

Noisy Scrub-bird Research and Recovery Program 1964-2010

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Recovery of the Noisy Scrub-bird *Atrichornis clamosus* commenced in the 1960s when the species was rediscovered at Two Peoples Bay, near Albany Western Australia. Since that time monitoring of the population trends has been conducted annually through census of territorial males across the species restricted range between Two Peoples Bay Nature Reserve and Cheynes Beach. Standardised monitoring has recorded a population index increase from around 45 territorial males to over 700 in 2001.

Translocations proved to be the most effective way of establishing new populations, and in 1997 the success of the program resulted in the scrub-bird being downlisted from Endangered to Vulnerable. Following the impact of several large wildfires, including one on Mt Manypeaks in 2004 that resulted in the loss of over 55% of remaining habitat suitable for scrub-birds in the Albany district, the status of the scrub-bird was reassessed as meeting IUCN criteria for Endangered, as the risk of fire impacting on the remaining population had significantly increased.

Research into habitat preferences, both vegetation type and structure and leaf litter food resources, has helped inform the selection of translocation sites and improve understanding of optimal habitat. In addition this work is being used to investigate post-fire seral stage preferences following the Manypeaks wildfire. Research on the social organisation of the species found that males most probably operate in song groups that represent a dispersed lek with a 'hotshot' male determining the repertoire of song groups consisting of up to 8 males. More recently the impact of genetic bottlenecks on population viability and the implications for the translocation program are being investigated.

Improving our understanding of habitat preferences, genetics and the social system of the scrub-bird will inform the long term management and recovery of this species. Long term, ongoing monitoring is essential to put this knowledge in context and to evaluate the effectiveness of management actions.

Threatened Species Research Forum



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A Review of WA Government Research into Threatened Species