



CHANGES TO LICENCES FOR KEEPING NON-NATIVE ANIMALS UNDER THE *NATURE CONSERVATION ACT 2014*

INFORMATION PAPER

© Australian Capital Territory, Canberra 2019

This work is copyright. Apart from any use as permitted under the *Copyright Act 1968*, no part may be reproduced by any process without written permission from:

Director-General, Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate, ACT Government, GPO Box 158, Canberra ACT 2601.

Telephone: 02 6207 1923

Website: www.environment.act.gov.au

Acknowledgement of Country

The Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate acknowledges the Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of this nation. We acknowledge and pay our respects to Elders, past, present and future of the Ngunnawal people as the traditional custodians of the lands on which our Directorate is located and where we conduct our business. We recognise the significant contribution of the Ngunnawal people and neighbouring Nations—the Ngambri, Ngarigo, Wolgalu, Gundungurra, Yuin and Wiradjuri to the Canberra region. For thousands of years these Nations have maintained a tangible and intangible cultural, social, environmental, spiritual and economic connection to these lands and waters.

Accessibility

The ACT Government is committed to making its information, services, events and venues as accessible as possible.

If you have difficulty reading a standard printed document and would like to receive this publication in an alternative format, such as large print, please phone Access Canberra on 13 22 81 or email the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate at EPSDDComms@act.gov.au

If English is not your first language and you require a translating and interpreting service, please phone 13 14 50.

If you are deaf, or have a speech or hearing impairment, and need the teletypewriter service, please phone 13 36 77 and ask for Access Canberra on 13 22 81.

For speak and listen users, please phone 1300 555 727 and ask for Canberra Connect on 13 22 81.

For more information on these services visit <http://www.relayservice.com.au>



PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER



CONTENTS

PURPOSE.....	5
WHEN DO YOU NEED TO HAVE A LICENCE TO KEEP AN ANIMAL?	5
HOW HAVE LICENSING REQUIREMENTS CHANGED?.....	6
HOW COULD THESE CHANGES AFFECT YOU?	6
HOW DOES LICENSING PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT?.....	6
WHY WERE CHANGES MADE?	6
ATTACHMENT 1: NON-NATIVE BIRDS PROPOSED TO BE REMOVED FROM THE EXEMPT ANIMALS DECLARATION	7
REFERENCES	11



PURPOSE

The ACT Government has a licensing system for the keeping of animals. The licensing system aims to reduce the risk of animals owned by people (in particular non-native animals) impacting on the environment. Following a risk assessment by the Conservator of Flora and Fauna, the ACT Government has made changes to the licensing arrangements for keeping non-native animals.

Although it is not expected that many people will be affected by the changes, it is important that the public are aware of the amendments under the Nature Conservation Act 2014 (the Nature Conservation Act) and comply with the new licensing requirements. The Government is also willing to explore options to minimise the impact on individuals or businesses that may be affected by the changes. Such options may include, for example, waiving licence fees for currently owned animals.

WHEN DO YOU NEED TO HAVE A LICENCE TO KEEP AN ANIMAL?

Owners of all animals kept in captivity, traded or imported in the ACT require a licence unless the animal is listed in the *Nature Conservation (Exempt Animals) Declaration 2015 (No 1)* (the exempt animals declaration). The list of animals that are exempt (or in other words do not require a licence) aims to minimise regulation, particularly for commonly kept animals at low risk to the environment.

Animals that are exempt and do not require a licence include: dogs, cats, farm stock including sheep, cattle and poultry, commonly kept native and non-native birds, as well as some commonly kept native reptiles and frogs.

If in doubt people should [check if a licence is required](#). Offences and penalties apply if a person is in possession of any animal which is not listed as an exempt animal, without a licence.

Note, although exempt from a licence under the Nature Conservation Act, the keeping of dogs, cats and farm stock has requirements under other legislation.

- Domestic dog and cat keeping, breeding and de-sexing is regulated by the *Domestic Animals Act 2000* (Domestic Animals Act).
- The *Stock Act 2005* and *Animal Diseases Act 2005* deal with animals kept for agricultural purposes.

