

**From:** [Murphy, Paul](#)  
**To:** [Lang, Sebastian](#); s22; [Richardson, Geoff](#); [Jonasson, Kylie](#); s22; [Knudson, Dean](#)  
**Cc:** s22; s22  
**Subject:** FW: Western Ground Parrot Recovery and MOU [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]  
**Date:** Monday, 30 October 2017 9:48:00 AM  
**Attachments:** [MOU ACTP-DBCA re western ground parrots - draft to ACTP 20171013.docx](#)

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Hi All

FYI – See below as highlighted. The Association for the Conservation of Threatened Parrots (Zoo in Germany) are increasing their support to \$200K to western ground parrot recovery.

(We gave them a copy of the TS Strategy and Prospectus in our meeting last week)

Cheers

Paul

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**From:** Katrin Scholtyssek s47F  
**Sent:** Sunday, 29 October 2017 7:14 PM  
**To:** Murphy, Paul s22  
**Cc:** s22; Martin Guth  
s47F  
**Subject:** Fwd: Western Ground Parrot Recovery and MOU

Dear Paul,

Thank you very much again for the meeting and also the very nice brochures. We are on our way back to Germany now. I just want to give you an update on our work on the Western Ground Parrot Program. Please see the email conversation below:

Best wishes

Katrin

Anfang der weitergeleiteten Nachricht:

**Von:** Katrin Scholtyssek s47F  
**Betreff:** Aw: Western Ground Parrot Recovery and MOU  
**Datum:** 29. Oktober 2017 19:09:07 GMT+11  
**An:** s22  
**Kopie:** Martin Guth s47F, s47F

Dear s22,

Thank you for sending the MOU. It looks totally fine for us.

During a meeting at the Ministry of environment with Paul Murphy and s22 we were able to discuss several conservation projects in Australia. We also received a brochure about conservation strategies in Australia. It was very impressive and we would like to become a long term partner for these incredible work, since we have realized that the population of the Western Ground Parrot might have less individuals than the Spix's Macaw, which is extinct in the wild.

With only 150 specimen in the wild, the Western Ground Parrot could become the most threatened Parrot in the world within the next years. This fact really concerns us and we definitely would like to avoid this! That is why we want of offer to increase the support of the program to 200K \$AUS for the next two years.

Now that Martin saw this beautiful country, he is happy to kick off ACTPs work in Australia immediately. We will change the amount in the MOU if you want us to and send a signed copy back to you.

Kindly let us know your bank details, so that the first 100k can be wired before the end of 2017.

We are looking forward to working together with you to protect the Western Ground Parrot and it's habitat!

Best regards

Katrin

Am 24.10.2017 um 18:53 schrieb s22

Dear Katrin and Simon

Further to our meeting some weeks ago and ACTP's generous offer to providing funding to the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions for western ground parrot recovery, we've done some work on the draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that you provided. You will note that it looks quite different from the previous version. This is mainly as a result of the department having to meet certain requirements for these types of agreements. I apologise for the time it has taken to get this back to you.

Please also note that we have a new name, and the Zoological Parks Authority (Perth Zoo) and the former Department of Parks and Wildlife are now both part of the new agency – however the same people are still involved in the recovery program.

Attached is the draft MOU for your review and comment. Please note we have suggested a specific project in the schedule, as we discussed at our meeting, in order to ensure that the funding can be immediately directed to an agreed project. Please let us know if you have any queries or comments on this approach.

If you are happy with the MOU as it stands, it would be appreciated if you could get it signed by Martin and then return it to us for our

Director General's signature. We'll send you back a fully signed version and can then arrange an invoice to be sent to you for the project funds.

Thanks again for your interest in western ground parrot recovery.

Kind regards, s22 .

s22

Assistant Director Conservation

Science and Conservation | Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions

17 Dick Perry Avenue, Kensington, 6151 | **P:** Locked Bag 104, BENTLEY DELIVERY CENTRE, 6983

**T:** 9219 s22

[www.dbca.wa.gov.au](http://www.dbca.wa.gov.au)

<image003.jpg>

<MOU ACTP-DBCA re western ground parrots - draft to ACTP 20171013.docx>

## INTERNATIONAL MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

between  
Association for the Conservation of Threatened Parrots (ACTP) – Germany  
and  
Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) – Western Australia  
for  
Conservation and Recovery of Western Ground Parrots

### Background

ACTP and DBCA mutually agree that the conservation and recovery of the western ground parrot is a priority. This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) seeks to consolidate arrangements for ACTP to support DBCA in recovering western ground parrots.

ACTP is a registered non-profit organisation based near Berlin, Germany, that is dedicated to the protection, the conservation and the development of threatened parrot populations and their habitats.

DBCA is the Western Australian State Government agency responsible for management and recovery of threatened species.

The western ground parrot (*Pezoporus flaviventris*) is Critically Endangered with fewer than 150 individuals remaining in a single wild population on Western Australia's south coast in Cape Arid National Park and Nuytsland Nature Reserve. The major threats to western ground parrots are predation by feral cats and foxes, inappropriate fire regimes and bushfires. In the longer term, climate change could impact on habitat suitability.

As part of DBCA, Perth Zoo undertakes captive breeding programs for specified native fauna species, including the western ground parrot. On-ground management of the wild population is undertaken through the department's South Coast Region and Science and Conservation service. The recovery program for the western ground parrot is guided by the South Coast Threatened Birds (SCTB) Recovery Plan (2014) and coordinated by the SCTB Recovery Team. DBCA remains ultimately responsible for the management and recovery of the species but relies on advice and recommendations from the Recovery Team.

Efforts to protect the wild population continue through the management of introduced predators and fire, survey and monitoring, and a small captive population has been established at Perth Zoo. While rearing of an egg to hatching stage has not yet been achieved at Perth Zoo, significant advancements have been made and staff are confident that the fundamental husbandry requirements necessary to support successful breeding have now been identified. The captive program has both short and long-term goals. In the short-term, the goal is to establish husbandry and keeping techniques and demonstrate the ability to breed the species in captivity. In the longer term, the program could be used to establish an insurance population, or to assist in establishing new wild populations of the species. The long-term goals are dependent on first achieving the short-term goals.

## **Terms of MOU**

- The Parties to this MOU are ACTP and DBCA.
- This MOU will remain in force until:
  - expiration of the term of this MOU, being five (5) years from the date of the MOU being signed by both Parties; or
  - 30 days after either Party gives notice to the other Party in writing of its intent to terminate this MOU.
- Parties may review the MOU at any time by mutual agreement. Any amendments to the MOU must be in writing and signed by both Parties.
- Agreed projects will be detailed in Schedules appended to this MOU. Schedules can be negotiated and added at any time as required, and shall come into effect upon the signatures of authorised representatives of both institutions, after being agreed to by both parties (refer to Schedule 1 for the initial project).
- Parties will inform each other in writing and as soon as practical should funding or other factors prevent delivery of the outcomes and activities set out in the Schedules.
- Any disputes will be managed through mutual agreement, and each Party will retain ownership over their assets and authority over the activities of their staff.

## **Mutually agreed roles and responsibilities of ACTP**

- ACTP will provide funding to DBCA for *ex situ* and/or *in situ* western ground parrot conservation activities and projects, including, but not limited to: construction of new aviaries at Perth Zoo for settling, holding and breeding birds; collection of additional wild birds for the captive program; feral predator control; fire management; field survey census and monitoring; establishment and management of additional wild populations. Projects will be detailed in Schedules appended to this MOU.
- ACTP may provide parrot husbandry advice and support to Perth Zoo, if the need for such advice is identified by Perth Zoo.
- ACTP may provide training to Perth Zoo staff members, if the need for such training is identified by Perth Zoo.
- ACTP will obtain prior approval from DBCA for any media or promotional material that refers to DBCA in any capacity (including, but not limited to, staff, facilities, animals or operations).
- ACTP will provide DBCA with a copy of all newsletters and publications that refer to DBCA in any capacity.

## **Mutually agreed roles and responsibilities of DBCA**

- DBCA will deliver agreed projects (as per signed, mutually agreed schedules appended to the MOU) funded by ACTP.
- Perth Zoo may provide parrot husbandry advice to ACTP, if the need for such advice is identified by ACTP.
- Perth Zoo may provide training to ACTP staff members, if the need for such training is identified by ACTP.

- DBCA will obtain prior approval from ACTP for any media or promotional material that refers to ACTP in any capacity (including, but not limited to, staff, facilities, animals or operations).
- DBCA will provide ACTP with a copy of all newsletters and publications that refer to ACTP in any capacity.
- For each financial year (1 July – 30 June) that DBCA receives funding from ACTP, DBCA will submit an Annual Report by August 31 of the following financial year that details and acquits the funds received from ACTP.
- Where appropriate, DBCA will provide ACTP with information regarding the recovery program and achievements.

**Both Parties Agree:**

- To cooperate on and coordinate promotion of western ground parrot conservation.
- The relationship between ACTP and DBCA is not exclusive.
- That this MOU does not relate in any way to the provision of western ground parrots or any other species to either Party.
- That decisions regarding actions and priorities for the recovery of the western ground parrot remain at the discretion of DBCA (subject to fulfilling agreed Schedules appended to this MOU).
- The intellectual property of outputs including data, information, publications and images generated collaboratively by the Parties as part of this agreement [herein called 'Products'] will be jointly owned, and can be used by either Party for the purposes of education, research, scientific publication, fundraising, public communication and other such purposes as agreed between the Parties.
- The Intellectual property of Products generated primarily by an individual Party in association with this agreement will remain the property of that Party but may be shared between Parties on the basis of a royalty free, perpetual licence, which is granted by each Party to the other Party through this MOU.
- Publications (including, but not limited to, scientific publications, educational materials, maps, newsletters, websites and other public communications) generated by either Party as through work undertaken under this agreement must obtain the other Party's written consent before being published. A Party will notify its decision whether to give or withhold consent to the other Party within 30 days of receipt of the final draft of the Publication. If a Party does not respond within 30 days of receipt of the Publication the Party will be taken to have consented to the Publication.
- Publications generated by either Party as part of this agreement must acknowledge all Parties by the name of their respective agencies and organisations. Both Parties have the option to review any Publications before made available to the public and either Party may choose to waive their right to acknowledgement on a Publication at any time.
- The authorship of scientific publications or published reports will be decided on a case-by-case basis. The Parties agree to negotiate in good faith to reach a reasonable decision on the authorship of any scientific publications or published reports.

- Products generated from this agreement may be provided to third parties if both Parties agree and must be labeled appropriately to acknowledge the photographer (in the case of images) and either or both Parties, as applicable. Any Party may choose to waive their right to acknowledgement on a Product or Publication at any time.
- Neither Party may reproduce the logo of the other Party without the prior consent of the logo owner.

**On behalf of ACTP:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Martin Guth  
President  
Association for the Conservation of Threatened Parrots

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**On behalf of DBCA:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mark Webb  
Director General  
Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Schedule 1**

**Support of a Western Ground Parrot Captive Breeding Program**

Duration: two years from date of signing  
Amount: \$100,000 AU

This project will assist in the establishment and management of a small-scale captive program located at Perth Zoo to develop captive husbandry and management, and demonstrate the ability to breed western ground parrots in captivity.

All decisions regarding the establishment and management of the captive population will remain with DBCA, guided by recommendations of the SCTB Recovery Team. Advice may be sought from ACTP, and other experts as appropriate. The relevant sections of DBCA will conduct the following activities.

Perth Zoo will:

- maintain the *ex situ* colony of western ground parrots
- ensure aviaries are constructed that are suitable for this species
- gather and document biology and behavioural data from the captive birds on an on-going basis
- document management and husbandry practices
- refine and document captive breeding techniques.

Science and Conservation and South Coast Region will:

- assess the capacity of the wild population to sustain harvesting birds for the breeding program
- if sustainable, will collect 6-8 wild birds for the captive breeding program.

**On behalf of ACTP:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name and position

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**On behalf of DBCA:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name and position

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



s22

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**From:** Murphy, Paul  
**Sent:** Monday, 30 October 2017 9:50 AM  
**To:** 'Katrin Scholtyssek'  
**Cc:** s22; Martin Guth  
**Subject:** RE: Western Ground Parrot Recovery and MOU [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Hi Katrin

That is wonderful news!

It was good to meet with you and Martin. I am very happy that you enjoyed your short time in Australia. I do hope you found some Acacia nuts.

Safe travels

Paul

Document contained  
in Document 1

s22







s22

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**From:** Lang, Sebastian  
**Sent:** Monday, 30 October 2017 10:45 AM  
**To:** Murphy, Paul; s22; Richardson, Geoff; Jonasson, Kylie; s22;  
Knudson, Dean  
**Cc:** s22  
**Subject:** RE: Western Ground Parrot Recovery and MOU [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Great news Paul! Thanks for promoting the Prospectus.  
Cheers  
Seb

Document contained  
in Document 1

s22







s22

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**From:** s22  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 31 October 2017 1:58 PM  
**To:** Lang, Sebastian  
**Subject:** Responses to questions - batch 3 [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]  
**Attachments:** RE: Western Ground Parrot Recovery and MOU [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]; FW: Threatened Species Prospectus [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Hi Mark,

Further responses to questions sent through by s22 below.

I have also attached two exciting email about new funding for a prospectus project.

The Association for the Conservation of Threatened Parrots, after reading the prospectus, are providing \$200k funding for western ground parrots. This goes to the second of s22's questions about part funding of projects. Once donors are interested in a project idea, more formal project design processes can look at parts of a project that a partner wants to fund.

The Conservation and Wildlife Research Trust are also looking to partner, though the amounts are smaller.

Cheers

s22

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Hi s22

Thank you for providing this additional batch of information. Do you have an estimate for when you will be providing information relating to the remainder of our questions? Can you also please copy s22 and s22 into any responses to our questions, so that they have access to the information if I am out of the office when it comes through (I am working part-time hours at the moment).

s22

- Why do the total project amounts from all projects, except the Platypus project, differ from the target funding amounts outlined in the Prospectus?

The Threatened Species Prospectus is essentially a dating service, and we are interested in introducing quality conservation projects and organisations to private sector donors. As a first introduction, these projects need to be tangible and easy to understand and digest. Once donors are interested in a project idea, more formal project design processes can look at parts of a project that a partner wants to fund rather than the whole amount (Crowdsourcing for the Norfolk Island project with Birdlife Australia focused on the first year funding), or in fact an expanded project with deliverables beyond the prospectus project idea (cockies saving cockies project

expanded into Victoria because of additional partner interest). Another example is the email attached, where a parrot conservation organisation has seen the prospectus, realised the opportunity and have invested directly with lead proponents of the project.

Many thanks for your assistance.

Kind regards

s22



[www.anao.gov.au](http://www.anao.gov.au)

s22

**Senior Director**

Environment and Resources Branch | Performance Audit

Australian National Audit Office

Tel: 02 6203 s22

s22







s22

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**From:** s22  
**Sent:** Thursday, 2 November 2017 11:35 AM  
**To:** s22 ; s22  
**Cc:** Lang, Sebastian  
**Subject:** Responses to questions - batch 3 [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]  
**Attachments:** QoN45.pdf; RE: Western Ground Parrot Recovery and MOU [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]; FW: Threatened Species Prospectus [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Hi s22 ,

Further responses to questions sent through by s22 below.

In addition:

- I have attached two exciting emails about new funding for prospectus projects.
  - The Association for the Conservation of Threatened Parrots, after reading the prospectus, are providing \$200k funding for western ground parrots. This goes to the second of s22 's questions about part funding of projects. Once donors are interested in a project idea, more formal project design processes can look at parts of a project that a partner wants to fund.
  - The Conservation and Wildlife Research Trust are also looking to partner, though the amounts are smaller.
- I have attached a Question on notice from last estimates relevant to the prospectus.

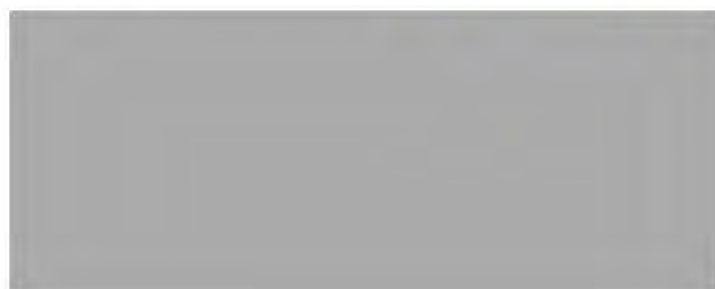
Lastly, Seb and I are keen to have another face-to-face, make sure you have what you need and check in on the process. Can I suggest Thursday next week?

Cheers

s22

s22

Senior adviser  
Office of the Threatened Species Commissioner  
DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY  
P | 02 6275 s22  
E | s22 W | [www.environment.gov.au](http://www.environment.gov.au)



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Hi s22

Thank you for providing this additional batch of information. Do you have an estimate for when you will be providing information relating to the remainder of our questions? Can you also please copy s22 and s22 into any

responses to our questions, so that they have access to the information if I am out of the office when it comes through (I am working part-time hours at the moment).

s22

- Why do the total project amounts from all projects, except the Platypus project, differ from the target funding amounts outlined in the Prospectus?

The Threatened Species Prospectus is essentially a brokering service, and we are interested in introducing quality conservation projects and organisations to private sector donors. As a first introduction, these projects need to be tangible and easy to understand and digest. Once donors are interested in a project idea, more formal project design processes can look at parts of a project that a partner wants to fund rather than the whole amount (Crowdsourcing for the Norfolk Island project with Birdlife Australia focused on the first year funding) , or in fact an expanded project with deliverables beyond the prospectus project idea (cockies saving cockies project expanded into Victoria because of additional partner interest). Another example is the email attached, where a parrot conservation organisation has seen the prospectus, realised the opportunity and have invested directly with lead proponents of the project.

Many thanks for your assistance.

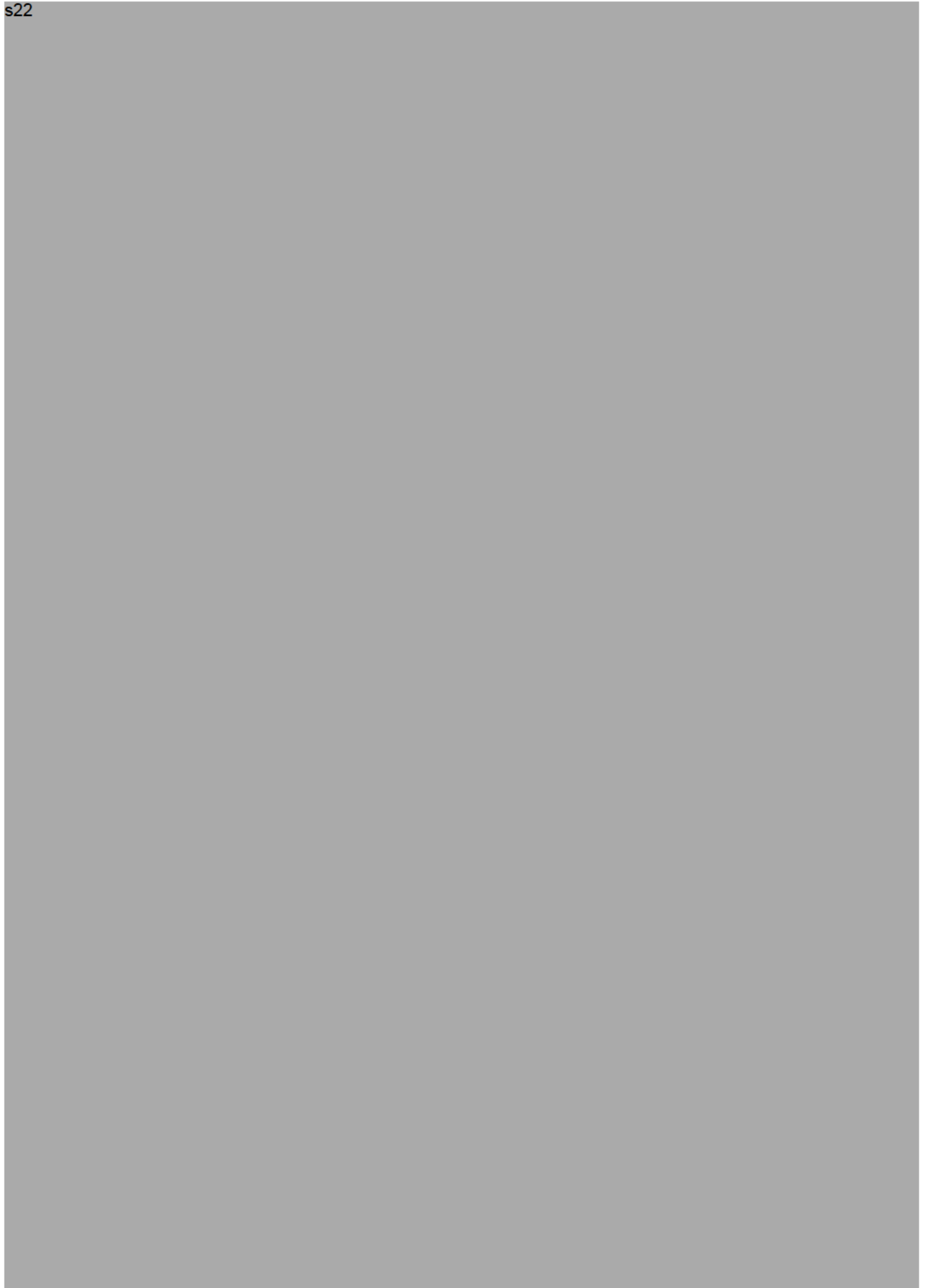
Kind regards

s22



s22  
**Senior Director**  
Environment and Resources Branch | Performance Audit  
Australian National Audit Office  
Tel: 02 6203 s22

s22





**From:** s22

**Sent:** Monday, 11 December 2017 4:01 PM

**To:** s22

**Subject:** FW: Western Ground Parrot Recovery and MOU [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

I'm thrilled to share that the Association for the Conservation of Threatened Parrots is generously providing \$200,000 towards the Saving the Western Ground Parrot from Extinction project in the Threatened Species Prospectus.

The ACTPeV is partnering with the WA Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions to deliver the project on the ground.

Document contained in Document 3

s22









s22

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**From:** s22  
**Sent:** Friday, 15 December 2017 11:48 AM  
**To:** s22  
**Subject:** RE: Western Ground Parrot Recovery and MOU [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Thoughts?

Western Ground Parrots are receiving a \$200,000 boost thanks to the Threatened Species Prospectus, @ACTPeV and @WAParksWildlife.

I'm thrilled to share that the Association for the Conservation of Threatened Parrots is generously providing \$200,000 towards the Saving the Western Ground Parrot from Extinction project in the Threatened Species Prospectus.

The ACTPeV is partnering with the WA Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions to deliver the project on the ground.

The project will increase feral animal control in key habitat, monitor existing populations and research better captive breeding methods to boost the number of bird we can reintroduce to the wild.

Western ground parrots are one of the world's most threatened parrot species. There are estimated to be around 140 animals left in the wild following recent fires that decimated the bird's habitat.

This is a fantastic example of the Prospectus in action, bringing together partners from across the world who are committed to fighting the extinction of our incredible plants and animals.

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**From:** s22  
**Sent:** Monday, 11 December 2017 4:01 PM  
**To:** s22  
**Subject:** FW: Western Ground Parrot Recovery and MOU [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Document contained  
in Document 3

s22









s22

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**From:** s22  
**Sent:** Friday, 15 December 2017 11:59 AM  
**To:** s22  
**Subject:** RE: Western Ground Parrot Recovery and MOU [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

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**From:** s22  
**Sent:** Friday, 15 December 2017 11:48 AM  
**To:** s22  
**Subject:** RE: Western Ground Parrot Recovery and MOU [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Thoughts?

Another example of the #TSProspectus in action, bringing together partners from across the world to fight extinction.

After receiving a copy of the Prospectus, @ACTPeV approached @WAParksWildlife and have agreed to give a \$200,000 boost to Western Ground Parrots.

The project will increase feral animal control in key habitat, monitor existing populations and research better captive breeding methods to boost the number of bird we can reintroduce to the wild. This builds on Australian and Western Australian Government efforts and is essential for ongoing recovery efforts.

Western ground parrots are one of the world's most threatened parrot species, with less than 200 left in the wild, and I am delighted the Association for the Conservation of Threatened Parrots are joining in #savingspecies.

