



SAVING OUR SPECIES

Plains-wanderer

2018-2019 annual report card

Overall status*

- Populations at all sites are known to be on track.
- Threat management is known to be on track at all sites, and population status is unknown at one or more sites.
- Threat management is known to be off track at one or more sites, and population status is unknown at one or more sites.
- **Populations at one or more sites are known to be off track.**

* For SoS priority management sites (may not include all locations where the species occurs in NSW)

Summary

Management sites	Captive breeding population; NSW Riverine Plain
Action implementation	13 (of 15) management actions were fully or partially implemented as planned for the financial year.
Total expenditure	\$1,483,645 (\$1,125,512 cash; \$358,133 in-kind)
Partners	Featherdale Wildlife Park; National Landcare Program; Office of Environment and Heritage; Saving our Species volunteers; Taronga Conservation Society Australia; Zoos South Australia; Zoos Victoria



Scientific name:
Pedionomus torquatus

NSW status:
Endangered

Commonwealth status:
Critically Endangered

Management stream:
Iconic species

Photo: David Parker





Priority management site: Captive breeding population

Local government area:
Not specified

Partners:

Featherdale Wildlife Park;
Office of Environment and
Heritage; Taronga
Conservation Society Australia;
Zoos South Australia; Zoos
Victoria

Population outcome

-  **On track**
-  **On track (inferred)**
-  **Not on track (inferred)**
-  **Not on track**

Monitoring

Species population monitoring by one or more methods indicates response to management over time and provides an outcome measure.

Monitoring metric	Species abundance
Annual target	Maintain and grow captive population, bringing in wild-caught individuals when required.
Long term target	100 plains-wanderers in a captive breeding population.
Monitoring result	Presently 18 wild-caught and 22 captive-bred birds in captivity, spread across four facilities (Taronga Zoo, Taronga Western Plains Zoo, Featherdale Wildlife Park and Werribee Open Range Zoo).
Scientific rigour of monitoring method	High
Conducted by	Office of Environment and Heritage

Investment

Participant	Cash	In-kind
Featherdale Wildlife Park	\$0	\$5,960
Office of Environment and Heritage	\$40,000	\$15,000
Taronga Conservation Society Australia	\$0	\$115,476
Zoos South Australia	\$0	\$7,820
Zoos Victoria	\$0	\$130,000

Management actions

The following actions are those identified as being required in financial year 2018-2019 to secure the species in the wild.

Threat	Management action	Implemented as planned?
Significant (>90%) decline of monitored population over 14-year period.	Maintain and grow captive population at Taronga Zoo, Sydney, bringing in wild-caught individuals when required.	Yes
Significant (>90%) decline of monitored population over 14-year period.	Maintain and grow captive population at Featherdale Wildlife Park, bringing in wild-caught individuals when required.	Yes
Significant (>90%) decline of monitored population over 14-year period.	Maintain and grow captive population at Taronga Western Plains Zoo, bringing in wild-caught individuals when required.	Yes
Significant (>90%) decline of monitored population over 14-year period.	Maintain and grow captive population at Werribee Open Range Zoo, bringing in wild-caught individuals when required.	Yes
Significant (>90%) decline of monitored population over 14-year period.	Construct facility	Yes
Significant (>90%) decline of monitored population over 14-year period.	Maintain and grow captive population, bringing in wild-caught individuals when required.	Yes

Site summary

The captive breeding program is progressing well. Currently across all facilities there are 11 male; seven female wild-caught birds. Breeding during this reporting period, as well as prior breeding outcomes, has resulted in 13 male and nine female captive-bred birds also being held amongst the captive population.

Priority management site: NSW Riverine Plain

Local government area:

Carrathool; Edward River; Federation; Griffith; Hay; Leeton; Murrumbidgee; Narrandera

Partners:

National Landcare Program; Office of Environment and Heritage; Saving our Species volunteers

Population outcome

-  On track
-  On track (inferred)
-  Not on track (inferred)
-  Not on track

Monitoring

Species population monitoring by one or more methods indicates response to management over time and provides an outcome measure.

