

THE BLACK-HEADED AND
STRIPED-CROWNED PARDALOTES



- *Yellow-tipped Pardalote at entrance to nesting burrow.*

Photo: J. R. Napier

The Black-headed and Striped-crowned Pardalotes

This bird in the hand gives the distinguishing features of the three striped-crowned pardalotes and the Black-headed Pardalote. It also describes apparent hybrids between the Striated and Eastern Striated Pardalotes and the Striated and Black-headed Pardalotes respectively. Nest site observations and banding both point to interbreeding of the former two species, while birds obtained in southern Queensland and northern New South Wales indicate interbreeding between the latter two species also, although they have still to be found nesting together.

It is likely that the striped-crowned pardalotes can be aged and sexed in the hand, but confirmation of possible characters is still needed.

As feathers of some pardalotes become very worn, their wing measurements may be much shorter than the normal range given below.

All four species have a fine white edge to the outer primary but this is often lost through wear.

YELLOW-TIPPED PARDALOTE

Pardalotus striatus

Crown feathers: Black with white centre streaks.

Eye stripe: Pale yellow from bill to above the eye, then white.

Face: A dark black line through the eye with some white streaking or mottling.

Wing

Primaries: No. 8 white on outer edge forming a narrow white line on the closed wing.

Primary coverts: Tipped yellow, forming a yellow wing spot.

Secondaries: Rufous brown edging to lower part of outer webs, forming a well marked rufous patch on the closed wing; this patch is reduced with wear.

Wing length

Juvenile 64 mm (1 measured).

First year and adults 64-68 mm (17 measured).

Face: Black from bill to eye, mottled black and white behind the eye.

Wing

Primaries: Nos. 4-8 and often 3 with white edges, forming a well marked white patch.

Primary coverts: Tipped bright red or orange-red, forming a red or orange wing spot.

Secondaries: Distinct rufous-brown edging to lower part of outer webs.

Wing length

Juveniles 60-64 mm (7 measured).

First year and adults 63-67 mm (38 measured).

EASTERN STRIATED PARDALOTE

Pardalotus ornatus

Crown, eye stripe and face: As in the Striated Pardalote.

Wing

Primaries: No. 8 with a white edge and No. 7 often with a very narrow white edge to some or all of the feather, forming a narrow white line on the closed wing and not an obvious patch.

Primary coverts: As for the Striated Pardalote.

Secondaries: Rufous-brown edging to the secondaries similar to the Striated Pardalote.

Wing length

Juveniles 62-63 mm (4 measured).

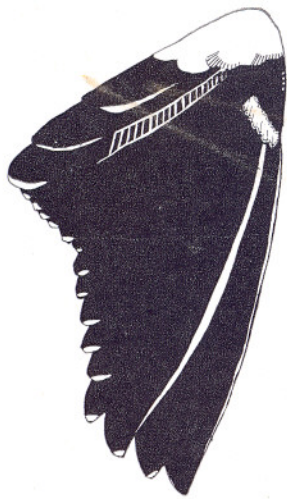
First year and adults 63-69 mm (47 measured).

STRIATED PARDALOTE

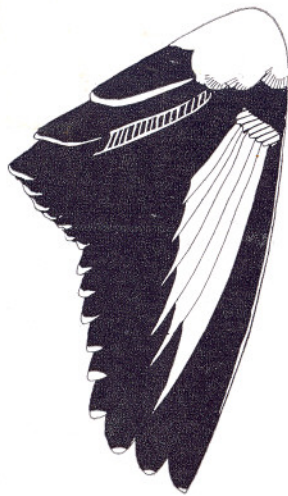
Pardalotus substriatus

Crown: Feathers black with white centre streaks as in the Yellow-tipped Pardalote.

Eye stripe: Deep yellow to the eye, then white



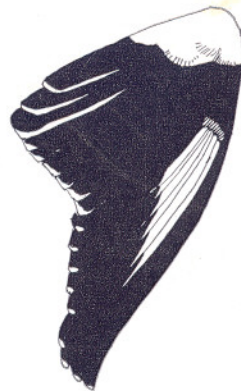
• *Yellow-tipped
Pardalote*



• *Striated
Pardalote*



• *Eastern Striated
Pardalote*



• *Black-headed
Pardalote*

BLACK-HEADED PARDALOTE

Pardalotus melanocephalus

Crown: Feathers black, without white streaks.
Eye stripe: Orange from bill to above the eye, then white.

Face: A broad black line from bill through eye to nape, without streaks or mottling. The black is clearly defined by the eye stripe above and white side of the throat below.

Wing

Primaries: Nos. 4-8 and sometimes 3 edged white, forming a well marked white patch as in the Striated Pardalote.

