

WINTER DIET OF SOUTHERN BOOBOOKS *Ninox novaeseelandiae* IN CANBERRA 1997–2005

SUSAN TROST¹, JERRY OLSEN^{2,5}, A. B. ROSE³ and S. J. S. DEBUS⁴

¹Erindale College, McBryde Crescent, Wanniassa, ACT 2903.

²Institute for Applied Ecology, University of Canberra, ACT 2601.

³Associate, Australian Museum, 6 College Street Sydney, NSW 2010. (Current address: 61 Boundary St., Forster, NSW 2428)

⁴Division of Zoology, University of New England, Armidale, NSW 2351.

⁵Corresponding author: Jerry.Olsen@canberra.edu.au

Received: 11 May 2007

There are few studies of Southern Boobook *Ninox novaeseelandiae* diet and only two major studies of winter (nonbreeding) diet. In this analysis of winter diet in the Australian Capital Territory, Australia, prey remains and pellets were gathered from five adult males and five adult females wintering in nature parks and Canberra suburbs during 1997–2005. The study generated 496 prey items: 167 mammals, 33 birds, 0 reptiles, and 296 invertebrates. The analysis adds one new prey species to the known diet: Red-rumped Parrot *Psephotus haematonotus*. We compared our results to those from two other major studies of non-breeding diet from other areas, and one study of breeding diet from the same area. The diet in this study was similar to that found in a Victorian study also based on pellets, with the highest percentage of the biomass coming from vertebrates, but differed from a South Australian study based on gizzard contents, and from reviews of the literature that described Southern Boobooks as mainly insectivorous. These differences in results may relate to different methods of collection and analysis, and the misconception that Southern Boobooks are small owls.