

Bush Stone-curlew

Burhinus grallarius



WHITEMAN PARK

CONSERVATION • RECREATION • EDUCATION

what long legs you have...

The bush stone-curlew, or bush thick knee as they are also commonly known, are large ground dwelling birds with long, stick-like legs. They tend to favour a habitat of open woodland with native grasses and leaf litter, where their preferred diet of insects are prolific.

Woodland wailer

The bush stone-curlew has a distinctive call or 'wail' that can be quite disturbing to hear! They typically vocalise while foraging or frightened, calling out to other curlew nearby.



Conservation

While the conservation status of the species is deemed of 'least concern', being common along the north eastern coast of Australia, the bush stone-curlew has suffered significant declines in New South Wales and parts of Western Australia. Predation and habitat loss are the primary cause of these regional declines. The curlews found within Whiteman Park have been reintroduced from successful breeding programs around Perth.

Moonlight dining

The bush stone-curlew is mainly nocturnal, feeding after dark on small vertebrates and insects. They are territorial birds and are known to forage over a large area. The curlews typically rest during the day, relying on their cryptic plumage to hide them from potential predators.

Masters of disguise

The highly speckled colouration of the bush stone-curlew means they are well camouflaged in their sparse habitats. When threatened, they typically stop still and freeze, but they are also efficient on the wing and will take flight if in danger.



Open nesters

Unlike most birds, the curlew nest on the ground in areas with sparse cover. Being out in the open, it is the camouflaged colouration of the eggs that helps to ensure they are not spotted by predators. Parents take it in turns to sit on, or watch the eggs from a distance and will chase off any 'threats' that come too close.