Monitoring metric	Species abundance
Annual target	Increase in the number of plains-wanderers and sites occupied.
Long term target	Reverse the long-term population trend of decline and increase the numbers of plains-wanderers to a level where there is a viable, wild, breeding population, even in poor breeding years.
Monitoring result	Winter 2018 - 13 individuals (two sites; one property), spring 2018 - three individuals (one site) and autumn 2019 - zero individuals.
Scientific rigour of monitoring method	High
Conducted by	Office of Environment and Heritage

Investment

Participant	Cash	In-kind
National Landcare Program	\$682,512	\$0
Office of Environment and Heritage	\$403,000	\$77,077
Saving our Species volunteers	\$0	\$6,800

Management actions

The following actions are those identified as being required in financial year 2018-2019 to secure the species in the wild.

Threat	Management action	Implemented as planned?
Boxthorn can provide perches for raptors that may prey upon plains-wanderers, and shelter for pest species such as foxes and rabbits.	Boxthorn controlled in areas of plains-wanderer habitat and other key areas.	Yes
Fox predation and developments that lead to elevated numbers of foxes represent a significant threat. Increased mouse densities that are associated with irrigated cereal crops such as rice can cause an increase in fox numbers.	Plan for predator proof fence.	No - Action referred to DPIE's Science Division for review.
Fox predation and developments that lead to elevated numbers of foxes represent a significant threat. Increased mouse densities that are associated with irrigated cereal crops such as rice can cause an increase in fox numbers.	Fox control at two landscapes located on private land, including the use of ground baiting and follow-up shooting.	Yes
Fox predation and developments that lead to elevated numbers of foxes represent a significant threat. Increased mouse densities that are associated with irrigated cereal crops such as rice can cause an increase in fox numbers.	Coordinated fox control program undertaken at Oolambeyan National Park (NP) including ground baiting (1080 baits and canid pest ejectors), aerial baiting twice yearly and ground shoot.	Partial implementation - Baiting at Oolambeyan National Park using canid pest ejectors was decommissioned in December 2018. No 1080 ground baiting occurred during this period.
High intensity fire completely destroys suitable habitat.	Boundary trail and key internal trails sprayed and/or slashed.	Conducted, but not as planned
Prolonged drought or overgrazing will also result in a loss of habitat due to the reduction of suitable ground cover.	Meet with landowners and land managers.	Yes
Prolonged drought or overgrazing will also result in a loss of habitat due to the reduction of suitable ground cover.	Sign up paddocks into the program.	Yes
Prolonged drought or overgrazing will also result in a loss of habitat due to the reduction of suitable ground cover.	Paddocks grazed where appropriate to maintain habitat.	Yes
Rabbits can cause damage to plains-wanderer habitat.	Rabbit control undertaken across Oolambeyan National Park.	No - It was determined that there was no approved Review of Environmental Factors (REF) in place authorising this activity on park. No rabbit control was undertaken during the reporting period.

Threat outcome

Assessment on the status of critical threats at this site.

Threat	Annual target	Threat status
Prolonged drought or overgrazing will also result in a loss of habitat due to the reduction of suitable ground cover.	Habitat at Oolambeyan NP in suitable condition. Managed stewardship paddocks in suitable condition.	Not on track
Fox predation and developments that lead to elevated numbers of foxes represent a significant threat. Increased mouse densities that are associated with irrigated cereal crops such as rice can cause an increase in fox numbers.	To be determined.	On track
Fox predation and developments that lead to elevated numbers of foxes represent a significant threat. Increased mouse densities that are associated with irrigated cereal crops such as rice can cause an increase in fox numbers.	Bait take reduced to 15% or less at each landscape.	On track

Site summary

A significant investment has been in the stewardship component of the project, with 57 paddocks being entered into management agreements to provide the long-term protection and maintenance of plains-wanderer habitat on private land. Targeted fox control programs were implemented across three landscapes on private land (incorporating eight properties) and Oolambeyan National Park. Pest monitoring of foxes at Oolambeyan National Park indicates that fox activity is low, possibly as a result of the coordinated control program, but also as a reflection of the dry conditions across the region. Total grazing pressure, particularly from native herbivores, coupled with the ongoing dry conditions continues to be an issue affecting suitable habitat at Oolambeyan National Park.

Saving our Species 2018-2019 annual report card for Plains-wanderer (*Pedionomus torquatus*). For more information refer to the specific strategy in the Saving our Species program.