

## **Progress Report SP 2012-022**

# **Conservation of south coast threatened birds**

**Animal Science**

### **Project Core Team**

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Approved and active

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**Project Team**

granted

**Program Leader**

granted

**Directorate**

granted

## Conservation of south coast threatened birds

AH Burbidge

### Context

Identifying the conservation requirements of threatened south coast birds such as the Critically Endangered western ground parrot, the Vulnerable western bristlebird and the western subspecies of the western whipbird will aid *in situ* management of these taxa. Understanding responses to fire, biological and behavioural characteristics, such as vulnerability to predation, and nesting site requirements are essential knowledge for the conservation of these Western Australian endemics. This work is carried out in close collaboration with the South Coast Threatened Birds Recovery Team and regional staff, so as to optimise the value of this research for management decisions.

### Aims

- Develop an understanding of the biological and ecological factors that limit the distribution and numbers of western ground parrots and western bristlebirds, including interactions with predators, habitat requirements and response to fire.
- Increase the survival chances of the western ground parrot, western bristlebird and western whipbird and increase their total population size through creation of management prescriptions that will benefit all threatened south coast animals.

### Progress

- Continued integrated predator management on the south coast in an adaptive management framework, including monitoring western ground parrots before and after extensive fires in Cape Arid National Park and Nuytsland Nature Reserve.
- Ground parrot monitoring protocols are being refined through use of audio recordings and analysis of trends in current data set.
- Finalised genetic analysis of western whipbird phylogeny; outcomes being incorporated into formal conservation status listing; manuscript submitted for publication.
- In collaboration with South Coast Region, assisted in capture of two more western ground parrots and transfer to captive colony at Perth Zoo.
- Assisted in design, conduct and reporting on a national emergency workshop to create a better future for the western ground parrot.

### Management implications

Knowledge of the biology and responses to threats of south coast threatened birds provides a basis for decision making and management actions for their recovery, especially with respect to of introduced predators and fire, in important conservation reserves on the south coast.

### Future directions

- Finalise writing up of data on response to fire by bristlebirds and write up data on morphometrics of the western ground parrot.
- Publish western whipbird taxonomy paper.
- Implement further field-scale feral cat control (with monitoring) in key western ground parrot habitat within the South Coast Region.
- Continue to develop monitoring analyses and techniques, and writing up recent survey data.
- Assist in finalising reporting on western ground parrot workshop, dissemination of report, and initiation of action on recommendations.