







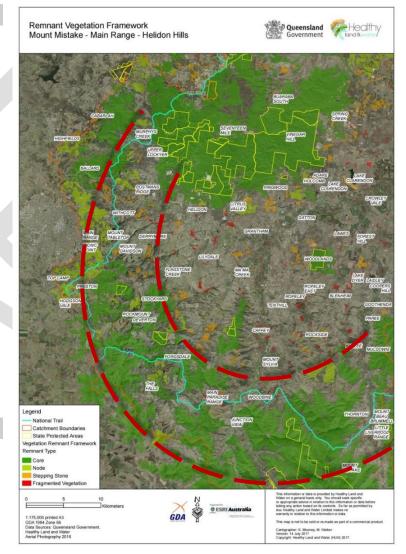
Introduction

Landholders in the Lockyer Uplands landscapes in the Main Range to Helidon Hills Biodiversity Corridor, are committed to maintaining and increasing the diversity of native bird species in their landscapes. The achievement of this goal will depend on the condition, extent, and connectivity of major bird habitat types across the corridor and the involvement of landholders and their networks of supporters working at both property scale and in collaboration across the landscape to manage these habitats.

Efforts to understand bird diversity in the Lockyer Uplands landscapes and conserve bird habitats commenced in 2016 with the Lockyer Uplands Catchments Inc's (LUCI) Glossy Black Cockatoo Feed Tree Project and expanded in 2020 to a Bird Survey Project, which established baseline bird presence across 27 survey sites. To maintain and enhance bird habitats and the rich bird diversity in our landscapes, a more coordinated approach in our conservation efforts is required across private and public properties in the landscape. As such, there is a need to extend the Survey Project by engaging with more landholders to increase the number of survey sites and build greater awareness and understanding of bird habitat requirements. To this end, LUCI has initiated a conservation action planning process (CAP) to prioritise the work that needs to be done in the landscape in the immediate and longer-term, provide a framework for collaboration on priority actions and communicate to interested parties/potential partners the work that is being done and what will be achieved.

The Lockyer Uplands project area

The landscapes of interest in our conservation planning stretch from the Little Liverpool Range in the south-east of the Lockyer Valley region, via the Main Range to the west of the Lockyer Valley and north along the Great Divide escarpment to the Helidon Hills and connecting to the Lockyer National Park. The vegetation of the ridgelines, escarpments and valleys of these landscapes include a diverse array of Eucalypt open forests and woodlands and dry rainforest.









Conservation Action Planning process

The planning process has built on an existing project and body of knowledge concerning bird presence in a part of the Lockyer Uplands landscapes. LUCI's Bird Survey Project, led by ornithologist Roger Jaensch, has been undertaken on twelve properties on 27 sites across warm and cold seasons since late 2020. A report produced by Roger Jaensch detailing bird species and seasonal variations was distributed to landholders and interested stakeholders including Lockyer Valley Regional Council, Great Eastern Ranges Initiative (of which LUCI is a regional partner), Little Liverpool Range Initiative, Friends of Escarpment Parks (Toowoomba), Toowoomba Bird Observers, BirdLife Australia, BirdLife Southern Queensland Darling Downs Branch, Dr Guy Castley (Griffith University) and Dr April Reside (University of Queensland).

LUCI convened two on-line meetings involving different stakeholders before convening a one-day planning workshop involving the above stakeholders or their representatives. Facilitated by Roger Jaensch, workshop participants considered the results and implications of the baseline data collected to date, potential future directions for the project, threats to maintaining bird diversity in the landscape and priorities for action. The outputs from this planning workshop were collated, distributed to participants for comment and drafted into the current plan.

Birds of the Lockyer Uplands Conservation Action Plan (BLUCAP)

The current plan provides a beginning framework for a strategic and coordinated approach to bird diversity conservation in the Lockyer Uplands landscapes. The vision for the project is to *maintain/increase the diversity of native bird species across the Lockyer Uplands landscapes*. The vision will be achieved through three main lines of activity – *Understand, Improve and Advocate*.

The BLUCAP is intended as a framework for conserving bird diversity in our landscapes that brings together the interests, skills and resources of stakeholders and applies that capacity to identified priorities for action under the Understand, Improve and Advocate approaches. The important contributions of the landholders involved in the existing Lockyer Uplands Bird Survey Project will continue and new collaborations and contributions will come from those individual experts and groups/agencies involved in the planning process to date. It is envisaged that, with time and achievements, the plan will be extended to take in other parts of the Lockyer Valley landscapes, such as the wetland habitats and wetland birds for which the Lockyer region is well known.

This document represents the first phase of the BLUCAP planning process with work yet to be undertaken on developing the monitoring and evaluation measures for assessing progress towards our stated goals. This latter work will be an early task for the BLUCAP implementation team.







Implementation

To guide the development and implementation of the BLUCAP, a Steering Committee has been convened whose members would represent the expertise and/or major partners involved in the strategic themes of the BLUCAP. The Steering Committee would monitor progress in the implementation of activities in the BLUCAP, provide advice and support to those individuals/groups implementing activities and review, in consultation with all stakeholders, the priorities of the BLUCAP.

Inaugural steering committee members include the following:

Diane Guthrie (Lockyer Uplands Catchments Inc)

Penny Kidd (Lockyer Uplands Catchments Inc, landholder representative)

Roger Jaensch (Independent expert)

Shania Watson (Little Liverpool Range Initiative, Ipswich City Council)

Chris Hoffmann (Lockyer Valley Regional Council)

Dani Andlemac (Ipswich City Council)

James O"Connor (Great Eastern Ranges)

Andrea Fullagar (BirdLife Australia)

Mick Atzeni (Toowoomba Bird Observers)

Dr April Reside (University of Queensland)

Dr Guy Castley (Griffith University)







BIRDS OF THE LOCKYER UPLANDS CONSERVATION ACTION PLAN (BLUCAP)

VISION Maintain/increase the diversity of native bird species across the Lockyer Uplands landscapes.

