



THE FINCH SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA INC

(incorporated under the *Associations Incorporation Act 2009*)

PO Box 69 Toongabbie NSW 2146

www.finchsociety.org secretary@finchsociety.org

15 May 2014

Invasive Plants and Animals Branch – Biosecurity Division, Regulation and Compliance
Department of Environment and Primary Industries
Invasivespecies.Consultation@depi.vic.gov.au

Please find attached The Finch Society of Australia's completed Consultation Feedback Form (Declared Birds).

At our recent May meeting a motion was unanimously carried by the membership to support the attached feedback. A copy will be posted on the web for the information of our extended membership.

The association looks forward to ongoing communication with regards this issue and offers to provide further details to assist the process in due course.

We would appreciate a return email to confirm receipt.

Kind regards,

Sam Davis

President – The Finch Society of Australia Inc.

P: 02 4632 7987

M: 0411 253512

F: 02 4632 8002

E: president@finchsociety.org

List of bird species proposed to be declared under the Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994

Consultation Feedback Form (Declared Birds)

Introduction

The Department of Environment and Primary Industries (DEPI) has developed a risk-based approach to the management of non-indigenous birds in Victoria, in line with DEPI's broader principles for managing biosecurity risks. In progressing this new policy, DEPI is inviting you to provide feedback on the bird species it is proposing to declare as pest animals under the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994* (CaLP Act).

The new policy enables species of birds to be declared under the CaLP Act if the species is, or has the potential to become a threat to primary production, Crown land, the environment or community health in Victoria. The declaration of species under the CaLP Act will help protect Victoria from the negative impacts associated with non-indigenous bird species, such as lost horticultural and other crop production, reduced amenity value in urban areas, risk to aviation safety and threats to native bird species. Currently there are no birds declared as pest animals under the CaLP Act.

The Department has identified a number of non-indigenous bird species that it believes should be declared under the CaLP Act. Established pest bird species such as the Indian myna will not be declared under the CaLP Act, nor will birds currently kept in aviculture be declared. Only the feral or wild populations of some high risk species kept in aviculture will be declared. DEPI will not be regulating the keeping on non-indigenous birds currently kept in aviculture. If declared, species found in the wild will be managed by the department. The department is responsible, under the CaLP Act, to take steps to control restricted pest animals on any land in the State. DEPI anticipates that the species declared will not pose a significant or social burden on any sector of the public.

By completing this feedback form you are able to provide feedback on the proposed declarations. DEPI will consider all feedback and make a recommendation to the Minister for Agriculture and Food Security. Once approved, processes will be initiated to ensure the legislative requirements for animal declaration proposals under the CaLP Act are met. The final list of declared bird species will be published in the Government Gazette and on the departments website once the process is finalised.

This form is structured into three sections and should take no more than 45 minutes to complete.

Section 1: Proposed declarations

This section enables collection of data on the extent to which you agree or disagree with the proposed declarations and your reasons for your view. This information will be reviewed by the Invasive Plants and Animals Branch (Biosecurity Division, Regulation and Compliance) as part of its decision-making process.

Section 2: Further comments

This section gives you the opportunity to provide further comments. This information will be reviewed by the Invasive Plants and Animals Branch as part of its decision-making process.

Section 3: Contact details

Please include your contact details if you wish to be provided with feedback and so that you can be contacted for clarification if necessary.

Please send your completed feedback form, 16th May 2014, to:
Invasive Plants & Animals Branch – Biosecurity Division, Regulation and Compliance
Department of Environment and Primary Industries
GPO Box 4440 Melbourne, Victoria 3001
F: (03) 9658 4203
Email: Invasivespecies.Consultation@depi.vic.gov.au

Section 1: Proposed declarations

In-line with the new Non-indigenous Bird Management Policy certain bird species will be declared under the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994* (CALP Act). The department is proposing to declared birds as (i) a prohibited pest animal, (ii) a controlled pest animal or (iii) a regulated pest animal. No bird species will be declared as an established pest animal. DEPI anticipates that the species' declared will not pose a significant or social burden on any sector of the public.

a) Prohibited Pest Animals

The species' that DEPI proposes to declare under the CaLP Act as Prohibited pest animals are those that are **not** present in Australia, but have been assessed, and endorsed by the Vertebrate Pests Committee (VPC), as posing an extreme or serious risk to environmental, economic and social values within Australia.

