



Songbird Trade in Oceania

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Songbird Trade in Oceania

- The Oceania region has limited trade in live songbirds, but Birds of Paradise mounts and feathers are more widely traded.
1. CITES-listed songbirds of Oceania.
 2. Non-CITES songbirds in trade in Oceania.
 3. Domestic trade of songbirds in New Zealand.

Ribbon-tailed Astrapia
(*Astrapia mayeri*)



CITES-listed songbirds in Oceania: App I

- 2 species. Both probably incorrectly listed because, although threatened, they were never in international trade, except for scientific specimens.
 - *Atrichornis clamosus* Noisy Scrubbird – Australia
 - *Zosterops albogularis* White-breasted Silvereye - Australia



CITES-listed songbirds in Oceania: App I

- No records of live birds traded internationally in the CITES database.
- Blood samples from Noisy Scrubbirds traded to NZ for scientific purposes.



CITES-listed songbirds in Oceania: App II

- 44 species. Most (38) are Birds of Paradise (Family Paradisaeidae) listed at the start of CITES in 1975. Most are from Papua New Guinea, a few from northern Australia, and some species are shared with Indonesia.



CITES-listed songbirds in Oceania: App II

- Export of <200 live specimens of 19 species of Birds of Paradise (Family Paradisaeidae) from Papua New Guinea recorded in the CITES Trade Database since 1975.
- Between 1976 and 1989, transactions of 1-12 individuals, mainly to zoos in the United States and Australia.
- Less than 30 individuals of only 3 species traded live since 1990, mainly to zoos in Japan and China.

CITES-listed songbirds in Oceania: App II

- Many specimens of display-mounted Birds of Paradise or their feathers are traded internationally, both legally and illegally.
- For example, between 1975 and 2022, NZ reported 46 legal and 3 illegal imports (mainly from PNG or Australia) and 4 exports (mainly to the Cook Islands) of mounts or feathers of Birds of Paradise.



CITES-listed songbirds in Oceania: App II

- Export of 76 purportedly captive-bred live specimens of 7 species of Birds of Paradise (Family Paradisaeidae) from Solomon Islands to Singapore in 2005.
- Birds of Paradise are notoriously difficult species to breed successfully in captivity, and no captive-breeding facilities were known in the Solomon Islands, and so TRAFFIC (2012) considered that they were likely laundered through the Solomon Islands before they joined CITES in 2007.

CITES-listed songbirds in Oceania: App II

- The remaining 6 species in Appendix II are either Australian endemics, such as the Black-throated Finch (*Poephila cincta*), or cage birds that have become naturalised in the wild (i.e., Hill Myna (*Gracula religiosa*) in Australia, and Java Sparrow *Lonchura oryzivora* in Australia and Fiji).



CITES-listed songbirds in Oceania: App II

- The export of 2900 live specimens of purportedly captive-bred Hill Myna from the Solomon Islands to Singapore and Malaysia was queried by TRAFFIC (2012). In 2019, 100 purportedly wild-caught specimens exported from the Solomons to Oman is likely a reporting error because the species is not in the Solomons.
- The export of 100 live specimens of captive-bred Hill Myna from NZ to Turkey is a reporting error because the species is not in NZ.



CITES-listed songbirds in Oceania: App III

- 6 species of introduced and naturalised European songbirds are listed courtesy of Ukraine's 2021 Appendix III listings.
- None of these 6 species has been reported to be traded from Australia nor New Zealand since the listing in 2021.



Eurasian Blackbird (*Turdus merula*)



Eurasian Skylark (*Alauda arvensis*)



European Goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*)

CITES-listed songbirds in Oceania: App III

- In 1976, Ghana listed many bird species in Appendix III, but withdrew the listing in 2007.
- In the 1990s, before animal health regulations were changed, NZ imported about 800 captive-bred of these Appendix III songbirds from Great Britain and Australia, mainly Estrildidae finches and weavers.



Senegal Firefinch (*Lagnosticta senegala*)



Orange Weaver (*Ploceus aurantius*)



Lavender Waxbill (*Estrilda caerulescens*)

Trade of non-listed songbirds **from** Oceania

- Neither Australia nor New Zealand allow the export of any live specimens of native songbirds.
- Specimens of some species of Australian native songbirds were exported before their regulations came into place. Perhaps the most notable is the Gouldian Finch *Chloebia gouldiae*, which has a BirdLife threat classification of “Least Concern (LC)”.



Trade of non-listed songbirds **into** Oceania

- 15 species of mainly European songbirds were introduced and became naturalised in New Zealand well before Animal Health Regulations came into force.
- 8 species (6 in common with NZ) were introduced and became naturalised in Australia.
- Other Oceania Parties all have a smaller number of introduced and naturalised songbird species.



House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*)



Common Myna (*Acridotheres tristis*)

Trade of non-listed songbirds **into** Oceania

- For animal health reasons, neither Australia nor New Zealand (since about 2000) generally allow the importation of live specimens of songbirds.
- Specimens of some songbird species are probably illegally released from boats, judging by their appearance in Oceania well away from their natural range.



Red-vented Bulbul (*Pycnonotus cafer*) in NZ



Jungle Myna (*Acridotheres fuscus*) in the Cook Islands

Songbird trade in New Zealand

- It is illegal to hold native songbirds as pets.
- Mix of wild-bred or captive-bred introduced and naturalised species, and specialist cage-bird species introduced before Animal Health regulations were enacted.
- Small numbers of songbirds, all “Least Concern”, are held and legally traded within New Zealand through pet shops, cagebird organisations, and online sales.



Greenfinch (*Carduelis chloris*), LC, naturalised ex Europe)



Zebra Finch (*Taeniopygia castanotis*), LC, cage-bird ex Australia

Songbird Trade in Oceania

- The Oceania region has limited trade in live songbirds, and songbirds are not frequently held as pets in the region.
- Birds of Paradise mounts and feathers are the most widely traded songbird specimens.
- Some evidence of illegal laundering of songbirds through the region.
- No songbird species is singing out to be listed on CITES.

Ribbon-tailed Astrapia
(*Astrapia mayeri*)

