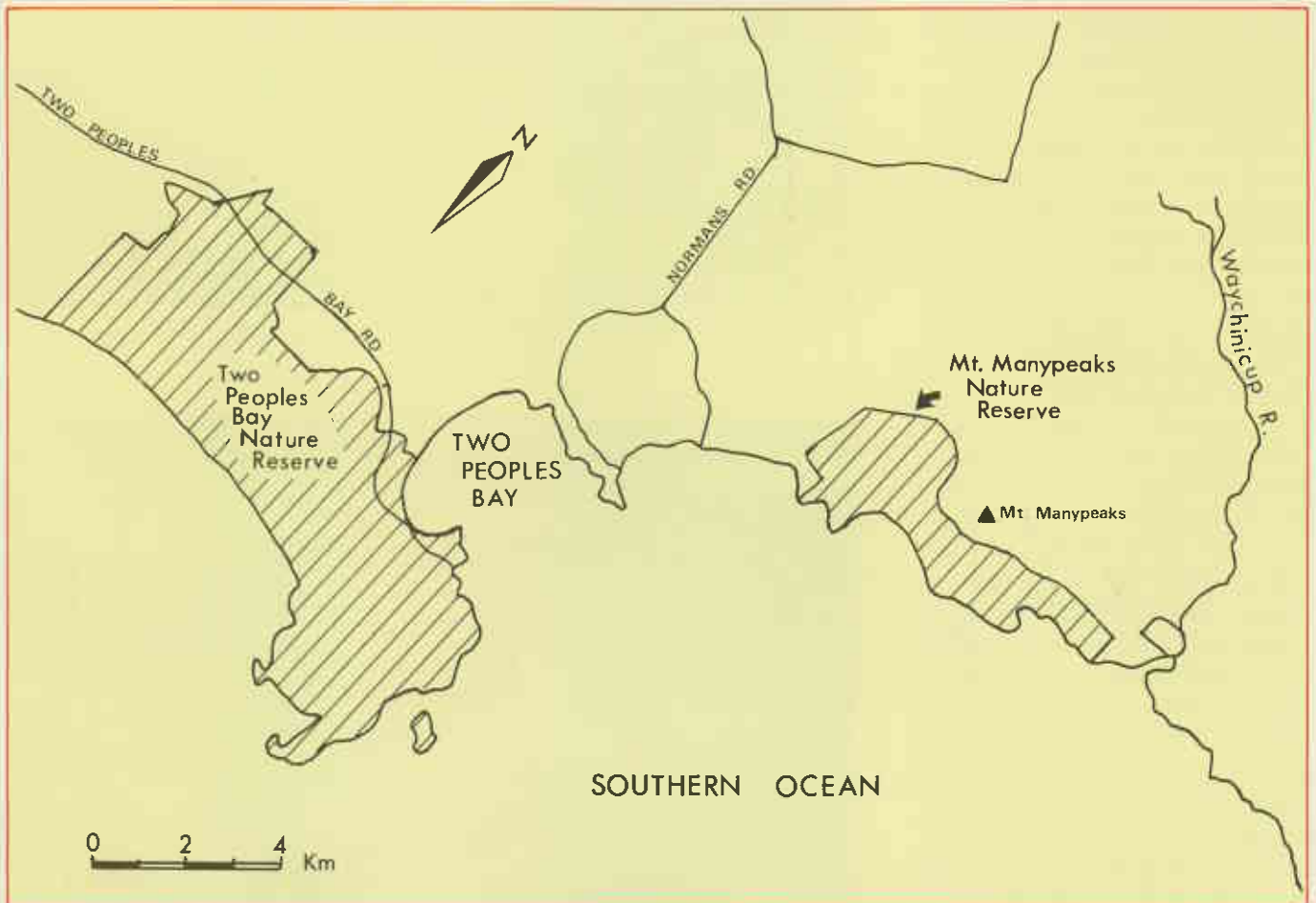


Proposed Colonisation of Noisy Scrub Birds at Mount Manypeaks



▲ The map illustrates the location of Mount Manypeaks nature reserve, the site of the proposed new colony of the Noisy Scrub Bird.

▼ Noisy Scrub Bird (*Atrichornis clamosus*)



The Noisy Scrub Bird (*Atrichornis clamosus*) is one of the world's rarest species of birds and it was thought to be extinct until its rediscovery in Western Australia in 1961.

Today the world's only known Noisy Scrub Bird colony is at the Western Australian Wildlife Authority's Two Peoples Bay Nature Reserve on the south coast of Western Australia.

When the world's stock of a single species is concentrated in a reserve in this way the threat of an unforeseen disaster overtaking the colony becomes a continuing concern. Accordingly the Western Australian Wildlife Authority has

been considering further suitable sites in order to attempt to establish another colony of the birds. At its April 21, 1980 meeting the Western Australian Wildlife Authority made its decision and recommended that a programme of colonisation of Noisy Scrub Birds be undertaken at Mount Manypeaks Nature Reserve which, as the map indicates, is situated some 15km from Two Peoples Bay. The decision was based on studies into the breeding habits of the Noisy Scrub Birds by the CSIRO, Division of Wildlife Research, which suggested Mount Manypeaks was the best locality for the attempt.

There appears to be no shortage of suitable habitat in the Mount

Manypeaks Nature Reserve, with dense patches of eucalypts and short closed heath in abundance, and most importantly there are heavily vegetated gullies which are the favoured home of the Noisy Scrub Bird.

Despite the presence of favourable habitat at Mount Manypeaks Nature Reserve, no previous sightings of the Noisy Scrub Bird have been made in the area, probably because of the frequency of large fires that have marred the otherwise suitable character of the reserve.

The original colony of Noisy Scrub Birds at Two Peoples Bay

appears more secure from the effects of fire because the reserve is on a peninsula and prevailing winds do not direct fires into it, also extensive migmatite rock sheets act as natural fire-breaks. The Department of Fisheries and Wildlife Reserve Management Section will accordingly give greater attention to fire control within the Mount Manypeaks Nature Reserve area as the proposed new colony would probably not be able to survive a widespread fire.

Breeding pairs to establish the new colony will be taken from Two Peoples Bay reserve where the numbers have nearly doubled since

1973, to a total of 72 breeding pairs plus about 20 non-breeding males which are holding territory.

As breeding male birds require a territory of about 10 hectares the population increase has been forcing young males out of the Two Peoples Bay reserve.

This breeding success in the original colony fortunately enables breeding pairs to be safely removed to Mount Manypeaks Nature Reserve without reducing the colony to dangerously low levels, and offers the chance of repeating the breeding success record at Mount Manypeaks reserve.