Document contained  
in Document 6

s22











s22

**From:** Margaret Byrne s22  
**Sent:** Friday, 15 December 2017 2:12 PM  
**To:** Lang, Sebastian  
**Subject:** FW: western ground parrot media release  
**Attachments:** WGP\_ACTP\_MS\_Final\_151217.pdf

Hi Sebastian

Further to our phone conversation yesterday, please find attached a the media release regarding the western ground parrot recovery program that has been released today. Also provided below is an image that can be used with credit to "DBCA/Perth Zoo" and caption *Western ground parrots at Perth Zoo - a male leaves the nest after feeding a female* if you wish to promote this program.

I have checked with the DBCA staff involved in discussions with ACTP to develop the MOU partnership we have formed and none were aware the TSC's office had encouraged them to contact us in regards the western ground parrot project in the Threatened Species Prospectus. Nonetheless, we are happy for the partnership we've formed with ACTP to be promoted as contributing to delivery of the Prospectus, as it is a great outcome and will deliver important resources for recovery actions for a key threatened species.

Best wishes  
Margaret

*Dr Margaret Byrne*

Executive Director, Science and Conservation  
Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions  
Locked Bag 104  
Bentley Delivery Centre, WA 6983

s22 Executive Assistant

Phone (08) 9219 s22 Email s22



***We're the people and places you know, but with new-look email addresses***

From early July 2017 we'll be moving to an updated IT system as part of the new Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA). This means email addresses for staff at Kings Park and Botanic Garden, Bold Park, Rottnest Island, Perth Zoo and the former Department of Parks and Wildlife will now carry the domain [@dbca.wa.gov.au](mailto:dbca.wa.gov.au)



s22

Assistant Director Conservation

Science and Conservation | Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions

17 Dick Perry Avenue, Kensington, 6151 | P: Locked Bag 104, BENTLEY DELIVERY CENTRE, 6983

T: 9219s22

[www.dbca.wa.gov.au](http://www.dbca.wa.gov.au)



Department of  
Biodiversity, Conservation  
and Attractions

***We're the people and places you know, but with new-look email addresses***

From early July 2017 we'll be moving to an updated IT system as part of the new Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA). This means email addresses for staff at Kings Park and Botanic Garden, Bold Park, Rottnest Island, Perth Zoo and the former Department of Parks and Wildlife will now carry the domain **@dbca.wa.gov.au**

15 December 2017

## ***Media Statement***

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### **International interest in critically endangered species**

The western ground parrot, a critically endangered species, has gained international attention and investment from a German-based environmental group.

The Association for the Conservation of Threatened Parrots e.V. (ACTP), a non-profit organisation, has committed \$200,000 over two years and signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) to support the ongoing protection of the species.

Chair of the South Coast Threatened Birds Recovery Team Sarah Comer said she welcomed the ACTP's investment in assisting with recovery efforts for the western ground parrot.

"The funding will help to support the western ground parrot program at Perth Zoo, and ongoing recovery of wild populations on the South Coast, both of which are important in improving our knowledge of western ground parrots," she said.

"It will also be invaluable in helping more broadly with the recovery program, which has the potential to see Zoo-bred birds used to establish new populations in the wild.

"It is very exciting to see groups from abroad offering to assist with the long-term protection of threatened animals such as the western ground parrot."

The western ground parrot is a cryptic, ground dwelling parrot with less than 150 birds estimated to remain in the wild in Cape Arid National Park and adjacent Nuytsland Nature Reserve. The main threats they face are predation by feral cats, foxes and bushfires.

Ongoing recovery actions coordinated by DBCA, such as feral cat and fox management through the Western Shield program and fire management, also continue to be key actions in protecting the remaining critically endangered ground parrots.

The ACTP will also share the knowledge it has gained through breeding threatened parrots, including Spix's Macaw, a Brazilian parrot considered to be extinct in the wild.

Ms Comer said in addition to the European investment, the Friends of the Western Ground Parrot were also providing a contribution.

"They have worked incredibly hard in the last few months to raise an additional \$30,000 for the recovery program and to support the efforts of the DBCA field team," she said.

"Community efforts in assisting with conservation programs for western ground parrots are equally important in helping to conserve this critically endangered species into the future."

**Media contact: DBCA Media 9219 9999**

Facebook / Twitter / Instagram: @waparkswildlife

s22

**From:** Friends of the Western Ground Parrot  
<wgparrot@gmail.com@mail158.sea22.mcdlv.net> on behalf of Friends of the  
Western Ground Parrot <wgparrot@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, 17 December 2017 11:47 PM  
**To:** s22  
**Subject:** Summer 2017 Edition - Newsletter



**Welcome to the Friends of the Western Ground Parrot Newsletter**

**No. 77**

Get up-to-date information about the latest efforts to save this critically endangered parrot unique to Western Australia



## German parrot association pledges \$200,000 for recovery project!



*Ground Parrot Fifi on the nest*

*photo credit Perth Zoo*

### **UPDATE FROM PERTH ZOO**

*by Arthur Ferguson*

#### *Season update*

From the first clutch that were removed for incubation showed no signs of development or fertility. This was disappointing, however, to encourage double clutching, we were well-positioned to increase the odds of producing further eggs.

the Western Ground Parrot captive management team and in light of Fifi displaying signs of good health, we agreed that we would lay eggs and nest on the 7<sup>th</sup> of September. Two days later, Fifi and Joy were observed mating and over the next few days we watched her build the nest. By the afternoon of the 14<sup>th</sup> of September we were confident that Fifi had settled on a new nest site and so we entered the enclosure. Upon inspection, the nest was only a shallow scrape in the sand with no vegetation lining and we were uncertain if she would stay there. Fortunately, we were able to set up the spy camera with excellent views and knowing the depth of the previous nest, we set up the camera so that as soon as the eggs were to be laid we could see the eggs in the nest and track their progress closely. With the spy camera in place, we could observe Fifi and continue to work on and prepare the nest. At times male Joy would visit Fifi at the nest site to offer mate feeding, comfort



*First view of Fifi's new nest site from spy camera 15<sup>th</sup> September*

By the 15<sup>th</sup> of September Fifi's weight had increased similar to that seen prior to her laying the first egg of her first clutch. The following day she laid the first egg of her new nest. Fifi showed no signs of concern when laying the egg which was great. Based on the view of the egg in the nest it appeared to be slightly larger in size than the eggs she produced in her first clutch, so we were very pleased. Knowing that we didn't intend to intervene with Fifi this season, we agreed that we would leave this clutch of eggs with her to attempt incubation. With the spy camera in place we could observe Fifi and parental care of the eggs which would be highly valuable to further our knowledge in this area. If in the event any concerns arose we could move the eggs to the Western Ground Parrot incubator facility.



*Fifi looking at her egg #1 from clutch #2 shortly after it was laid 19<sup>th</sup> September 2017*





*Fifi's egg #1 from her second clutch 20<sup>th</sup> September 2017*



*Joy (right) and Fifi (left) at second nest site*

ere expecting that Fifi would be getting close to laying egg #2 of her second clutch. We watched the live CCTV camera views of Fifi in the nest on nine occasions and during each nest visit Joy was observed to pull at Fifi's leg with his beak to the point that Fifi would pull her leg very gently with his beak, however the frequency and persistence he displayed with this behaviour didn't appear to show any signs of her first contraction. By this stage we were still hopeful that egg #2 was on track to be passed without complication. Joy displayed the leg pulling behaviour which forced Fifi off the nest. Fifi moved back into the nest and Joy pulled at her leg again at 4:05pm, leaving the nest at 4:05pm.



*Joy pulling Fifi's leg at 11:01 am, 21st September 2017. Egg #1 from clutch #2 visible in nest*

to the nest briefly at 4:12pm and this led to concerns that Fifi may have issues with passing the egg. At this time Fifi looked like she was struggling and appeared to be egg bound. As time progressed however, it became clear that Fifi's usual pattern of behaviour had changed. She didn't respond to food being offered. Later that evening, Fifi went under one of the Lomandra tussocks at the front of the aviary where she was out of view for a number of times however no interaction with Fifi could be seen, and Joy's behaviour pattern was also noticed to have changed. An emergency meeting was called and key staff convened at Perth Zoo to monitor the CCTV cameras and discuss the situation. Neither Fifi nor Joy was showing any clear signs of being egg bound. At 9:44pm Fifi moved into the large Lomandra tussocks not far from the nest. As Fifi doesn't have night vision capability so we were unable to confirm if she had moved into the nest. The decision was made to leave her in the aviary to be prepared to intervene and provide supportive treatment if necessary. The following morning we checked the cameras and Fifi wasn't displaying her usual behaviour so we decided to intervene and remove her from the aviary for veterinary assessment. It was determined that she had laid the second egg in the aviary overnight, which was discovered in the large Lomandra tussock approximately 1m from the nest. This further suggests that it was passed under atypical circumstances. With Fifi's weight low, the decision was made to provide her with veterinary support.

It was decided it would be best to remove egg #1 from the nest and transfer it into the incubator. Egg #2 was also cleaned up following the incident (Fifi was placed on a post-operative recovery program with the Department of Conservation in New Zealand) and placed in the incubator. These two eggs from Fifi's first clutch, and although they were good sized eggs for Fifi, they were still on the small side when compared with other Green-crowned Parrots. In September Fifi had passed a 3<sup>rd</sup> egg. The egg was very small and when found it had four ~2mm diameter holes and four small punctures, suggesting it was being damaged. Upon reviewing the CCTV footage, Fifi had attempted to roll the egg minutes after it was laid which led to the holes. Fifi then passed egg #3 and so was transferred back into the aviary with male Joy. Unfortunately, eggs #1 and #2 from Fifi's second clutch were not viable and were confirmed to be infertile.

After Fifi was returned to the aviary, male Joy was observed to offer mate feeding and two days later they were observed mating again! The nest was located in a Lomandra tussock and started out as being the most elaborate nest constructed so far, however on the day when the first egg was due to be laid Fifi moved to a large Lomandra tussock. The third nesting attempt between Joy and female Fifi resulted in a further four eggs being laid completely separate from the previous behaviour identified in the previous clutches it was decided to move male Joy into the aviary next door after the first egg was laid. Fifi attempted to incubate the eggs without the harassment of the male. Fifi responded well following the separation of Joy and she was able to continue her incubation. At nine days into incubation the eggs were candled to check for signs of development but unfortunately these eggs showed

empt no further pairing opportunities were enacted to encourage Fifi to regain body condition in preparation for moult. This opportunity to evaluate the data collected from this year breeding efforts.



*Fifi's 4 eggs in nest of clutch #3*



*Fifi tending to and incubating eggs from clutch #3*

ved the result we are after with the production of nestlings, we have gained a great deal of information from the breeding attempt. We have been able to observe and document the nesting behaviour of the Western Ground Parrot with the support of our volunteers Delia and Sherrilyn and dedicated team of staff. We have been able to promote nesting and we have achieved this over two consecutive seasons. The behaviour identified with Joy grabbing at Fifi's tail feathers, was an unexpected discovery, and it's possible that this behaviour has also contributed to complications with previous nesting attempts. We are keen to gain new insight into Western Ground Parrot behaviour which we can use to develop more effective management strategies for the future. The result of this season's nesting was a success. We have confirmed for the first time that Fifi is at least capable of producing a fertile egg and this brings a glimmer of hope that the species is capable of developing full term and hatching.

As the eggs were being fertile, but not continuing to develop during incubation we decided it was important to validate our Grumbach incubator as a viable incubating factor with egg failure. With a small population of breeding Elegant Parrots *Neophema elegans* also maintained at the Zoo, we decided we could use them as a control. A number of Elegant Parrot eggs were removed from the nest box and incubated using the same procedures as those used for the Western Ground Parrot. The eggs developed very well and confirmed that our incubation procedures are sound. The viable Elegant Parrot eggs were transferred back into the nest box for the Western Ground Parrot to hatch and raise the chicks.

The success of the eggs laid by female Fifi this season from three clutches, this demonstrates the egg-laying potential of the species. Our efforts in the future will aim to improve Fifi's egg quality and fertility.

For more information of the breeding season update can be found in the September edition of our newsletter.

## UPDATE FROM PARKS AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

*by Sarah Comer & Allan Burbidge, Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA)*

changes for the south coast ground parrot recovery program, with Lucy Clausen and Saul Cowen moving to other parts of the south coast team, as their contribution towards ground parrot conservation has been significant, but we wish them well in their



*Banksia speciosa flowering prolifically at Cape Arid National Park (Photo credit: S Comer / DBCA)*

unteers joined DBCA staff Steve Butler, Emma Massenbauer, Wayne Gil and I, who had to juggle access to Cape Arid and Nuytsland Nature Reserve in October, and data from these units is currently being processed. We spent three nights camped at Pasley, and as a result we were allocated some additional funds from the SW Fauna Recovery Project to help Abby Thomas deploy 31 units throughout the park. These will give us some idea of where the ground parrots are during the 2018 monitoring period.



l Park

photo credits: S Comer / DBCA



Rough track at Cape Arid National Park

ve also been conducted following compelling reports of ground parrots. We get many reports of potential sightings, and it is
ted by learning more about the location or sighting, there are some reports that warrant further investigation. There were tw
ave resulted in an array of ARUs being deployed to conduct acoustic surveys of the area where there has possibly been a ground

ported ground parrot call) was in the Waychinicup area, where a ground parrot was last heard in 2004. Despite a number of c
d ground parrots in this area, so it was with some excitement DBCA staff and volunteers from the Albany Bird Group deploy
initial cluster analysis using the Kaleidoscope software did not detected any ground parrot calls on the 57 nights and 456 re

rrort (also a call) was heard by an observer with some experience in surveying for ground parrots in Cape Arid, while walking th
heard before dawn, and given the location overlapped with the last known location of ground parrots in the Fitz Wilderness it
ea. Access is restricted to walking, and in October DBCA ranger Mal Grant, and volunteer Darcy Martin joined me in a long walk
be retrieved in January 2018.



cy Martin in
ying ARUs

photo credits: S Comer / DBCA



Volunteers Raeline, Shaun and Anne deploying
ARUs at Cheynes Beach

s might be found in Fitzgerald River National park, and would encourage anyone who thinks they have seen or heard a ground p
cation can be found at this link:

[https://www.dbca.wa.gov.au/images/documents/plants-animals/animals/have\\_you\\_seen\\_a\\_western\\_ground\\_parrot.pdf](https://www.dbca.wa.gov.au/images/documents/plants-animals/animals/have_you_seen_a_western_ground_parrot.pdf),

made to [sarah.comer@dbca.wa.gov.au](mailto:sarah.comer@dbca.wa.gov.au) or [wgparrot@gmail.com](mailto:wgparrot@gmail.com). We will follow up all reported sightings in due course.

d by the ARUs is a laborious job. Each single 30 minute recording generates a wave file of around 300MB, and if we have a ur
gs. To identify calls we have a well-tested method of manually scanning files, but with the dwindling human resource, we've
es. Using software to scan the files has had minimal success over the past few years, but the Kaleidoscope software recently

and Rotary Club of Albany Port is showing some promise in being able to scan the large volumes of data and detecting parrots. We are continuing this process and anticipate that for detecting presence this software has a lot of potential. Early trials suggest it is not likely to be as accurate as we would like, but it is a step in the right direction. These techniques are key to monitoring the remaining population, but alleviating some of the scanning for survey effort and following up on sightings. As we develop these techniques further we will provide updates.

Efforts to secure funds from the Threatened Species Fund were unsuccessful, but we will continue to look for opportunities to continue recovery. Plans for 2018 are taking shape, with monitoring of the Cape Arid and Nuytsland reserves the main activity where work will also be conducted through the Western Shield program and SW Fauna Recovery Project in autumn next year.

Funding for staff on the Southwest Fauna Recovery Team ran out at the end of June and was not renewed.

## CHIRPINGS FROM

**Anne Bondin**

After a lengthy overseas journey to find out that the only new government funding announced for the recovery of the Western Ground Parrot was the provision of the custom-built aviaries. Both state and federal governments have also been very slow to respond to our letters of concern. We have since met with our local members of parliament, Mr Peter Watson, member for Albany and Mr Rick Wilson, member for the South Coast, but they were completely forgotten in next year's budget. We also looked into grants to help finance some of the unfunded recovery measures, but found that the estimated expenses were far in excess of what was available.

Efforts for the capture of additional birds to boost the captive breeding trial at Perth Zoo have had some success. At the time of writing, the public and proceeds received from the screening of "Secrets at Sunrise" as well as the sale of the DVDs. Surprisingly, there has been quite a number of the DVDs being shipped to the eastern States and even as far away as the United States and Europe. By the way, film producer David Attenborough who has inspired generations of nature lovers and last week Jennene received a handwritten reply from the world's most famous bird expert that he would gladly view "Secrets at Sunrise". If you are based in Albany, the documentary will be screened again during the South Coast Festival. It would be an opportunity to join an afternoon field trip to Waychinicup on the 12<sup>th</sup> of March to learn more about Western Ground Parrots and to participate.

It has gone without any Western Ground Parrot chicks having been produced at Perth Zoo. While this is disappointing, it is best to remain optimistic. The recovery program have also taken a while to get up and running. Perth Zoo's sole female bird produced an astounding eleven eggs. Western Ground Parrots of this species will breed readily given the right conditions. During the breeding season Perth Zoo supplemented the parrots' diet with native insects. We contacted Perth Zoo without delay, regional airline Rex Express offered to help transport the parrot food free of charge on their flight between Perth and Albany. A committee was elected. We will do our utmost to provide the Western Ground Parrots with a brighter future.

As we approach the festive season and the corner I would like to take this opportunity and wish everyone a happy festive season. And if you need some gift ideas, we have a list of gift ideas. What is your favourite gift?



Conservation of Threatened Parrots e.V. (ACTP), a non-profit organisation from Germany, has committed \$200,000 over the next five years in partnership with the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) to support the ongoing protection of threatened birds. ACTP's investment will assist with recovery of the western ground parrot program at Perth Zoo, and ongoing recovery of wild populations on the South Coast, both of which are part of the "Recovery of Western Ground Parrots," she said.

ACTP is helping more broadly with the recovery program, which has the potential to see Zoo-bred birds used to establish new wild populations. The knowledge it has gained through breeding threatened parrots, including Spix's Macaw, a Brazilian parrot considered extinct in the wild, is being used to inform recovery efforts. "This generous financial support from Germany means that the capture of additional birds from the wild to supplement the program is now possible," she said. "We are looking forward to the work ahead. Our organisation will donate the \$30,000 raised in our recent appeal towards this project."

---

**If you haven't yet seen "Secrets at Sunrise" or need a Christmas present,  
the film is now available for download or as a DVD.**

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Join the race to save the Western Ground Parrot

**In Albany and Esperance the DVD is also available at a number of local outlets.**

**Please contact us for details.**

**Order now**

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Previous issues of our newsletter are available online at <http://wgpnewsletters.blogspot.com/>

Western Ground Parrot history blog: <http://westerngroundparrothistory.blogspot.com.au/>

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## Aviculture and Threatened Species - Finding a way forward

### Threatened Species Commissioner Meeting Summary

Canberra 14/12/2017

On December 14th a group of aviculture representatives - Sam Davis, Gary Fitt, Graeme Phipps, Steve Sass and Simon Degenhard – met with the Acting Threatened Species Commissioner (TSC) in Canberra to raise awareness of the possibilities for private aviculture to contribute actively to conservation breeding programs focussed on high priority threatened bird species. The Aviculture and Threatened Species Group involves several leading aviculturists across Australia who are jointly developing arguments to support the case for private aviculture to participate in conservation programs.

By all accounts the meeting was a success – all we could have hoped for - a terrific start. The TSC is well placed to open doors leading to broader understanding of our amazing skills, experience and the extensive resources at our disposal for successfully breeding rare and endangered species. The wide-ranging discussion in the meeting covered options for aviculture to contribute to recovery team efforts, to work with state government threatened species efforts, and the need to overcome obstacles with some other stakeholder groups who don't yet see the value that aviculture can bring.

After the initial pleasantries, the five representatives provided an overview of their experiences including thoughts on a way forward.

Gary Fitt (the Scientist) focused on science based initiatives. The privately funded Save the Gouldian Fund is an exemplar, but Gary noted the expertise, infrastructure, passion and commitment that private aviculture could bring to bear on some of the top 20 birds on conservation lists. An amazing stem cell based advanced reproductive technology proposal to dramatically increase Orange-bellied Parrot numbers was outlined, including a request to uncover why this proposal has not progressed despite considerable interest internationally. Such frustrating experiences - low interest/involvement/respect domestically with high interest/involvement/respect internationally - arose a number of times during the meeting.

Simon Degenhard (the Publicist) focused on international projects. His work publicising the expertise of Australian aviculture via AviaryLife magazine and his vast connections to the world's most significant avian collections is crucial in upholding our highly regarded status in world aviculture. All our avian publications and products are highly regarded internationally, and this has and continues to be a catalyst for international partners seeking our expertise and offering assistance with our recovery programs. For instance, at the meeting Simon announced an ACTP contribution of \$200K to assist with Western Ground Parrot recovery efforts via the WA Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions.

Sam Davis (the Organiser) spoke of the desire for aviculture to engage with recovery efforts and some of the stumbling blocks he has encountered in recent years. Our knowledge is sought internationally (the Smithsonian led Red Siskin Initiative, for example), we are working alongside university research efforts (projects with Macquarie Uni, Western Sydney Uni and ANU are underway) yet we experience ongoing difficulties infiltrating the conservation and threatened species effort in our own country. The detailed knowledge aviculturists have of the species they keep will surprise recovery teams – and not just regarding captive breeding. We're volunteers with a passion for the birds we breed. Many of the best of us spend all day observing and tweaking

husbandry - these are real experts and they're itching to be involved. To share their knowledge, to refine husbandry, to be part of captive breeding recovery efforts here in Australia.

Graeme Phipps (the Zoologist) has a long and distinguished history promoting the obvious benefits private aviculture can contribute to threatened species efforts. Graeme has seen a long line of action plans, recovery programs, species management goals, etc. come and go over many decades. There is one thing all these long winded well-meaning documents have in common – they do nothing whatsoever, if nothing practical is actually done. Action, unsurprisingly, means doing something, something practical to help the birds we care for and care about. Graeme has the practical qualifications to train avicultural leaders to manage studbooks, perform Population and Habitat Viability Analysis and Assessment workshops, to use modelling to arrive at measurable and consensus options for the recovery of species. These internationally respected methodologies are open to all - private aviculture can and should do all this.

Steve Sass' (the Ecologist and Bird Park owner) presentation at the meeting made it clear he is definitely in the thick of it, and on a daily basis. Steve's professional ecology work involves assessing the effects of development and other influences on threatened species whilst his lifelong passion for aviculture and more recently development of "On the Perch" gives him a broad view of the overall threatened species effort and how aviculture can assist. It appears, On the Perch's recent proposal supported by aviculture, to work with Red-capped Plovers as analogues of the threatened Hooded Plover was rejected without due consideration. Was this yet another example where aviculture's expertise is not recognised by some other influential threatened species stakeholders?

Much past frustration is a result of other major stakeholders' inability to understand, accept and engage with aviculture or consider alternative strategies. Stakeholder's in the conservation area have proven to be hard nuts to crack. Much is due to ignorance of what we offer, some appears due to simple bigotry and some due to a desire to protect their turf. The meeting endeavoured to find a way forward, practical assistance from the TSC office to assist our voice to be heard. We also explored a range of strategies and projects where we can go it alone, running our own projects in parallel to existing programs.

Recommendations for the Threatened Species Commissioner to explore include...

1. Inclusion of private aviculture representatives on recovery teams. We setup a working group to appoint/invite avicultural experts with specific experience with the specific species or its analogue. The detailed knowledge aviculturists know of the species they keep will surprise recovery teams
2. Facilitate meetings with state based programs, such as NSW OEH Saving Our Species. Meetings similar to this meeting are needed to raise awareness of the possibilities and explore a way forward.
3. Assistance, where possible, uncovering why a number of projects and offers have been unsuccessful. In particular, projects and offers of assistance outlined by Gary Fitt, Graeme Phipps and Steve Sass during the meeting.

The Threatened Species Commissioner has committed to...

1. Consider and respond as to how the TSC office can assist private aviculture to move forward.
2. A new TSC, Dr Sally Box, has recently been appointed to commence late January 2018. Signal our intentions to Dr Box, including an overview of this meeting.

The Threatened Species Commissioner has already established a priority list of 20 bird species which are the focus of Federal government conservation efforts ( <http://www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/threatened/species/20-birds-by-2020> ) and a key outcome from the meeting was a suggestion from the TSC that we consider a specific targeted species in the Threatened Species Strategy and explain how private aviculture was well placed to contribute to recovery, as a way of clearly illustrating our skills. Much work has already been undertaken and is ongoing to identify species where we have a definite role to play. There are many possible species to consider and we welcome input from everyone.

