The Striated Pardalote (*Pardalotus striatus*) is a small (100 to 120 millimetres) bird found in several races; most races have a black crown (sometimes striated with white). Back is grey-brown, or rufous, or yellow on the rump. Wings are black with small red or yellow spot at the shoulder; outer flight feathers have a narrow or broad white stripe; inner flight feathers are edged rufous or white. Tail is black, tipped white. Broad white brow stripe over eye with front segment (in front of the eye) orange or yellow. Black stripe through the eye tapers forward to the bill and continue to the rear. Underparts are all cream-white with yellow line down the centre dividing to the sides of the breast. Eye is tan-grey, bill black, feet dusky brown.

Male and female are mostly similar. Females of the northern subspecies have the crown scalloped grey. Immatures, of all races, are similar to adults in colouring but have olive-grey crown and face with a cream brow.

There are about six races; photographs are of subspecies *melanocephalus*, one of the black-headed forms, which has a plain black crown, wide black eye-line running to the nape, no facial streaks, a red or orange wing-spot, wide white wing stripe, white edged secondaries, a tan rump found from far north-east NSW through SE Queensland to about Townsville.

Different races are sometimes considered to be different species but they hybridise and intergrade whenever different races meet.
This small Striated Pardelote is the largest of the pardelotes, and the most widespread and nomadic. Found over most of the Australian mainland, except the most arid parts of Western Australia; also found in Tasmania. Live in eucalyptus forest and woodland and, following river gums along watercourses, ranges far inland. Feeds as a foliage-forager in tree crowns and outer foliage creeping and running like a mouse picking lerps (sugary deposit left by some insect larvae) and a variety of insects such as grasshoppers, beetles, cockroaches, thrips, weevils, ants, bees, wasps, flies and caterpillars from leaves and outer twigs. As they feed the birds trill softly and frequently to maintain contact.

Different subspecies have different migratory habits. Most (but not all) Tasmanian birds (race striatus) fly across Bass Strait to winter on the mainland as far north as southeastern Queensland. Many other southern populations shift north, inland or to lower altitudes in winter. More northern populations disperse after breeding but do not go far.

Breeding takes place from June to January. Males mark the beginning of breeding with loud singing from high, often bare, perches. Flocks disperse into groups of three to six; one pair incubates eggs and feed the young and may be helped by others in the group. All of them cluster around the nest entrance and display with wing-waving. The nest is cup-shaped, partly or fully domed, made of grass, bark fibre and rootlets, sometimes lined with feathers. The nest is either placed in the hollow of a post or tree 10 metres or more high; or at the end of a nest burrow dug into the side of a cliff, creek bank or roadside cutting. Three to five (usually four) eggs are laid; white, oval about 19 by 15 millimetres. Incubated by both parents.

Variants
The Pardalote may be considered as a "Stripe-crowned Pardalote" complex with six races. Three races are black-headed and lack stripes on the head and face.

- **melanocephalus** has a plain black crown, wide black eye-line running to the nape, no facial streaks on the plain black face, red or orange wing-spot, wide white wing stripe, white edged secondaries, a tan rump found from far north-east NSW through SE Queensland to about Townsville.

- **uropygialis** also has a plain black crown and is similar to melanocephalus but with a mid-yellow rump. Found across tropical north Australia from Broome to Townsville.

- **melvillensis** also has a plain black crown and is similar to melanocephalus but with a tan rump. Found on Melville Island.

- **striatus** ('Yellow-tipped Pardalote') has white stripes on the black crown and face, yellow wing spot, narrow white wing stripe, secondary wing feathers are buff-edged. Found in Tasmania but migrates across Bass Strait to winter in Victoria and eastern New South Wales.

- **ornatus** ('Eastern Striated Pardalote') also has white stripes on the black crown and face, red or orange wing spot, narrow white wing stripe, secondaries are buff-edged. Found in eastern New South Wales and the eastern part of Victoria; winter migrant to the north.

- **substriatus** ('Striated Pardalote') also has white stripes on the black crown and face, red or orange wing spot, wide white wing stripe, secondaries buff-edged. Found in Western Australia south of the Pilbara, South Australia, Northern Territory south of Tenant Creek, western Queensland, western New South Wales and western Victoria. winter migrant or nomad to the north.

Similar Species/Identification. Most confusion is likely to arise with other pardalote species or between subspecies.

Information