

Hooded plover *Thinornis cucullatus cucullatus*

Status National (EPBC Act): Vulnerable | State (NPW Act SA): Vulnerable

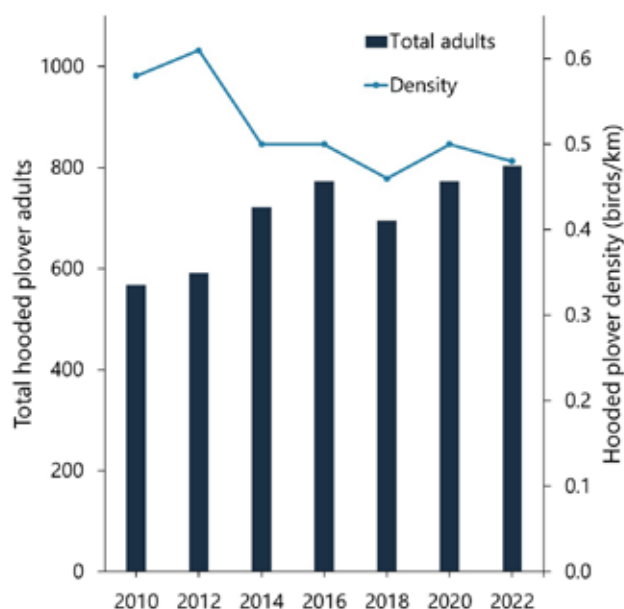
Hooded plovers in South Australia have benefited from concerted conservation activities and increasing support from the state's coastal communities. While South Australian hooded plover populations are stable, their persistence depends on maintaining or improving protection against urban development, human recreational activity and introduced predators, along with addressing pressures associated with sea level rise.

Distribution and habitat

Hooded plovers are a beach-nesting shorebird inhabiting sandy coasts across South Australia and other parts of southern Australia. While the critical habitat for the species is higher energy sandy beaches, they also utilise coastal lakes (e.g. as winter refuge and for breeding). The total extent of suitable habitat in South Australia is estimated to be 1,675 km.

Population trend

Based on biennial counts, the hooded plover density in South Australia is stable. There has been an observed increase in total population size, although this may partly reflect an increase in survey effort. However, regional declines have been observed, notably in the Coorong. Fleurieu Peninsula populations are recovering due to significant investment in conservation actions and community support.



Data source: BirdLife Australia

Threats to the species

Threats to hooded plovers include human disturbance (e.g. coastal recreation), coastal development, and predation (e.g. foxes and cats). Climate change may further impact breeding sites, particularly in areas where there are barriers to coastal retreat (e.g. coastal development).

What is being done?

The hooded plover is one of 22 priority bird species included in the Australian Government's Threatened Species Action Plan 2022–2032. While a formal Recovery Team has not been established for the species, BirdLife Australia coordinates national hooded plover recovery efforts, including across South Australia. Conservation activities include securing funding to address key threats, monitoring, and implement evidence-based on-ground management. On-ground actions include protection of breeding sites, predator control, and habitat improvement. Community engagement is central to conservation of the species, particularly for populations in urban and peri-urban areas.

