

Coastal IFOA Guidance – Rufous Scrub-bird micro-habitat

Purpose

This guidance document provides a description of **Rufous Scrub-bird micro-habitat**, as referred to in Coastal Integrated Forestry Operations Approval (Coastal IFOA) Protocol 39: Definitions. It is intended to:

- Assist the Forestry Corporation of NSW (**FCNSW**) in implementing conditions 49, 56 and 66 and Protocol 20.4(2) of the Coastal IFOA.
- Guide the NSW **Environment Protection Authority (EPA)** when regulating conditions 49, 56 and 66 and Protocol 20.4(2) of the Coastal IFOA.

Note: this guidance does not affect the legal requirements of the Coastal IFOA and its protocols. This guidance is not a substitute for the Coastal IFOA conditions¹ and protocols² and does not modify their terms or effect. Terms used in this guidance document have the same meaning as defined in Coastal IFOA Protocol 39, 'Definitions'. Defined terms are indicated by **bold and italicised** type.

Coastal IFOA definition

The Coastal IFOA definition of **Rufous Scrub-bird micro-habitat** is 'Areas of **rainforest** and/or wet sclerophyll forest that are:

1. one hectare or greater in size; and
2. contain extremely dense cover between two and 50 cm above the ground; or
3. moderate cover between 50 and 100 cm above the ground.

The cover may consist of living or non-living plant material or both. These areas generally have a moist microclimate and abundant leaf litter.'

Aspects relevant to habitat identification

The following aspects may assist in identifying **Rufous Scrub-bird micro-habitat** and the features described in the Coastal IFOA definition:

- The areas of dense and moderate cover referred to in the Coastal IFOA definition:
 - may coexist in the same location or occur separately in discrete areas.
 - may consist of either living material such as ferns, shrubs, and vines, or non-living material such as logs, branches, bark, and associated debris.
 - provide essential refuge and breeding **habitat** for the Rufous Scrub-bird. The Rufous Scrub-bird may also forage in adjacent more open areas. The required additional 20m **exclusion zone** from the outer edge of **Rufous Scrub-bird micro-habitat** may comprise an important part of the foraging **habitat**.
 - generally occur in high rainfall forests located above 600 m in elevation.
- At ground level, areas with a moist microclimate and dense leaf litter provide **habitat** for the invertebrates that are food for the Rufous Scrub-bird.
- The Rufous Scrub-bird will use small-scale open areas within their generally dense **habitat** for foraging. These small-scale open areas should be considered as contained in the consolidated area of **habitat** that is protected, in addition to any areas of dense or moderate cover.

- Examples of **habitats** utilised by Rufous Scrub-bird include vine thickets or other dense vegetation occupying forest gaps and edges, shrubby **habitat** along **drainage features**, or dense young tree ferns. See photos 1–5 (below) for examples of **Rufous Scrub-bird micro-habitat**.

