

**Australian Boobook** *Ninox boobook* Species No.: 242 Band size: 10 (11) (09)

(1 of 2)

(use the original species code for Southern Boobook - 242)



Adult



Juvenile



Adult

nominate *N.b. boobook*



ssp. *N.b. ocellata*



ssp. *N.b. lurida*

**Status:**

Australian mainland sub-species, along with others in PNG and surrounding islands, were separated in 2017 from Southern Boobook *Ninox novaeseelandiae* on the basis of genetics. Two (and probably three – as shown below) Australian mainland subspecies are now recognised as within the species Australian Boobook *Ninox boobook*.

The Tasmanian Boobook *N.n. leucopsis* remains as a subspecies of the NZ Southern Boobook and is dealt with in a separate profile sheet.

**Morphometrics:**

nominate *N.b. boobook*  
(s. Qld, NSW, Vic & e. SA)

	Adult Male	Adult Female
Wing:	217 – 251 mm	222 – 251 mm
Tail:	117 – 147 mm	122 – 153 mm
Bill tip to culmen:	14.0 – 18.7 mm	15.6 – 18.7 mm
Bill tip to skull:	22.0 – 27.9 mm	23.5 – 28.5 mm
Tarsus:	32.6 – 45.9 mm	38.1 – 46.9 mm
Toe:	23.6 – 29.0 mm	25.2 – 29.8 mm
Claw:	12.8 – 16.2 mm	13.0 – 16.6 mm
Weight:	176 – 321 g	195 – 370 g

ssp. *N.b. ocellata*  
(NT, most Qld, n. & w. SA & WA)

	Adult Male	Adult Female
Wing:	203 – 239 mm	216 – 246 mm
Tail:	111 – 136 mm	114 – 144 mm
Bill C:	14.6 – 17.4 mm	15.7 – 18.1 mm
Bill S:	24.2 – 26.7 mm	23.6 – 27.2 mm
Tarsus:	33.0 – 46.5 mm	38.5 – 44.7 mm
Toe:	23.4 – 28.4 mm	24.6 – 29.0 mm
Claw:	13.0 – 16.5 mm	13.2 – 16.9 mm
Weight:	172 – 245 g	194 – 285 g

ssp. *N.b. lurida*  
(rainforests in n.e. Qld)

	Adult Male	Adult Female
Wing:	206 – 220 mm	207 – 225 mm
Tail:	110 – 124 mm	111 – 133 mm
Bill C:	14.2 – 17.6 mm	13.6 – 18.1 mm
Bill S:	24.4 – 26.9 mm	23.0 – 28.5 mm
Tarsus:	36.0 – 39.8 mm	36.9 – 40.8 mm
Toe:	24.6 – 28.0 mm	22.9 – 27.6 mm
Claw:	12.2 – 14.7 mm	10.1 – 15.3 mm
Weight:	200 – 225 g	184 – 260 g

## Australian Boobook (2 of 2)

### Ageing:

	Adult (3+)	Juvenile (J)
Iris:	straw-yellow, light greenish-grey, or orange-buff;	powder-blue changes to straw-yellow;
Legs & feet:	light grey or pink-grey;	pale pink or grey;

### In the nominate *N.b. boobook*:

- the forecrown of first immatures (1) is heavily streaked and the hindcrown and nape are heavily spotted and mottled off-white;
- second immatures (2) have more spotting on the crown than adults.
- first and possibly second immatures appear paler and more streaked on underparts than adults because spots on feathers are more elongated;
- the upper forehead, crown, nape and hindneck of adults (3+) is dark brown with yellow-brown edges to most feathers of the forehead.

Post-juvenile moult from basic downy white Juvenile (J) (see illustration above which applies similarly to all subspecies) to adult-like First Immature (1) is completed about 3 months after fledging;

First immatures retain juvenile remiges and rectrices (often with fault bars) until commencement of a complete moult at the end of the first year;

Full adult plumage is not attained until third or fourth year. Thus adults are aged (3+).

### Sexing:

Sexes are similar in plumage and size, but females tend to be slightly larger than their mates, especially in weight;

Incubation by female alone.