HOW HAVE LICENSING REQUIREMENTS CHANGED?

The ACT Government has reviewed the Exempt Animals Declaration and removed seventy-seven non-native birds from the list (See **Attachment 1**). These birds will still be able to be kept but will require a licence to do so. Licensing of high risk animals facilitates responsible pet ownership by ensuring appropriate pet keeping practices and facilities to reduce the risk of escaped animals adversely impacting on the ACT's native species and ecosystems.

We have also removed Arabian Camels (*Camelus dromedarius*) from the list. Camels are large animals requiring specialised husbandry. They are not currently managed under the *Stock Act 2005* in contrast to commonly kept South American camelids such as Alpacas which are grown for meat and fibre. If Arabian Camels escape they are likely to cause damage to native ecosystems. Camels will be able to be kept under a Nature Conservation Licence.

HOW COULD THESE CHANGES AFFECT YOU?

If you are the [keeper of animals](#) that require a licence under the Nature Conservation Act, you are required to keep prescribed records and may be required to pay a licence fee.

It is not expected that many people are keeping animals that were previously exempt and now require a licence, however, if people are, then the ACT Government would like to know so that transitional arrangements can be made.

HOW DOES LICENSING PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT?

The main object of the Nature Conservation Act is to protect, conserve and enhance the biodiversity of the ACT. One of the important means of achieving this outcome is through the licensing of keeping (including breeding), selling, trading or taking of animals for research, education and zoological purposes, animal handling or for public exhibition.

Irrespective of whether the animal is an exempt animal, it is an offence to:

- take a native animal from the wild, harm or kill a native animal, without a licence
- release any animal (both native and non-native) from captivity, without a licence.

WHY WERE CHANGES MADE?

The Nature Conservation Act (Part 6.2, s. 155) provides for the Conservator of Flora and Fauna (the Conservator) to make an Exempt Animals Declaration. In doing so the Conservator must consider the need to protect native species and significant ecosystems in the ACT, NSW and Australia.

A risk assessment including of animals listed under the *Pest Plants and Animals Act 2005* (Pest Plants and Animals Act) has led to the removal of about 77 non-native birds from the Exempt Animals Declaration. These non-native birds have been assessed as, or having potential to be, high-risk invasive animals. The Conservator believes that it is not appropriate for these animals to be kept or traded without a licence. The Arabian Camel has also been removed as if they escape they are likely to cause damage to native ecosystems and they are not managed under other legislation.

ATTACHMENT 1: NON-NATIVE BIRDS REMOVED FROM THE EXEMPT ANIMALS DECLARATION

Table 1: Non-native birds removed from the exempt Animals declaration – Licence now required

COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	JUSTIFICATION
African Silverbill	<i>Lonchura cantans</i>	Serious pest risk (VPC 2007, EIC).
African Yellow Canary*	<i>Crithagra flaviventris</i>	Serious pest risk, provisional (VPC 2007). Extreme pest risk, provisional (EIC).
Barbary Partridge	<i>Alectoris barbara</i>	Extreme pest risk, provisional (EIC).
Bengalese Mannikin, White-rumped Munia	<i>Lonchura striata domestica</i>	Serious pest risk, provisional (VPC 2007). Extreme pest risk, provisional (EIC).
Black and White Munia, Rufous-backed Munia,	<i>Lonchura bicolor</i>	Serious pest risk (VPC 2007). Extreme pest risk, provisional (EIC).
Black-cheeked Lovebird	<i>Agapornis nigrigenis</i>	Serious pest risk, provisional (VPC 2007). Extreme pest risk, provisional (EIC), listed as vulnerable under IUCN.
Black-headed Munia	<i>Lonchura malacca ferruginosa</i>	Extreme pest risk (VPC 2007, EIC).
Black-headed Nun	<i>Lonchura malacca atricapilla</i>	Extreme pest risk (VPC 2007, EIC).
Blue-black Grassquit, Jacarina Finch	<i>Volatinia jacarina</i>	Serious pest risk (VPC 2007, EIC).
Blue-breasted Cordonbleu	<i>Uraeginthus angolensis</i>	Serious pest risk, provisional (VPC 2007). Extreme pest risk, provisional (EIC).
Blue-capped Cordonbleu	<i>Uraeginthus cyanocephala</i>	Moderate pest risk, provisional (VPC 2007). Extreme pest risk, provisional (EIC).
California Quail	<i>Callipepla (syn. Lophortyx) californica</i>	Extreme pest risk, provisional (VPC 2007, EIC).
Chestnut Mannikin, Tri-coloured Mannikin	<i>Lonchura malacca malacca</i>	Extreme pest risk (VPC 2007, EIC).
Chukar Partridge	<i>Alectoris chukar</i>	Serious pest risk, provisional (VPC 2007). Extreme pest risk, provisional (EIC).
Common Myna/Indian Myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>	Already established significant pest (COG 2017). Common breeding resident.
Common Quail	<i>Coturnix coturnix</i>	Extreme pest risk, provisional (VPC 2007, EIC).
Common Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	Extreme pest risk, Provisional (VPC 2007); Serious pest risk (EIC). Common breeding resident.
Common Waxbill, St Helena Waxbill	<i>Estrilda astrild</i>	Extreme pest risk (VPC 2007, EIC).
Crimson-winged Pytilia, Aurora Finch	<i>Pytilia phoenicoptera</i>	Serious pest risk, provisional (VPC 2007). Extreme pest risk, provisional (EIC).

