Progress Report SP 2013-021

Monitoring of threatened birds on Dirk Hartog Island

Animal Science

Project Core Team

Supervising Scientist	Allan Burbidge
Data Custodian	Allan Burbidge
Site Custodian	

Project status as of July 31, 2019, 4:27 p.m.

Approved and active

Document endorsements and approvals as of July 31, 2019, 4:27 p.m.

Project Team	granted
Program Leader	granted
Directorate	granted

Monitoring of threatened birds on Dirk Hartog Island

A Burbidge

Context

This project was designed to develop and implement a monitoring program for the three extant threatened bird species on Dirk Hartog Island (DHI): DHI southern emu-wren, DHI rufous field-wren, and DHI white-winged fairy-wren. The intent was to allow assessment of the distribution, status and population trends of these species, and enable monitoring of change in relation to management actions.

Aims

Long term aims of the project were to:

- Determine historical and contemporary occurrence of threatened bird species across Dirk Hartog Island.
- Model threatened bird occurrence in relation to vegetation characteristics.
- Model and map potential occurrence of each species across the island.
- Develop a robust monitoring program.
- Clarify the conservation status of each of the threatened bird taxa.

Progress

- Over the past year, progress has been made on the taxonomic appraisal of the rufous fieldwren, with a view to submitting it for publication in the coming 12 months.

Management implications

- The three threatened bird taxa have been found to be abundant and widespread on the island, albeit with slightly different habitat preferences.
- This means that there are no especially sensitive sites, so management actions need not be constrained due to specific characteristics of these particular species.
- The needs of the three bird species should be covered by normal management considerations for a conservation reserve of the size of DHI.

Future directions

- For the species of interest, publish accounts of the modelling of species distribution across the island, and the population estimates of the species.
- Finalise an analysis of morphological variation in the rufous fieldwren and submit for publication along with the analysis of genetic variation and conclusions in relation to taxonomy and conservation status.
- Establish an optimal monitoring design for each species across the island.