

Sooty Owl *Tyto tenebricosa tenebricosa* Species No.: 253 Band size: 13 (12) SS, but trial



Species Status:

Prior to 2008 the Sooty Owl *Tyto tenebricosa* and Lesser Sooty Owl *Tyto multipunctate* were regarded as separate species. They are now recognised as subspecies of *T. tenebricosa*, but for the purposes of *Bird in the Hand* (2nd Edition) they are dealt with in two separate profile sheets, as they were treated as separate species in HANZAB which predated the 2008 reclassification); In Aust. confined to coast and ranges south from the Qld Sunshine Coast to e. Vic.

Morphometrics:

	Adult Male	Adult Female
Wing:	254 – 300 mm	310 – 340 mm
Tail:	120 – 135 mm	151 – 171 mm
Bill (cere to tip):	24.1 -26.6 mm	26.2 – 30.5 mm
Bill (skull to tip):	37.1 – 43.5 mm	38.5 – 46.9 mm
Tarsus:	58.7 – 71.8 mm	67.0 – 83.1 mm
Toe:	33.0 – 45.1 mm	36.6 -46.3 mm
Claw:	19.1 – 27.5 mm	24.4 – 29.4 mm
Weight:	452 – 565 g	753 – 1040 g

Ageing:

Juveniles fledge in almost full adult-like juvenile plumage with little remaining down, but may be darker than adults;

Difficult to age: combination of three methods has potential but criteria need refining:

- plumage of juveniles is very dark;
- shallow notches of the flange of the pectinate claw of the middle toe have developed within 6 months of fledging and the notches become deeply slotted within the second year;
- the staggered wing moult (*staffelmauser*) is slow and gradual and may be a guide to aging birds up to their third year;

In captivity, birds have been recorded breeding at one year of age. It is therefore difficult to age free flying birds as any age other than (1+).

Sexing:

Females are larger than males and often have a lighter facial mask and underparts than males; Females alone incubate.