

NGANAMARA

Malleefowl ~ *Leipoa ocellata*

What do they look like?

Nganamara are large, ground dwelling birds with mottled white, brown and black feathers which provide excellent camouflage. Males are only slightly larger than females but expert Anangu trackers are able to tell the sex of an animal from its tjina (tracks).



Where do they live?

Nganamara live in mulga (Minyura) and mallee (altarpa) woodlands in NSW, VIC, SA and WA. They prefer to build their nests/mounds in country that has not been burnt for a long time, and will not return to a burnt area for up to 30yrs. In the APY lands 26 mounds are known, primarily within the Walalkara and Watarru Indigenous Protected Areas (these are special conservation reserves that support indigenous land management techniques).

Mounds are special nests built from leaf litter and dirt to incubate up to

20 eggs. The male spends a lot of time looking after the mound to make sure that it remains at the right temperature for incubation. Mounds can be over 1m high and 3m wide. Eggs are laid around September/October and may take up to 3 months to hatch.

What do they eat?

Preferred foods include seeds, flowers, leaves and some insects. Ilykuwara and punti (*Acacia* spp.) are an important food source.

Why are they threatened?

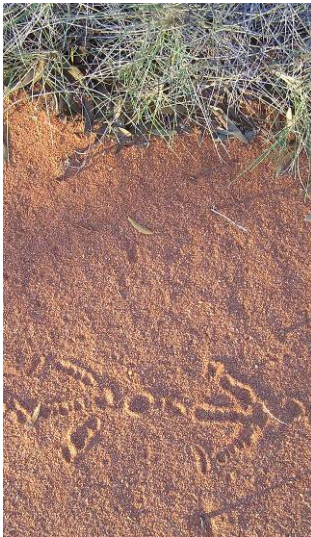
Nganamara are classed as vulnerable in South Australia. A decline in indigenous land management practices has played a significant role in the disappearance of Nganamara from central Australia. This is supported by their persistence at Walalkara and Watarru where patch burning is still carried out to protect Nganamara habitat from wildfires. Predation from foxes and cats has also played a role in the decline of this species.

What is APY Land Management doing?

- Supporting traditional owners to conduct protective patch burns around Nganamara habitat.

- Creating maps of suitable habitat and fire history.
- Monitoring mound activity and breeding success.
- Surveying suitable habitat for Nganamara tjina (tracks) and new mounds.
- Recording indigenous knowledge of Nganamara, including stories, preferred food plants, and Nganamara behaviour.
- Monitoring predator activity through tjina and kuna collections. Kuna is analysed to determine preferred prey of predators and predation rate on tjitji Nganamara.

Photos: T. Partridge



Nganamara tjina (left), APY Land Management staff monitoring activity at a Nganamara mound (centre), Robin Kankanpakantja surveying a successful patch burn conducted near Nganamara ngura (country) in the Walalkara IPA (right).

How you can help?

Look after and de-sex your pet cats and dogs so that they don't escape into the wild and kill native animals. Look after fire and only burn with advice from your elders. Listen to stories about Nganamara. Learn what different tjina and kuna looks like from experienced elders. Work hard at school and get a job with APY Land Management to help look after Nganamara.

More information:

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APY LM is supported by:

Indigenous Land Corporation,
Indigenous Protected Areas,
Department of Environment South
Australia, Alinytjara Wilurara
Natural Resources Management
Board.