Many thanks to the office of the Threatened Species Commissioner. This was just the first of what we hope will be a series of planning and engagement meetings. Together we can find a way forward - for the birds.

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information  
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# Talking Birds

BIRD  
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\$5 parrots, finches, budgies, canaries, pets, fancy poultry & pigeons, veterinary advice, Aust. & world news, conservation February 2018



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with golden  
shoulders**

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canary  
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**Purple  
grenadier  
fascinates**

**Dorking  
has an  
extra toe**

**Managing  
hernias  
not easy**

**Derbyan  
a lively  
parrot**

**Red mite  
bad for  
budgies**

**Opening  
key to  
step-up**

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**A**NYONE can make big money by exporting native birds from Australia.

All you need is the birds and a partner who owns a licenced zoo overseas, someone who is prepared to breed the birds and sell their progeny down the track, or if he/she is a bit shifty, to sell the birds as soon as they arrive at their destination, possibly to fill pre-existing orders.

You'll have to prove that the birds are aviary bred before you can export them, but it would be well worth the effort.

It's already happening, but why the need to involve a zoo?

Why couldn't the birds go direct to bird keepers overseas?

Could it be as simple as making it unnecessary to have a zoo as the overseas receiver?

It's time to lobby our legislators to make it happen, not in a few year's time, but starting now, because it will likely take at least a few years.

Maybe a special group could be set up to work on that.

**FIX PROBLEMS:** When things go wrong during the breeding season it is vital that they be addressed before the next season and that is the case

## the blue box

with canaries.

Canary specialist Jeff Leaney addresses that problem in this edition and his advice makes plenty of sense.

**RARE FINCH:** Finch guru John Buchan this month addresses the purple grenadier, a pretty bird that is not widely kept in Australia

Sometimes aggressive and often needing heated quarters, it is a species that is worth persevering with.

**HOLEY TROUBLE:** Hernias come in varied shapes, sizes and causes, with myriad ways of treating them.

Avian vet Matthew Gosbell runs through the problems and their causes in this edition.

**UNEXPECTED:** This month a mate of Bob Philpot's relates his experiences with golden-shouldered parrots, providing plenty of food for thought.

In this edition there's something for everyone with an interest in aviculture.

It's a pleasure to bring bird words to you every month.

Please enjoy and if not, please tell me about it.

— Lloyd Marshall

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### It's time for the truth

Dear Lloyd,

You disappoint me. You usually go to town when you see shonky things happening but you have been super quiet about the recent ridiculous exports of our parrots to Germany.

To suggest that those birds will be part of conservation efforts is nonsense.

It seems to me that the cunningly-named Association for the Conservation of Threatened Parrots near Berlin is a front for selling rare birds.

Yes, they have bred some Spix's and Lear's macaws, but that's all they have done, so why do they keep dozens of most species of Australian black cockatoos and other Australian parrots?

In a recent Facebook post Australian ACTP employee Simon Degenhard made out like he is a hero for arranging to send 74 Australian birds to his German employer.

In that post he said: "I found out that it is in fact possible for any licensed breeder, who can prove the legal origins of their birds for a number of generations, to export, so long as the receiving facility overseas meets all the criteria set by the Australian Government — including being a recognised zoological facility."

Did he breed all 74 birds? I don't think so, so how could he prove to our government that the birds were captive-bred?

It is common knowledge that he bought those birds from breeders around the country.

Maybe the officials who signed off on those exports didn't do their jobs properly. Who knows?

Those birds included mutation galahs and king parrots, which can not be used in any conservation program and in any case, ACTP does not conserve Aussie birds.

Those 74 birds will be worth millions to wealthy collectors in Europe and ACTP stands to make heaps more if they breed those birds and sell the offspring.

I am amazed that Australian officials approved the export of native parrots to a place which poses as a conservation operation but which in reality has only a tiny track record relating to conservation, but has a great track record for selling birds that are rare in Europe to breeders there, something which is prohibited under Australian law because birds sent from Australia to zoos overseas can only go there for exhibition, educational, research or scientific purposes.

I do not know of any legitimate conservation operation anywhere in the world which engages in constant promotional activities to try to con-

vince people that it is fair dinkum.

ACTP does that all the time by articles in glibble magazines, by donating big money to conservation projects to make itself look good and by doing things like convincing world parrot authority Rosemary Low from the UK to do a glowing report on ACTP which was recently published in the UK Parrot Society magazine, something I am sure she will regret when she finds out the truth.

The only reason anyone would go to all that trouble is to try to create credibility and an image of respectability, as well as helping to counteract negative publicity.

The fact that the highly respected Parrot Society of Australia refused the offer of an ACTP speaker for its convention in July this year speaks for itself.

Loro Parque in the Canary Islands, which has a great conservation track record, issues press releases when it breeds something special and that's fine, because they are actually doing something.

Al Wabra in Qatar, which focuses on Spix's and Lear's, seldom blows its own trumpet, but does a great deal of excellent work.

Mr Degenhard was recently included in a group of experts that met officials in Canberra to discuss local bird keepers taking part in projects to breed Australian birds that are under threat.

He has no experience breeding threatened birds unless you count being an ACTP hanger-on, procurer of parrots and "aren't we great" spruiker.

He was in Canberra only because ACTP promised to provide \$200,000 to the western ground parrot conservation project, which is a classic example of ACTP's tactics of throwing money around to make itself look good.

In his Facebook post Mr Degenhard said he was proud of what he achieved in relation to sending 74 parrots to ACTP.

Exactly what is he proud of? He deprived Australia of 74 birds, many of them the only examples of their type, which will enrich the bank balances of ACTP and Mr Degenhard.

I mentioned credibility earlier. What happened to Simon's promised free monthly email bulletin he said would start in December last year?

Guess what, no appearance your honor. What a surprise.

Lift your game Lloyd, do some research and tell the world what Mr Degenhard and his German boss are really up to.

— J. McMahon, via email  
**EDITOR'S NOTE:** See pages 3 and 4.

...to provide \$200,000 to the western ground parrot conservation project, a classic example of ACTP's tactic of using money...

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# Talking Birds

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COVER: MALE GOLDEN-SHOULDERED PARROT.

PHOTO: BOB PHILPOT.

SEE: NOT WHAT YOU EXPECT. — PAGES 8-9.



# Exports to Germany disgust our breeders

By LLOYD MARSHALL

THREE of Australia's leading aviculturists, all well-known breeders of native parrots, have expressed their disgust about the export of 74 native Australian birds to a breeding facility in Germany in December last year.

Those people told *Talking Birds* they deplored the recent consignment of birds sent to Europe.

The first breeder was upset because rare mutations, including galahs and other parrots, were sold to Germany for big money.

"That means those birds are lost to Australian aviculture forever, they will end up in collections overseas and it will take many years to breed numbers of those mutations up again in Australia," he said.

*Talking Birds* was sent the photograph of mutation galahs on this page, which was taken near Berlin at the facility operated by a group called the Association for the Conservation of Threatened Parrots.

The photo was sent to two Australians who have visited ACTP and both said the shot was taken at the German operation.

The second breeder, a specialist in lorries and lorikeets who lives in Victoria, was scathing about the loss of pied rainbow lorikeets.

"Those birds came from a breeder in Queensland who wanted to scale back his numbers," he said.

That breeder is long-time Toowoomba bird man Les Banks, who sold ACTP representative Simon Degenhard 10 peds and 10 splits.

"Simon told me he was going to set them up for breeding at his place," Mr Banks said.

"I call them speckled peds and they came from birds which I got from a mate of mine in Toowoomba."

*Talking Birds* asked Mr Degenhard if the pied rainbows had been sent to Germany. No reply was received.

The birds sold by Mr Banks were believed to be the only peds of their type but it has since been confirmed that another breeder has some of those birds.

Lory and lorikeet breeder Jordan Lewis said rumours that he sold split blue rainbows to be sent to Germany had no foundation.

The third breeder who contacted *Talking Birds*, a man who lives in New South Wales and has an extensive set-up for breeding black cockatoos, said he was appalled that the German breeding facility had most Australian black cockatoo species.

"None of those birds are part of any recognised conservation breed-



Mutation galahs at the ACTP facility in Germany after being exported from Australia by Simon Degenhard.

ing program so why are they needed in Germany?" he asked.

"I'm familiar with all of the major recognised conservation breeders around the world and ACTP is not one of them. As far as I am aware ACTP has no connection with any conservation breeding program for any black cockatoo species.

"It bothers me that good breeding birds, particularly glossies, are going out of the country, because they are not easy to breed and we should be hanging onto them."

*Talking Birds* spoke to a breeder in Queensland who sold a pair of yellow-tails in strange circumstances.

"I needed money and a mate told me a man in Victoria wanted yellow-tails, so I called him, told him about the birds and he agreed to buy them for \$4000," he said.

"I sent the birds off and was paid \$2000, I asked where the balance was and the buyer said it was being paid by Simon Degenhard, which I eventually got.

"I later heard that the birds had gone to Germany.

"The mate here who told me about the Victorian bloke later received an email from a man in Germany thanking him for selling the yellow-

tails to him. He had nothing to with the sale of the birds."

The breeder said there was no discussion about whether the birds were aviary bred.

One phone caller and two email correspondents suggested to *Talking Birds* that Dee Patterson, who runs a black cockatoo rehabilitation centre in south-west Western Australia, was supplying birds for export to Germany.

Mrs Patterson said that was definitely not the case.

"No, I have supplied no birds to go anywhere like that, it is illegal to do that," Mrs Patterson said.

A spokesperson for the Australian Department of the Environment and Energy told *Talking Birds* any person may, in accordance with regulations, apply for a permit to export native Australian birds.

The spokesperson said live native birds may only be exported from Australia for eligible non-commercial purposes such as for exhibition in a zoo or menagerie, for scientific research or for conservation breeding.

"Permit applications to export live birds must be accompanied by exhibition information, specimen details to demonstrate the appropriate source of the birds, and the des-

tinuation facility must meet conditions for the care, housing, feeding and treatment of the birds, known as an Ambassador Agreement," the spokesperson said.

ACTP's Australian representative Simon Degenhard said on Facebook on December 16 last year that he had exported 74 birds to Germany.

"Last week, despite the fictitious and elaborate stories going around in an effort to discredit me, I achieved my first export of native parrots from Australia to Germany," he said.

"I legally exported 74 birds including cockatoos, lorikeets and parrots, all done with the complete backing of both the authorities in Australia and their counterparts in Germany," he said.

"So, I guess if being under 'Federal investigation' ends in the issuing of export permits, then I welcome this to occur each and every time!

"I am extremely proud of what I have achieved so far. And through the close relationship that I have built up with ACTP I have also been able to facilitate the direct backing of parrot conservation within Australia."

A spokesman for the Department

■ Continued on page 4.

# Exports to Germany disgust breeders

Continued from page 3.

of the Environment and Energy could not confirm that Mr Degenhard had that department's "complete backing".

Talking Birds asked Mr Degenhard these questions:

■ What did he mean by "the direct backing of parrot conservation within Australia."

■ Please provide details of credentials that qualify you to be a member of the threatened species group which met officials in Canberra in mid-December?

■ As an Australian citizen how do you reconcile your actions in assisting Martin Guth to export Australian native birds to Germany, to be sold to wealthy collectors, thereby depriving Australian aviculture of those birds?

■ Are you aware of any conservation programs for Australian native birds which involve ACTP?

No replies were received.

Martin Guth, the man behind the Association for the Conservation of Threatened Parrots in Germany was asked the questions below. No replies were received.

■ Can you please tell me how many St Lucia and St Vincents Amazons you have bred, and how many have been repatriated?

■ Can you please tell me how many of the 74 birds sent to you last

month by Simon are still at ACTP?

■ Does ACTP have regularly-scheduled exhibition sessions, please supply details?

■ How many people attended exhibition sessions during the past 12 months?

■ Is ACTP involved with any Australian Government sanctioned breeding operation?

■ Your website says 15 staff are employed at ACTP, can you please tell me how much is spent annually on their salaries and where those funds come from?

A person who has worked at ACTP told *Talking Birds* it was an extremely secretive place.

"Everyone had to sign a confidentiality agreement where we could not discuss our work or anything about ACTP with anyone," he said. "It was like something out of a spy movie, often it felt like there was always someone looking over your shoulder, it was not a very healthy atmosphere."

A copy of Mr Degenhard's Facebook post referred to in this report can be found at [www.talkingbirds.com.au](http://www.talkingbirds.com.au), in the documents section under the heading Simon Facebook.

■ **EDITOR'S NOTE:** The four bird keepers quoted in this story spoke to *Talking Birds* on the condition that their names would not be published.



Dee Patterson did not supply any birds for export to Germany, including Carnaby's white-tailed black cockatoos, pictured above.

## What does 'commercial' really mean?

THERE has been some confusion about the meaning of the word "commercial" as it applies to exports of native Australian birds.

A spokesperson for the Department of Environment and Energy provided this explanation:

*Australia treats "commercial" trade of wildlife consistent with guidance provided by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).*

*The Convention sets out the definition of "primarily commercial purposes" (see <https://cites.org/site/default/files/document/E-Res-05-10-R15.pdf>).*

*It states that an activity can generally be described as commercial if its purpose is to obtain economic benefit (whether in cash or otherwise), and is directed toward resale, exchange, provision of a service or any other form of economic use or benefit.*

*It goes on to say that the term 'commercial purposes' should be defined by the country of import as broadly as possible so that any transaction which is not wholly "non-commercial" will be regarded as "commercial".*

*Live Australian native birds may only be exported from Australia for eligible non-commercial*

*purposes such as exhibition in a zoo or menagerie, scientific research, or conservation breeding.*

*Australia issues CITES permits only to applicants that meet all relevant requirements under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999.*

*If you have concerns about incidents of non-compliance with the EPBC Act, we encourage you to contact the Department with any relevant information at [wildlife-trade.compliance@environment.gov.au](mailto:wildlife-trade.compliance@environment.gov.au).*

*Please note that all reports are treated with the highest confidentiality.*

## Why was ACTP man part of Canberra meeting?

Talking Birds asked Sam Davis, the convener of the *Aviculture Working with Threatened Species* group, which met with federal officials in Canberra late last year, to explain why ACTP's employee in Australia, Simon Degenhard, was part of that group.

This was his response:

There are three non-commercial uses one can utilise as the basis for the export of native birds — research, education, exhibition.

I understand ACTP is a registered zoo in Germany, hence exhibition was the non-commercial usage — nothing directly to do with threatened species conservation.

The application process is all detailed online — the process is not a secret — in fact, I find it odd that (to my knowledge) apart from Simon/ACTP, PRIAM is the only other to have pursued such native exports in recent years. This process is open to everyone.

The philosophical argument about whether or not natives (and exotics also) should be traded internationally is a different matter.

The fact is that there is currently a legal process for native (and exotic) exports and it looks likely that we will soon have a legal process for legal import of parrots.

The general debate about inter-

national trade in birds needs to continue — there are sensible arguments on both sides.

On Simon's involvement in the Aviculture working with Threatened Species initiative...

Aviculture is my passion — and I seem to breed a few birds — but to be honest, it is I that have no real credentials in the threatened species field.

My professional experience is in education — I've organised and chaired a few matters in my time. I've learnt how to keep on pushing/annoying politicians/bureaucrats to make them wiggle!

Simon has been involved in this evolving threatened species initiative for some years — he has been integral from the start.

I have no doubt about his passion for aviculture, particularly with regard to threatened species.

The team was not simply thrown together for this meeting.

Public programs Simon and I have worked on together include the Red Siskin Initiative as well as our "Aviculture working with Threatened Species" display at the 2017 Sydney Royal and there are other projects in the pipeline.

Readers would be well aware of various other domestic and international threatened species efforts

of which Simon has been a part.

Simon has many contacts, including a number of staff in the Department of Environment who work alongside the Threatened Species Commissioner's office. His efforts are known and respected by the TSC office.

If there are other people with similar contacts then we would welcome their input and assistance — I hope we don't appear to be an elitist closed shop.

Everyone in the group has the best interests of aviculture at heart — I'm sure of this — we are genuinely keen to be inclusive.

One last general comment that is pertinent here...

We'll never agree on everything, we need to argue (and I like that) but we do need to work towards common goals.

This requires some sort of system/structure/process, one that promotes and encourages action.

Realistically, there's just a handful of capable people nationally, we need to let them fly — with everyone encouraging and a management structure directing them — so they can just get on with it.

At this stage the best system/structure/process to unite aviculture nationally is unclear — but I'd suggest we are edging (evolving) in

the right direction.

In my opinion, "Aviculture working with Threatened Species" has enormous promotional potential for all of aviculture, in much the same way zoos reinvented as centres of conservation. Plus we get to help save threatened species!

■ **EDITOR'S NOTE:** Mr Degenhard did not reply to a request to give reasons for him being a member of the "Aviculture working with Threatened Species" group.

The same question was put to Mr Davis. It seems to me that, Mr Davis' response does not explain why Mr Degenhard was part of the group that met officials in Canberra, except for the fact that he knew some of the public servants.

I am sure those officials would have spoken to the group if Mr Degenhard had not been part of it.

Mr Davis said: "Readers would be well aware of various other domestic and international threatened species efforts of which Simon has been a part." That is more than a little bit vague and *Talking Birds* is not aware of any of those situations.

*Talking Birds* asked Mr Degenhard for information about the "threatened species efforts" mentioned by Mr Davis.

No reply was received.

Mr Davis is president of the Finch Society of Australia and vice president, government liaison, of the Canary and Cage Bird Federation of Australia. His response to *Talking Birds'* question was not provided when acting in either of those capacities.

## NSW pet shop move

A DISTURBING proposed change to the NSW Department of Primary Industries' definition of a pet shop could mean anyone selling birds from home or at a bird sale.

Sam Davis, Canary and Cage Bird Federation vice president, government liaison, said pet shops have legal requirements and red tape that are irrelevant to bird breeders.

"We confirmed with senior DPI staff that the above is an accurate assessment of the intent of the proposed changes," Mr Davis said.

A full update on progress will be provided at the CCBFA meeting on February 7 and Mr Davis urged all member clubs to send delegates.

## Blacks plight spread

PERTH Zoo is doing what it can to educate the public about the plight of black cockatoos.

Two of the hand-raised birds at the zoo used for educational purposes are Vic the forest red-tailed black cockatoo and Pepe the Baudin's white-tailed black cockatoo.

Keeper Emily Trainer said on national bird day last month that Vic and Pepe were ambassador birds who gave the public the chance to learn about the species.

"We have school groups that come in to learn about black cockatoos with Vic and Pepe, they fly around and have health checks too," she said.

## Snake eats conures

A WOMAN in Bundaberg was shocked to find out that her pair of conures had been eaten by a carpet snake.

Tanya Wogandt said Connie and Conrad had been part of the family for about two years before they became brunch for the slithering animal.

"I will be buying wire today to attach to my cages that prevents snakes from getting in," she said.

"I have had birds for years and never had this happen before.

"We are just going to relocate the snake in another area as if we relocate it around here it will just return."

## Light helps macaw

FIREMEN from Sunbury CFA in Victoria shed light on the subject when a missing macaw had to be rescued at night last month.

Fireman Dean Opie said: "We'd just come back from a grassfire at the Nook and were cleaning up the truck when the call came in.

"The resident had seen the macaw fly off and by chance had an arborist as a neighbour helping him, but they needed some lighting.

"Apparently it was the first time the bird had flown and it chose a big eucalypt as its first tree."

"She was on my shoulder and just took off," owner Shane Gusey said.

## Bird kills Tas. power

ALMOST 900 people in Tasmania were without power on a recent Saturday afternoon after a bird caused power line damage at Ravenswood.

It is believed a bird flew into a power line, sparking a small blaze which was quickly contained.

A TasNetworks spokesperson said it was likely the bird damaged an insulator.

About 873 customers were without power.

## Concern on NZ ducks

A DUCK rescue group in New Zealand is worried that a deadly disease which is killing off hundreds of birds in Auckland parks could spread to other animals.

The birds have been struck down by avian botulism, which is produced when natural bacteria heats up in the water.

The disease is made worse by people sharing leftover bread with the ducks.

## \$5000 raised for OBP

A CROWDFUNDING campaign to cover costs of volunteers monitoring critically-endangered orange-bellied parrots in Tasmania's south had an overwhelming response.

Needing \$5000 to pay for transport and equipment for volunteers to stake out the Melaleuca region, where the birds breed, ornithologist and former parrot conservation program manager Mark Holdsworth put the call out for public support.

Volunteers are required to observe the birds at feeding tables in Melaleuca twice a day, identifying each bird by its leg bands to ensure none are lost or injured.

## Woolworths pays for bird attack

WOOLWORTHS has been ordered to compensate a staffer at a store in New South Wales after the woman's eye was severely injured by a vicious swooping bird known to guard the entryway to the shopping complex.

Anita Smith was almost inside the Kiama Village Shopping Centre, 120km south of Sydney, when a peewee, pictured right, set her in its sights on May 14 last year.

She required surgery in to repair the resulting injury, described in a compensation claim as an intumed central part of the right eye flap.

The Workers Compensation Commission ordered the supermarket to pay Ms Smith almost \$17,000 in lost wages.



A Woolworths store manager had denied liability, instead placing blame on centre management for not acting.

"Centre management had previously been informed regarding a number of bird attacks and chose to do nothing about this until this and other serious incidents happened," the company said.

## Shark takes ibis

AN ibis has apparently been killed by a shark in South Lismore's Duck Pond Reserve on the New South Wales mid-north coast.

A number of witnesses have reported seeing what they believe to be a juvenile bull shark swimming in the relatively shallow pond at the western end of the reserve.

Noreen Colley, owner of the Duck Pond Cafe, said she was beside the pond when she noticed a wake in the water.

A short time later there was a commotion and a number of ibis took off and Ms Colley said there was one less ibis than had been there before the commotion.

## Police seek speeder

A DUCK is at the centre of a police investigation after two people were injured in a crash inside Perth's Graham Farmer Freeway tunnel.

The man and woman, both in their 20s, received serious injuries when the car they were travelling in crashed into a Main Roads vehicle as emergency crews tried to remove the bird from the tunnel.

It is believed the driver was speeding just after midnight when he lost control in the westbound tunnel, hit a wall and ploughed into the incident response vehicle.

Police are searching for a silver Nissan Skyline which may have been racing with the other vehicle.

## Duck shoot warning

THE Victorian government has defended changes to the upcoming duck shooting season despite warnings that the regulations could see conflict break out between protesters and gun-wielding hunters.

The regulations included a late start time on both days of the season's opening weekend.

The Game Management Authority said more light will mean shooters are better able to identify species and collect slain animals.

But the 9am start time is under fire from hunters who say it will put them in closer contact with protesters, who are allowed to enter wetlands from 10am.

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## Budgie back home

**BIRDY** the budgie found himself in safe hands when he went for a little fly-about near his UK home in Buckfastleigh and ended up at the local fire station.

He flapped the 100 yards or so to the fire station where he spent the evening making himself at home, perching on pictures, picking up pens and settling on computer monitors.

He even showed his friendly side by sitting on a fireman's finger.

The firemen, concerned for the welfare of their new best friend, took to Facebook and quickly located owner Denys Egginton who swiftly reclaimed his pet.

## Small birds rescued

A **CANADIAN** animal rescue group is working to rehome more than 100 small birds found in a fore-closed house in Ottawa.

Jill Woods, who runs the Feathered Haven Parrot Rescue said the birds, 106 finches and two canaries, were rescued from a hoarding situation.

She said it took a co-ordinated effort to get the birds out of the home, where some of the finches were in cages and others were flying free.

"At one point there were 24 of us, including people keeping vehicles warm in case birds needed emergency transport," Ms Woods said.

## More flu outbreaks

**IN** latest avian flu outbreak developments the UK has reported its first detection of highly pathogenic H5N6, based on sampling from mute swans found dead and South Korea reported another poultry farm outbreak involving the virus.

In the latest findings scientists watching avian flu virus levels in Cambodia's live market poultry reported higher levels since their last report, along with co-infections in the birds that pose a risk of emerging reassortant viruses.

The UK outbreak began on January 9 when three mute swans were found dead at a nature park near the city of Dorset.

## Sea fowl looking good

A **US** fishing boat 60 miles south of Long Island has rescued a penguin-like sea fowl called a dovekie.

Doug Davidson, a crew member of the Montauk-based *Caitlin & Mairead*, saw the tiny bird having trouble in the waves and used a shovel to help it aboard.

Winds had whipped up 13-15 foot seas the night before, perhaps disorienting the dovekie.

Rescuers took the dovekie to the Evelyn Alexander Wildlife Rescue Center where Staci Earl, a wildlife rehabilitator, said the dovekie was in fairly good condition with no known injuries, but it was really thin.

