CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA

Eighteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties
Colombo (Sri Lanka), 23 May – 3 June 2019

CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSALS FOR AMENDMENT OF APPENDICES I AND II

A. Proposal

To transfer *Dasyornis broadbenti litoralis* from CITES Appendix I to CITES Appendix II, in accordance with Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev CoP17) Annex 4 measures A.1, A.2(a)(i), and the provisions regarding extinct species outlined in Annex 4D.

B. Proponent

Australia*:

C. Supporting statement

1. Taxonomy

1.1 Class: Aves

1.2 Order: Passeriformes

1.3 Family: Dasyornithidae

1.4 Genus, species or subspecies, including author and year: *Dasyornis broadbenti litoralis* (Milligan, 1902)

1.5 Scientific synonyms: *Dasyornis broadbenti littoralis, Sphenura litoralis*

1.6 Common names:
English: Western Rufous Bristlebird, South-western Rufous Bristlebird, Rufous-headed Bristlebird, Lesser Rufous Bristlebird
French: Dasyornerousse de l'ouest, Fauvette rousse de l'Ouest
Spanish: Papamoscas rosa occidental, Curruca bigotuda rojiza

1.7 Code numbers:

2. Overview

At the 29th meeting of the Animals Committee (AC29 Com 7 Rev) the Committee selected *Dasyornis broadbenti litoralis* (the Western Rufous Bristlebird) for review between CoP17 and CoP19 in accordance with Resolution Conf. 14.8 (Rev. CoP17) *Periodic Review of the Appendices*. Parties were notified of the Animals Committee's selection in Notification 2017/069. Australia's review was provided to the 30th meeting of Animals Committee, and the Committee asked the Secretariat to invite the proposal to be submitted to the 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

* *The geographical designations employed in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the CITES Secretariat (or the United Nations Environment Programme) concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The responsibility for the contents of the document rests exclusively with its author.*

Dasyornis b. litoralis was listed on CITES Appendix I on 1 September 1975. The CITES trade database reports no trade in this species.

Dasyornis b. litoralis is considered to have become extinct after its shrubland habitat was burnt repeatedly to convert it into pasture in the early 20th century (Carter 1924). It was last reliably recorded in 1906 (Smith 1977 cited in Western Australian Department of Environment and Conservation 2009).

Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev CoP17) resolves that, when considering proposals to amend Appendix I and II, species that *are or may be affected by trade* should be included in Appendix I if they meet at least one of the biological criteria listed in Appendix I. A species "is or may be affected by trade" if:

i) it is known to be in trade (using the definition of 'trade' in Article I of the Convention), and that trade has or may have a detrimental impact on the status of the species; or

ii) it is suspected to be in trade, or there is demonstrable potential international demand for the species, that may be detrimental to its survival in the wild.

There is no known incidence of trade in this species. The species is demonstrably not in trade. There is no suspected or demonstrable potential demand for the species. Future commercial trade is unlikely. There is no evidence that trade is or may be a threat to the survival of this species. Therefore *D. b. litoralis* does not meet the basic criteria for inclusion on Appendix I. *Dasyornis b. litoralis* is considered extinct. In accordance with Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev CoP17) Annex 4D, species that are regarded as possibly extinct should not be deleted from the Appendices if:

1. they may be affected by trade in the event of their rediscovery; or

2. they resemble extant species included in the Appendices; or

3. their deletion would cause difficulties implementing the Convention; or

4. their removal would complicate the interpretation of the Appendices.

This subspecies is unlikely to be affected by trade if rediscovered, as there is not recorded trade in other subspecies of this species. Deletion from the Appendices would not cause implementation difficulties or complicate interpretation of the Appendices, but the subspecies did somewhat resemble *Dasyornis longirostris* which is also included in the Appendices. Therefore, in line with this precautionary approach, we propose that *D. b. litoralis* be transferred from Appendix I to Appendix II.

3. Species characteristics

3.1 Distribution

Dasyornis b. litoralis was endemic to the south-western coast of Western Australia, between Cape Mentelle and Cape Naturaliste (Storr 1991, Schodde and Mason 1999, Higgins and Peter 2002, Johnstone and Storr 2004).

3.2 Habitat

Dasyornis b. litoralis inhabited coastal shrublands on clifftops and sand-dunes (Milligan 1902, Carter 1924).

3.3 Biological characteristics

Dasyornis b. litoralis was probably sedentary. The other subspecies of *Dasyornis broadbenti* (*D.b.broadbenti, D.b.cayochrous*) are typically sedentary or resident in small, permanent home ranges (Higgins and Peter 2002). *Dasyornis b. litoralis* was usually recorded singly or occasionally in pairs (Higgins and Peter 2002).

There is no known life cycle information for *D. b. litoralis* (Serventy and Whittell 1976). Other subspecies of the rufous bristlebird mostly breed between August and January, and usually nest just above the ground in tussocks of grass or sedges, or among low, dense shrubs, laying two eggs of variable colour (Brummitt 1935, Ey 1944, Higgins and Peter 2002).

Dasyornis b. litoralis is recorded as having eaten terrestrial snails (Milligan 1902). Other extant subspecies eat invertebrates, especially insects and their larvae, fruits and seeds (Campbell 1907, Chapman 1999, Lea and Gray 1935, Morgan 1919, Sutton 1925). The foraging methods of *D. b. litoralis* are unknown, but other extant subspecies usually forage on the ground, either on bare ground or among leaf litter. Some food items are also gleaned from low foliage (Campbell 1907, Chapman 1999, Higgins and Peter 2002, Lang 1946).

