Conservation Significance
Endemic to the AMLR. The subspecies has been described as 'probably declining' within the AMLR. Within the AMLR the area of occupancy is 'Extremely Restricted'. It is geographically isolated in the region.

Description
Small wren (15-19 cm in size). Tawny colour, males with lavender-blue eyebrow and throat. Tail long and sparsely feathered, nearly twice the length of the body.

Distribution and Population
Approximately 20 sub-populations, comprising an estimated 500 individuals. Most sub-populations are small, from one to a few breeding pairs and occur in swamps on private property. Approximately 60% of individuals occur in dry heath in Deep Creek CP.

The distribution contracted during the period 1993-2006 and the population remains highly fragmented. Southern sites are completely separate from northern sites; fragmentation also exists within these population groupings. Although overall range effectively remained unchanged, 18 local extinctions during the period resulted in a further contraction of population groups and increased isolation within these disjunct groups.

Excluding reintroduced occurrences, there was a 27% decline in area of occupancy from 25 km² in 1993 to 18.25 km² in 2006 (IUCN 2001; Pickett in prep.).

A trial translocation program occurred in 2001-02 to re-populate an area in Cox’s Scrub CP.

Post-1983 AMLR filtered records restricted to the Southern Fleurieu in two general clusters: around Mount Compass (with records from Myponga to Finniss area); and around the Deep Creek CP/Parawa/Second Valley Forest area. Also a single record for Victor Harbor. Confined to sub-populations in the Deep Creek, Parawa, Myponga, Mount Compass, Nangkita and Finniss areas. Locally extinct from Yundi, Cox’s Scrub (now re-introduced), Ashbourne and possibly Kuitpo areas (M. Pickett pers. comm.).

Within the AMLR, pre-1983 filtered records are limited but suggest a similar distribution, but with additional (unverified) isolated records from around Cleland, Hindmarsh Falls Reserve and near Second Valley.

Habitat
Occurs in two general habitat types: swamp and dry-heath. Most populations occur in dense swamp (which includes wet-heath, sedgeland, reedland and occasionally lignum), although one of the two largest populations inhabits dry-heath. These habitats are dense at 0-1m height. Swamp habitat occurs almost entirely on private property, is fragmented, rare and subject to incremental alteration or clearance (G. Carpenter pers. comm.).

Within the AMLR the preferred broad vegetation groups are Wetland and Heathy Woodland.

Biology and Ecology
Feed predominantly on small invertebrates, chiefly insects (Higgins et al. 2001; Pickett in prep.).

Breed annually during spring-summer, with overall breeding season occupying nine months from the start of August until the end of March. This includes nesting and rearing of young to independence, but most young hatch during September-December. Pairs produce one (mostly) or two broods of one to three young during the breeding season (Pickett in prep.). Low recorded values of overall productivity, fecundity and breeding female annual survival are probably
insufficient to maintain a stable population size (Pickett in prep.).

Considered dispersal-limited (particularly in fragmented habitat in largely cleared landscapes) due to their short rounded wings that prevent sustained flight, and a preference for dense cover. However there is little available empirical information regarding dispersal.

Aboriginal Significance
Post-1983 records indicate the majority of the AMLR distribution occurs in Ngarrindjeri Nation. It also occurs on the southern edge of Peramangk and Kaurna Nations.

Threats
Threats include:
- habitat loss and/or degradation: much of the wetland habitat has been drained and cleared for agriculture, and has dried out after feeder streams have been dammed or are grazed
- fire: habitat areas are vulnerable to fire in dry seasons; few refuge areas exist to enable recolonisation to occur, fires have the potential to eliminate isolated sub-populations (G. Carpenter pers. comm.)
- habitat fragmentation: populations are apparently isolated due to the bird’s low ability to fly across open spaces
- altered water regimes: such as water extraction and swamp (surface-water) drainage, are affecting habitat areas, land use change such as plantation forestry and residential development may also be important
- weed invasion
- Phytophthora: causing habitat dieback
- predation: by both exotic and native predators.

Additional current direct threats have been identified and rated for this species. Refer to the main plan accompanying these profiles.

Regional Distribution
Map based on filtered post-1983 records. Note, this map does not necessarily represent the actual species’ distribution within the AMLR.

References
Note: In some cases original reference sources are not included in this list, however they can be obtained from the reference from which the information has been sourced (the reference cited in superscript).