## Bird activates alarm

A **FIRE** alert was started last month when a parrot flew too close to a burglar alarm sensor at a UK property in Harrogate.

North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service crews responded to reports of smoke detector activation in domestic premises and on arrival they found a burglar alarm had activated after the resident's parrot had flown next to a sensor, setting it off.

## Silly goose rescued

A **BRITISH** woman took her life in her hands when she ran into rush-hour traffic on a busy bridge to rescue a Canada goose.

Elizabeth McKenna, who placed fourth in the UK version of *The Apprentice* TV show, rescued the bird last month on the Trent Bridge in Nottingham.

She didn't actually have any contact with the bird, instead chasing it away from the road.

## Indonesian smugglers caught

**INDONESIAN** officials from the West Nusa Tenggara Natural Resources Conservation Agency and the West Lombok Police foiled an attempt to smuggle hundreds of wild and protected birds from the province to Bali and Java.

The joint team detained a truck carrying 1711 passerine birds, some of which were endangered and protected, at Lembar Port in West Lombok, spokesman Ivan Juhandara said. "We stopped the truck as it was attempting to cross to Bali via Lembar Port. When we checked it was not equipped with proper permits and documents," he said.

The birds comprised seven species and included 1200



streaked weavers, 250 local yellow keciacs, 15 black-napped orioles, 30 yellow-vented bulbuls, 15 black drongos, 200 brown honeyeaters and one brahminy kite.

The truck driver and his assistant, if found guilty of smuggling protected animals, could face charges with penalties up to five years in prison and 100 million rupiah fines.

## Plane hide and seek

**LAST** month a US bird flew out of the cold Detroit sky, across an airfield and into the cockpit of a jetliner bound for Atlanta.

Some think it was a sparrow, some a hummingbird.

An hour later the plane was still sitting on the ground with no-one able to find the bird in the cockpit.

It was finally decided that the bird had gone and the plane took off.

It was in the air no more than five minutes before the bird made its second appearance.

The plane returned to Detroit, the men in yellow vests came back and one of them exited the cockpit with the bird wrapped in a towel.

## Ringnecks head north

**INDIAN** ringneck parrots have been a feature of London's skies for a long time but it's only recently that they have been seen in numbers in Birmingham in large numbers.

During the past 12 months the northern flock, which previously was 24-strong, grew to more than 40.

They are in the Shard End area where the birds gather late each afternoon to roost on an island in the middle of a lake.

Technically the ringnecks are an invasive species but like all wild birds in the UK they are protected, with the RSPB saying they are not a problem at this stage.

## Rainbow bird found

A **NEW** bird-like dinosaur has been discovered in the north-east of China, in the Hebei Province.

Its chest, neck and head feathers resemble those of hummingbirds.

Scientists named him Caihong juji which is Mandarin for rainbow with the big crest.

Caihong juji gained its name thanks to its exquisite plumes but also because of another feature.

Its head is very similar to a velociraptor's, with a bony crest running between the eyes.

Scientists believe the crest played a significant role in mating along with the shiny feathers on the bird.

## 360 budgies homeless

**NEW** homes are being sought for almost 360 budgies rescued by the RSPCA in England when their owner became ill.

The animal charity expected to find 200 birds when officers went to the house in Brighton after the man was taken to hospital.

Inspector Liz Wheeler said: "They were flying free around the semi-detached home so we had to use capture nets to safely catch them and remove them."

She said the house was a sea of yellow, green, blue and white.

"The noise from their tweeting and chirping was deafening," she said.

## Grey lost in Singapore

A **VIDEO** of a parrot scrounging through a filthy pool of cigarette water out of desperation for food and water was captured last month in Singapore.

The clip was submitted to the All Singapore Stuff Facebook page in an attempt to get the bird's owner to collect it.

The African grey parrot had rings on both legs, indicating that it belonged to someone.

The photographer said the fact that one of the smartest species of parrots in the world had to rely on toxic cigarette juice for sustenance made the situation all the sadder.

## Crossbow hits swan

A **CROSSBOW** bolt was removed from a mute swan's neck after it and another swan fell victim to mindless cruelty in England last month.

Using a canoe and a rowing boat rescuers managed to corner the birds in an area of reed bed near Maldon in Essex before rushing them for treatment at South Essex Wildlife Hospital.

Hospital founder Sue Schwar said it was appalling that people would injure swans for a bit of fun.

"Crossbow bolts are made of plastic with a metal tip, so they are designed to cause enough damage to kill an animal easily," she said.

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# Not what you expect

Photos: Bob Philpot

WHAT are your expectations and what practical understanding do you have when you keep a certain number of birds in an aviary then add more to the aviary?

I would have to say that over my lifetime of keeping aviary birds I have done exactly what I have just written. That is, I have added more birds, but with discretion.

Other bird keepers have done the same in the past and will do so in the future, as shown by some correspondence I recently received from a fellow birdo.

The following is detailed information from Mike in which he described for me the direct effects of what happened to him when he added more parrot-type birds to an existing number in the one aviary.

There are many bird keepers who make errors of judgment either through a lack of knowledge or in Mike's situation his lack of available individual accommodation for the number and type of birds he kept. There are also many bird keepers who do not willingly attest to their errors.

Mike is not one of those. When I suggested to him that I publish the problems that he encountered in 2017 he was only too pleased to do so in order to tell other bird keepers what can occur.

I received an email from Mike who was seeking some advice on a species of cockatoo that I have had considerable experience with.

Data flowed back and forth and at the conclusion of the cockatoo details whizzing back and forth on the internet Mike then offered some of his 2017 breeding season experiences with one of Australia's most beautiful small parakeet species, the golden-shouldered *Psephotus chrysopterygius*.

Dear Bob, I hope your breeding season went well, my season wasn't as successful as previous years, which is purely my fault. In moving to a new house and no time to build multiple aviaries, etc this led to my big mistake of having no room and then placing several golden-shouldered parakeets together.

I know that shouldn't occur but I had a 40m square aviary that is 4m high and in it three unrelated pairs of young that had grown up together. The three pairs in fact turned out to be two pairs plus two hens.

All was fine until a breeding pair I had at my parents' house in an old aviary had to be moved out and I made the mistake of adding that pair to the aviary with the other six birds.

My thoughts of golden-shouldered having life partners turned upside down when the adult male



Male golden-shouldered parrot.

took on a younger hen to add to his usual mate that he'd bred with for many years.

While there was rarely any squabbling between the young pairs there was bitter dissent between the old hen and one younger hen.

The arguments then went on to fighting over the same nest box although there were multiple boxes in the aviary.

All pairs were in and out of their nest boxes but only the adult hen reared any young (1), which is far from her double broods of multiple young.

Well that was my lesson for the season Bob, thankfully all my birds are fine and things are calm now that breeding season has ended for them. But I will sell off some of my golden-shouldered parakeets so I don't go through the

same experience next season.

Mike then sent me further details of his experiences with that particular species.

1. I've heard many people house them with finches etc, however I don't think there's a hard and fast rule with golden-shoulders. When I first purchased my adult pair, I housed them in a large planted aviary with Gouldians and painted finches, they promptly attacked and injured the finches until I separated them.

2. While my two hens fought there were many moments of contentment between them and the rest of the birds. The minute the sprinklers would come on, even during breeding season, all would bathe together in the one bowl, putting aside their differences.

3. While the two hens bickered it was predominantly a lot of tail wagging but on occasions feathers would fly as they fought in the air, flying against one another.

The bickering was particularly over one nest box, one hen would sit at the entrance guarding it to stop the other hen from entering but when the bird guarding the entrance flew off the other would fly down into the entrance and that was where the bickering got heated.

The young hen would not drop into the nest box but would walk down the spout and I gather look in, but I don't believe she dropped into the box.

4. One thing I noticed is that by keeping them in a colony they seemed to all start showing interest in nest boxes at the same time. I'd never seen birds so interested in their boxes, guarding them to ensure others couldn't take their box.

I had two young pairs — two years give or take a few months — in and out of nest boxes and guarding them but both hens didn't lay.

One spare hen decided to use one nest box on her own but never laid eggs. One of the young males who had paired with another hen would always show a keen interest in that lone hen by flying on top of her nest box when she was in the spout, but she would retreat further down the spout when that occurred.

5. The adult male would feed the two-year-old hen as well as his adult partner. But on occasions the adult male would chase the adult hen away if the young hen and his adult partner started bickering.

I feel that the adult male would not flinch if his adult hen was removed from the cage and he was left with the young hen.

6. I'm not sure if others have noticed this, but I find my golden-shoulders get interested in nesting following heavy rains, unfortu-



Female golden-shouldered parrot.

# ○ Swifts a single nomadic population

NEW DNA analysis suggests that nomadic swift parrots, pictured right, from Tasmania and the surrounding islands form a single population — a population increasingly vulnerable to extinction.

Scientists collected DNA samples from nestlings on the predator free islands of Bruny and Maria and compared the genetic code to the genome of parrots on Tasmania.

The results showed the parrots are not genetically isolated. Instead the island and Tasmanian parrots form a single nomadic population.

"We already recognise the importance of predator-free islands as havens for swift parrots but our findings demonstrate that protecting islands is only part of the solution to saving the parrots," Dejan Stojanovic, a researcher with the Australian National University, said.

The research suggests that parrots move to where the food is and if the food is on Tasmania they will go to Tasmania, where predators await.

"This new genetic evidence shows that islands don't support a genetically distinct sub-population

of swift parrots," Dr Stojanovic said.

"Birds that nest on islands in one year may move to the Tasmanian mainland the next year, putting them at risk of being eaten by sugar gliders."

The findings highlight the importance of addressing major threats to swift parrots on Tasmania.

Research has shown habitat loss and predation by sugar glider sars shrinking swift parrot numbers.

"Protecting islands from deforestation is a good start but this alone will not save them from extinction," Dr Stojanovic said.



nately this is normally when it's cold. My thoughts are that this is because in the wild the rain helps to soften up the termite mounds that these parrots dig in for nest site

While I haven't been to Queensland to see the termite mounds I know those in the Pilbara are solid like concrete and I can't imagine a parrot of this size digging into one unless it had rained heavily and softened it up.

7. My golden-shoulders only like one vegetable and that's celery, something that I've spoken to other breeders about. They always rub the celery leaf over their feet, feathers, rump, etc.

That is not unusual because other breeders have mentioned that their parakeets also do it. I really have no idea on why, except for possibly warding off parasites, etc.

8. My golden-shoulders nest in insulated nest boxes with a small wooden spout, I don't heat the nest boxes. Some breeders place mud in the entrance for their birds to dig out, which apparently spurs them to nest but I've never done that. The floor in the nest boxes is dried potting mix.

9. I don't believe in keeping small parakeets in suspended aviaries, only because mine spend a lot of time on the floor as a group looking for extras to chew and eat. I've found that soft-leaved plants in my aviary do not last long, the best plants for them are the tougher grevillea and banksia because they

## Not what you expect



Nest of five golden-shouldered parrot chicks.

don't get touched.

10. At my parents' home my golden-shoulders would often get visited by goshawks and on one occasion four goshawks at one time. I think there were two adults with two young. After the initial scare my birds would settle down and not worry about the goshawks because there were regular visits.

I have goshawks that land on the aviary, again they don't worry my birds too much, owls on the other

hand do. Night visits from owls will often scare my birds, causing them to fly around my cage but I've never lost a bird due to that.

11. My tip for anyone wanting to get into any aviary birds is never, ever shift them on a hot day because you're looking for trouble, the birds will die very quickly from heat stress.

If you are buying birds in the warmer months collect them in the cool of the morning or evening but don't put them into their new home until early the next morning when it's cool.

Mike then went on to outline his previous experiences with a wide range of aviary birds and poultry:

Bob, I've kept birds now for over 35 years, I worked for a bird dealer every Saturday and Sunday from Year 5 to Year 12 in my school years.

I've kept many different species — pheasants, finches, siskins, turkeys, chickens and parrots plus incubating and hand-raising birds.

I've never kept cockatoos which I've always wanted to but I've just never taken the plunge but maybe

I will in the future.

Many people won't like them but one of my favourite birds are turkeys because of their character.

My nan, who used to farm turkeys, gave me 17 fertile turkey eggs to incubate and they all hatched. As a child that was the beginning of my love for birds, although when Christmas came around that year I came home from school to find the turkeys were gone with mum left to do some explaining.

I found all of Mike's information very rewarding and replied to him that the section dealing with the golden-shoulders and the finches came as news to me. I would have put them in with finches also and to hear that they bashed them up was a surprise.

**SUMMING UP:** Mike's experiences raise several questions one of which is the fact that most of those birds grew up together. The additional birds were already an established pair and thirdly the aviary they were kept in was large plus there were multiple nest sites available.

I have kept and bred the following species of parakeets — golden-shouldered, hooded, Naretha blue bonnet and mulga parakeets.

I have always been extremely wary of keeping a pair of any of those species in the same aviary with a different species of the same group. In fact from my experience and reports that I have read the parakeets mentioned are strictly one pair to an aviary.

I consider that Mike was lucky not to have had some severe injuries to individuals and I thank him for his generous contribution for this month's magazine.

If I have kept different species of parrot-type birds together I have tried to maintain a size difference, that is a big species — cockatoos — and a smaller species — western rosella or Port Lincoln type, in my experience that appears to work well.

I have also kept an Aussie species and an Asiatic species together and there has not been any conflict.

At the end of the day if there is severe conflict between parrot-type birds they must be separated.

## Cocky watered

ESCAPING bushfires can be thirsty work, just ask the sulphur-crested cockatoo which found itself in need of a drink near Taralga in the NSW Southern Tablelands.

Rural Fire Service firefighters from the Southern Highlands Brigade were on hand to cool down their feathered friend, who was searching desperately for cool relief.

A heartwarming video showed a fire fighter holding the bird while it hastily guzzled from a bottle of water.

Southern Highlands Rural Fire Service Inspector David Stimson said

## ODD SPOT

there has been a lot of public interest in the footage taken by firefighters from the Mittagong crew.

"The generous spirit of the fire crew who came to the aid of the thirsty cockatoo attracted thousands of comments of appreciation from social media users," Mr Stimson said.

"Thank you for all you have done and for this beautiful action towards our wildlife," one person posted on the unit's Facebook page.

Another said: "Great job, you guys and girls are the true definition of the word hero."



# Derbyans are lively and full of character

Photos: Bob Philpot's birds taken by Bob

THE Derbyan parrot *psittacula derbyana* is a strikingly beautiful bird with a colour scheme that is not seen in many other parrots.

It basically has the same body size as an Alexandrine parrot but the tail is much shorter which serves to give it a more stocky appearance.

By nature they are quite a shy bird that will sit quietly when confronted by people or situations with which they are unfamiliar, which has earned them a reputation in some quarters for being a rather dull, uninteresting and lethargic species.

In reality that is far from the truth because once they are at ease and familiar with keepers and surrounds they are a bird full of character, very lively and amusing.

The trait of sitting quietly and tending to try to blend into their surrounds during times of unfamiliar confrontation is most likely the reason that to this day not a lot of information has been gathered with regard to their habits in the wild.

The exact number of Derbyan parrots is unknown however they are perhaps the rarest of all species of *psittacula* on the Asian mainland. In 2011 the International Union for Conservation of Nature updated their status in the wild from being of least concern to near threatened.

That amended status came about mainly because of continuing wood cutting and clearing of habitat for heating and industry as well as poaching and smuggling.

**DESCRIPTION: Male** — The rear of the crown and abdomen is a lavender blue colour. The frontal band and lores are black, as are the large moustache patches on the lower cheeks.

The forecrown from beak to around the eye is an intense pale blue. The back of the head nape and outer thighs are a pale emerald green and the mantle is grey-green.

The rump is a brighter green than the mantle. The outer wing coverts have a large patch of yellowish-green. The upper tail is green and most of the large tapering central tail feathers are a medium blue while under-tail coverts are green.

The upper mandible is a pinkish red tending to yellowish at the tip. The lower mandible is black. The iris is pale yellow and the feet are grey.



Derbyans feeding in one of Bob Philpot's aviaries. Mature males have red beaks.

**Hen** — The hen is similar in appearance but she has a shorter tail and her beak is entirely black. The throat to the abdomen is a duller greyish lavender. The hen can be distinguished by the presence of a pink band behind the ear coverts. The lavender blue on her crown is



Female Derbyan at nest.

tinged with pale blue surrounding the eye.

**Immatures** — Similar to adults but paler with shorter tail feathers. The young have pinkish beaks regardless of gender. Cocks will later acquire their pinkish red upper mandible, a gradual process that usually commences late in their first year.

Both sexes are approximately 50cm in length and weigh roughly 320g. Wing length is 22cm and tail length 22-26 cm. Given correct conditions Derbyan parrots can live for up to 40 years.

**SEXING:** The Derbyan can be visually sexed at about eight months of age. They fledge at approximately eight weeks and are the same size as their parents but duller in colour. At that point their beaks are pinkish red.

At three months the beak colour changes to black and at around eight or nine months males begin to develop a red beak while hens remain black.

When young are in the nest an indication of sex can sometimes be made by the presence of a pink line on the neck which is only present on hens. Cocks do not have that but

it only shows in some hens at this stage so this it is at best only an early guide.

Beak colour as they reach maturity is the most accurate method of determining sex.

**DISTRIBUTION:** The Derbyan is found in mountainous regions between south-western Acahina, south-eastern Tibet and north-eastern Assam in India. They are generally found at altitudes between 1250-4000m in montane coniferous forest.

In winter there is a seasonal movement in altitude when the birds move down to valleys where it is warmer than higher up.

They feed on seeds, fruits and flower buds of forest plant species and have been known to raid crops and orchard fruit trees in flocks of 20 to 50 birds. They are rarely encountered in pairs or as single birds.

They have been known to nest in poplar tree hollows in June but as previously mentioned other than these sparse details little is known about their habits in the wild.

**IN AUSTRALIAN AVICULTURE:** Derbyans are commonly kept and bred in Australian aviculture and aviculturists have done an excellent



# Derbyans are lively and full of character



Derbyan pair with male, on right, displaying to hen.



Male Derbyan getting stuck into a pomegranate.

job in establishing the species in Australia.

They are a quite hardy species but do best in a climate that has a relatively constant temperature that is cooler rather than hotter, which is reflected by where they live in the wild. Derbyan parrots like to spend time foraging on the ground which can make them susceptible to intestinal worms so a regular worming schedule is essential.

**HOUSING:** Derbyan parrots are avid chewers and can be very destructive so perches need to be replaced regularly. They are excellent, fast flyers so aviaries should have a double door security area.

They are best housed in single pairs in open flight aviaries which are roughly 5.4m long, 1.2m wide and 2.1m high with a third of the area sheltered and the balance open to sun and rain because Derbyans love to bathe and sunbathe.

The aviary floor should be covered with sand because they love to bathe in sand as well as on the sandy surface. Complete disinfection should be carried out on the floor at least once a year with all sand replaced to minimise build-up of worm eggs, etc.

The aviary frame needs to be box steel tube or galvanised pipe and clad with heavy mesh wire.

**FEEDING:** Derbyans can be picky eaters. An appropriate diet as far as a seed mixture goes can comprise sunflower, various millets, barley, safflower and hemp along with a sprouted form of those.

Some choose to pick through and just eat certain seeds but it is important to offer them a variety. It is also vitally important to provide a mixture of fruit and vegeta-

bles in their diet, which may include apple, peanuts, hazelnuts, carrot, silverbeet, bok choy, celery, and corn on the cob along with dandelion, milk thistle or chickweed.

Mineral blocks are beneficial nutritionally and for maintenance of beaks. Some form of calcium and clean, fresh water are essentials. To accommodate their chewing tendencies fresh gum branches complete with buds and nuts or cotoneaster branches should be provided when available.

**BREEDING:** Derbyans are not the easiest of birds to breed successfully but once they are satisfied with conditions and begin to breed they generally continue to do so on a regular basis but they should not be expected to begin to breed until at least three years of age but will sometimes continue to do so for 20 or more years.

As previously mentioned they are avid chewers so if an artificial nest box is provided it is essential that is constructed of hard wood and in some instances will need to be fortified with metal in certain places because these birds find it necessary to continually exercise their beaks to keep them in shape, so what better way to do that than by reshaping the nest box?

Boxes should be roughly 25cm x 25cm square at the base and 60cm minimum height. The entrance hole should be large enough to al-

low easy entry and exit — around 130mm diameter is suggested.

The box should be constructed to allow the lid to be removed if hot weather arrives while nesting is taking place, which allows for additional air flow through the box to induce a cooling effect.

My preference for this species is a large, very solid log because I feel those do not allow heat to penetrate as readily as a man-made box and most also have the capacity to withstand the effects of chewing.

If young are in the nest and the weather forecast is for an extended period of temperatures in excess of 30 degrees or more I would seriously suggest removing the chicks to hand rear them because

Derbyans are a cool weather breeder, much like the New Zealand kakariki.

The breeding nest must never be placed in a position where any direct sunlight, even for a short period of time, can penetrate.

In Australia Derbyans usually begin nesting from October onwards.

The courtship display is very elaborate and the calls and cackles accompanying the display are loud, with associated antics carried out by both birds.

Bowing, arching to the side and bill dragging to the side are all performed with the hen being slightly less demonstrative in all aspects than the male.

Usual clutch size is two to four

eggs, incubation period is 24 days, young fledge at around eight to nine weeks and they are independent approximately five to six weeks later.

Only the hen incubates and feeds the hatchlings. The male feeds her during that time at the nest entrance.

Young hatch with a wispy yellowish down which is replaced quite quickly by a dense dark grey down similar to that of an eclectus baby's down, which is one of the reasons they are susceptible to overheating in the nest.

When young fledge they can be rather erratic flyers initially so the provision of light brush at the ends of the aviary flight is recommended.

**PET POTENTIAL:** I have never kept a Derbyan as a companion bird however I am led to believe that they do make excellent pets.

Although they are a bit noisy they are quite a placid bird but can also be very active and will enjoy, in fact require, lots of stimulation in the form of swings, chewable toys and natural branches.

Derbyans, like other Asiatics such as the Alexandrine, reportedly are very rewarding in their willingness to interact positively with their owners provided time and a consistent approach to exercising and training is provided.

A Derbyan parrot needs to be offered regular daily interaction, a socialisation with its human carers which will invariably maximise potential as an excellent companion bird which should result in many years of mutual enjoyment.

The courtship display is very elaborate and the calls and cackles accompanying the display are loud, with associated antics carried out by both birds.

KEA parrots spotted moving road cones near the Homer Tunnel in New Zealand have been given a roadside gym to keep them busy away from the dangers of traffic.

The gym has been set up with multiple objects and contraptions that the birds can play with to distract them from the road.

The bird gym was set up near the Homer Tunnel in Fiordland National Park where the birds had been filmed moving road cones.

The kea gym in Fiordland isn't the first one. Previous gyms for keas have been set up in Nelson and at Arthur's Pass.

There is also one at the Manapouri power station where kea, pictured right, were damaging cars.

# Gym built for curious kea

Kea, the world's only alpine parrot, were last year named New Zealand's bird of the year.

They are highly intelligent creatures so experts suggest the road cone moving could be more than just a bit of fun.

According to Kea Conservation Trust chair Tamsin Orr-Walker the birds could be doing that to slow down cars so they can beg for food.

The gym is the result of a partnership between the Department of Conservation, Downers NZ, Uni-

versity of Canterbury and the Kea Conservation Trust.

The gym is designed to keep the curious birds mentally fit and engaged, and is equipped with ladders, spinning flotation devices, swings and climbing frames. The objects are rearranged on a regular basis to keep the birds interested.

Footage of the Fiordland kea gym is being monitored by experts at the University of Canterbury, who are using it to find out more about the behaviour of the endangered bird.



# Superb parrots hit hard

ENVIRONMENTALISTS are concerned that motorists are hitting and killing flocks of highly endangered superb parrots feeding around a New South Wales road.

Ecologist Saan Ecker estimated more than 100 superb parrots had been found dead on a road off the Barton Highway near the town of Murrumbateman near Canberra in recent weeks.

She said she saw dozens of the dead birds surrounded by live ones and said several motorists had alerted Wildcare of similar sightings in the area.

"It was quite a catastrophic sight," Dr Ecker said.

"For every dead body was one or two live birds sitting between each and they are getting hit by cars as well.

"Obviously it is normal for birds to become road kill but not on this huge scale."

Dr Ecker said superb parrots' tendency to mourn the death of their own by gathering around the bodies combined with their camouflage and motorists' carelessness had proven a recipe for disaster.

"They've been there consistently for three days or so," she said.

