



# Media release

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## On the lookout for elusive quail

A bird that uses stealth and camouflage to avoid detection is being sought out by the Fitzroy Basin Association Incorporated (FBA).

The elusive Black Breasted Button Quail is a ground-dwelling bird that prefers to keep to itself, foraging in the leaf litter of coastal and inland scrubs for insects and seeds.

FBA has joined forces with Central Queensland University to invade the bird's privacy – all in the name of conservation.

The quail is listed as vulnerable in Queensland, and nationally, due to habitat loss from clearing and development, and the impact of feral animals.

Biodiversity Coordinator Graeme Armstrong said FBA would provide Central Queensland University with more than \$8000 through the Queensland Government's Q2 Coasts and Country program to research the bird.

"CQ University will seek out populations of the Black Breasted Button Quail and look for potential habitat for this special bird," Mr Armstrong said.

"This work will significantly boost conservation efforts, as habitat loss through clearing is the main threat to the Black Breasted Button Quail and existing populations are very fragmented.

"FBA has been working with the Queensland Government to identify and prioritise threatened species like this quail within the Fitzroy Basin through the Back on Track species prioritization framework."

The study will help FBA to identify areas of land for conservation and increase efforts to manage remaining populations to improve the bird's chance of survival.

CQ University's Wayne Houston said the research would involve searches for new populations, mainly in the Dawson Valley, the former stronghold of the species, but also in local coastal scrubs.

"Another aim is to find out more about its breeding habitat because we know so little about the ecology of the species. Overall, we are aiming to get a better understanding of which habitat types are most important to the Black Breasted Button Quail for breeding and survival."

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