

<http://www.quadrant.org.au/blogs/doomed-planet/2009/08/starck>

Doomed Planet

“Today’s debate about global warming is essentially a debate about freedom. The environmentalists would like to mastermind each and every possible (and impossible) aspect of our lives.”

*Vaclav Klaus
Blue Planet in Green Shackles*

Shrinking birds?

by Walter Starck

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Does GW Really Cause Birds to Become Smaller?

An article in the [Sydney Morning Herald](#) on 13 August, 2009, reports that, “CLIMATE change is shrinking Australia's birds. During the last century, biologists say, some birds decreased in size by almost 4 per cent.”

Reports that climate change is causing some kind of far fetched change in something or other are now a daily occurrence in a news media which has abandoned any vestige of due diligence in reporting stories which appear to support the dogma of global warming. Storms, floods, droughts and heat waves well within the bounds of natural variability over recent centuries are widely attributed to Global Warming and are said to be unprecedented. Even record cold is claimed, although in this case it is rebadged as Climate Change. Utterly unremarkable minor fluctuations in nature that would otherwise pass un-noticed are routinely provided global news attention by merely suggesting a link to



GW.

The above mentioned study compared the wing lengths of bird specimens in museum collections and found that those collected in recent years were 1.8 to 3.6% smaller than those collected a century earlier. It was noted that birds from Sydney had shrunk to the size of those from Brisbane and that the scientists had, "...ruled out other possible explanations, including

nutritional changes.” It was further said that studies in Europe and New Zealand had found similar declines in size but that previously, "nobody has been able to pin down the underlying mechanisms". It then offered the prediction of extinction if the birds couldn't adapt fast enough.

It doesn't require sophisticated scientific knowledge to recognise that any link to climate change in this matter is pure speculation and extinction is only a gratuitous addition for dramatic effect. Consider these simple facts:

- The slightly reduced size of Sydney and Brisbane birds that is mentioned, is much more likely to be due to massive changes in the environment from urbanization than from an average annual temperature increase of less than a degree C.
- The average temperature difference between Sydney and Brisbane is about 4 times greater than the average increase attributed to climate change. Why then, would a 0.7°C increase in the Sydney area average have the same effect as the four fold greater difference between the two places?
- In addition to the regional difference in temperature and a purported 0.7°C increase from climate change there has also been a pronounced warming of cities over the past century (the so called Urban Heat Island Effect). This is several times greater than the global change. Why then is the size change not related to this localised effect and not global climate change?
- Instead of nutritional changes and other possible explanations being “ruled out” it would be more truthful to say they were dismissed. Certainly there is no way to rule out the possible nutritional effects of the massive urban development which has occurred, nor the huge increase in exposure to myriad chemicals in the environment.
- That studies elsewhere had found similar declines but could not determine their cause might simply reflect a firmer adherence to the scientific ideal of conclusions based on sound reason and evidence.
- Instead of extinction from some small increase in temperature, a gradual shift in geographic range might be expected. It happens all the time.

Although the scientific community has traditionally been a bulwark against superstition and hysteria it appears that the Global Warming meme has found a new generation of researchers with little immunity and they have become a prime reservoir for wider infection.

It is past time for the hardened sceptics of the Fourth Estate to begin to do their duty and start to provide this constant stream of toxic climate drivel the exposure it deserves.

For a quick perspective on just how absurd the list of things attributable to Global Warming has become, see [numberwatch](#): an alphabetical list with hundreds of links.

