



## Protecting endangered Cocos buff-banded rails

Through a \$15,000 funding boost, the Threatened Species Commissioner is supporting recovery of the Cocos buff-banded rail, a ground-dwelling bird found only in Australia's Cocos (Keeling) Islands.

### Project

A comprehensive remote camera and monitoring network will be established on Horsburgh Island, to monitor the endangered Cocos buff-banded rail (*Gallirallus philippensis andrewsi*) and its threats. These ground-dwelling birds were translocated to Horsburgh in 2013 to provide an insurance population of this rare species. Because of Horsburgh's isolation, remote sensing gear is needed to keep a close eye on the birds and make sure they are thriving in between visits by park rangers.

### Funding

\$15,000, adding to the funding provided by Parks Australia through Pulu Keeling National Park.

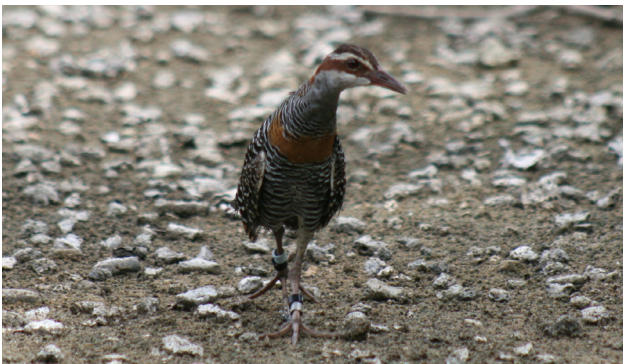


Photo: Cocos buff-banded rail (Parks Australia)

### Partners

This work will be done by Parks Australia, through Pulu Keeling National Park. Horsburgh Island is owned by the Cocos community, and the Shire of Cocos (Keeling) Islands is a key partner in the translocation project.

### Background

Once widespread across the Cocos group, by the 1980s the Cocos buff-banded rail only existed on a single uninhabited island. The entire island is protected as Pulu Keeling National Park, but this endangered bird was vulnerable to unexpected events because it only existed in one place. An insurance population was needed to guard against disasters such as severe storms or the introduction of predators. In 2013, Parks Australia translocated 39 of the birds to a second island in the Cocos group, in partnership with leading researchers. The translocation was guided by a recovery plan for this rare species. The birds are thriving on Horsburgh Island, but rangers need to keep a close eye on them to make sure predators such as feral cats and rats have not reached the island. Some remote cameras are already in use but there are gaps that need to be filled. This project will boost the number of cameras to ensure systematic monitoring.

### Species to benefit

Endangered Cocos buff-banded rail.