"I've never previously seen one before in the 12 or so years I've been here.

"These birds are so ignorant to traffic that you literally have to drive five or 10 kilometres per hour not to hit them and they just look like leaves when you come across them."

She urged drivers to be cautious, to remove any dead birds from the road and to report injured ones to Wildcare on 02 6299 1966.

"I know that Wildcare has been getting calls and are receiving the injured ones to hopefully release them back into the flock," Dr Ecker said.

"As humans, in rushing to get to work, we forget we really need to take into consideration these oth-



LEFT: One of the dead superb parrots collected from a highway near Canberra.

er species, especially one that is heading to extinction.

"To see these birds is such a delight and the fact it is being marred by our lack of attention is a message we all need to hear. We have a responsibility to help protect them."

Superb parrots seasonally migrate over inland eastern Australia before settling in southern areas, including the ACT, to breed and nest.

In recent months they have been flocking to the region in larger numbers and ecologists believe that signals a larger movement than usual rather than a recovery of the species.

The ACT Government is exploring ways to save and protect the parrots, which have been forced to compete with more aggressive birds for nesting hollows because 95 per cent of their woodland habitat has been cleared.



BELOW: A superb parrot chick taken from a nest for checking.

*Raising the perch in avicultural education*



*Announcing*  
**PARROTS  
2018**  
**TWENTY-EIGHTEEN**

**6, 7 & 8 JULY 2018**

***Announcing Parrots 2018 (P2018) the next instalment  
in Australia's most highly regarded avicultural convention.***

**Parrots 2018**, the Parrot Society of Australia's 10th international biennial convention, continues the theme of *"Raising the Perch in Avicultural Education"* with a lecture program designed to appeal to the widest audience of bird enthusiasts, topics of both interest and educational value are on offer. The comprehensive programme offers approximately 22 sessions to choose from over the weekend and is the only convention in Australasia catering to parrot

breeders, veterinary staff, pet shop employees, companion parrot owners, zookeepers, young bird keepers and conservationists alike.

The diversity of our unique program is something that we are very proud of and gives you, as a delegate, a plethora of choice during the 2-day convention and, as with previous Parrots Conventions, P2018 will continue with the concurrent program of lectures. Each stream is designed to appeal either to those seeking breeding and husbandry based

knowledge or to those with interests in the behavioural and enrichment aspects of aviculture and delegates can tailor the programme to meet their own interests.

As well as the abundance of up-to-date information based on sound research and personal lessons from experienced aviculturists, P2018 offers you the chance to meet other people whose interests match your own, and the chance to socialise and network with others in the bird keeping community.

*We look forward to seeing you!*



## GUEST SPEAKERS

We know that you will be impressed by the diverse range of guest speakers, lectures and focus sessions on offer at Parrots 2018 that have been especially selected to inspire you to learn more about psittacine aviculture over the course of the weekend.

Here is a list of the confirmed speakers to date:

### INTERNATIONAL SPEAKERS

#### Rodolfo Orozco Vega

*Natuwa Santuario de Lapas,  
Costa Rica*

#### Dorothy Schwarz

*Companion Parrot Consultant  
and Author, UK*

#### Stephanie Edlund

*Parrot Behaviour Consultant,  
Understanding Parrots, Sweden*

#### Mary-Lee Sloan

*Private Breeder, NZ*

### AUSTRALIAN SPEAKERS

**Peter Smith** – *Private Breeder, QLD, AUS*

**Brenda Gulie** – *Private Breeder specialising  
in Golden Conures, NSW, AUS*

**Belinda Young** – *Behaviour Consultant –  
Treat, Play, Love, QLD, AUS*

**Daniel Gowland** – *Priam Psittaculture, ACT, AUS*

**Dr Stacey Gelis** – *Avian Veterinarian,  
Melbourne Bird Vet, VIC, AUS*

**Dr Deborah Monks** – *Avian Veterinarian,  
Brisbane Bird and Exotics Veterinary Clinic, QLD, AUS*

**Nicholas Leseberg** – *PhD Candidate, QLD, AUS*

Over the next few issues we will be updating and profiling several Guest speakers along with their lecture topics and providing further announcements regarding the Guest Speakers as arrangements are confirmed.



**Parrot Trust  
OF AUSTRALIA**  
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## OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Once again, delegates will have the option of marvelling at the great achievements of fellow bird keepers who kindly let us visit their aviary complexes for the Aviary Tour. This time we will be travelling west to enjoy some of the most impressive set-ups that South East Queensland has to offer. The convention aviary tour always sells out well in advance and is strictly limited to convention delegates so be sure to get your registration in early.

### OFFICIAL PARROT 2018 OPENING

Friday night offers the opportunity to mingle with the speakers and get to know other delegates, as well as to register and collect your delegate pack to be fully prepared for the week end ahead. Finger foods and light beverages will be served and the evening will culminate with the formal opening presentation.

### PARROT TRUST OF AUSTRALIA CONSERVATION GALA DINNER

The Saturday night dinner is a highlight on the calendar of many aviculturists and gets us thinking beyond our own backyards. With the Parrot Trust of Australia being on the Federal Governments register of Environmental Organisations, the dinner will not only be an enjoyable evening but also an opportunity to learn more about conservation efforts for parrots in the natural environment but to offer our fundraising support via the Parrot Trust of Australia to assist in these vital efforts. Mr Nicholas leseberg will be presenting a talk on the Endangered and highly elusive Night Parrot.

## REGISTRATIONS

With a lecture program designed to appeal to the widest audience and topics of both interest and educational value, Parrots 2018 offers approximately 22 sessions to choose from over the weekend. There is the option of a one day conference registration for those not able to attend the entire weekend and discounted spouse registration pricing available as well.

Super Early bird registration is now open offering the chance to register at a highly discounted rate, with Early Bird registration then commencing 1 December 2017 and will be on offer until 31 March 2018. Registrations from 1 May 2018 will be then at the standard rate. All details and the registration forms will be available on the website at [www.parrotsociety.org.au/events/parrots-convention](http://www.parrotsociety.org.au/events/parrots-convention)

Should you wish to take advantage of the Early registration rates but are concerned about budgetary constraints, you are welcome to call Registrar Bev Bennion to organise a time payment plan that suits your budget. Please phone Bev on 07 54 33 1486.





# Unseasonal rain disrupts breeding

Photos: John Griffith

JANUARY is a time when few people get to see Iron Range National Park, with peninsula roads often closed to traffic by rising creeks and rivers.

I recently led a group of five photographers into that part of Cape York Peninsula. We flew from Cairns into Lockhart River for a six-day visit.

Our targets were species that migrate down from New Guinea to breed during the wet season. High on our wish list was the red-bellied pitta.

I am happy to report that all members of our group got good views and excellent photos of the pitta.

During the trip we were treated to a number of unexpected surprises. The first was observing a group of 14 palm cockatoos feeding on beach almonds along the waterfront at Golden Beach.

Palm cockatoos are usually solitary birds that feed alone so to see such a large group was a real treat.

The next surprise happened when two of our group staked out one of my eclectic parrot nesting hollows. The smiles of delight on their faces could never have prepared me for what I was about to witness.

I looked up at the hollow and saw a male electus chick peering out of the entrance.

Last year was a disrupted breeding season for the parrots at Iron Range.

Electus parrots normally go



Some of the 14 palm cockatoos seen feeding on beach almonds at Golden Beach.

to nest in May. This area received heavy rain at the end of June and early July which would have flooded nesting hollows.

The birds would have laid eggs again in August but the region received heavy rain again in early October.

The young that we observed in January were the result of a third breeding attempt. River levels were high so I couldn't visit other hollows but I could hear females calling for males to feed them and saw males flying in the direction of their hollows.

Climate change is putting additional pressure on eclectic.

Let's hope that these young parrots make it to fledging.



Eclectic hen with two male chicks.



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# Pretty purple finch

It would be safe to say that very few Australian aviculturists would have heard of the purple grenadier *Uraeginthus ianthinogaster* and fewer still would have seen the live bird. The species is extremely rare in Australian aviaries.

Sometimes referred to as the purple waxbill, purple-bellied waxbill and purple grenadier waxbill, its native homes are Somalia, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania in eastern Africa. That geographical range has four recognised sub-species, although earlier field studies list many others with only minor variations.

With a preferred natural habitat of arid thorn scrub, acacia thickets and open bushy areas the distribution indicates it is a bird that prefers warmer climates so aviaries should be well protected from the elements and should exclude dampness and draughts.

Sexing of adult birds presents no problem. A dimorphic species, they can be distinguished by plumage differences. Males have blue on the face, breast, and belly. The hen has less blue on the face and shows white feathering around the eyes. Both sexes sing.

Purple grenadiers, although not aggressive to most other finches, demonstrate the opposite characteristics when housed with birds of their own species or close relatives of the *Uraeginthus* genus.

That includes all species of cordon bleus and the little-known violet-eared waxbill *U. granatina*. To



The purple grenadier is a truly stunning bird but is not a species for the beginner.

prevent possible antagonism these birds should not occupy the same or any adjacent aviary.

As a rarity in Australian aviaries consideration should be given to giving one pair of grenadiers exclusive use of the aviary, which has the advantage of the birds not being distracted in their activities and enables them to access any extras, including live food, without having to share.

Grenadiers do well on a mix of the smaller millets and canary

seed which can be fed dry and soaked. Greens can be provided in the form of seeding grasses, chickweed and other garden weeds.

Some pairs will sample finely chopped broad-leaved greens such as endive, silver beet, broccoli and kale. Apple may be sampled by more adventurous birds.

Live food such as mealworms, termites, small spiders, aphids and bush fly maggots are all acceptable additions to the diet and are particularly important during the breeding season.

To increase the variety and volume of available live food night lights attract all forms of insect life and a vinegar fly culture is easy to maintain.

Calcium can be provided by supplying commercially available mineral blocks, sterilised eggshells, cuttlefish bone or shell grit. Insoluble grit such as river sand, a small amount of rock salt and charcoal can also be added. A supply of clean, fresh water is necessary for drinking and bathing.

Field studies in Africa note that the various sub-species commence breeding at slightly different times according to the district.

In Australia normal breeding activities take place during the rainy season from late summer to the middle part of the year.

That is in keeping with the cycle of many birds from the tropics and poses problems with birds attempting to breed in the colder, southern parts of the country. In

those circumstances consideration could be given to artificial heating to alleviate the possibility of egg binding.

Nest construction is carried out by both birds. A selection of dried grasses is incorporated into the nest, usually built at low level in the brush lining of the aviary.

Alternatively, some pairs may elect to use nesting boxes, wire baskets and other containers. Avoiding the overheated proximity of the roof those items can be placed at random around more sheltered parts of the aviary.

Small feathers and soft grasses are used for the final lining with the male continuing to add soft items to the nest throughout the 14-day incubation period.

Incubation is shared in turn during the day with the hen alone sitting on the average clutch of four eggs at night. The birds are very light sitters and will not tolerate any human interference.

Careful, unobtrusive monitoring is required during incubation. The parents will invariably stop brooding youngsters at about the nine-day mark. If the weather turns cool at that time there is a high chance the young will die. For the serious breeder that is another factor to support the installation of a heating system.

Fledging occurs at around 21 days with the young returning to the breeding nest at night for a few days. Independence is reached two or three weeks later when their juvenile moult starts.

Providing seasonal circumstances are suitable purple grenadiers are capable of up to three nests per year.

Owing to less than ideal hygienic conditions the old nest should be removed after the young have abandoned using it as their night roost.

New nesting material needs to be supplied for the parents to build a fresh nest for the next and subsequent broods.

As yet no mutations have been reported but hybrids are known to occur in the wild between the purple grenadier and the violet-eared waxbill.

Purple grenadiers present a degree of difficulty and could not be recommended for the beginner however with correct aviary construction giving protection from the elements and a reasonable amount of attention to their requirements breeding of this unusual and attractive species should pay dividends.

## Jacko won't be forgotten

NEW Year's Day this year saw the creation of a huge void in Australian aviculture with the passing of David "Jacko" Jackson at the age of 58.

David was president of the Hunter Valley Finch Club and an active member of seven bird clubs, including the Finch Society of Australia.

Around 500 relatives and friends joined to celebrate the life and many varied family, avicultural and other achievements of David at his Cessnock funeral service.

David was a foundation member and life member of the Hunter Valley Finch Club, where he was always actively involved in club affairs and prepared to do any heavy lifting.

He will be sorely missed for his contributions and great sense of humour.

He was always generous in sharing his bird knowledge and donating birds, cages, etc to the local club's raffle table.

It seems like yesterday that he was to be seen transporting all

### OBITUARY

manner of things to the Singleton Bird Sale — tables, catching cages, etc.

Last December he had a great time at the Hunter Valley Finch Club Christmas party.

Jacko will be greatly missed.

A man of action, a worker, a leader and a down-to-earth Aussie larrikin has left the party.

According to the minister who presided at David's funeral service at St John's Anglican Church on January 12 it was one of the largest funerals ever held in the city of Cessnock.

Our condolences go to David's loving wife and highly respected club member Tammy and their family.



...no mutations have been reported but hybrids are known to occur in the wild between the purple grenadier and the violet-eared waxbill.



# What went wrong?

DURING the breeding season many problems can arise with canaries, including birds dying or not performing as expected.

Unless something is done those problems will probably repeat next year. There will be advice from other fanciers or even expert advice from a vet.

The problem may go away but can return the next year or even cause another problem to appear. It is very frustrating and something must be done to break the cycle. There are many infections that affect canaries and some can be dormant until a trigger sets them off.

You do not stand much chance of having a problem-free year unless you try to eliminate or reduce the causes.

Many infections are spread by parasites, via perches and walls or are airborne. An infection in one bird can quickly spread through a bird room or aviary.

Common signs are going light, diarrhoea, death or a bird just being lethargic and fluffed up. Many external signs give no clue to the actual infection so without an examination by a vet the cause of the infection is usually not known.

An infection treated with the wrong antibiotic can kill off good bacteria as well as harmful bacteria, leaving the bird with no resistance to other infections. So the bird may be cured from one disease but die from another.

It may sound heartless but in some cases it is better if the sick bird dies. If it recovers it may become a carrier of the infection.

It will be immune to the infection but can pass it on to other birds. It is essential to isolate a sick bird immediately so that it does not infect other birds.

A canary may develop a problem due to its age, overall health, previous exposure to an infection, draft conditions, heat, overcrowding, poor nutrition, introduced new birds, dirty cages, dirty food or water containers, contaminated food, dust, parasites, rodents, insects or a stressful situation.

You may even spread an infection by handling the bird or it could simply be the layout of your bird room. Drafts, poor airflow on hot days and dampness can result in infection.

Canaries that are well fed and kept in a clean environment free of parasites will normally be resistant to most of those problems.

There are so many things that can go wrong it is a wonder that we breed canaries at all. Most problems once they occur will spread or re-occur at the same time next year.

So how do we go about breaking

the chain to eliminate those problems? Many infections will never be eliminated and can only be kept under control.

After a while your birds will develop immunity and will not be affected by that infection again however when you introduce a new bird it may not be immune to that infection and the problem appears. Then it may gain enough strength to overcome your birds' immunity and so the problem continues.

For an infection to start a germ such as a virus, bacteria, rickettsia or mycoplasma must be present. Those germs can be in the droppings, in feather dust, in the air, in food regurgitated for babies and some are even trapped inside the egg as it travels down an infected oviduct.

Periods of stress such as egg laying, the moult, or a genetic weak-

ness can remain active in dried droppings for many months.

That is one reason why deep litter is dangerous. It must be replaced or sterilised regularly.

Bacteria can be controlled and killed by antibiotics but not all bacteria are harmful because good bacteria are part of the natural digestive process.

Using the correct antibiotic is essential and recovery is dependent on the natural balance of good and bad bacteria in the system. Overdosing or a regular antibiotic treatment can kill off good bacteria, leaving the bird susceptible to other harmful bacteria.

Fungus generally affects the respiratory and digestive system. They produce toxins that affect the liver. Antibiotics do not act on fungus but the spores can be controlled by disinfectants.

Photo: Jeff Leaney



A clean, well managed bird room.

ness can also be responsible and young babies have less resistance than an adult.

Infections are controlled in different ways.

Virus infections are not treatable by antibiotics but can be controlled by disinfectants.

**MYCOPLASMA:** This is usually triggered by some form of stress and is one of the reasons for egg losses such as dead in the shell because it can affect the ovarian tract. Identification and treatment by a vet is recommended. These can be airborne and can infect all birds if not controlled.

**RICKETTSIA:** The most common of this group is chlamydia. It can be treated by antibiotics but the correct one must be used and birds can be carriers after treatment so professional advice is essential.

This is one of the more serious groups of canary diseases because it can spread to humans. The org-

**WHAT DOES THIS ALL MEAN?** It means that spring comes early to a bird room with a thorough clean required to break the cycle. After the breeding season and during the moult is a good time to thoroughly clean and disinfect the bird room, cages or aviary.

Another good time is just before the breeding season. To break the cycle a complete clean in February or March with another in July or August will lead to healthier birds.

Birds must be removed from one section while the area is thoroughly cleaned. Remove all fittings, empty all cupboards and vacuum the entire area to remove dust which may be harbouring dust mite.

Follow up with a safe insecticide surface spray, paying attention to interiors of breeding cages, ends of perches and any crevices.

Pyrethrum and permethrin-

based sprays are safe. Cover all areas and leave to dry. Follow that with a disinfectant spray such as sodium hypochlorite (common bleach) or one known to be safe for canaries. Excess should be wiped from cage surfaces.

When dry the birds can be returned while the next area is cleaned but first the birds must also be cleaned. For several days give them their bath with a dash of disinfectant added to the water.

Not all birds have a bath so some may require individual spraying. On transferring birds spray them with an insecticide preparation for killing lice or use Ivermectin on the back of their heads.

Dishes and drinkers should be sterilised. It is not sufficient to just wash them, they should be left to soak in a disinfectant solution for a few hours before they are washed.

It is a good idea to have additional drinkers and dishes so one set can be soaking while the others are in use. A dishwasher is useful but not suitable for many plastic dishes.

It is not necessary to go overboard with cleanliness. A low level of bacteria etc in a cage helps the birds to build immunity. But most diseases do not lie dormant forever and they gradually build until there is an outbreak.

Sick birds should be immediately isolated from other birds. If it is several birds take them to a vet. Walls, perches and fittings of the cage or flight where the sick bird came must be cleaned and floor covering replaced.

During the breeding season use paper as floor covering in breeding cages. It has to be replaced regularly but is worth the trouble. With paper the first sign of ill health is easily recognised by the state of droppings. With deep litter that is hidden until it is too late.

Be aware of abnormal smells from a breeding cage which is another sign that all is not well.

With reasonable levels of cleanliness and a yearly thorough clean and sterilisation it will be possible to avoid many yearly problems with breeding canaries.

Many people remark that newcomers to the fancy have more luck in raising babies than experienced fanciers.

The reason is that experienced fanciers have built up an infection cycle over the years.

One way out of the cycle is to build a new bird room however with good management the infection cycle can be broken.

Basically common sense is all that is required.



# Red mite horrible

RED mite is an absolute nightmare. They are probably smaller than the head of a pin but they usually appear in groups. They are grey in colour and only become red once they have taken blood from our birds.

They reproduce rapidly in warm weather but they are still around in winter months. During the colder months they never seem to reach epidemic proportions.

Once the heat arrives they are almost uncontrollable. It's the reason why we need to be careful not to introduce them into the bird room and to manage and prevent problems.

Mites are never far away so it's vital to prevent bringing them into a bird room on new birds and on second hand cages and equipment.

I have slight reservations about mites entering the bird room from wild birds however on a local farm some 15 years ago I found some of the best chickweed I had seen for years.

I gathered it, washed it and offered it to my birds and they loved it. I am positive now it was on that chickweed that I introduced red mite into the bird room.

Poultry keepers have the same problem as bird keepers and mite is a huge problem for them. It's always worth remembering that and keeping chickens well away from our birds to avoid risking the transfer of mite from poultry to our birds.

Those mites suck the blood from birds, especially babies in the nest and weaken the chicks. Several years ago I had a huge problem with mite and I was losing chicks and I could not believe the effect it was having on chicks in the nests.

They live and breed in the cracks of cages and nestboxes. We tend not to see them in the bird room during the day but they attack the birds at night. We can always see the signs of red mite because they leave an ash-like trail around their colonies around joints and cracks.

A few mites will do no obvious damage to our birds but once there is an attack by lots of red mite the chicks and the adult birds start to go downhill quickly. The chicks will not grow and look neglected, the adults will start to look depressed, become unfit and chicks will start to die.

The adults will battle on for some time. During hot weather the mites reproduce at a massive rate. It's always best to be aware of the potential problem.

Mites come in on new birds and old equipment that has been used in another bird room. Always treat and dust new birds with mite powder or spray them thoroughly with a mite preparation.



Red mite hide in cracks and crevices in flights, cabinets and show cages.

Any used equipment is always a massive problem. Soak anything new in one of the easily available treatments even if you think there are no mites hiding away in the cracks and crevices. We don't like to think about it but mites can enter the bird room on birds and show cages when they return from shows.

Every year before the breeding season thoroughly wash and disinfect cages and nest boxes. Think about painting wooden cages and add mite killer to the paint.

Once you think cages and flights are prepared properly spray them thoroughly again with a mite treatment. Soak all breeding equipment in mite preparations.

It's important to wash cages and nest boxes during the breeding season and spray again.

At one time we used to wash cages and boxes before a breeding season and expect that to be enough for the whole season.

Today when commercially available products are sometimes less good we need to be overly zealous and keep on top of the problem.

During the year we need to take birds from flights, empty the flights and see that they are thoroughly washed, disinfected and soaked in the best concentrate available. We should not use flights for months and months, never emptying them or treat them regularly.

There was a time when all breeding cages and nest boxes were made of wood and we had to take care that mites were not breeding

in the joints. We were able to overcome the problem to some extent by painting over all of the joints.

We used to use creosote on flight frames but that product is no longer available. There is some mis-information going around that mites only breed in wood and that's untrue, they seem to breed very happily between aluminium framed joints and plastic joints in cages and nest boxes.

Lots of fanciers treat all of their birds going into a breeding season with something like ivermectin — it's one of the spot-on treatments

on the back of the neck and it's absorbed into the blood and will kill any mite that attacks the bird. It works extremely well.

We no longer have access to some of the mite preparations we had years ago. We have concentrates that can be diluted in water and sprayed onto birds and equipment and used for soaking equipment. There are powders that can be used freely and numerous aerosol spray preparations.

**WHAT TREATMENTS ARE AVAILABLE?** I don't know exactly what is available in Australia with trade names but I do know what type of products we should be looking for.

**Mite powders.** Insecticide powders that can be used under concaves, in nest boxes and under trays. Use it to PREVENT mites setting up a nest, better called a colony **Liquid concentrate.** In Europe we have hit a problem in this area because several of the concentrates that used to work well have been

withdrawn from the market.

Those concentrates are diluted into water and used in a hand spray or can be used in a bath to soak nestboxes and perches. I believe we are left with lesser quality products generally that are less good in their effect.

The ones I have used in the UK seem to knock the mites back for a while but they seem to bounce back quickly. The concentrate needs to be used under the manufacturer's directions because some will not be licenced to be used on the birds direct.

**Ivermectin.** This comes with various trade names but works well and is effective. A very small quantity is placed on the back of the neck, absorbed into the blood of the bird and when the mite attacks the bird and takes blood the mite gets killed. It really does protect each bird.

**Aerosol Sprays.** It all seems to depend on what the spray contains. I believe we have the same and similar problems to the concentrate in that many of the chemicals that worked years ago have been withdrawn due to various national regulations.

If I catch a bird and look at it I tend to place Ivermectin on the back of the neck as a routine treatment and that includes when I am pairing up. I frequently spray the birds in flights and a bird safe mite preparation is usually added to the liquid.

All of my boxes and concaves are soaked in a mite preparation with cages and flights frequently sprayed as a routine.

I used to be a believer in the deep litter system in breeding cages with the litter changed regularly but these days I avoid deep litter and anywhere mites can be encouraged to hide and breed.

I would be terrified about bringing any second-hand equipment into the bird room and in recent years have become paranoid about mites entering the bird room. I use powders under trays and concaves.

My fear about mites is that we don't seem to have access to the concentrates we had years ago that would eradicate a serious outbreak. For a couple of years I have carefully used a highly potent German preparation that is used in the poultry industry. It's extremely effective on mites but I did lose a couple of birds when I first used it.

The most important message for any bird keeper is never to sit back and forget mites because they are never far away.