* different species to the Common Canary

COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	JUSTIFICATION
Cuban Grassquit, Cuban Finch	<i>Tiaris canorus</i>	Moderate pest risk, provisional (VPC 2007). Extreme pest risk, provisional (EIC).
Cut-throat Weaver, Cut-throat/Ribbon Finch	<i>Amadina fasciata</i>	Serious pest risk, provisional (VPC 2007). Extreme pest risk, provisional (EIC).
Egyptian Goose	<i>Alopochen aegyptiacus</i>	Extreme pest risk (VPC 2007, EIC).
Eurasian Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	Extreme pest risk (VPC 2007, EIC). Common, breeding resident (COG 2017).
Eurasian Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	Extreme pest risk, provisional (VPC 2007, EIC). Common, breeding resident (COG 2017) with a stable population.
Eurasian Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>	Extreme pest risk, provisional (VPC 2007, EIC). One published historical ACT record (Anon. 1969). Currently extinct in the ACT (COG 2014, 2017).
Fan-tailed/Red-shouldered Whydah, Widow Bird	<i>Euplectes axillaris</i>	Serious pest risk, provisional (VPC 2007). Extreme pest risk, provisional (EIC).
Green Peafowl	<i>Pavo muticus</i>	Serious pest risk, provisional (VPC 2007). Extreme pest risk, provisional (EIC).
Green-winged Pytilia, Melba finch	<i>Pytilia melba</i>	Serious pest risk, provisional (VPC 2007). Extreme pest risk, provisional (EIC).
Grenadier Weaver, Red Bishop	<i>Euplectes orix orix</i>	Extreme pest risk, provisional (VPC 2007, EIC).
Grey Partridge	<i>Perdix perdix</i>	Extreme pest risk, provisional (EIC).
Hooded Siskin, Yellow Siskin	<i>Carduelis magellanica</i>	Moderate pest risk (VPC 2007). Extreme pest risk, provisional (EIC).
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	Extreme pest risk (VPC 2007, EIC). Common, breeding resident.
Indian Peafowl	<i>Pavo cristatus</i>	Extreme pest risk, provisional (VPC 2007, EIC). Common, breeding resident.
Indian Silverbill, White-throated Munia	<i>Lonchura malabarica</i>	Extreme pest risk, provisional (VPC 2007, EIC).
Janday Conure, Jandaya Parakeet	<i>Aratinga jandaya</i>	Moderate pest risk, provisional (VPC 2007). Extreme pest risk, provisional (EIC).
Java Sparrow, Paddy Finch	<i>Lonchura (Padda) oryzivora</i>	Serious pest risk (VPC 2007). Extreme pest risk, provisional (EIC). Recorded as an escapee in the ACT (COG 2014).
Javan Munia, Javanese Mannikin	<i>Lonchura leucogastroides</i>	Moderate pest risk, provisional (VPC 2007). Extreme pest risk, provisional (EIC).
Kalij Pheasant	<i>Lophura leucomelanos</i>	Moderate pest risk, provisional (VPC 2007). Extreme pest risk, provisional (EIC).
Luzon Bleeding Heart Pigeon	<i>Gallicolumba luzonica</i>	Moderate pest risk, provisional (VPC 2007). Extreme pest risk, provisional (EIC). Recorded as an escapee in the ACT (COG 2014).
Madagascan Red Fody, Madagascar Weaver.	<i>Foudia madagascariensis</i>	Serious pest risk, provisional (VPC 2007). Extreme pest risk, provisional (EIC).
Namaqua Dove, Masked Dove	<i>Oena capensis</i>	Extreme pest risk, provisional (VPC 2007, EIC).
Nanday Conure	<i>Nandayus nenday</i>	Extreme pest risk (VPC 2007, EIC).

COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	JUSTIFICATION
New Zealand Scaup	<i>Aythya novaeseelandiae</i>	Although only a moderate pest risk (VPC 2007, EIC), species is not generally kept as it likes clear deep water and would be difficult to keep in captivity.
Northern Bobwhite	<i>Colinus virginianus</i>	Extreme pest risk (VPC 2007, EIC).
Northern Red Bishop, Orange Bishop	<i>Euplectes orix franciscana</i>	Extreme pest risk, provisional (VPC 2007, EIC).
Nutmeg Mannikin, Spice Finch	<i>Lonchura punctulata</i>	Recorded as an escapee in the ACT (COG 2014). No local wild population established. Extreme pest risk, provisional (VPC 2007, EIC).
Nyasa Lovebird	<i>Agapornis lilianae</i>	Serious pest risk, provisional (VPC 2007). Extreme pest risk, provisional list (EIC), requires specialised husbandry.
Oriental Greenfinch	<i>Carduelis sinica</i>	Moderate pest risk, provisional (VPC 2007). Extreme pest risk, provisional (EIC).
Ostrich	<i>Struthio camelus</i>	Serious pest risk, provisional (VPC 2007). Can cause significant harm to people if they escape.
Paradise Shelduck	<i>Tadorna variegata</i>	Serious pest risk, provisional (VPC 2007). Extreme pest risk, provisional (EIC).
Paradise/Aberdeen Finch, Red-headed Amadina	<i>Amadina erythrocephala</i>	Serious pest risk, provisional (VPC 2007). Extreme pest risk, provisional (EIC).
Pin-tailed Whydah	<i>Vidua macroura</i>	Extreme pest risk, provisional (VPC 2007, EIC).
Plum-headed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula cyanocephala</i>	Extreme pest risk, provisional (VPC 2007, EIC).
Red Avadavat	<i>Amandava amandava</i>	Extreme pest risk (VPC 2007, EIC).
Red Avadavat (subsp.)	<i>Amandava amandava punicea</i>	Risk not assessed. Under the precautionary principle, treated as for <i>A. amandava</i> .
Red-billed Fire Finch	<i>Lagonosticta senegala</i>	Serious pest risk, provisional (VPC 2007). Extreme pest risk, provisional (EIC).
Red-cheeked Cordonbleu	<i>Uraeginthus bengalus</i>	Serious pest risk (VPC 2007, EIC).
Red-faced Aurora (sub-species)	<i>Pytilia hypogrammica lopezi</i>	Risk not assessed. Under the precautionary principle, treated as for <i>Pytilia hypogrammica</i> .
Red-faced Pytilia, Yellow-winged Pytilia	<i>Pytilia hypogrammica</i>	Serious pest risk, provisional (VPC 2007). Extreme pest risk, provisional (EIC).
Red-fronted Parakeet, Red-fronted Kakariki	<i>Cyanoramphus novaezelandiae</i>	Serious pest risk, provisional (VPC 2007). Extreme pest risk, provisional (EIC).
Red-headed Fody, Mascarene Fody	<i>Foudia eminentissima</i>	Serious pest risk, provisional (VPC 2007). Extreme pest risk, provisional (EIC).
Red-legged Partridge	<i>Alectoris rufa</i>	Extreme pest risk, provisional (EIC).
Red-whiskered Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus jocosus</i>	A prohibited pest animal under the PPA. Extreme pest risk, provisional (VPC 2007); Serious pest risk (EIC).
Reeve's Pheasant	<i>Syrnaticus reevesii</i>	Extreme pest risk (VPC 2007, EIC).

COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	JUSTIFICATION
Ringed Turtle-dove, Barbary Dove	<i>Streptopelia risoria</i>	Recognised as a domesticated species derived from the Eurasian Collared Dove (<i>S. decaocto</i>) and/or the African Ringed Turtle-dove (<i>S. roseogrisea</i>) which are not exempt. Recorded as an escapee in the ACT (COG 2014). Sub species have been assessed as an extreme pest risk (VPC 2007, EIC).
Ruddy Ground Dove, Talpacoti	<i>Columbina talpacoti</i>	Extreme pest risk, provisional (VPC 2007, EIC).
Silver Pheasant	<i>Lophura nycthemera</i>	Moderate pest risk, provisional (VPC 2007). Extreme pest risk, provisional (EIC).
Slaty-headed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula himalayana</i>	Extreme pest risk (VPC 2007). Extreme pest risk, provisional (EIC).
Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	Extreme pest risk, provisional (VPC 2007, EIC).
Spotted Dove	<i>Streptopelia chinensis</i>	Extreme pest risk, provisional (VPC 2007, EIC).
Swinhoe's Pheasant	<i>Lophura swinhoii</i>	Moderate pest risk, provisional (VPC 2007). Extreme pest risk, provisional (EIC).
White-rumped Seedeater, Grey Singing Finch	<i>Serinus leucopygius</i> (also known as <i>Crithagra leucopygia</i>)	Serious pest risk, provisional (VPC 2007). Extreme pest risk, provisional (EIC).
White-breasted Ground Dove; White-bibbed Ground-dove, Purple Ground-dove, Jobi Island Dove	<i>Gallicolumba jobiensis</i>	Moderate pest risk, provisional (VPC 2007). Extreme pest risk, provisional (EIC).
White-headed Munia	<i>Lonchura maja</i>	Moderate pest risk, provisional (VPC 2007). Extreme pest risk, provisional (EIC).
Yellow-fronted Canary*, Green Singing Finch	<i>Serinus mozambicus</i>	Serious pest risk, provisional (VPC 2007). Extreme pest risk, provisional (EIC).
Yellow-fronted Parakeet. Yellow-fronted Kakariki	<i>Cyanoramphus auriceps</i>	Serious pest risk, provisional (VPC 2007). Extreme pest risk, provisional (EIC). Recorded as an escapee in the ACT (COG 2014).
Zebra/Orange-breasted/Golden-breasted Waxbill	<i>Amandava subflava</i>	Serious pest risk, provisional (VPC 2007). Extreme pest risk, provisional (EIC).

* different species to the Common Canary

REFERENCES

Canberra Ornithologists Group (COG), 2014, *Canberra Bird Notes*, 42:1, Canberra.

Canberra Ornithologists Group (COG), 2017, *Canberra Bird Notes*, 39:1, Canberra.

Environment and Invasives Committee (EIC), 2015, *Australian List of Threat Categories of non-indigenous vertebrates*, unpublished.

Vertebrate Pests Committee (VPC), 2007, *List of Exotic Vertebrate Animals in Australia*, VPC. See <https://www.pestsmart.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2010/03/VPCListJuly2007.pdf>

The background is a solid purple color. Overlaid on this are several thin white lines that intersect at a single point in the upper right quadrant. These lines radiate outwards, creating a starburst or web-like pattern that spans across the page.

© Australian Capital Territory, Canberra 2019

This work is copyright. Apart from any use as permitted under the *Copyright Act 1968*, no part may be reproduced by any process without written permission from:

Director-General, Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development
Directorate, ACT Government, GPO Box 158, Canberra ACT 2601.

Telephone: 02 6207 1923

Website: www.environment.act.gov.au