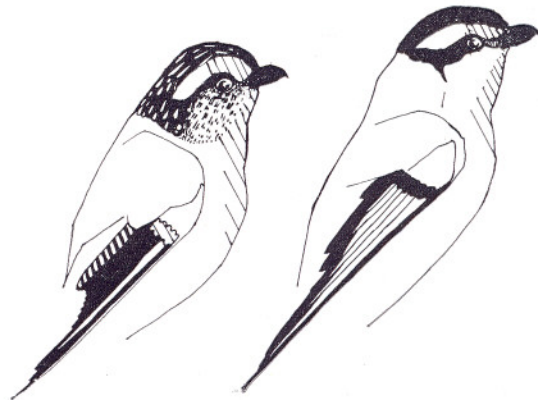
Primary coverts: Tipped deep red, forming a red spot.

Secondaries: No rufous-brown edging to lower part of outer webs, although nos. 5 & 6 may sometimes show a slight deep buff tinge when fresh.

Wing length

Juveniles 57-61 mm. (5 measured).

First year and adults 59-61 mm (9 measured).



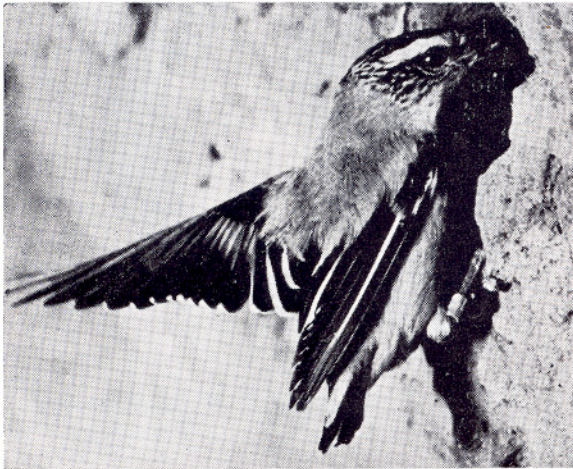
• *Yellow-tipped
Pardalote*

• *Black-headed
Pardalote*

DIAGNOSTIC CHARACTERS

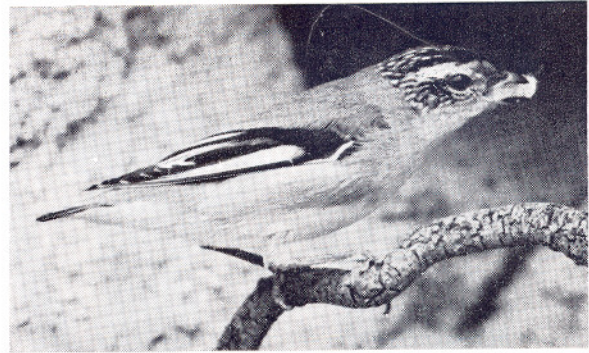
This species is separated from the striped-crowned forms by the absence of rufous-brown on the secondaries, by its smaller size and by the lack of white streaks on the crown.

Drawings by C. Tanner



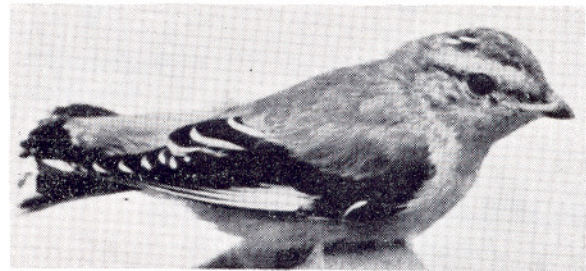
• *Eastern Striated Pardalote*

Photo: N. Chaffer



• *Striated Pardalote*

Photo: R. P. Cooper



• *Striated Pardalote (juvenile)*

Photo: S. G. Lane

HYBRID STRIATED x BLACK-HEADED PARDALOTE

P. substriatus x *P. melanocephalus*

These hybrids frequently occur in southern Queensland and northern New South Wales, where the ranges of the two species overlap.

Crown: Mainly black with a few narrow white streaks towards the nape; sometimes these streaks may be hidden by overlapping black feathers.

NOTE: Care must be taken not to confuse such birds with the Striated Pardalote. The crown feathers of the latter may appear similar through loss of white streaks from heavy wear.

Eye stripe: Orange or yellow.

Face: A full black line or various degrees of mottling similar to the Striated Pardalote.

Wing

Primaries: Similar to the Striated Pardalote.

Primary coverts: Usually tipped deep red, forming a deep red spot.

Secondaries: Nos. 5 & 6 (sometimes more) with definite rufous-brown edges. This character indicates that the bird is probably a hybrid rather than a Black-headed Pardalote.

Wing length: Usually longer than the Black-headed Pardalote.

HYBRID STRIATED x EASTERN STRIATED PARDALOTE

P. substriatus x *P. ornatus*

Probable hybrids between these two species are differentiated by the white edging to primaries nos. 5 & 6.