Mite is a much bigger problem than it was years ago and we can never knock biosecurity off the top of our management list when we are working in the bird room.

The concentrate needs to be used under the manufacturer's directions because some will not be licenced to be used on the birds direct.





Photos: Courtesy Australasian Poultry archives



Dorkings can occasionally be found in miniature or bantams.



The silver-grey hens are a very different colour to their male mate.



The silver-grey rooster is magnificent. Note extra toe on each foot.

# Dorking fifth toe

THE majestic Dorking has held pride of place in my fowl yard for close to 40 years. When the opportunity arose to visit the town of Dorking in the UK I naively thought how amazing it was to name a town after a chook.

I've learnt since it was common practice to name local farm stock after the area from which they originated as a means of distinguishing them from stock from other locations. So there are cattle breeds named Devon, Ayrshire and Hereford, sheep like Romney Marsh, Cheviot and Dorset Down and poultry called Sussex, Orpington and of course the Dorking.

**A RARE BREED:** Dorkings are classified a rare breed and are a reminder of times past when chicken was an occasional treat and large bodied birds took well over a year to mature.

Breeds become numerically low and very rare when their unique characteristics are no longer valued. Newer more economic breeds may replace them or changing fashion initiates a fall from favour.

The Dorking ruled supreme in the first half of the 19th Century as a table bird and on the show bench. It's probably sentimentality and the breed's attractive appearance that enabled it to keep going but supporters are sparse worldwide.

**HISTORICAL ORIGINS:** Where do we start when considering the history of this breed — ancient Rome or more recent times?

Columella, the 1st AD Roman agrarian writer, described a fowl that was broad breasted and square shaped, short-legged, five-toed and with a single comb. That is a good approximation to the Dorking today the shape however has changed to long and more brick-like.

People claim this ancient fowl as the progenitor of the Dorking although little real evidence exists to support that. What can be validated is the introduction of the gene for the fifth toe.

Bone relics attributed to fowls

predating the Roman invasion do not carry the fifth toe. It's clear that characteristic was introduced by the fowls carried by the invading armies, archaeological finds in the south of England and around Cumberland attest to that.

The written history of the Dorking commences in the late 18th Century and peaks in the first half of the 19th Century prior to the explosion of hen fever, a period when Asian breeds were imported and showing commenced.

The Dorking, called the Darking initially possibly due to a typographical error, was one of only a handful of recognised breeds in Britain until the late 1840s. It was also the breed that was grown in large numbers to service the London meat market.

No records exist regarding the breed's arrival in Australia but its popularity and practical characteristics would have made it an easy choice for colonists setting up in a new country.

**APPEARANCE:** Size wise the Dorking is one of our heaviest purebreds. The breed standard calls for weights of 4.55-6.35kg in males and 3.60-4.55kg in females.

There is a danger in our hot climate of losing such big birds to heat stress and most breeders settle for the lower end of the desired weights.

Dorkings are long backed, broad breasted and deep bodied and they are noticeably short legged. The single comb is moderate sized, wattles are large and males carry a very full, curved tail with the flowing sickles almost reaching the ground. Neck and saddle hackles are profuse.

The fifth toe is a breed characteristic, it involves an extra digit

above the back toe that emerges close to it, is similar in length but points upward.

It is acceptable for Dorking to present with a rose comb instead of the traditional single comb, generally that is only seen on minor colour varieties.

**COLOUR:** Early Dorkings were bred in white, red, cuckoo, silver-grey and brown plumage, today silver-grey is the common variety. Dark Dorkings, which resemble the original brown birds, were imported into Australia in 2014 but haven't taken off.

The silver-grey is stunning, the male is black except for silver-white neck and saddle hackles, fine white edging on outer wing feathers and a white wing bay.

By contrast the female has a fawn to salmon-red breast, silver-white neck hackle that is striped with black and the remaining plumage silver-grey, each feather finely pencilled with dark grey.

Skin colour, including legs and feet is white, a trait that enhanced the breed's popularity in the past as a premier table bird.

**GENETIC LEGACY:** the Dorking was crossed with local breeds in regional areas of Britain and the Sussex is believed to have benefited most from the crossing.

In fact it's not clear whether the Sussex was an existing type or was composed solely of Dorkings that hatched with only four toes. There are still strong similarities between dark Dorkings and Sussex fowl.

In France the Dorking was one of the breeds used in the reinvigoration of the Houdan, a traditional market bird.

It too is distinguished by five toes and white flesh that is charac-

In fact it's not clear whether the Sussex was an existing type or was composed solely of Dorkings that hatched with only four toes.



With practice breeders can differentiate gender by intensity of the down colour.

teristic of the Dorking. **RELEVANCE TODAY:** The breed, or at least the females, are a good choice for today's recreational poultry keeper. The breed is associated with traits of longevity and excellent egg lay.

Dorkings can notch up a substantial egg output over their 6-7 years of productive life with the eggs white shelled, well shaped and of medium size. The silver-grey variety is a better layer than some breeds with a reputation for lay like Rhode Island and Rocks.

One problem is broodiness and where hens are kept for table eggs needs prompt management or the continual presence of broodies becomes frustrating. Such hens are perfect if chickens are desired and make steady attentive mothers.

Roosters show the same docility so aggression is rare.

A desirable aspect of the silver-grey is the ease of gender ID in chicks. It's possible to sex hatchlings by differences of colour intensity in the down pattern and the presence or absence of eye stripes.

By three weeks the breast colouring changes radically, making gender indisputable.

Look out for this old breed at shows and if travelling overseas, at farm museums and historic properties.

More than 200 years of domestication is a fine achievement, fingers crossed that there are enough devotees to see Dorkings through another century.



Photos: Matthew Gosbell



Cockatoo being prepared for surgical repair of a hernia.



Galah with a large hernia.



Suturing the muscle together after surgical repair of the hernia.

# Managing hernias can be complicated

HERNIAS are a common occurrence in pet birds. A hernia is a defect or hole in the muscle wall through which abdominal organs can poke and become trapped.

Hernias can be congenital, genetic or can occur over time. Congenital hernias are often a result of an issue with the resorption and retraction of the the yolk sack of the chick.

The condition in older birds is seen mostly in hens and is very common. Although it can occur in many species I most commonly see it in cockatoos.

Treatment of hernias in birds can be quite complicated. It is not as straightforward as just doing surgery to suture the hole closed. To repair a hernia it is first important to understand and correct the causes of the hernia.

In most cases vets will be presented with older birds where a hernia has occurred over time. Those hernias are a result of muscle wastage and thinning resulting in a splitting of the muscle.

Internal organs, usually the intestines, liver and oviduct often burst through the muscle tear within a sack formed by the lining of the abdominal cavity. That then sits just under the skin.

The skin often stretches and thins over time as the hernia enlarges. The intestines and internal organs develop adhesions with the skin.

Although the organs are then sitting just within the skin, hernias in birds are not often emergencies. They only become emergencies if the skin becomes damaged, ulcerated and a full thickness injury develops or if the bowel becomes twisted or traumatised within the hernia.

Hens are much more likely to develop hernias than males. As a result it is thought that hormones

may have a significant role in the development of hernias.

Some research in the 1990s indicated that oestrogen played a significant role in the thinning of the abdominal muscle. More recently that has come into question.

It has been shown that physical pressure from within the body will increase the chance of muscle splitting and hernia development.

Some years ago when I treated a duck with a hernia I discovered at surgery that the duck had no oviduct — it was born without one — but still had an active ovary.

As a result the ovary was full of mature large follicles the size of normal egg yolks, I recall removing 14 yolks from the ovary so that there was room to return the herniated intestines and close the hernia.

Other things that can lead to thin muscle prone to splitting include lack of exercise. Birds that do not exercise will have weakened abdominal muscle.

Many pet birds are very sedentary, they don't need to move to eat, drink or to interact with their owners and are often confined and wing clipped which further impedes appropriate exercise.

Weak, thinned abdominal muscle will split with internal pressure changes. Things that commonly cause internal pressure changes in birds include excessive fat, enlarged organs as seen with liver disease, often resulting from fatty diets, and also increase in size of the ovary and oviduct during egg laying.

The egg itself is a large mass that puts pressure on abdominal

muscles and that is likely to be a major contributing factor to the higher number of female birds presenting with hernias.

Many pet birds are overweight because of high fat diets. Fat can form into large masses within the body, putting pressure on abdominal muscle.

Fat can also cause considerable organ enlargement, especially affecting the liver. Fat can also deposit within the muscle, weakening the muscle.

Often the high fat diets commonly fed and the way birds are kept also encourages more frequent egg laying and reproductive disease which contributes to hernia formation.

Other things that can increase internal body pressure, resulting in abdominal muscle splitting include large tumours such as ovarian cancers or diseases such as cystic ovaries.

It is therefore vital for birds that have been diagnosed with hernia to have a full health check and work-up to understand the cause of the hernia before it can be repaired.

Because hernias are not often life threatening there is often time to correct the underlying causes and contributing factors before surgery, improving likely outcome and reducing complication risks.

Blood tests, x-rays, ultrasound and even endoscopy may be used to investigate. For hens it is often helpful to use hormone treatments to turn off their reproductive activity. We often do that using hormone implants.

Making changes to diet, improv-

ing the bird's nutritional status and getting it to lose weight can dramatically reduce complications during surgery and help to reduce the likelihood of recurring hernia post surgery.

The surgical repair of avian hernias can be quite complicated. Often there are many adhesions that develop between skin and abdominal organs.

Organs may be enlarged and abnormal because they have been twisted and functioning at abnormal angles, that may make them easy to tear and damage and prone to ileus (where the intestines stop contracting and can't pass internal contents through).

Often there is only a small amount of abdominal muscle remaining that can be sutured closed. Suturing the muscle closed can lead to a very tight abdomen where all the organs are squeezed.

That can result in breathing problems and blood flow issues to the organs. Secondary complications can result from poor circulation to the organs and death can occur if the bird can't breathe properly.

Sometimes to avoid tight closure we need to use a special surgical mesh which stays in place instead of the muscle. However that implant can cause other complications.

We also remove excess fat and the oviduct of hens to make room and stop future laying. Even with successful surgical results it is not uncommon to get ongoing issues.

I believe in most of the cases I have repaired surgery could have been avoided if the pet had been exercised, fed properly and had controlled reproductive activity.

Improving those things before and after surgery can dramatically improve the outcome and long-term success of the procedure.

For hens it is often helpful to use hormone treatments to turn off their reproductive activity. We often do that using hormone implants.

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# Third OBP hen seen at Tasmanian breed site

A THIRD female wild orange-bellied parrot was reported at Melaleuca in Tasmania's south towards the end of the last migration season.

The critically endangered parrot has been the focus of increasing concern because few females returned this season, but eggs are being laid in nest boxes with teams on the ground monitoring progress.

Only 16 birds have returned from their annual migration to Victoria, including one which was captive bred.

A statement posted on social media by the Orange Bellied Parrot Tasmanian Program said the third female, a juvenile born in March last year, had been spotted.

That bird, named RED RED Z for the identification bands on her legs, disappeared for nine months and was not seen on the mainland or in Tasmania.

The statement said RED RED Z was seen with unusual yellow flecked feathers across her back and wings.

It's not known what caused the unusual colouring, whether it is disease or genetic issues.

"A member of the Orange Bellied Parrot Tasmanian Program has flown to

Melaleuca to examine RED RED Z to assess her body condition, weight and general health," the statement said.

Federal Threatened Species Commissioner Sebastian Lang said the recovery of the orange-bellied parrot was a priority for the federal government.

"We continue to closely monitor the status of the orange-bellied parrot via the recovery team and receive regular updates from researchers and conservation practitioners in the field," he said.

"This breeding season we have received updates on the number of wild birds returning to Tasmania, the sex ratio of the population and recovery actions undertaken such as boosting the breeding population through the releases of captive-bred birds."

The commissioner said the parrot is one of 20 birds targeted for improved recovery by 2020, with the federal government contributing more than \$1.1m to support the parrots.



Orange-bellied parrot.



# Opening step-up key

It can be quite challenging to establish a co-operative handling relationship with an older parrot who has recently joined your flock. That is especially true if the previous owner did not enjoy a trusting relationship with the bird and you are now in the position of trying to build trust with a parrot you really don't know well.

It is both frustrating and heart-breaking if you are trying to re-establish a handling relationship with a beloved parrot you have had for some time who is no longer compliant with the step-up cue because of fear.

It can be next to impossible for a caregiver to visualise a path forward from Point A (the bird who won't step up) to Point B (the bird who readily steps up without fear and can be moved from place to place as needed).

However all you really need is a small opening. If the bird gives you any behavior at all that might lead toward a handling relationship seize upon that and figure out how to make progress from that point. A bird who refuses to step up is a bird who is afraid or lacking in trust.

Parrots are supremely social animals whose very survival depends upon co-operative bonds with the flock.

In captivity we are in most cases their flock and the bird who won't step up has a lower quality of life. Many of those parrots still want badly to have that lost relationship and they can be very motivated if we wisely devise a training plan that ensures that the process of re-learning is fear free for the bird.

Arlo had a wonderful relationship with his owner, Judith, eight years ago. He never hesitated to step up. She took him for a wing trim to an establishment that trimmed him so severely that he subsequently dropped like a rock if he fell.

Shortly after that he got scared and tried to fly. He hit the hardwood floor and broke a blood feather. Judith towelled him to stop the bleeding. He stopped stepping up after that and became fearful around Judith.

She has been working for eight years to correct that and has reached the point where he will take a treat from her hands. Judith feels terribly guilty and misses the relationship they once had. She has no idea how to move from offering him a treat to getting him onto her hand.

Navidad came into my home at the age of 15 months. He had never had his wings clipped, had never been in a cage and had never stepped up. I was perplexed.

I needed to train him to step up and following that to accept a cage. Training cannot take place without first identifying reinforcers or treats for which the bird will work.

I had no idea what he might find valuable. I guessed that since he was still so young he might respond to the prompt that most breeders use to begin a feeding response in a baby parrot being hand fed with a syringe.

My guess was correct. When I

placed my fingers along the corner edges of his beak, he bobbed as any baby parrot would. That behaviour is in itself highly reinforcing and our friendship had begun.

A lot of hard work came after that. But that was my opening with Navi and it led to a normal handling relationship. He will now step up onto my hand, onto a hand-held perch and will fly to me when called as well. He also goes into a cage without protest.

Bongo Marie joined my flock about 10 months ago. She is a very confident bird as is Navidad. She had a history of biting and lunged to bite me in the face within just a few days of joining my flock.

That was a shock. I had thought I was far enough away to avoid aggres-

sion for some more seeds. Bongo ate several from my hand and then happily and calmly stepped back down onto a perch.

She created her own opening with me which merely proves my point that these birds need social connection. We must just try to help them find the path forward to that reality.

I met with Arlo and his owner two days ago. As we talked the information tumbled out that Arlo still steps up, just once a day.

In the mornings Judith sits in her chair in the sunroom near Arlo's cage to have her tea and a bit of breakfast. She always has blueberries which Arlo loves. He will step up for a brief moment to take a blueberry.

Judith had been discounting that

After a minute or two ask again. In most cases the bird in this situation will comply when given a second chance if his fear levels are not too high.

Wait to make further progress until the first step is rock solid. When Arlo steps up 99 per cent of the time in these circumstances and will do so multiple times in a row, then proceed to the next step.

**Step two:** Ask Arlo to step up. Give him the treat immediately and hold your hand steady while he eats it. Then move your hand a few inches, then a few inches back and allow him to step off for another treat. Stay at this step until he does so with a great deal of enthusiasm.

**Step three:** Ask for the step up, offer a treat, allow him to eat it then stand up with him on your hand. Sit back down again and allow him to step off for another treat.

**Step four:** When that step is solid begin to take one foot forward then one step back and put Arlo back down again. All steps are followed with treats.

The process from here will be for her to just keep up this daily work, increasing the distance she walks with Arlo.

**Step five:** Begin to ask Arlo to step up from other locations.

There are some rules that must be followed when working with fearful parrots in this way.

First, you must watch and respond sensitively to the bird's body language. The first sign of discomfort on the parrot's part is evidence that you have tried to progress too quickly. Slow down. The parrot is in charge of your progress speed.

Second, you must always keep the parrot in a calm, relaxed state — another reason to go slowly. Any sign of agitation means it's time to regroup and examine your plan.

Third, you must always first find food treats or other reinforcers that are so valuable to the parrot that he will choose to push past his reluctance to perform the cued behavior.

If your bird is not food motivated talk to your vet. Parrots are all food motivated. They need food to live. If your bird won't work for treats the most likely reason is that the diet you are feeding is too high in fats and carbohydrates (seed mixes, table food, etc). Therefore the bird will need to be converted to a better diet before progress can be made.

Fourth, you must not ever, from this point onward, intentionally do anything to scare that parrot in your home. If you are towelling him to get him back into his cage you must stop. Instead get the help of a behavior professional who can help you to devise a plan to accomplish this other goal.

And last, please don't take the parrot's behavior personally. Sometimes accidents happen and trust is lost. Fear like this is learned and therefore it can be unlearned and greater trust can develop in its place. Just find that opening and proceed slowly. Get some help if you need to.



Pamela Clark teaching a red-tailed black cockatoo to step up.

sion (since she was new to me) and had merely been engaging in a bit of sweet talking with her because she was so new.

She kept her distance for many months but eventually learned to trust me to scratch her head. She loves that and has been seeking me out more often. I haven't been too worried about finding my opening with her because she goes into her cage on cue.

Yesterday I was sitting on the couch and she came down to sit behind me. She invited me to scratch her head. Before I knew it she had stepped up onto my hand. I gave her several sunflower seeds for that.

Because she looked comfortable I got up slowly and walked into the

because it is Arlo who makes the overture just as Bongo did with me. However that will be our starting point.

I recommended the following initial training plan:

**Step one:** Using the same set of circumstances ask Arlo to step up while showing him the treat (blueberry or whatever else she might have that he would want).

When he does, give him the treat immediately and allow him to step back off to where he had been. Do not try to move your hand while he is on it.

If he does not immediately comply turn your face away and don't talk to him. Let him think about the choice he just made.

# ○ Dead ibis displayed on footpath

RESIDENTS believe sadistic killers snapped the neck of an ibis and put the dead bird on display in a Sunshine Coast street.

Amr Kehila was out walking with friends at Minyama when they saw the dead bird on the footpath.

At first Mr Kehila and his mates thought the ibis had died of natural causes or had been hit by a car.

Then they saw the bird's neck was at a right angle but it had no other obvious injuries.

"We realised it was more sadistic, that there was more to it," Mr Kehila said.

"A wheelie bin was put next to it

then they'd erected a Christian cross for a grave."

The sign on the cross, made out of plastic, read Thoth, in reference to the Egyptian god that had an ibis head.

"It was in a prominent spot, right next to a roundabout on purpose," Mr Kehila said.

Mr Kehila believed whoever killed the bird and placed the props was just looking for attention and tagging along with the common thought that ibises were no more than pests.

"It's no excuse for taking the life of something that didn't really do anything," he said.



The dead ibis with a snapped neck was displayed on a footpath.

# ○ Raptors spread fires

GRASSLAND fires that are deadly and devastating events for many kinds of wildlife are a boon to birds known as fire foragers.

Those opportunists prey on animals fleeing from a blaze or scavenge the remains of creatures that succumbed to flames and smoke.

In Australia some fire-foraging birds are also fire starters.

Three raptor species are widely known for lurking on the fringes of fires and for snatching up smouldering grasses or branches and using them to kindle fresh flames in order to smoke out mammal and insect prey.

Scientists recently collected and evaluated reports from Aboriginal and non-indigenous people on the so-called firehawks — black kites, whistling kites and brown falcons — to better understand the unusual behavior and to evaluate its implications for fire management in regions where the birds are active.

Aboriginal people in some parts of northern Australia referenced the fire-spreading actions of firehawks in sacred rituals and noted numerous sightings of firehawks.

The study authors identified 12 Aboriginal groups in which people described firsthand sightings of raptors deliberately setting new fires with smouldering brands salvaged from existing fires, acting on their own and co-operating with other birds.

"I have seen a hawk pick up a smouldering stick in its claws and drop it in a fresh patch of dry grass half a mile away, then wait with its mates for the mad exodus of scorched and frightened rodents and reptiles," an Aboriginal man named Waipuldanya recalled in *I, The Aboriginal*, a 1962 autobiography ghostwritten by journalist Douglas Lockwood.

"When that area was burnt out the process was repeated elsewhere," he reported.



Black kites in northern Australia help fires to spread by moving burning sticks to unburnt areas.

Another account described birds intentionally starting new fires in unburnt patches of grass.

"When a fire burns into a creek line and burns out brown falcons have also been observed collecting fire brands and dropping them on the other unburnt side of the creek in order to continue the fire," it was reported in a collection of Aboriginal accounts published in 2009.

The researchers also conducted interviews with non-Aboriginal sources and scoured prior studies for stories about the fire-seeking birds.

Two researchers contributed their own observations gleaned from decades of fieldwork and encounters with bushfires in Australian grasslands.

From their reports, a behavioral pattern emerged: Firehawks — also described as kitehawks, chickenhawks and on several occasions by non-Aboriginals as shithawks

— purposely swiped burning sticks or grasses from smouldering vegetation or even from human cooking fires and made off with the brands and dropped them into unburnt areas to set them alight, presumably to drive out more prey.

"The firehawks come out of nowhere when you start a fire because they know that the feed is on," one interview subject said.

Another man described a group of birds that appeared to work together to steal embers from an existing blaze to start a new fire some distance away.

"Certain raptors either restart extinguished fires or move fires across barriers that might otherwise hamper the fire's spread," the study's lead author, Mark Bonta, assistant professor of Earth sciences at Penn State University, said.

"In the case of co-authors Nathan Ferguson's and Dick Eussen's accounts they saw the behavior re-

peatedly and at close range, including failed attempts, but also successful attempts," Prof Bonta said.

The range of the birds' reported fire stealing spans a significant area measuring approximately 2400km by 1000km across part of northern Australia, the scientists reported.

Photos and videos of firehawk behavior remain scarce and it can be challenging to observe the birds while fires are blazing.

Officials typically overlook firehawk activity when creating strategies for managing fires, which are commonly used in Australia by Aboriginal groups and non-Aboriginal landowners for ecosystem management.

"This May we are leading a team to the Northern Territory to work with Aboriginal ranger groups who will set controlled burns for us so we can study the dynamics of raptor behavior under semi-controlled conditions. No one has ever done this before," Prof Bonta said.

Close collaboration with Aboriginal teams and individuals will be a critical part of studying the birds' use of fire and its relationship to the Australian tropical grasslands which indigenous people have inhabited and managed with controlled burning for at least 50,000 years.

Over millennia Aboriginal people have accumulated an unparalleled understanding of the ecosystem and the animals that inhabit it, knowledge that is in danger of being lost as cultural traditions are abandoned by younger generations, Prof Bonta said.

"Our work is a collaborative effort to help valorise indigenous knowledge of birds, particularly as known to the older generation," he said.

"This is not simply folklore but rather intricate ecosystem knowledge that is typically unparalleled even by most outsider experts."

## Turkey seizes 300+ greys

TURKISH Customs officials in Istanbul seized more than 300 African grey parrots, pictured right, which were smuggled from the Democratic Republic of the Congo last month after officials received a tip-off on the birds' location.

An official from the Turkish Forestry and Water Affairs Ministry, who spoke on condition of anonymity due to restrictions on talking to media, said the birds were found at a customs warehouse in a cargo package en route to Iraq.

Trade in the birds was banned in 2016 under new, upgraded rules of the Convention on the International Trade of Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

According to a ministry official the grey parrots, one of the world's most trafficked birds, would later be smuggled to markets in Turkey through Iraq.

He said 10 birds were dead when found and the rest were taken to the Celal Acar Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation Centre in north-

western Bursa province.

Vayssel Eroglu, the Minister of Forestry and Water Affairs, said: "The African grey parrot was listed in Annex 1 by the CITES Secretariat on January 2, 2017 at a conference held by the group."

He said the Congo was suspended from wildlife trading following last year's decision.

According to the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW), between 2.1 and 3.2 million African greys were captured between 1975 and 2013.



## Human absence helps

REPRODUCTION among American bald eagles, pictured right, in a remote national park in Minnesota was aided when their nests were protected from human disturbance, according to a study published recently.

The study, by researchers at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, the National Park Service and the US Geological Survey, focused on a nest protection program that was based on the logical assumption that endangered birds would reproduce and prosper if people were kept away from their nests.

The assumption was logical but unproven said study author Ben Zuckerberg, an associate professor of wildlife ecology at UW-Madison.

