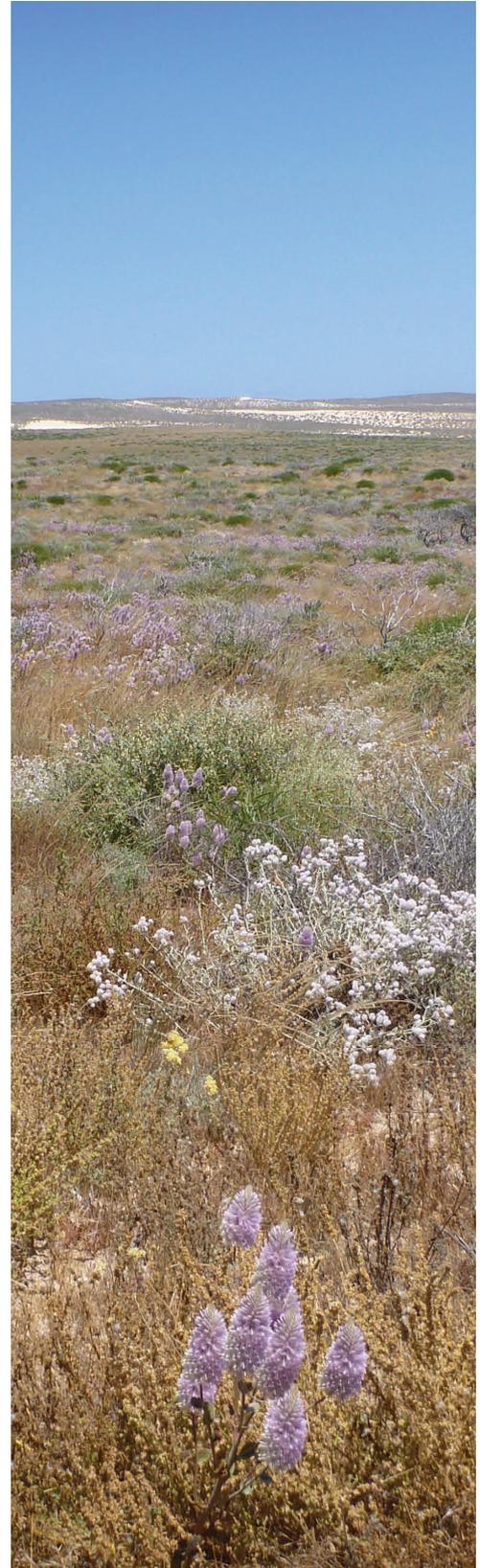


Dirk Hartog Island southern emu-wren

Stipiturus malachurus hartogi

Fact sheet

SHARK BAY



Description



Emu-wrens are so named because of their tail plumes which, like emu feathers, lack the interlocking hooks that usually zip feathers together. As a result the emu-wren's tail looks like a lacy fan.

During flight the 160-180mm emu-wren looks like a large insect slowed by the drag of this long tail. Males have purplish-blue bibs and eyebrows.

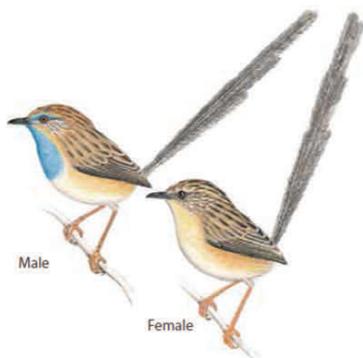
Diet and habitat



The emu-wren hops around on the ground with its tail erect as it forages, probing vegetation and snatching insects. It will perch high in the scrub to sing a high-pitched descending trill.

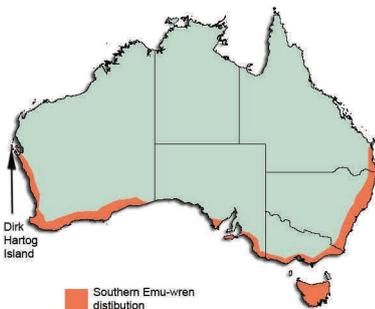
Sandplain heaths and dune thickets are their habitat on Dirk Hartog Island.

Breeding



On Dirk Hartog Island nesting is from July to August. The domed, oval nest is woven with grass and fine twigs. It has a side entrance and is hidden in dense vegetation close to the ground. 2-4 eggs are laid and the emu-wrens appear to occupy territories as pairs.

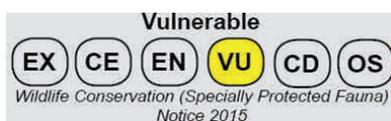
Distribution



The mainland southern emu-wren, *Stipiturus malachurus*, is found in coastal areas around southern parts of Australia.

The *S.m. hartogi* subspecies is only found on Dirk Hartog Island in Shark Bay. It is moderately common but hard to detect.

Status



The small and limited distribution of *S.m. hartogi* leaves it vulnerable to potential threats. This emu-wren is also the least common of Dirk Hartog Island's endemic sub species.



Department of Parks and Wildlife