A species can be declared as a Prohibited pest animal if the Minister for Environment and Climate Change is satisfied that—

- (a) it did not occur naturally in the wild in Australia before European settlement; and
- (b)(i) it is a serious threat to primary production, Crown land, the environment or community health in a place outside Victoria; or
- (ii) its potential to threaten primary production, Crown land, the environment or community health in Victoria is unknown.

The importation, keeping and sale of the species should be banned.

For each species, please indicate by placing a 'y' or 'n' in the 'Agree' column if you agree/disagree with the proposed declaration of the species as a Prohibited bird. Please provide a supporting rationale if you do not agree.

Scientific Name	Common Name(s)	VPC Threat Category	Agree (y/n)	Supporting rationale
<i>Corvus splendens</i>	House Crow	Extreme (31/05/2004)		

b) Controlled Pest Animals

The species' that DEPI proposes to declare under the CaLP Act as Controlled pest animals are those that are:

- found in Australia
- have been assessed, and endorsed by the VPC, as posing an extreme or serious risk to environmental, economic and social values within Australia and/or have complex husbandry
- are not kept in aviculture, and
- are only to be kept in zoological facilities.

A species can be declared as a Controlled pest animal if the Minister for Environment and Climate Change is satisfied that—

- (a) it did not occur naturally in the wild in Australia before European settlement; and
- (b) it has a high potential to become a serious threat to primary production, Crown land, the environment or community health in Victoria.

The species should only be kept in high security collections, i.e. zoological parks as defined in the *Zoological Parks and Gardens Act 1995*, approved by the Minister.

For each species, please indicate by placing a 'y' or 'n' in the 'Agree' column if you agree/disagree with the proposed declaration of the species as a Controlled bird. Please provide a supporting rationale if you do not agree.

Scientific Name	Common Name(s)	VPC Threat Category	Agree (y/n)	Supporting rationale
<i>Phoenicopterus chilensis</i>	Chilean Flamingo	Serious (21/09/2005)		
<i>Phoenicopterus ruber</i>	Greater Flamingo	Extreme (21/09/2005)		
<i>Rhea americana</i>	Greater Rhea	Serious (21/09/2005)		

* As a representative of the Order Sphenisciformes

c) Regulated Pest Animals

DEPI proposes to declare, under the CaLP Act as Regulated pest animals, the **feral or wild populations** of species that are considered to pose an extreme or serious risk to environmental, economic and social values within Australia. These species are not established in the wild in Victoria. Their risk assessments have either been endorsed by the VPC or the species are documented to be an escapee in other Australian jurisdictions. They are kept in captivity and are not established in the wild.

A species can be declared as a Regulated pest animal if the Minister for Environment and Climate Change is satisfied that—

- (a) it did not occur naturally in the wild in Australia before European settlement; and
- (b) it is, or has the potential to become, a serious threat to primary production, Crown land, the environment or community health in Victoria.

These species should only be kept in collections or at premises approved by the Minister.

For each species, please indicate by placing a 'y' or 'n' in the 'Agree' column if you agree/disagree with the proposed declaration of the species as a Regulated bird. Please provide a supporting rationale if you do not agree.