By combining more than 40 years of data from Voyageurs National Park along the Canadian border he, post-doctoral researcher Jennyfer Cruz and colleagues found that the breeding population of bald eagles at Voyageurs rose from fewer than 10 pairs in the late 1970s to 48 pairs by 2016.

Those numbers, however welcome, did not prove whether nest protection played any role in the increase.

Starting in 1991 park staff began to sequester an average of nine eagle nests per year, using warning signs to deter boaters and campers.

When looking at nests rather than the overall population protection significantly improved breeding activity, with annual increases of 8 per cent in nesting success — meaning the breeding pair had at least one young — and 13 per cent in the average number of young per occupied nest.

Overall the number of breeding pairs, whether successful or not, rose from 10 to 48 pairs between 1991 and 2016. To save time and to reduce disturbance the surveys were done from the air.

The question of how much of the increases were due to nest protection is more complex than it



sounds because documenting the impact of protection requires more than counting breeding pairs and their offspring.

For example other researchers have seen strong benefits for nests and birds protected from predators by fences.

"But they did not necessarily account for predation of eggs in the unprotected nests," said Ms Cruz.

"Overall even if the protection registered as positive from looking only at the managed nests it could be negative for the whole population."

To clear that hurdle the researchers developed an analysis that looked at nests and the overall eagle population.

"Counting alone does not allow you to say that management is doing what it is supposed to be doing," said Prof Zuckerberg.

"The model we developed opened

the door to that."

Bald eagles are still rebounding in the United States following the banning around 1970 of DDT, an insecticide that mimics hormones and caused a fatal weakening of eggshells.

Bald eagles primarily eat fish but also scavenge for carrion and occasionally eat water birds and their eggs. They prefer to nest in tall trees along river and lake shorelines.

In order to compare managed and unmanaged nests, and to deduce what protection means for the entire population, researchers integrated their data with a modelling framework that looks at individual nests and over population levels.

"We asked a series of questions," said Prof Zuckerberg.

"If the nest is occupied what is the chance they will have young? If they do have young what is the

chance that they have more than one? How is that different in managed versus unmanaged nests?

"Given the level of management that happens year to year how did the population grow and how would that compare to the situation in the absence of management?"

In a bottom-line result the researchers concluded that protection increased the number of breeding pairs at Voyageurs by 37 per cent with other factors accounting for the balance of the increase.

Although the result is most relevant to large, undisturbed habitat like Voyageurs the model can be used for other raptors in other places regardless of the level of disturbance, Prof Zuckerberg said.

"Long-term monitoring data is really hard to fund but it's critical for conservation," he said.

"This is a perfect example of the benefits of collecting data in a standardised way over a long period of time."

The benefits of protection may seem logical but getting the science straight is vital since protecting nests and counting eagles carries costs.

"There are very few studies of birds, mammals or reptiles that quantify the benefits to the population of protecting individuals or nests," Ms Cruz said.

"Nest protection is widely used for other raptors including many hawks and falcons to quarantine them from human disturbance, even from activities that we don't think would be all that disturbing, like camping, hiking or boating.

"But nobody has come along and asked does protecting individual nests have a broader effect on the population?"

"We know that habitat preservation is not always enough. When we talk about protecting areas it's important to think about managing the species as well."

# Longer beaks in birds that use UK feeders

THE great tit *Parus major* is a small, common garden bird in much of Europe and Asia.

In a new study several international teams of researchers collaborated to compare measurements for beak length in more than 3000 great tits living in three separate populations — one in the United Kingdom and two in the Netherlands.

The teams found beaks of great tits living in a long-term study site, Wytham Woods in the UK (949 birds) were 0.3mm longer on average than beaks of great tits living in two other long-term study sites — Oosterhout (254 birds) and Veluwe (1812 birds) in the Netherlands.

The longer beaks were a surprise because great tits are thought to be nearly alike throughout their entire huge range.

Even more surprising is that historical data indicated the trend towards longer beaks in British tits was quite recent and it occurred quickly.

"Between the 1970s and the present day beak length has got longer among the British birds," said study co-author, Jon Slate, a professor at the University of Sheffield. He said beak length had been increasing over a period of roughly 100 years.

"That's a really short time period in which to see this sort of difference emerging," he said.

Which genetic differences underlie this trait? This question was a bit more complicated to answer because beak length in birds is a polygenic trait, which means it is influenced by a group of genes working in concert so identifying which genes they are is where the real work began.

The research teams screened the birds' genomes and identified regions that were changing rapidly in the UK tits, indicating the genes in those regions were being affected by natural selection.

Further investigations uncovered a handful of likely genes in those genomic regions. A look through an online genetic database was encouraging, several candidate genes are known to affect beak shape in Darwin's finches, which are world famous for rapidly changing their beak size and shape to adapt to environmental challenges.

The candidate genes also closely matched some of the genes known to influence face shape in humans.

The researchers' analyses confirmed that several of the candi-



A United Kingdom great tit at a garden feeder.

date genes were consistently associated with the bill length variation that they had measured.

One gene in particular stood out, the collagen gene, COL4A5. The teams found that British tits with the long-beak variant of the COL4A5 collagen gene raised more chicks to fledging on average than tits with the short-beak variant.

That indicated that there is strong ongoing selective pressure for tits to grow longer bills in the UK, which contrasts sharply with the Netherlands data where tits with the long-beak gene variant raised fewer chicks to fledging.

Birds' beak structures are often especially adapted to the food they eat which has led to the huge variety of distinctive beak shapes and sizes.

In addition to Darwin's finches Hawaiian honeycreepers are another example of the stunning variation in avian beak shapes and sizes among closely related birds.

Beak specialisations in honeycreepers took thousands of years to evolve but not so, apparently, for British tits.

That raises the question: Is beak

length in great tits related somehow to food?

If so why are there opposite effects on beak length between tits in Britain versus those in the Netherlands?

The one big difference between Europe and Britain is the presence of garden bird feeders. Unlike many Europeans the British became avid bird feeders

around Victorian times and that in turn could be driving the evolution for longer beaks in common garden birds throughout the UK.

"In the UK we spend around twice as much on bird seed and bird feeders than mainland Europe, and we've been doing this for some time," said another of the study's co-authors, Lewis Spurgin, a research fellow at the University of East Anglia.

"In fact at the start of the 20th Century *Punch* magazine described bird feeding as a British national pastime," he said.

People in the UK are estimated to spend £334m per year on seed for wild birds whereas people in mainland Europe, a much larger land-

mass, spend only half as much, £167m.

When the researchers analysed data collected by electronic monitoring tags attached to some of the Wytham Woods tits they could track how much time each tagged individual spent at bird feeders.

They found the tits with the long-beak gene variant visited bird feeders more often than those with the short-beak gene variant.

"Although we can't say definitively that bird feeders are responsible it seems reasonable to suggest that the longer beaks among British great tits may have evolved as a response to this supplementary feeding," Dr Spurgin said.

Preliminary data indicates that the longer beak gene variant may only be found in tits living in the UK where garden bird feeders are much more common.

"What is it that gives birds with longer beaks an advantage at the feeder sites?" asked lead author of the study, Mirte Bosse, a postdoctoral fellow at the Netherlands Institute of Ecology and at Wageningen University.

It's possible that longer beaks allow those birds to get the best seeds buried deeper in bird feeders or, as Dr Spurgin speculated: "It could be that they don't drop seeds when they're carrying them away."

Nevertheless, eating more or better food can have direct, lasting effects on a population.

So investigating the changes in bird feeder design over the years and studies into how great tits eat from feeders could clarify the situation.

"It's certainly true that birds who have adapted to better access food will be in better condition generally and so better able to reproduce and outperform others without that adaptation," Dr Spurgin said.

So bird feeding is a powerful way to drive evolution of physical traits, particularly beak structure, in wild birds.

"The way we've detected evolutionary differences in the wild is unique," said Ms Bosse.

"It was the genome that led the way. That this is possible for a trait influenced by so many genes holds many promises for future discoveries."

"We now know that this increase in beak length and the difference in beak length between birds in Britain and mainland Europe is down to genes that have evolved by natural selection," Prof Slate said.

...UK are estimated to spend £334m per year on seed for wild birds whereas people in mainland Europe... spend only half as much, £167m.

# 4000 species indoors

BIRD Kingdom at Niagara Falls in Canada looks like just another tourist attraction. It is not.

It is the most fanciful thing this side of fiction.

You might find yourself high in the middle of a giant rain forest, centimetres from two serene, Victoria crowned pigeons with no glass between you. Named for Queen Victoria they are giant blue birds, round as a globe, with extravagant plumed crests.

You might also glimpse, strolling around, Lady Amherst's pheasants. With its long tail and wild patterns it looks like something dreamed up by Edward Lear.

You have the option of being swarmed by lorikeets. Hold a cup of nectar and these rainbow-hued Australian birds alight all over you, all aflutter and atwitter. Now there is something to tweet about.

Bird Kingdom, the world's largest free-flying indoor aviary, is home to 4000 species, with birds from Australia, South America and Africa.

History lives there too.

The building, the first poured concrete building in Canada, was home to the Spirella Corset Factory.

In the 1950s it became the home of the Niagara Falls Museum, the oldest museum in Canada, dating to 1827.

The museum's most famous resident was Egyptian Pharaoh Ramses I. The pharaoh went back to Egypt in 2003 after his mummy had finally been identified. But the mummy spent almost 150 years in Niagara Falls, including 40 years in what is now the building that houses birds.

Entering Bird Kingdom is rather disorienting. There's a musty aroma of old wooden floors. You enter a hall of old photographs of Niagara Falls history and derring-do, left over from the museum.

After getting into the aviary there are occasional reminders that something else was there first. But the further you get into the place the better it gets.

Rounding a corner you behold a dozen bright parrots, with plumes of scarlet, chartreuse and Play-Doh blue, all settled on perches and looking at you.

Bird Kingdom has a kind of Egyptian Lost Kingdom theme to amuse the kids and this room is Explorer's Base Camp.

What a treat to hold a big parrot as if you were a pirate. You realize how heavy they are and how smart.

"Stick out your tongue," requested keeper Steve Bush, and the bird did so, cackling.

"Spread your wings," the sight was stunning.

"Bow," the bird bowed, squawking "bow."

Nearby is Dundee, a loud laughing Kookaburra from Australia. The keepers make a trilling sound and the bird laughs and laughs.

There's a Night Jungle where you can watch nocturnal critters — skunks, bats, etc — going about their business. But the place is really for the birds and the birds seem to know that.

Up another level is the airy small aviary. It has a genteel, Victorian feel. Exotic foreign forms of finches, sparrows, and canaries flit among the vegetation, darting here, there and everywhere. They flutter right past you, sometimes



The Victoria crowned pigeon is the largest species of pigeon.

so close you feel the air moving. They chirp right in your ear.

There's a bench where you can sit, feeling like the bird lady from *Mary Poppins*. A zebra finch, a Forbes finch, an elegant Java sparrow — pictures can help to identify them and it's tempting to linger all day.

But the Great Aviary, up another level, beckoned.

Opening the doors we stood agog. We were in a vast jungle with a skylight and a stunning view of the Niagara Gorge.

Keeping with the lost kingdom theme there were poetic ruins and a shimmering waterfall. A flock of scarlet ibis soared overhead. A silver pheasant, dignified and bright, strolled far below.

Green and yellow double headed Amazons shared a tree with smaller, equally garish parrots. All were donated former pets, said keeper Matt Killby.

"You get strange pairs," he said. "For instance the crow and the hornbill hang out together. Maybe

it's because they look alike."

The pied crow from Africa looks like a bird in black tie. The silvery-cheeked hornbill is glossy black with a huge beak.

They squawk the squawk. You walk the walk. The path leads behind the waterfall then up so you are at eye level with a row of motionless macaws or down so you can mingle on the ground floor with the rotund, riotously-colored pigeons.

Set back in the greenery on the other side of the panorama is a genuine 19th century Javanese nobleman's house, carved from teak wood, painstakingly moved and reassembled. It is the only one in North America and one of the few in the world.

Too bad Ramses had to go home to Egypt. He would enjoy the grandeur. Rob Cairns of Toronto was enjoying it.

"I come to Niagara Falls three or four times a year," he said.

"People don't look at what's right in our own back yard."

Keeping with the lost kingdom theme there were poetic ruins and a shimmering waterfall. A flock of scarlet ibis soared overhead.



The silvery-cheeked hornbill is glossy black with a huge beak.



Dundee the laughing kookaburra releases a loud, laugh-like call.



# Fishing bycatch killing Antipodean albatross

ANTIPODEAN albatrosses court for years, mate for life and work together to raise their young but human activity is causing a sex ratio imbalance that is destroying their lifelong romance.

This year they have been uplisted to endangered on the International Union for the Conservation of Nature Red List due to worrying population declines. The "live slow, die old" strategy has been working for the bird for millennia.

Breeding exclusively on a few New Zealand islands the majestic birds mate for life, laying a single egg with each breeding attempt.

Because it takes a year to hatch the egg and raise the chick they reproduce once every two years. But they don't even start thinking about breeding until they are at least seven years old, sometimes more like 20 and even then the process entails a long and drawn-out courtship involving song and dance routines spanning several years.

It sounds like a Jane Austen novel but investing a lot of time and energy in safely raising a few healthy young is a strategy that has paid off until now.

Recent surveys of Adams Island and the Antipodes Islands have shown a steep decrease in population size and the number of nests found.

The Antipodes Islands, which house the largest population, nearly half of the world's birds, are showing the biggest decline.

Numbers have fallen by 12 per cent a year in the past 13 years and the overall population is estimated to have more than halved in the decade between 2004 and 2014.

What could be the reason for the catastrophic decline? There are many likely causes. Warming oceans are decreasing the food supply, meaning that they need to travel to new areas to find food.

They are specialists in low-energy flying, riding updrafts created by the wind and waves and covering vast distances while rarely needing to flap their wings but their increasingly arduous journeys are putting them in the paths of fishing boats and that's where the problems begin.

Antipodean albatrosses are mainly scavengers, plucking squid and fish from the surface of the waves or plunging into water in shallow dives so it's no wonder that they are attracted to fishing boats and the discarded delicacies they provide.

Unfortunately many albatrosses



Human activity is affecting Antipodean albatross breeding success.

end up being accidentally impaled on the baited hooks of longline fisheries. In 2006 a single fishing trip in New Zealand waters ensnared 58 antipodean albatrosses.

But the impact isn't equal, twice as many females are being killed because females have changed their foraging ranges. In previous years they remained largely around New Zealand but tracking data since 2011 shows they have started venturing further north and much further east to the coast of South America which means they now overlap with a far greater number of fisheries where they are at risk of being killed.

That is creating a serious imbalance in the sex ratio of the population. With two males for every female far fewer breeding pairs are able to form and an army of bachelors is left over, which significantly reduces the species' potential to raise the next generation and build up the population again. If the current rate of decline continues in 20 years there will be fewer than 500 pairs left.

Another albatross species has moved in the opposite direction on the IUCN Red List. With its imposing silhouette and severe expression the black-browed albatross is one of the most iconic seabirds in the Southern Hemisphere and it seems to be on the increase.

On the Falkland Islands aerial and land-based surveys have shown

that its population has risen by 4 per cent a year between 2005 and 2010, and Chilean populations are showing a similar improvement.

Because those archipelagos hold some of the highest numbers of breeding individuals we can be confident that the population as a whole is on the up.

There are now estimated to be 700,000 breeding pairs globally. As a result this year the black-browed was downlisted from near threatened to least concern.

But the change isn't simple. Although the overall population is increasing on the island of South Georgia it has been declining by an

estimated 1.8 per cent a year between 2005 and 2014.

That is a separate population with a different foraging range and its situation needs to be addressed.

Black-browed albatrosses everywhere are plagued by similar bycatch issues to their Antipodean counterparts — it was found that just one Argentinian trawl fishery was killing an estimated 13,500 black-browed birds every year with far more globally.

Bycatch is a problem for the whole albatross family. An estimated 100,000 albatrosses a year of multiple species are dying as accidental bycatch in longline and trawl fisheries but help is at hand. The Albatross Task Force, set up in 2006 and led by BirdLife in the

UK has spent more than a decade working alongside fishermen to introduce measures that will prevent seabirds from getting caught in this way.

They have braved storms, sea-sickness and extreme climates and spent more than 5000 days at sea to build relationships with those in the fishing industry.

Fishermen don't want to catch seabirds because they obstruct the fishing process. One seabird can eat up to 10 pieces of bait intended for fish before they get hooked.

So the Albatross Task Force is in a perfect place to work with the fishing community to find solutions that suit everybody.

And their work is paying off. After years of lobbying by BirdLife partner Aves Argentinas this year Argentinian fishing authorities announced the mandatory use of bird-scaring lines on all freezer trawlers from May 2018 onwards.

Thanks to the Task Force's advocacy in Namibia 100 per cent of trawl and demersal longline vessels now have bird-scaring lines which were constructed in collaboration with local women's group Meme Itumbapo.

In South Africa there has been a 99 per cent reduction in albatross deaths in the hake demersal trawl fishery following the introduction of similar measures.

Nine out of the 10 fisheries originally pinpointed as bycatch hot spots have now committed to adopting regulations to protect sea birds and the Task Force's work continues in earnest.

It's not all plain sailing. In 2016 39 albatrosses were killed in a commercial tuna fishing venture off the west coast of New Zealand due to the skipper's illegal failure to use bird scaring lines.

Last July a survey by Auckland Museum and the University of Tasmania discovered that more than a third of sea birds found dead on Australia and New Zealand's beaches had eaten plastic.

Invasive species are also a big problem and on Auckland Island pigs are thought to have been responsible for almost extirpating the bird from the island.

So there's a long way to go — 15 of the world's 22 albatross species are still globally threatened but the Albatross Task Force has shown that it's possible to achieve and with enough support in the coming years we can take those successes to a new level.

An estimated 100,000 albatrosses a year of multiple species are dying as accidental bycatch in longline and trawl fisheries but help is at hand.

# ○ Florida sparrow on brink



A wild grasshopper sparrow on the hand of a federal biologist.

GET ready to say goodbye to Florida's rarest bird, the grasshopper sparrow. US Federal officials say 2018 is the year we'll learn whether the species will disappear from the wild and the odds are not good.

"There's a significant chance that the birds might go extinct," said Larry Williams, who supervises the South Florida office of the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

The grasshopper sparrow is generally regarded as the most endangered bird in the continental United States.

If it goes extinct in spite of \$1m spent to save it in recent years it would be the first American bird in three decades to disappear.

The number living in the wild has dropped dramatically in recent years due in part to a disease that has zoomed through the dwindling population.

Last year biologists found 74 males and 40 females remaining in the Central Florida prairies where the birds nest. This year they found 53 males and 22 females.

"This is probably the last year

that we'll have the birds in the landscape," said Paul Reillo, founding director of the Rare Species Conservatory Foundation at Florida International University.

The disease picking off the birds isn't one the sparrows have dealt with before so their immune systems aren't equipped to fight it.

It affects younger birds before they turn a year old. Somehow the protozoans causing the illness were turned loose on the birds the same way that pythons were turned loose in the Everglades.

# ○ Shops in Kalimantan causing big concern

TENS of thousands of birds, many of them protected species on the brink of extinction, are being openly traded in Indonesian Borneo in the first clear picture to emerge of the extent of the practice there.

Nearly 200 stores across the region, known as Kalimantan, were found to be selling more than 25,000 birds from 148 species, according to multiple periodic field surveys carried out by the conservation group Planet Indonesia between July 2015 and February 2017.

"This is the first data that we know of about the wild bird trade from Kalimantan," said Adam Miller, the group's executive director.

Some of the species discovered for sale include the Bali myna *Leucopsar rothschildi* and the black-winged myna *Acridotheres melanopterus*, both of which are critically endangered; the straw-headed bulbul *Pycnonotus zeylanicus*, an endangered species; and the greater green leafbird *Chloropsis sonnerati*, classified as vulnerable.

Mr Miller said his team's findings uncovered just a fraction of the picture of the true extent of the wild bird trade in rural Indonesia.

The report was aimed at identifying the supply chain and the stakeholders in the practice, he said.

"It is imperative that we gain an understanding of the wild bird trade in other regions of Indonesia, particularly in areas where species are sources as populations in Java have been largely depleted, forcing trappers to move to forests on the other islands in Indonesia," Mr Miller said.

Previous studies on the bird trade have exposed the rampant



One of the almost 200 bird shops in Indonesia's Kalimantan region.

markets in urban centres on the islands of Java and Sumatra. A 2005 report estimated that an average of 614,180 native songbirds were trapped and traded annually on the two islands.

Bird keeping is a popular pastime among Indonesians, particularly Javanese, for the most part because it signifies status and is thought to promote peace of mind.

Songbirds are also prized for use in contests which have spawned thriving networks of clubs, online forums and blogs.

"What we have found is the once Javanese culture of bird keeping has spread like wildfire across the island of Kalimantan to a number of local ethnic groups such as Mel-

ayu, Dayak and Chinese," Mr Miller said.

That influence has been attributed largely to the government's transmigration program, which sought to relocate residents from densely populated Java to other regions, thereby introducing birdkeeping among other Javanese customs, to residents of those regions.

"This study reveals that even in rural areas the size and scale of the wild bird trade raises extreme concern about the future of Indonesia's avian species," Mr Miller said.

One of the key concerns is the prospect of local trappers and traders bringing in birds from the Malaysian side of Borneo to meet demand in Kalimantan.

"Then our worst fear has been imagined, that Indonesians songbirds are now on the brink of extinction," Mr Miller said.

"And worse, no one is talking about it."

The trade has been allowed to flourish because of a lack of meaningful action on the part of the government and conservation groups, Mr Miller said.

"There are very few NGOs addressing this issue," he said.

"Songbirds aren't sexy fundraising species, like tigers, elephants, rhinos or other charismatic species that draw most of the attention and donors in Indonesia."

Ten bird species or 7.4 per cent of the total observed in the surveys, are ostensibly protected under the country's laws.

"The fact that you can basically go to any major city in Indonesia, walk into a bird market and find hundreds of species for sale, and thousands of individuals, well that says it all," Mr Miller said.

Planet Indonesia has called for more surveys on wild populations, building partnerships with local communities and addressing the multiple links of the supply chain.

The group is also strongly recommending that the Indonesian government include more species in its list of protected birds.

"Addressing the massive songbird trade involving over 250 species and possibly up to a million birds a year, without law enforcement, is going to be tough," Mr Miller said.

"It is a tragedy, a huge loss of biodiversity, and it is happening with the vast majority of even conservationists and donors showing little to no remorse or interest in the issue," he said.

The trade has been allowed to flourish because of a lack of meaningful action on the part of the government and conservation groups...



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# More whoops number on Mount Taranaki

IN New Zealand three juvenile who/blue duck have been released into the Waipuku Stream on the eastern side of Mt Taranaki, further boosting the bird's population in the area.

Proud foster parents drove for hours to watch three young who being released into Egmont National Park on Monday. Anne Purchas from Kapiti was there with her husband Larry to watch the ducks which she'd helped care for at the Nga Manu Nature Reserve where they were hatched, swim off to freedom in a stream near the York Rd track at Midhurst.

"It's my first time at a release. I'm the clucky foster mother," she said.

Sarah O'Sullivan had left her bed before dawn to catch the young ducks and drive them to Taranaki from Turangi, where they spent the past month in a duckling boot camp at the Department of Conservation creche learning how to swim in fast-flowing rivers and forage for their own food.

"These were the most chilled boys we've had," she said.

The ducks were blessed before their release by kaumatua Sid Kershaw on behalf of iwi Ngati Ruanui and given names.

One duck was named for five-year-old Manawanui Clifton, who was with his father Te Amaroa Clifton.

When their boxes were opened ducks Manawanui, Tane and Matu slipped into the Waipuku Stream, and dove straight in for a drink, some lunch and a quick preen or two to look their best for the cameras surrounding them.

The trio would bring genetic diversity to a now growing who population on Mt Taranaki, Department of Conservation biodiversity ranger Jo Carson said.

Two other who were released recently and more would be freed soon, she said.

Once considered extinct in Taranaki there were now 33 pairs on the eight rivers in the park surveyed by DoC, she said.

This summer was proving a boom year for the endangered birds.

"Fifty-six ducklings have been found on the eight rivers, that's phenomenal," Ms Carson said.

As well as the surveyed pairs there were others living elsewhere.

"We get lots of sightings by trampers of pairs on other rivers," she said.

A predator protection program covering 7500 hectares of the park began in 2003.

That work is being complemented by Taranaki Mounga which has extended the safe area for who and kiwi on Mt Taranaki by increasing the stoat trapping network to 11,000ha in the past year.

