

ENDANGERED SPECIES: AUSTRALASIAN BITTERN.

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The Australasian Bittern is a rare bird that lives in New Zealand, Australia and New Caledonia. The Australasian bittern is a very cool, smart and camouflaged bird that calls wetlands home. But unfortunately, the Australasian Bittern has ended up on the endangered list.

THE EVENT:

The Australasian Bittern is a small bird found in New Zealand, parts of Australia and New Caledonia. Scientific name: Botaurus poiciloptilus. They became known as endangered in 1999. There are thought to be about 1000 birds in 2020 left in NZ. The Bittern is found in wetlands. Their length - 74cm. Weight - Male: 1400gms, Females: 900gms. The bittern lays clutches of 3 - 5 eggs, and they take about 25 days to hatch. When the chicks hatch they are cute little fluffballs! The Australasian Bittern can fly but prefers to walk around on the ground, but will take flight if it is given a fright or scared of something like a predator or human. The Australasian is very critically endangered.



If I hold my head high, I'll be invisible.

SOCIAL ACTION - WHAT'S BEING DONE:

DOC has played a significant role in saving the Australasian Bittern, and they have informed the public and have convinced many people to keep wetlands on their property to make sure these birds have a place to thrive in. They are still declining at alarming rates. Predators have a major effect on the bittern so what we can do is set traps to kill the predators so these birds can just roam around doing their thing. It is illegal to destroy wetlands, but people are still doing it. But most people are realising the mistakes we have made and are keeping the wetlands anywhere they are. We have just under 1000 Australasian Bitterns left in New Zealand and it is so important to make sure we have wetlands that the birds and everything else that lives in a wetland. These birds need so much more help to thrive from anyone, or from anything to make them more common.



The Australasian Bittern hiding in the reeds.

THE EFFECTS:

The effects of the Australasian bittern going endangered is that there are only around 1000 Australasian bittern left in New Zealand wetlands. The pollution effects are that there is no food to eat or no clean water to get food from. The disturbance to these birds is a big thing as well. Disturbing these animals is not ok because it causes them to get a fright, fly away or become stressed. Loss of wetlands is a big thing, farmers need to think about what animals will lose their habitat if we clear them for towns and farming. So what do you think is more important? More farms and towns or more Australasian bitterns? What do you think? Thankfully many people have realised what is happening and have kept wetlands on their farms and set traps so more animals can thrive and populations will grow.

MY OPINION:

I think that not enough is being done to save the amazing Bittern. We need to make it more well known that these birds even exist! I didn't know anything about them until I read the book "How to mend a Kea by Janet Hunt" I now know about the bittern and will go on to inform more people about these birds that are nearly extinct thanks to our mistakes and uselessness. Our monitoring skills have improved a lot and we have become more and more informed, so we could have had thousands of these birds running around our wetlands they call home. Our ability to know things now are better with social media. Finding Information out about the bittern because they are so rare was a challenge. But it was a good experience, and I enjoyed learning about the Australasian Bittern.

THE CAUSE:

The cause for the Australasian Bittern becoming endangered is because of water pollution and habitat pollution because us humans are polluting and we are ruining the food and habitat of the Bittern. Wetlands are the only home they will ever have. Also, predators are still, unfortunately even though they have their amazing camouflage and are still being killed by all the usual predators like Stoats, Ferrets, Cats and Dogs, Possums. Australasian Bitterns are also being disturbed by us humans and we need to be more careful of how we approach these amazing animals.



An Australasian Bittern enjoying an eel for a snack.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Book:

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Websites:

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<http://www.bitternsinrice.com.au/bittern-facts/>

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Video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch>

Pictures from:

<http://nzbirdsonline.org.nz/species/australasian-bittern> and Birds New Zealand, Beauty like no other, by Paul Gibson.

