

## Rufous Scrub-bird Surveys – Barrington/Gloucester Tops IBA

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Interim Report Surveys conducted 11/10 to 13/10 2010

Nine people participated in the second round of surveys including five from the September team.

Monday involved setting up camp, briefing the newcomers and discussing changes in the record sheet. The Munro Hut bird was again used to familiarise new participants with a Rufous Scrub-bird (RSB) in the field. This is important because the tapes used for briefing involve recordings of the northern sub-species and there are differences in the calls.

In September there was difficulty measuring distances accurately on walking tracks. Subsequently a slightly modified set of transect end points was generated from maps. An important task for Monday and Tuesday was to remark the transect boundaries using the revised coordinates and to remove all superfluous tape.

For the October surveys the observers were provided with information concerning where RSBs were recorded in September to assist the process of verifying these calling sites as permanent territories.

On Tuesday five sets of transect surveys was conducted involving 20 km of track split into 1 km segments. Conditions were difficult with teams experiencing light rain, high winds or at times a combination of both, making it difficult to hear birds and to take notes. Nevertheless, RSBs were recorded by every team and a number of the September RSB calling sites were confirmed and have been upgraded to territory status.

On Wednesday the conditions were better, but we only had six people available. Another difficulty was crossing the Gloucester River, which was running strongly, to access the Glowang and Mt Nelson tracks. Consequently, we decided to only repeat 10 km of transect surveys involving the Carey's Peak Track and the Kerripit Road. In addition some scouting work was done below 1100m on the road down to Sharpes Creek.

A preliminary analysis of the results follows:

Transect	length (km)	Confirmed Territories(1)	Probable Territories(2)	Calling Sites(3)	New Sites(4)
Carey's Peak	5	6	8	9	2
Mt. Nelson	3	3	4	5	0
Glowang	3	3	6	8	2
Kerripit Road	5	1	5	8	3
Gloucester Tops	3	2	3	4	0
Total	19	15	26	34	7

(1) A RSB calling site is upgraded to confirmed territory status if active in both September and October.

- (2) Probable territories based on records of calling birds on two days in the same month.
- (3) Calling sites based on only one record.
- (4) New sites identified in October.

The above numbers may change slightly following more detailed analysis of the results.

As only 10 km of track were surveyed twice in October it is anticipated that with further work the number of confirmed territories will increase.

Seven new calling RSB sites were identified. This probably in part reflects the increased confidence and ability of the team to detect distant birds.

One Rufous Scrub-bird was seen and identified as an immature male.

Three additional RSB calling sites have been identified outside the transect survey areas. This includes the Gloucester Falls Loop track where a single 1 km transect survey was conducted replacing the Beech Forest survey conducted in September.

We have received a small number of incidental records from other observers which are helping build up the inventory of calling sites and territories.

The intention is to conduct some further work to confirm territories involving day trips as opposed to another camp. Subject to the availability of people we may make further scouting visits to other areas.

An additional 30 BA Atlas 500m surveys were completed.

The sterling efforts and dedication of the survey team is applauded.

Mike Newman  
15/10/2010