CURRENT SITUATION WHAT WE CAN DO **OUR AIMS**

ASSETS

- Our land and bird habitats
- Our capabilities
- Our collaborative networks of individuals and groups working in native species conservation

BIRD PROJECTS

- Glossy Black Cockatoo Project
- Lockyer Uplands Bird Survey Project

THREATS TO BIRD **DIVERSITY**

- Habitat clearing, modification, fragmentation, and loss of hollow bearing trees
- **b.** Climate change
- c. Feral animals and overabundance of Noisy miners
- d. Weeds vine weeds in SEVT and non-native grasses
- e. Inappropriate fire regimes
- f. Pesticide and herbicide use
- g. Lack of awareness of threats

UNDERSTAND

Undertake bird diversity and bird ecology citizen science and research to inform on ground

IMPROVE

Improve condition and connectivity of bird habitats across private lands and local parks

Increase

birds.

Increase the

representative bird species associated with each major habitat over time.

Increase the number

of native bird species,

over time, especially

the small-sized bush

distribution of native

bird species over time.

Improve and extend bird habitats at the property and landscape scale.

Increase community understanding of native bird habitat requirements.

conservation action

ADVOCATE

Increase bird awareness and conservation capacity among landholders and the broader community







STRATEGY 1: UNDERSTAND BIRD DIVERSITY AND BIRD ECOLOGY IN THE LOCKYER UPLANDS

Lockyer Uplands Bird Survey Project

- Plan/implement a program of (a) follow-on bird surveys on Phase 1 properties and (b) baseline bird surveys on additional survey sites.
- Register survey records with Birdata and WildNet databases.
- Identify indicator¹ species (IS) for major habitat types in the Lockyer Uplands as a focus for survey design, promotion of participation, and analysis of results and reporting

UNDERSTAND

Undertake bird diversity and bird ecology citizen science and research to inform on ground conservation action

Historical bird data Project

 Collate, register (with Birdata and/or WildNet databases) and interpret historical bird data sets for the Lockyer landscapes including Toowoomba Bird Observers' records.

Bird Ecology Research Program to investigate:

- the habitat attributes relevant to bird lists per property in bird survey project
- how birds respond to conservation interventions (e.g., fire regimes, control of noisy miners) and landscape changes (e.g. rainfall, change in land use)
- innovations for increasing climate adapted restoration of bird habitats.

IMPROVE

Improve bird habitat condition and connectivity across private lands and local parks

ADVOCATE

Increase bird awareness and conservation capacity among landholders and the broader community

¹An indicator species (IS) is a conservation target and promotional species for a major habitat type and is not intended as a representative for all species in that habitat type.





STRATEGY 2: IMPROVE CONDITION AND CONNECTIVITY OF BIRD HABITATS IN THE LOCKYER UPLANDS

Plan/implement a Bird Habitat Condition assessment on properties in combination with bird surveys and monitoring of indicator species (IS) Identify known bird habitat areas that have been severely depleted or degraded or fragmented for consideration for priority conservation action Undertake strategic weed removal with an understanding of the impacts and/or function of some weeds in bird habitat adaptation **IMPROVE** Improve bird habitat condition and connectivity Explore and promote options for assistance to landholders in control of across private lands weeds, especially in Semi-evergreen vine thicket areas and local parks Investigate incentives (e.g. carbon farming, biodiversity certificates) for landholder enhancement/enrichment of habitat on private property Liaise with local rural fire authorities to provide information on local habitat values for possible protection from controlled burns Assess range and scale of exotic animal threats in the landscape and investigate options for management of same

Increase the number of native bird species, over time, especially the small-sized bush birds.

Increase the distribution of native bird species over time.

Increase representative bird species associated with each major habitat over time.

Improve and extend bird habitats at the property and landscape scale.

Increase community understanding of native bird habitat requirements.





STRATEGY 3: INCREASE BIRD AWARENESS AND CONSERVATION CAPACITY AMONG LANDHOLDERS AND THE BROADER COMMUNITY

Grow volunteer bird surveyor numbers and increase volunteers' skills in bird ID and use of bird apps (e.g. workshops, field days, buddy system, collaborate with environmental/nature groups in the city and engage retiree groups)

Promote community and student involvement in bird conservation projects and conduct events to stimulate interest in, and provide expert advice on, land and bird habitat management.

Educate the community about responsible use of pesticides and herbicides

Promote or implement diverse planting (e.g., climate adapted restoration planting) and regenerative agriculture practices to provide and protect bird habitat resources (i.e. remnant vegetation patches, large paddock trees).

Promote a bird diversity focus in LUCI's Biodiversity Property Planning Project.

Advocate for support of the Birds of the Lockyer Conservation Action Plan in local/regional conservation projects and government planning.

Develop a brochure and/or photo book on Birds of the Lockyer Uplands

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Increase the distribution of native bird species over time.

Increase representative bird species associated with each major habitat over time.

Improve and extend bird habitats at the property and landscape scale.

Increase community understanding of native bird habitat requirements.

Enhance landholders' appreciation of their property as wildlife habitat.

ADVOCATE Increase bird

awareness and conservation capacity among landholders and the broader community