Scientific Name	Common Name(s)	VPC Threat Category	Agree (y/n)	Supporting rationale
<i>Agapornis personatus</i> **	Yellow-collared Lovebird	Extreme		
<i>Agapornis roseicollis</i> **	Peach-faced Lovebird; Rosy-faced Lovebird	Serious (5/04/2004)		
<i>Aix galericulata</i> **	Mandarin Duck	Extreme		
<i>Alopochen aegyptiaca</i>	Egyptian Goose	Extreme (5/04/2004)		
<i>Amandava amandava</i>	Red Munia; Red Strawberry Finch; Red or Indian Avadavat; Tiger Finch; Red Waxbill	Extreme (5/04/2004)	N	See comments below In particular 6
<i>Amazona leucocephala</i>	Cuban Amazon; Cuban Parrot	Serious (13/05/2006)		

Regulated Pest Animals continued

Scientific Name	Common Name(s)	VPC Threat Category	Agree (y/n)	Supporting rationale
<i>Amazona ochrocephala</i>	Yellow-crowned Amazon; Yellow-headed Amazon; Yellow-fronted Amazon; Yellow-naped Amazon	Extreme (1/03/2004)		
<i>Anodorhynchus hyacinthinus</i>	Hyacinth Macaw	Extreme (13/05/2006)		
<i>Anser anser</i> **	Graylag Goose	Extreme		
<i>Ara ararauna</i> **	Blue-and-yellow Macaw	Extreme		
<i>Branta canadensis</i>	Canada Goose	Extreme (5/04/2004)		
<i>Cairina moschate</i> **	Muscovy Duck	Extreme		
<i>Carduelis cabaret</i>**	Common Redpoll	Extreme	N	See comments below In particular 3 and 5
<i>Chrysolophus amherstiae</i> **	Lady Amherst's Pheasant	Extreme		
<i>Colinus virginianus</i>	Bobwhite Quail; Northern Bobwhite	Extreme (1/03/2004)		
<i>Cyanoramphus novaezelandiae</i> **	Red-fronted Parakeet	Extreme		
<i>Estrilda astrild</i>	Common Waxbill; St Helena Waxbill	Extreme (1/03/2004)	N	See comments below In particular 6
<i>Leiothrix argentauris</i>	Silver-eared Mesia	Extreme (12/08/2006)	N	See comments below In particular 5
<i>Leiothrix lutea</i>	Pekin Robin; Red-billed Leiothrix	Serious (22/04/2004)	N	See comments below In particular 5
<i>Lonchura cantans</i>	African Silverbill	Serious (1/03/2004)	N	See comments below In particular 6
<i>Lonchura malacca</i>	Black-headed Munia; Black-headed Nun, Black-headed Mannikin, Tri-coloured Mannikin	Extreme (1/03/2004)	N	See comments below In particular 6
<i>Myiopsitta monachus</i>	Monk Parakeet; Quaker Parrot	Extreme (22/04/2004)		

Regulated Pest Animals continued

Scientific Name	Common Name(s)	VPC Threat Category	Agree (y/n)	Supporting rationale
<i>Nandayus nenday</i>	Nanday Conure	Extreme (1/03/2004)		
<i>Numida meleagris</i> **	Helmeted Guineafowl	Extreme		
<i>Padda oryzivora</i>	Java Sparrow; Paddy Finch	Serious (22/04/2004)	N	See comments below In particular 6
<i>Psittacula eupatria</i>	Alexandrine Parakeet	Extreme (1/03/2004)		
<i>Psittacula himalayana</i> **	Slaty-headed Parakeet	Extreme		
<i>Psittacula krameri</i>	Rose-ringed Parakeet; Indian or African Ringneck Parrot or Parakeet	Extreme (22/04/2004)		
<i>Pycnonotus jocosus</i>	Red-whiskered Bulbul	Serious (08/05/2010)		
<i>Pyrrhura frontalis</i>	Maroon-bellied Conure	Serious (28/12/2005)		
<i>Serinus canaria</i>**	Island Canary	Extreme	N	See comments below In particular 7
<i>Streptopelia roseogrisea</i>	African Collared Dove; Barbary Dove	Serious (31/05/2004)		
<i>Streptopelia tranquebarica</i> **	Red Collared-Dove	Extreme		
<i>Struthio camelus</i> **	Ostrich	Serious (11/12/2008)		
<i>Tadorna variegata</i> **	Paradise Shelduck	Extreme		
<i>Uraeginthus bengalus</i>	Red-cheeked Cordonbleu	Serious (22/04/2004)	N	See comments below In particular 6
<i>Volatinia jacarina</i>	Blue-black Grassquit; Jacarini Finch	Serious (28/12/2005)	N	See comments below In particular 6

