

Protection and Recovery Program for the the Amami Thrush (*Zoothera dauma major*)

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Environment Agency

Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

I. Objectives of the Program

Occurring only on Amami-Oshima Island and Kakeroma Island, the Amami thrush (*Zoothera dauma major*) is the largest of the Japanese thrushes. This species mainly inhabits mature or old growth laurel forests featuring closed canopies and sheltered from the wind.

Degradation of suitable environments and other factors have dramatically reduced both the distributional range and overall population of this species.

The objectives of this program is to ensure the stable survival of the bird in a natural state by clarifying and monitoring the status of the species; maintaining and improving the environments necessary for the species; and mitigating and removing factors that pose threats to the species.

II. Program Areas

The distribution areas of this species in the Amami Island Group in Kagoshima Prefecture.

III. Overview of the Program

1. Understanding the species status and monitoring, etc.

The following surveys will be undertaken to appropriately and effectively implement the program.

(1) Understanding the species status and monitoring

Using fixed-point observations, route censuses, and other techniques to track the birdsong during the breeding season, the program will continuously gather information on the status and trends of this species.

The program will also collect and organize reports of sightings.

(2) Clarifying the biological characteristics

The program will also consider tracking methods, whether involving banding or other identification methods, to gather information on behavior and home ranges of individual birds.

Sick or injured individuals that recover after rescue but are poorly suited for return to their original habitats will be used for captive behavioral observations to deepen understanding of physiology and ecology of the species.

(3) Understanding suitable environments and potential threats

The results gained in (1) and (2) above will be used to clarify suitable environments for this species. Surveys will be implemented to better understand the factors that pose potential threats to the current population and their impacts.

2. Habitat maintenance and improvement

The stable survival of this species in its natural state will require efforts to maintain the health of the entire ecosystem, including preserving the laurel forests with a closed canopy that provide shelter from wind. Based on the results of Item 1 above, the program will explore effective countermeasures against degradation of the habitats and population declines, thereby maintaining and improving environments suitable for the habitat and breeding.

When land use or business activity on species habitat arises, the program will seek to ensure the environmental conditions needed for the survival of the species.

3. Captive breeding

Species conservation will focus on the maintenance and growth of wild populations in their habitats. However, to safeguard against precipitous declines in the wild populations, the program will explore the possibility of captive breeding.

4. Patrol, etc. of the habitat

To prevent human interactions that may adversely affect the populations, including illegal hunting and indiscreet entry into the habitats, the program will establish a patrolling system in the species habitats.

5. Promotion of education and awareness-raising activities

To achieve effective progress with the program, understanding and cooperation is crucial on the part of the parties carrying out various business activities, relevant administrative organs, and citizens including community residents. The program will promote public awareness on the species status, the need for protection, and the progress of the protection and recovery program. These activities will help foster better understanding and cooperation in protecting the species. The program will also seek to facilitate the development of voluntary conservation activities of the community through efforts such as fostering a deeper understanding of the species in the concerned area.

6. Consolidation of collaboration for effective promotion of the program

When implementing the program, efforts will seek to facilitate cooperation and collaboration among the national government, Kagoshima Prefecture and relevant municipalities, experts in ecology or other aspects of this species, and local residents.