3.4 Morphological characteristics

Dasyornis b. litoralis was a medium-sized thrush-like terrestrial bird with a rufous cap and conspicuous scalloping on the breast. It was 25–27 cm in length. The head was rich rufous on top, extending onto the ear-coverts; the lores and other areas of the face were off-white. The hindneck, back, uppertail and scapulars were reddish-brown, grading to olive brown with a reddish-brown tinge on the lower back and rump; the upperwings were brownish with a rufous tinge. The chin, throat and breast were grey-white with bold scalloping, and the remainder of the underparts were mostly grey. The bill was grey-black on the upper mandible and paler grey or pink on the lower mandible. The eyes were red while the legs and feet were dark brown or greyish-brown (Higgins and Peter 2002, Johnstone and Storr 2004, Milligan 1902).

3.5 Role of the species in its ecosystem

Little is known about the role of bristlebirds in their ecosystem, beyond the seed dispersal and control of invertebrate numbers common to many bird species.

4. Status and trends

4.1 Habitat trends

Dasyornis b. litoralis is one of a number of threatened birds that appear to have suffered significant reduction in numbers and contraction of range following European settlement in the late 1800s as a likely result of land clearing and inappropriate fire regimes (Western Australian Department of Environment and Conservation 2009). Most of the coastal area of its former distribution is currently included within protected land of the Leeuwin-Naturaliste National Park.

4.2 Population size

This subspecies is considered extinct (Garnett and Crowley 2000, Department of Environment and Energy 2018). No captive population exist (Department of Environment and Energy 2018).

Dasyornis b. litoralis was formerly considered to be 'moderately common' (Storr 1991).

4.3 Population structure

The former range of *D. b. litoralis* was small (Storr 1991). It is unknown whether there were subpopulations present within this range.

The generation length of *D. b. litoralis* is unknown. The generation length of the two extant subspecies *D.b.broadbenti* and *D.b.cayochrous* is estimated at five years (Garnett and Crowley 2000).

4.4 Population trends

Extinct; last recorded 1906 (Garnett and Crowley 2000).

4.5 Geographic trends

Extinct; last recorded 1906 (Garnett and Crowley 2000).

5. Threats

Dasyornis b. litoralis is considered to have become extinct after its shrubland habitat was burnt repeatedly to convert it into pasture in the early 20th century (Carter 1924). Predation by feral cats is also considered

to possibly have adversely affected the population of this ground foraging bird (Western Australian Government Department of Environment and Conservation 2009).

6. Utilization and trade

6.1 National utilization

None.

6.2 Legal trade

No trade is recorded in the CITES Trade Database and the species was not traded domestically.

6.3 Parts and derivatives in trade

No trade is recorded in the CITES Trade Database.

6.4 Illegal trade

There is no known incidence of illegal trade in *D. b. litoralis*. Illegal trade is not considered to have been a factor in this species' decline.

6.5 Actual or potential trade impacts

There is no known incidence of trade in this species. Trade has not had a detrimental impact on the status of the species. There is no demonstrable potential demand for the species. Future commercial trade is unlikely; some trade for scientific purposes may arise in remaining specimens.

7. Legal instruments

7.1 National

The subspecies is listed as extinct under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*. The subspecies is listed as presumed extinct under the *Western Australian Wildlife Conservation Act 1950*.

7.2 International

Dasyornis b. litoralis is listed on CITES Appendix I since 1975. No commercial trade is permitted and any non-commercial trade would require CITES permits.

8. Species management

8.1 Management measures

Extinct; last recorded 1906 (Garnett and Crowley 2000).

8.2 Population monitoring

None. Extinct; last recorded 1906 (Garnett and Crowley 2000).

Searches have been undertaken for the subspecies within its former range but have been unsuccessful (Blakers et al. 1984, Garnett 1992 cited in Western Australian Department of Environment and Conservation 2009). The Western Australian Government's South Coast Threatened Birds Recovery Plan 2009-2018 lists a systematic survey of all likely habitats for *D. b. litoralis* as a low priority relative to management actions for other threatened birds in the region (Western Australian Department of Environment and Conservation 2009).

8.3 Control measures

8.3.1 International

As described at 7.2

8.3.2 Domestic

As described in 7.1.

8.4 Captive breeding and artificial propagation

There are no captive populations of this subspecies and none have been reintroduced into the wild.

8.5 Habitat conservation

Much of the former habitat of *D. b. litoralis* is now included in the Leeuwin-Naturaliste National Park.

8.6 Safeguards

n/a

9. Information on similar species

Dasyornis b. litoralis is a conventionally accepted subspecies of *Dasyornis broadbenti* (the Rufous Bristlebird) (Higgins and Peter 2002; Schodde & Mason 1999). *Dasyornis b. litoralis* is the only subspecies listed on CITES.

Dasyornis b. litoralis may be considered similar in appearance to *Dasyornis longirostris* (Western Bristlebird) which is also included in the Appendices. *Dasyornis longirostris* occupies a similar habitat and range to that of *D. b. litoralis*. These birds and four others endemic to the coastal and near-coastal habitats of the south coast of Western Australia are listed as threatened under Australian national environmental legislation (the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*) and are managed by a recovery team with actions and prioritisation outlined in the South Coast Threatened Birds Recovery Plan 2009-2018 (Western Australian Department of Environment and Conservation 2009).

10. Consultations

The Western Australian Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, the Australian Government Department of the Environment and Energy and the Office of the Threatened Species Commissioner, and Professor Stephen Garnett were consulted in the development of this document.

11. Additional remarks

None.

12. References

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