beach Road (no NSB or WGP habitat in this area). Proposed Angove and Sinker reef burns probably will not happen/postponed following the Two Peoples Bay fire in October 2012. <p>Cape Arid NP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal to introduce fire 150m deep along northern side of Fisheries Track for a minimum of 50km to provide protection for WGP habitat. Cape Arid airstrip has been upgraded (for baiting) and can be used by water bombers or helicopter for fire suppression in the future. Burn proposed for east of Pasley – not definite and will be informed by WGP surveys and habitat assessment.

	<p>Fitzgerald River NP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some edge burning proposed for Jacup area. • Wilderness burns on hold because of access issues.
<p>Conservation and research e.g. fire research, translocation, ex-situ conservation, revegetation/rehabilitation etc</p>	<p>Western Ground Parrot – Captive Management Project Aim is to refine husbandry methods and to learn from any breeding behaviour to inform a future captive breeding program (not yet funded).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breeding attempt Nov 2011 – chicks lost in hot weather. • Nesting attempt by same pair in September/October 2012. Chick died 29 October at age 10-14days. Cause of death aspiration pneumonia. Infertile egg also present in nest. <p>IFRP and research in to cat control is addressed above.</p> <p>Noisy Scrub-bird – translocation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Translocation of four females and two males from Bald Island to Angove Water Reserve in June/July 2012. • Birds radio-tracked post-release, with maximum number of days tracked 36 days. • One bird found dead after 5 days – autopsy indicates he had been attacked and injured but escaped, then several days later was attacked again and killed, with evidence suggesting this was a feral cat. <p>Noisy Scrub-bird – genetics PhD (Saul Cowen)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mt Gardner population of NSBs has the greatest genetic diversity but also the highest levels of inbreeding. • Loss of alleles in Manypeaks and Bald Island subpopulations. • Microsatellite results indicate we may need to consider reintroductions into Mt Gardner population because of high levels of inbreeding. • Papers documenting results of this research are in draft.
<p>Liaison, education/provision of advice e.g. promotional material inc newspaper/ magazine articles, liaison with land managers/ owners, input to impact assessment, development of specific management plans, volunteers assisting with surveys/ monitoring etc.</p>	<p>DEC registered volunteers contributed in excess of 1500 hours to south coast threatened bird projects in the 2012 calendar year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteers took part in surveys for WGP in Nuysland Nature Reserve and Fitzgerald River NP. • Volunteers assisted with deploying Song Meters around Cheynes Swamp. • Volunteers assisted with Noisy Scrub-bird translocation and census. • Friends of WGP secured a \$26,000 DEC Community Environment Grant to provide assistance with volunteer travel costs to participate in WGP surveys. <p>Articles and Presentations: numerous articles to Friends of the WGP newsletter, presentations to Friends group, UWA.</p>
<p>Land use/tenure changes e.g. covenants, acquisitions, changes in land use or listed purpose etc.</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>
<p>Conservation status reviews for taxa/TECs e.g. nominations for additions, deletions or change in status to state threatened or priority lists; changes to EPBC list</p>	<p>EPBC reassessment pending for WGP, this submitted September 2010 with no advice on progress to date.</p>

<p>Recovery plans e.g. recovery plans/ IRPs drafted, approved, reviewed or updated</p>	<p>Commonwealth required a number of changes to the recovery plan including a revision of population estimates. Population estimate for the WGP is now less than 110.</p> <p>Comments made by the commonwealth are being worked through and addressed. Allan Burbidge is working on resolving some data issues. Sarah Comer is currently working through final version for Commonwealth.</p> <p>Have again requested that State Endorsed Plan is put on DEC webpage.</p>
<p>Other actions completed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Captive breeding discussion paper drafted and circulated to RT members for comment. • Friends of WGP group has produced and distributed promotional material about the WGP, and have been lobbying the government for funding for WGP. • Funding secured for the IFRP from Biodiversity fund (until June 2017), State NRM (until June 2015), South Coast NRM, Caring for our Country, State Government special allocation. • A proposal submitted by Phil Digney on behalf of Kaarakin expressing an interest in participating in captive breeding of WGPs.