

IS THE BEHAVIOUR OF MALLEEFOWL *Leipoa ocellata* SIGNIFICANTLY AFFECTED BY THE ATTACHMENT OF RADIO TELEMETRY EQUIPMENT?

CHRISTOPHER COOMBES, ANDREA WILSON* and REMY DEHAAN

Charles Sturt University, Institute for Land, Water and Society, School of Environmental Sciences,
Locked Bag 588, Wagga Wagga, NSW 2678, Australia

*Corresponding author. E-mail: awilson@csu.edu.au

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The decline of Malleefowl *Leipoa ocellata* populations across Australia has necessitated field research dependent upon bird identification and location using radiotelemetry equipment. To investigate the effect of radio transmitter attachment this study analysed foraging, moving, preening and resting behaviour of captive Malleefowl with and without radio transmitters attached. Six juvenile Malleefowl were randomly allocated to the transmitter group and six allocated to the control group. Control birds were captured, anaesthetised, weighed, leg-banded and blood sampled in an identical manner to the transmitter group, but did not have telemetry equipment attached. The results showed that there were no statistically significant differences between the transmitter and control groups in the percentage of time spent engaged in each behaviour.