



## Regent Parrot (Eastern sub-species)

*Polytelis anthopeplus monarchoides*

**Vulnerable**



Female



Male

### Description

The eastern sub-species of the Regent Parrot is found in an area overlapping the junction of the South Australian, Victorian and New South Wales borders.

They can be recognised by their distinctively bright colours. The males are a brilliant golden-yellow with a dark green back, blue-black flight feathers and a red band across the mid-wings. Female birds and juveniles are similarly patterned but are greener around the head and neck.

In Spring they nest in colonies of River Red Gums along the River Murray. Colonies usually have between 10-20 pairs but over the years we have seen larger colony sizes downstream of Lock 3. The female parrots incubates the eggs and sit with the newly hatched chicks while the males flock to search for food. These male feeding flocks can sometimes be seen heading to and from their nests along the river.

### Regent Parrot or Yellow Rosella?

Yellow Rosellas can be easily confused with Regent Parrots, but they look and behave differently. Yellow Rosellas are not as brightly coloured, they have a red patch on their forehead, their bills are white not orange and they have a blue patch under the beak.

Yellow Rosellas are usually seen in pairs and have an undulating flight pattern compared to a Regent Parrot which has a very flat, and direct flight trajectory.

### Where do they occur?

In South Australia they nest in River Red Gum woodlands along the River Murray, between Chowilla and Swan Reach. Outside the breeding season they disperse from the river corridor into the surrounding mallee. Sometimes they are recorded as far south as Ngarkat.

## What do they need to survive?

During the breeding season Regent Parrots nest in the hollows that occur in mature and dead River Red Gums. From these trees they forage over large areas, up to 12km from their nests. They feed on the seeds, buds, flowers and sometimes on insect larvae. Regent Parrots need flight corridors of native vegetation that link their nest colonies on the river with good feeding areas such as large intact areas of mallee woodlands.

## Why are they threatened?

In the past this parrot was destroyed as an agricultural pest and many nesting and foraging areas were cleared. While destruction of this bird is no longer permitted and the clearance of native vegetation is regulated, the Regent Parrot is still in decline.

Today their continued survival may be threatened by other birds forcing them from their nest hollows, clearing of small areas of mallee that link nesting and foraging sites, long periods of drought, illegal destruction and human disturbance around nests. Sometimes they are accidentally killed by cars when flocks feed on grain spilt along roadsides. Currently there are less than 400 pairs remaining in the South Australian River Murray corridor.



## What we are doing to help?

A Regional Recovery Plan for the Regent Parrot is already in place, which we are implementing together with a Regional Recovery Team. Recovery actions include doing regular monitoring of breeding numbers, identifying competition from other species, researching habitat requirements, restoring and protecting areas around colonies and locating feeding areas.

## What can you do to help?

- Every sighting of these birds is valuable, as every record helps us to improve our understanding of this bird. You can report sightings to the Murraylands Regional Ecologist (08) 8595 2111.
- Slow down and be careful when driving near grain spills.
- Protect breeding sites by reducing activity near Regent Parrot nests in River Red Gums during the breeding season.

### Further information contact

Biodiversity Conservation Programs  
Department of Environment and Natural Resources  
Telephone (08) 8595 2111  
[www.environment.sa.gov.au](http://www.environment.sa.gov.au)

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