



OAK VALLEY

Oak Valley is a 75 Ha area of open eucalypt woodland and riparian vegetation that lies 15 km from Townsville. It is the home to both significant local fauna and flora and to a local land care group that has planted 2000 locally occurring tree species to restore the riparian vegetation. Also begun here is a plant propagation programme that allows for the planting of healthy native species into other degraded regions of similar habitat type. It is also home to the rare and endangered black throated finch.

The region is of vital importance in the dry season as it has permanent water and foraging habitat for many native species.

Flora

Swamp Mahogany - *Eucalyptus robusta*

River oaks – *Casuarina spp.*

Pongamia – *Pongamia spp.*

Pandanus – *Pandanus spiralis*

Fauna

Carpet python – *Morelia spilota*

Spangled Perch – *Leiopotherapon unicolor*

Eastern rainbow Fish - *Melanotaenia duboulayi*



Black Throated Finch »



Black Throated Finch (*Poephila cincta*) photo courtesy of Ian Montgomery
www.birdway.com.au

Black Throated Finch

Identification

The male is a stocky bird with a pink to fawn colour. It has a black beak and a large black bib with a short black tail. The female is slightly smaller with a rounder bib, blue-grey head, cinnamon breast, brown back, white belly and pink feet. Both have a soft, musical song comprised of soft 'tets' and a 'floating' whistle. Once landed both sexes nod their heads up and down.

The finch is listed as an endangered bird species with the Townsville region being one of its last strongholds.

Habitat

The finch tends to be found in open forest and woodland where it is a seed eater foraging on the ground for grass seed. In breeding season however, the finches will eat and feed insects to their young.

Nesting

They build a covered but unwoven grass nest into which they lay two, pure white eggs into a lining of feathers and plant 'wool'. The nestlings beg for food by leaning their head down to one side. As well as grass seeds the young will eat insects caught by both the parent birds.

The Recovery Team is keen to hear from anyone who has sighted the Black Throated Finch.
The contact for any sightings is group member Marnie McCullough, Tel: 07 4722 2519;
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