** denotes species' documented to be an escapee in other Australian jurisdictions

Section 2: Further comments

If you have any other comments or feedback, please provide them below. This information will be reviewed by the Invasive Plants and Animals Branch as part of its decision-making process regarding these species.

Thankyou for requesting feedback on the proposed policy. The Finch Society of Australia is keen to ensure conservation of our unique Australian wildlife, in particular finch and related species. However we are unable to support the proposed policy and make the following observations to explain our position. Comments are made with regard to the finch and related species we have bolded in *Section 1 c) Regulated Pest Animals* above.

1. We acknowledge the intention to regulate only “feral or wild populations”. However this appears to contradict the statement “These species should only be kept in collections or at premises approved by the minister”. We recommend replacing this statement with the words “These species may be freely kept in captivity without regulation”.
2. We request further detail as to how the DEPI selected particular species for proposed declaration given the number of exotic bird species known to be present in Australia.
3. In Australia all current “established in the wild” finch species were introduced by Acclimatisation societies. These were wild caught birds released in large numbers, at many locations, and at many different times. House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*, Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*, Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis* and Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris* were successful, most others were unsuccessful including the Common Redpoll *Carduelis cabaret*. The Spice finch *Lonchura punctulata* is the single exception and is believed to have established from wild birds released by sailors unable to sell the birds off the docks.
4. All exotic species highlighted were last imported into Australia prior to 1945. Therefore captive populations are thoroughly domesticated with virtually no chance of wild survival.
5. The following species are extremely rare in Australian aviculture with less than 10 viable breeding pairs. Clearly their pest risk is trivial at best.

Carduelis cabaret Common Redpoll
Leitothrix argenteauris Silver-eared Mesia
Leitothrix lutea Pekin Robin

6. The following species have been held in large numbers by aviculturist across Australia for some 100 years, yet none have established feral populations.

Amandava amandava Red Strawberry Finch
Estrilda astrild St. Helena or Common Waxbill
Lonchura cantans African Silverbill
Lonchura malacca Tricolored Munia
Padda oryivora Java Sparrow
Uraeginthus bengalus Red-cheeked Cordon Bleu
Volatinia jacarina Jacarini Finch

7. The domestic canary (*Serinus canaria domestica*) is the only sub-species of *Serinus canaria* present in Australian aviculture and has no chance of survival in the wild.
8. We strongly disagree with the VPC Threat Categories assigned to these species. We suggest the Bomford model is inappropriate when assessing risk of establishment associated with escaped domestic captive populations.

We look forward to your timely response to our observations and welcome the opportunity to elaborate further.

NB. We have used your Scientific Names to identify species. There was some confusion with regard to some common names used – in particular for *Lonchura malacca*.

SECTION 3: Contact details

If you wish to do so, please give your contact details so we can provide you with feedback and contact you for clarification if necessary.

Title: Mr First name: SAMUEL Surname: DAVIS

Position: PRESIDENT

Organisation: THE FINCH SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA INC.

Address: PO BOX 69

Town/suburb TOONGABBIE

Postcode: 2146

Telephone: 02 4632 7987

Mobile: 0411 253512

Fax: 02 4632 8002

Email: president@finchsociety.org

END OF QUESTIONNAIRE

Thank you for your interest in the proposed declarations and for taking the time to complete this feedback form.