



The Woodhen: A Flightless Island Bird Defying Extinction

Clifford Frith

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This book tells the fascinating success story of saving the flightless Woodhen of Lord Howe Island. This unique large rail, an iconic and highly endangered Australian bird, was at the very brink of extinction with just 15 individuals found in 1980, when bold and risky actions were taken to save it.

The book begins with the discovery and ecology of Lord Howe Island. It then details the history of the Woodhen, its place among the rails and their evolution of flightlessness, the planning, implementation and trials, tribulations and successes of the captive breeding programme and the way in which the wild population recovered. The ecology, behaviour and breeding biology of this unique flightless island rail are also discussed. The text is accompanied by numerous photographs and drawings.

This is a story of survival, yet the bird remains highly endangered as it is under constant potential threat, which could tip it over the brink and to extinction. The Woodhen provides gripping insights into the potential for both losing and saving vertebrate species.

Winner of a 2014 Whitley Awards Certificate of Commendation for Historical Zoology.



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