Rufous Scrub-bird micro-habitat photos

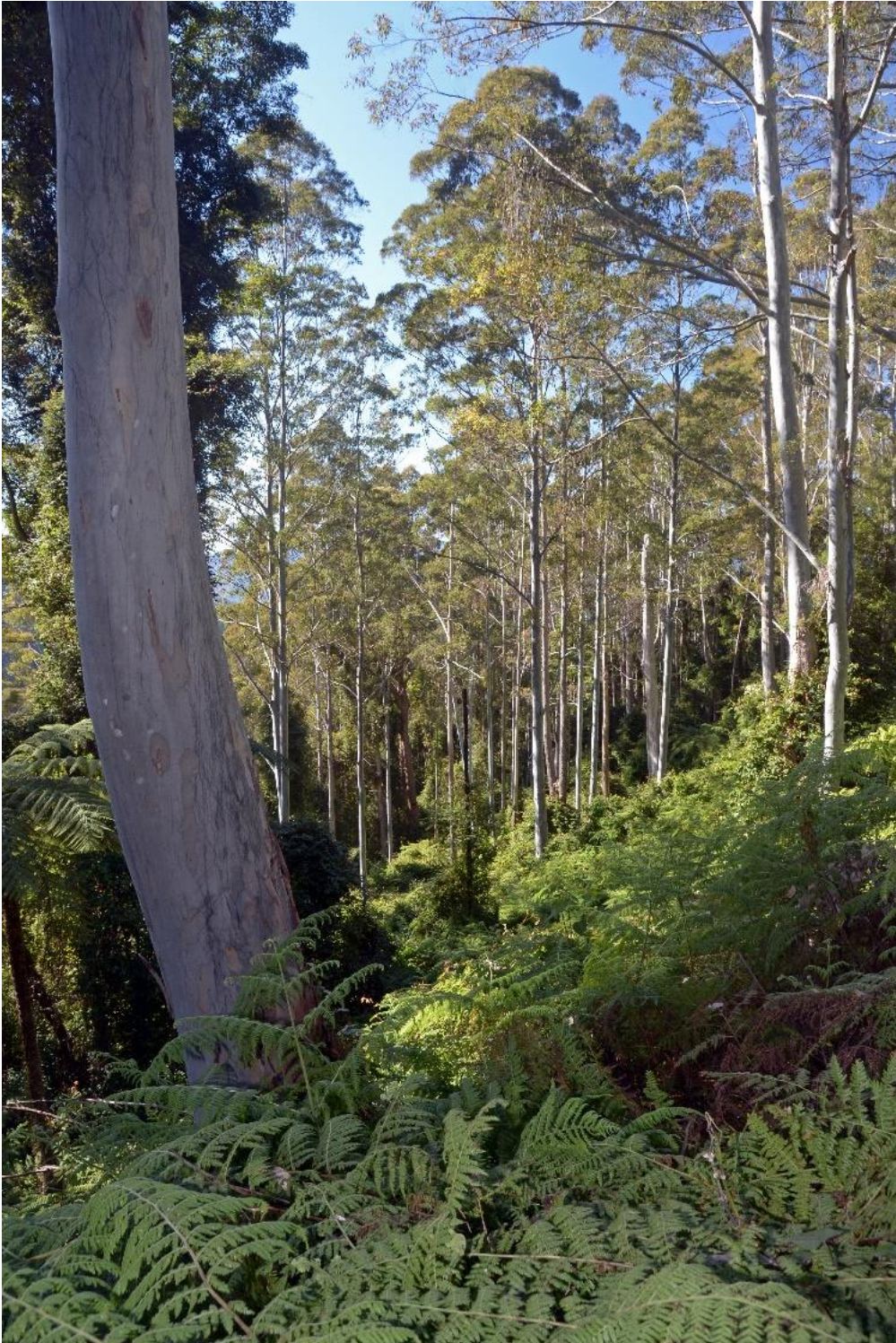


Photo 1: Rufous Scrub-bird micro-habitat characterised by dense cover of fern.
Kilprotay Road, Gumbaynggirr National Park; Photo: Shane Ruming/DPE



Photo 2: Rufous Scrub-bird micro-habitat with dense cover including shrubs, fern and branches.
Note: the road surface is not Rufous Scrub-bird micro-habitat.
Bellbuca Road, Oakes State Forest / Gumbayngirr National Park; Photo: Shane Ruming/DPE



Photo 3: Rufous Scrub-bird micro-habitat comprising dense cover of shrubs and branches.
Boot Hill, Baalijin Nature Reserve; Photo: Shane Ruming/DPE



Photo 4: Rufous Scrub-bird micro-habitat with dense cover including ferns, shrubs, vines and debris.
Horseshoe Road, New England National Park / Gumbaynggirr National Park; Photo: Shane Ruming/DPE



Photo 5: Rufous Scrub-bird micro-habitat with dense cover of fern and vine.
Comara Trail, New England National Park; Photo: Shane Ruming/DPE

Additional Reading

Ferrier, S. 1984, The Status of the Rufous Scrub-bird *Atrichornis rufescens*: Habitat, Geographical Variation and Abundance. PhD thesis. University of New England, Armidale, NSW. <https://hdl.handle.net/1959.11/21366>

NSW Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) *Rufous scrub-bird-profile*.

<https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/threatenedSpeciesApp/profile.aspx?id=10076#habitatandecology>

Saving our species Rufous Scrub-bird (*Atrichornis rufescens*)

<https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/savingourspeciesapp/project.aspx?ProfileID=10076>

References

1. Coastal Integrated Forestry Operations Approval – Conditions November 2018

<https://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/-/media/epa/corporate-site/resources/forestagreements/18p1177-coastal-ifo-conditions.pdf?la=en&hash=E437EFD84FE1B1002AFF69DB1A13336319FF5A56>

2. Coastal Integrated Forestry Operations Approval – Protocols November 2018

<https://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/-/media/epa/corporate-site/resources/forestagreements/coastal-ifo-protocols.pdf?la=en&hash=62F5AFBB969D14D13A1FDFDE003B7BE8081A50D1>

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