



FACTSHEET

Ruddy Turnstone



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Common Name: Ruddy Turnstone

Scientific Name: *Arenaria interpres*

Conservation Status: Listed as Least Concern under ICUN (2014). All Rottnest Island's fauna is protected under the *Rottnest Island Authority Act 1987*.

Habitat: Wetlands, Coastal Habitat

Body length: 21-24 cm

Weight: 100-170 g

Gestation period: 24 days

Number of young: 1-4 (4 eggs)

Description:

The Ruddy Turnstone has a black bill, short orange legs, a tubby shape and a distinctive tortoiseshell pattern on its feathers. Its upper surfaces are dark brown and its chest has broad black band across it. This bird has a white throat, and white lower surfaces.

Widespread around the coast of mainland and off-shore islands of Australia, the Ruddy Turnstone is a non-breeding visitor to Rottnest. It is a migratory bird which breeds in the high Arctic, competing for the record of the world's most northerly breeding shorebird. The largest numbers occur on the Island in spring or summer and some of the immature birds stay all year round. Its feeds on shores covered with stones or weed.

The Ruddy Turnstone forages by flipping over stones and debris with its robust bill and catching the prey hiding underneath. The distinct feeding technique and appearance of the Ruddy Turnstone makes this bird easy to spot.

Diet:

Saltwater mussels, barnacles, amphipods like sand fleas, beetles, flies, larvae, slaters, spiders, other invertebrates, plant material.

In the Wild:

The edges of the Salt Lakes are its preferred feeding areas, particularly the shores of Government House Lake, Herschell Lake and Serpentine Lake.

These birds also visit most of the beaches and exposed reefs around Island to forage. Rottnest is an important conservation site for these birds as it has lots more suitable feeding sites than the mainland.

Threats:

- Pest birds
- Climate change causing habitat change
- Wetland destruction
- Hunting
- Uncontrolled fire

DID YOU KNOW?

The Ruddy Turnstone's foraging technique gives it its name because turning stones is exactly what it does, turns stone over.

The Ruddy Turnstone is a migratory bird which breeds in the high Arctic