

Variegated fairy-wren

Malurus lamberti bernieri

Fact sheet

SHARK BAY World Heritage



Description



A flash of blue and a squeaky reeling call signals the presence of a variegated fairy-wren. Female and young birds are mostly grey-brown on top, cream-coloured below, and have a chestnut ring around the eye. The male has an electric blue head, chestnut shoulders and a bright blue tail. The Shark Bay subspecies differs from the mainland species (*Malurus lamberti*) by having a much darker cap and cobalt blue ear-muffs.

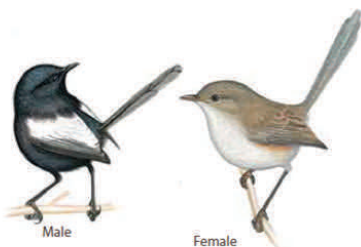
Head-body 65mm	Tail 65mm	Weight 6-11g
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Diet and habitat



Variegated fairy-wrens are usually seen in pairs or small family groups flitting about catching insects. They also eat spiders, seeds and leaves.

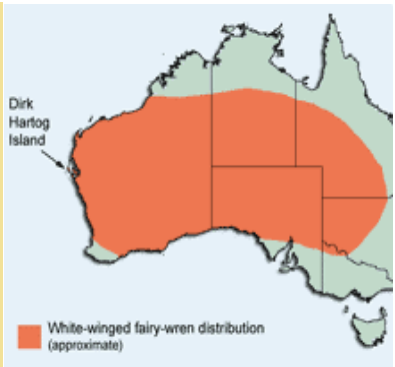
Breeding



These fairy-wrens usually breed from July to September but may breed during other months when insects are plentiful after good rain. Their nests are dome shaped and hidden in shrubbery close to the ground. While the breeding female incubates the eggs and looks after the chicks others in her group gather food.

Incubation 13 days	No. eggs 2-4	Fledge 2 weeks
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Distribution



The Shark Bay subspecies, *Malurus lamberti bernieri*, is found only on Dirk Hartog Island in Shark Bay. The mainland species occurs in a broad band across most arid and semi-arid parts of Australia.

Status

Vulnerable

(EX) (CE) (EN) (VU) (CD) (OS)

Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna)
Notice 2015

Threats to fairy-wrens include habitat loss and degradation, and predation by introduced mammals.



Department of Parks and Wildlife