The who's success was due to a lot of hard work by DoC, the Central North Island Blue Duck Trust and Who Forever (a five-year partnership between Genesis and DoC).

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## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

● There is no charge for Forthcoming Events listings. Entries are restricted to date, location, club name, event, phone number and email address.

Information should be sent to the editor, contact details on page 2 of this edition. If any entry contains errors, please contact the editor so it can be updated.

### February 10

**Inverell.** Inverell Birdkeepers Group, early bird sale. 02 6723 1388.

### February 24

**Brisbane.** Parrot Society of Australia, annual general meeting. 0459 990 333, treasurer@parrot.society.org.au

### February 25

**Canberra.** BSNBW Canberra Branch, Annual Show. 0417 044 023.

**Newcastle.** Newcastle Budgerigar Club, young bird show. 0412 531 316, <http://bit.ly/nbchome>

### Rockhampton.

Rockhampton Finch and Parrot Social Club, sale. 07 4936 3128

**Young.** Young & District Cage Bird Society, sale. 02 6385 3058, 0407 903 220.

### March 3

**Orange.** Orange Bird Society, sale. Bird bookings 0429 867 276, trades 02 6362 8605 AH, dinner 0409 912 370, [www.orangebirdsale.com](http://www.orangebirdsale.com)

### March 11

**Cleveland.** Queensland Bird Breeders Club, Australian Birdfest sale. 07 3299 1940.

**Grafton.** Clarence River District Caged Bird Club, sale. 02 6643 1323.

### March 18

**Bexley.** BRASEA, budgie auction. 02 9747 6642, 0418 916 685.

### March 25

**Tuggerah.** Avicultural Society of the Central Coast, sale. 02 4389 1997.

### April 7

**Evanston South.** Gawler & Districts Bird Club. 08 8522 3862, 08 8524 8068, 08 8264 8310.

### Gunnedah.

Naroi Valley Bird Club, sale. General inquiries 0488 252 720, bird bookings 0438 844 381, trades 02 6744 1179, [info@gunnedahbirdsale.com](mailto:info@gunnedahbirdsale.com), [www.gunnedahbirdsale.com](http://www.gunnedahbirdsale.com)

**Ringwood.** Eastern District Budgerigar Society, auction. 9799 2035, 0409 652 962.

### April 14

**Murray Bridge.** Lower Murray Bird Club, sale. 0418 813 493.

### April 20-22

**Auckland.** Parrot Society of New Zealand, Convention 2018. [www.parrot.co.nz](http://www.parrot.co.nz)

### April 21

**Brisbane.** Wynnum Redlands budgerigar auction. 07 3396 8732.

**Devonport.** North West Bird Club, Tasmania, sale. 03 6423 2121.

**Nowra.** Shoalhaven Avicultural Society, sale. 0419 970 691.

**Toowoomba.** Downs Bird Breeders, auction. 07 4630 4469.

### April 22

**Sarina.** Sarina Bird Club, sale. 0438 162 196.

### April 29

**Cairns.** Far North Queensland Bird Breeders Club, 10th annual bird sale. [clarkellectrics@bigpond.com](mailto:clarkellectrics@bigpond.com)

**Taree.** Great Lakes Manning Bird Club, sale. 0413 048 680.

### May 6

**Fairfield.** Parrot Breeders and Exhibitors Society of NSW, sale. 02 4681 8589, 02 9607 93343.

**Tanunda.** Barossa Bird Club, sale. 0437 323 170.

### May 12

**Nanango.** Burnett Bird Keepers, annual sale. 0448 855 262, 07 4162 7635.

### May 25-30

**Sydney.** Australian National Budgerigar Council, ANBC show 2018. 02 6176 0389, 2018national@budgerigar.com.au

### May 26

**Cessnock.** Hunter Valley Avicultural Society, sale. Trades 0411 952 044, general 0438 665 941.

### May 27

**Skye.** Mornington Peninsula Avicultural Society, sale. 0402 634 108, [david-over1@hotmail.com](mailto:david-over1@hotmail.com)

### June 2

**Toowoomba.** Downs Bird Breeders, sale. 07 4630 4469.

### June 3-5

**Gold Coast.** Poultry Information Exchange and Australasian Milling Conference. [info@pixamc.com.au](mailto:info@pixamc.com.au)

### June 9-10

**Bowen, Proserpine, Whitsunday.** 2018 Northern Avian Society Conference. 07 4945 1643, [camo.50@bigpond.com](mailto:camo.50@bigpond.com)

### June 10

**Bexley.** BRASEA, budgie auction. 02 9747 6642, 0418 916 685.

### Inverell.

Inverell Birdkeepers Group, annual bird sale 02 6723 1388.

### June 15

**Wagga Wagga.** Wagga Wagga Cage Bird Club, sale. 0427 322 747.

### July 1

**Kempsey.** Kempsey Macleay Bird Club, show/sale. 02 6566 5433.

### July 6-8

**Brisbane.** Parrot Society of Australia, Parrots 2018 conference. 0459 990 333, 02 6723 1388, [president@parrot.society.org.au](mailto:president@parrot.society.org.au)

### July 15

**Brisbane.** BRASEA, budgie auction. 02 9747 6642, 0418 916 685.

**Clarendon.** Parrot Society of Australia NSW, sale. 0416 667 678.

### August 11

**Forbes.** Central West Bird Club, sale. 0406 512 851.

### September 24-27

**Canary Islands.** Ninth International Parrot Convention. 02 6128 0800, 0421 383 051, [www.parrotbreeding.com.au](http://www.parrotbreeding.com.au)

### October 14

**Bundaberg.** Bundaberg Bird Breeders Club, sale. 07 4155 6221.

### October 21

**Bexley.** BRASEA, budgie auction. 02 9747 6642, 0418 916 685.

### October 28

**Bundaberg.** Bundaberg Bird Breeders Club, sale. 07 4155 6221.

### October 28

**Singleton.** Hunter Valley Finch Club, sale. 02 4955 1853, 0402 251 853, [baz.joc@hotmail.com](mailto:baz.joc@hotmail.com)

### October 28

**Newcastle.** Newcastle Budgerigar Club, young bird show. 0412 531 316, <http://bit.ly/nbchome>

### December 9

**Prairiewood.** Finch Society of Australia, sale. 0402 492 350.

## AUSTRALIAN BIRD CLUB NEWS

### Nanango on track

THINGS are looking good for the fourth annual sale to be held by the Burnett Bird Keepers Association on May 12, according to club spokesman Wally Sawatzki.

Known as the club's ambassador, Wally is the group's bird sale co-ordinator and he takes that role very seriously.

During the past four years it has been Wally's job to recruit new members and to promote his club's events.

To achieve that promotion task he has been a regular visitor to the Gunnedah, Inverell and Beaudesert sales to spread the work about Nanango.

"Everything you need at a sale, we have it and we attract vendors from as far as Rockhampton in the north to Inverell in the south," he said.

"As sale co-ordinator I find the hardest thing for me is to convince people to commit themselves more to our club.

"My motto always is that you only get out of it what you put into it."

Wally said that in the club's short existence membership has already passed the 60 mark.

"For a little country town like Nanango/Kingaroy that's a great result," he said.

### No Mildura sale

THERE will be no more bird sales at Mildura, according to Peter Dennis, the man who organised the past few sales, including 2016 and

2017, which were held over the border in NSW due to restrictions during those years on selling exotic birds in Victoria.

"It's disappointing that there will be no more sales but we don't have enough young members who are interested in helping out with organising, etc, because the past two sales went well, really well" Peter said.

### Geelong seeks help

THE Geelong Branch of the Avicultural Society of Australia has launched an appeal for funds to be used to rejuvenate that club.

"We are looking for anyone or a business who would like to sponsor our club in the form of small monthly donations on a monthly basis for our raffles of bird related products or a voucher, or to sponsor us in the form of a monetary donation," club secretary Naomi van Breugel said.

### 28 auction sellers

THERE will be 28 budgerigar breeders from Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia and New South Wales at Victoria's Eastern District Budgerigar Society auction on April 7.

Public viewing at the Ringwood venue will be from 9am-10am and the auction will start at 10am.

■ If you would like to see news about your club's activities published here please send relevant information and photographs to the editor, whose email address and phone number can be found on page 2.

## Vic. corellas killed

AUTHORITIES are investigating the deaths of almost 50 long-billed corellas which fell dead from the sky at a park in western Victoria.

Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning wildlife officer Glenn Smith said there was no good reason why the birds had died.

"They were perfectly healthy birds," he said.

The department feared the birds died from ingesting illegally produced mice bait and was conducting autopsies.

"The tests will determine what has been the cause of death but it is suspected it could have been from illegal mice baiting," Mr Smith said.

Mice bait affordability and accessibility has been a huge issue for farmers in western Victoria with some producers spending up to \$50,000 to protect their crops.

Before Grains Producers Australia helped to facilitate a shipment of the raw product required to produce the bait in Australia it was nearly impossible to buy it.

GPA southern region chairman Andrew Weidemann said availability was now much less of an issue.

"Most definitely it's given the manufacturers ample product to mix and supply the product again," he said.

Mr Weidemann said he had heard of illegal mice baiting practices occurring in Victoria, a point that was echoed by agronomists.

"There's certainly been reports that I have heard but by the same token I don't support or condone any of that," Mr Weidemann said.

Strong demand for the product coupled with mice numbers reaching plague proportions in parts of the country has authorities worried.

"Illegal mouse baiting can and does result in the death of native wildlife in particular our bird species such as rosellas, galahs, sulphur-crested cockatoos and corellas," Mr Smith said.

"Not only that, we also have concerns over people putting their livestock and their pets at risk as well."

Agriculture Victoria said reports of mice numbers increasing in the state's north-west had resulted in heavy demand for all types of mouse bait.

Leading chemical standards officer Alex Perera said the high demand made it tempting for people to make their own mice bait.

He said this could have devastating results, including accidental poisoning of pets, working dogs and native animals.

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**Wollongong** Dr Michael Cannon, Dr Kym Fryer 461 Crown St 4229 8888

## QUEENSLAND — phone prefix 07

**Ashgrove** Dr Ron Woodhead 333 Waterworks Rd 3366 1888

**Chemside** Dr Adrian Gallagher 248 Hamilton Road 3359 2233

**Cummbin Valley** Dr Peter Wilson 1596 Cummbin Creek Rd 5533 0381

**Gatton** Dr Bob Doneley Uni Qld campus Bldg 8156 Main Drive 5460 1788

**Greenbank** Dr Terry Martin 412 Middle Rd 3802 1155

**Maryborough** Dr Kellie Fowler Walker St 4123 1570

**McGregor** Dr Deborah Monks Kessels Rd and Springfield St 3420 6773

**Oxenford** Dr Michael Woodcock 145 Old Pacific Hwy 5573 2670

**Wishart** Dr Edward Layt 224 Wishart Rd 3343 6399

## SOUTH AUSTRALIA — ph prefix 08

**Glengowrie** Dr J McBride 80 Morphett Rd 8294 8444

**Glengowrie** Dr Mark Hill 40 Diagonal Rd 8295 6924

**Glenside** Dr Pin Needham 294 Greenhill Rd 8379 0222

**Holden Hill** Dr Kristian Zimsac 728 North East Rd 8261 9948

**Kurralta Park** Dr Anne Fowler 119 Anzac Hwy 8371 2110

**Port Noarlunga** Dr Pam Scanlon 35 Saltfleet St 8384 4363

## TASMANIA — phone prefix 03

**Launceston** Dr Kim Barrett 351 Wellington St 6344 4566

**Sandy Bay** Dr James Hams 2 Russell Cres 6224 4244

## VICTORIA — phone prefix 03

**Burwood** Dr Pat McWhirter & Dr Philip Sacks 128 Highbury Rd 9808 9011

**Mornington** Dr Adam Stefani 4/1140 Nepean Hwy 5975 3811

**North Melbourne** Dr Sasha Herbert 24 Villiers St 9328 3021

**Springvale South** Dr M Gosbell 570 Springvale Rd 9546 5022

**Scoresby** Dr Colin Walker, Dr Stacey Gells & Dr Corrie Pinkster 1 George St 9764 9000

**West Brunswick** Dr Cameron Wood 169 Dawson St 9387 6166

## WESTERN AUSTRALIA — ph prefix 08

**Balcatta** Dr James Haberfield, Dr Peter Ricci 59 Enndale Rd 9345 4644

**Booragoon** Dr Elizabeth-Jo Vickridge 10/20 Shields Cres 9330 2321

**Mundaring** Dr Ian Hainsworth 30 Wandeara Cres 9295 6777

**Murdoch** Dr James Haberfield, Dr Peter Ricci 90 South St 9360 6454

**Myaree** Dr Ray Butler, Dr Ian McDowell, Dr Toni Cockburn 13 Hulme Court 9329 9222

**Shelley** Dr Kevin Cleasby 1A/24 Yampi Way 9457 1008

**Wangara** Dr Ingrid Danylyk Chokolich St 9200 6247

**Wattle Grove** Dr Tim Oldfield, 791 Welshpool Road 9453 6655

# BIRD CLUB & SOCIETY LISTINGS

## NATIONAL GROUPS

**Associated Birdkeepers of Australia** 106 Berry St Nowra NSW 2541 Ph 4421 2407 saleraj@optusnet.com.au

**Australian Roller Canary Society** 178 Ennoger Rd Newmarket Qld Ph 0412 340 867

**Budgerigar Rare & Specialist Exhibitors of Australasia** PO Box 141 Croydon NSW 2132 Ph 02 9747 6642

**Canary & Cage Bird Federation of Australia** PO Box 230 Frenchs Forest NSW 1640 Ph 02 9452 2396

**Miniature Budgerigar Society of Australasia** 1 Kader St Bargo NSW 2574 Ph 0422 067 888

**National Finch and Softbill Association** 80 Harris Rd Elliminyt Victoria 3250 Ph 03 5231 4510

## AUST. CAP TERRITORY — ph prefix 02

**Budgerigar Society of Australia** 4 Crowley Cr Chamwood 2615 Ph 6256 6849

**Budgerigar Society of NSW Canberra Branch** 5 Blumenthal Pl Spence 2615 Ph 0417 044 023 nta.stuart@optusnet.com.au www.budgerigar.com.au/canberra-branch

**Canberra Canary Fanciers Society** 11 Faulkner Pl Chapman 2611 kijing@bigpond.net.au

**Canberra Finch Club** PO Box 3719 Weston Creek 2611 Ph 0408 787 865

## NEW SOUTH WALES — ph prefix 02

**Armidale Caged Bird Club** 28 Budumba Rd Invergowrie 2350 Ph 0431 292 101

**Association of Country Bird Exhibitors** 151 Prince St Orange 2800 Ph 6362 4561

**Australian Fife Fancy Canary Club of NSW** 126 Hopetoun St Kurri Kurri 2327 Ph 4937 3150, 0439 439 697

**Australian Lizard Canary Society** Level 1 384 High St Penrith 2750 Ph 0414 997 423

**Australian National Cockatiel Society** Branch, PO Box KL630 Kings Langley 2147 Ph 4572 3349

**Avicultural Society of the Central Coast** PO Box 4218 East Gosford 2250 Ph 4374 1801

**Avicultural Society of NSW** PO Box 482 West Ryde NSW 1685 Ph 02 9874 2464, aviculturalsocietynsw@yahoo.com.au

**Bathurst Regional Avicultural Society** PO Box 776 Bathurst 2795 Ph 0416 061 154

**Blacktown & District Cage Bird Society** 63 Dahlia St Greystanes 2145 Ph 9604 9242

**Border Fancy Canary Club of Australia** 15 Third Av Berala 2141 Ph 9646 4569

**Brisbane Waters Cage Bird Society** 69 Lone Pine Ave Umina 2257 Ph 4341 6842

**Broken Hill Avicultural Society** 585 Cummins St Broken Hill 2880 Ph 08 8087 6980

**Budgerigar Improvement Society** 48 Heather St Wheeler Heights 2097 Ph 9982 2801

**Budgerigar Information Service** 25 Lyton St Blacktown 2148 Ph 9671 5380

**Budgerigar Rare & Specialist Exhibitors of Australasia** PO Box 141 Croydon 2132 Ph 9747 6642

**Budgerigar Society of NSW** 340 Highlands Drive Failford 2430 Ph 6554 3073, 0427 537 761 knico2@bigpond.com

**Canary & Cage Bird Improvement Society** 3 Lakeside St Currans Hill 2567 Ph 4647 0327

**Central Coast Avicultural Society** PO Box 4218 East Gosford 2250 Ph 4389 1997

**Central Tablelands Avicultural Association** PO Box 233 Gulgong 2852 Ph 6374 1890

**Central West Bird Club** 59 Templar St Forbes 2871 Ph 0406 512 851

**Clarence River District Cage Bird Club** PO Box 959 Grafton 2460 Ph 6643 1323 AH

**Coffs Harbour & District Avicultural Society** PO Box 884 Coffs Harbour 2450 Ph 6654 3357

**Finch Society of Australia** PO Box 26 Douglas Park 2569 Ph 0411 253 512 secretary@finchsociety.org

**Finch Society of Australia Hawkesbury Valley Branch** 341 Springwood Rd Yarramundi 2753 Ph 02 4776 1076 www.finchclub.cbj.net

**Finch Society of Australia Wollongong Branch** PO Box 50 Woonona 2517 Ph 02 4283 5383

**Gloster Fancy Canary Club of NSW** PO Box 230 Frenchs Forest 1640 Ph 9452 2396 birdclubs@aaopt.net.au

**Grass Parrot & Lorikeet Society of Australia** PO Box 41 Berry 2535 Ph 4572 3349

**Great Lakes Manning Bird Club** 18 Belles Close Foster 2428 Ph 6557 2165

**Gulgong and District Avicultural Society** PO Box 37 Gulgong 2852 Ph 6374 1348

**Hawkesbury Valley Water Fowl Club** PO Box 838 Windsor 2756 Ph 4577 3639

**Hunter District Canary & Cage Bird Society** 21 Libya St Shortland 2307 Ph 4955 6606

**Hunter Valley Avicultural Society** PO Box 25 RAAF Base Williamtown NSW 2317 Ph 0411 952 044 secretary.hvas@hotmail.com

**Hunter Valley Finch Club Inc** 5 Harold St Floraville 2280 Ph 02 4946 9773

**Illawarra Parrot Club** 0448 414 588 borgs brooders.bigpond.com

**Inverell Birdkeepers Group** Sunny Brae Gilgal 2360 Ph 6723 1388 www.inverell-socialbirdkeepersgroup.com.au

**Kempsey Macleay Bird Club** PO Box 445 Kempsey 2440 Ph 6562 2019

**Lake Macquarie Zebra Finch Society** 5 Elizabeth Street Fennell Bay 2283 Ph 4959 6834

**Macarthur Aviary Bird Club** PO Box 673 Ingleburn 2565 Ph 9605 3432

**Macleay District Avicultural Society** 26 Elizabeth St Iluka 2466 Ph 6645 7366

**Maitland Bird Club** 1 Elizabeth St Telarah 2320 Ph 4932 3311

**Manly Warringah Aviculture Society** 32 Fairlight St Fairlight 2094 Ph 9949 2692

**Manning & District Birdkeepers** 3 Rosewood Cres Taree 2430

**Midstate Budgerigar Club** 5 Gilliana Pl Orange 2800 Ph 6363 1322

**Nambucca River Cage Bird Club** Lot 5 Albert Dr Warell Creek via Macksville 2447 Ph 6569 3243

**Namoi Valley Aviculture Club** PO Box 445 Gunnedah 2360

**Narrabri & District Poultry Club** 13 Saundera St Narrabri 2390

**Native Cockatiel Society of Australia** PO Box 6308 South Penrith 2750 Ph 4733 6521

**Nepean District Cage Bird Club** 134 Maple Rd St Marys 2760 Ph 9862 2624

**New Colour & Red Factor Canary Club of Aust** 26 Coorabin Pl Riverwood 2210 Ph 9584 9279

**Newcastle Border Fancy Canary Club** 8 Agate Av Pearl Beach 2256 Ph 4342 2466

**Newcastle/Maitland Canary & Cage Bird Society** 2 Beckett St Gillieston Hts 2321 Ph 4932 6732

**North-West NSW Avicultural Society** 'Melrose' 151 Glenburnie Rd Rob Roy 2360 Ph 0407 453 236

**North Coast Caged Bird Club** 65 Cathcart St Lismore 2477 Ph 6621 3226

**Northern Avicultural Society (Newcastle)** PO Box 277 Adamstown 2289 Ph 4963 3623

**Northern NSW Budgerigar Breeders Assoc** 20 Armidale Rd Courts Crossing 2460 Ph 6649 3209

**Northern Rivers Avicultural Society** 104 Meyers Rd Grafton 2460 Ph 6644 9513

**Norwich Canary Club of NSW** 122 Campbell St Fairfield 2165 Ph 9755 7377

**NSW Finch Exhibitors Society** 7 Braddon St St Marys 2760 Ph 9833 9883

**NSW Ornithological Association** 11 President St Croydon Park 2133 Ph 9745 1215

**Orana Avicultural Society** PO Box 4103 Dubbo 2839 Ph 6882 9098

**Orange Bird Society** PO Box 1666 Orange 2800 Ph 6365 3666

**Parrot Breeders & Exhibitors Society of NSW** PO Box 87 Casula Mall 2170 Ph 9607 5591

**Parrot Society of Australia (NSW)** PO Box 49 Riverstone 2765 Ph 0403 017 855

**Pied Budgerigar Society** 117 Malvern St Panania 2213 Ph 9773 8348

**Red Factor Canary Club of Australia** 2 Beethoven St Engadine 2233 Ph 9520 2574

**Rivernia Bird Fanciers** PO Box 208 Temora 2666

**Ryde District Canary & Cage Bird Society** 13 Thom St Ryde 2112 Ph 9808 4468

**Shoalhaven Avicultural Society** PO Box 1133 Nowra 2541 Ph 4423 4475, 0419 970 691

**Softbill & Native Pigeon Society of Australia** Ph 9817 4897

**South Sydney Avicultural Society** 5 Byrne Ave South Coogee 2034 Ph 9344 0779

**South Western NSW Budgerigar Society** 18 Myall Cres Lake Albert Ph 6922 6214

**Sutherland Shire Bird Society** Uniting Church Hall Flora St Sutherland NSW 2232

**Tamworth Cage Bird Society** 74 Denne St Tamworth 2340 Ph 6762 7961

**Tenterfield Cage Bird Society** 56 Pelham St Tenterfield 2372 Ph 6736 2694

**Tuggerah Lakes Specialist Canary Society** 236 Pacific Highway Watanbobbi 2259 Ph 4352 1494

**Twin Towns Avicultural Society** 22 Waratah St Parkes 2870 Ph 6862 2806

**Wagga & District Caged Bird Society** PO Box 300 Wagga Wagga 2650 Ph 6922 8200

**Wodonga-Albury Avicultural Society** PO Box 794 Lavington 2641 Ph 6025 8328

**Wollongong & District Avicultural Society** 2 Griffiths St Oak Flats 2529 Ph 4256 0005 bmker1997@bigpond.com

# BIRD CLUB & SOCIETY LISTINGS

- Wollongong Finch Club** 173 Coromal St Wollongong 2500 Ph 0412 288 656 [aj.mallon@gmail.com](mailto:aj.mallon@gmail.com)
- Yass & District Bird Club** PO Box 432 Yass 2582 Ph 6226 5663
- Yorkshire Canary Club of Australia** 7 Higgins St Condell Park 2200 Ph 9709 6400
- Young & District Cage Bird Society** Ph 0407 903 220
- Zebra Finch Society of Australia** [gorkell@optusnet.com.au](mailto:gorkell@optusnet.com.au) Ph 9833 9883
- NORTHERN TERRITORY — prefix 08**
- Northern Territory Avicultural Society** PO Box 40928 Casuarina 0810 Ph 0407 357 272
- QUEENSLAND — ph prefix 07**
- African Lovebird & Foreign Parrot Society of Qld** PO Box 5587 Brendale MDC 4500
- Australian Budgerigar Society** PO Box 5163 Eagleby 4207 Ph 0407 037 522 Wayne Robinson
- Australian National Cockatiel Society** PO Box 1248 Fortitude Valley 4006
- Australian Roller Canary Society** PO Box 292 Alderley 4051 Ph 0417 340 367
- Beaudesert Parrot & Finch Assoc** PO Box 222 Beaudesert 4285 Ph 0438 182 604 [www.bpfa.websyde.com.au](http://www.bpfa.websyde.com.au)
- Beenleigh Bird Breeders Assoc** PO Box 5021 Eagleby 4207 Ph general 3208 6062, bird sales 3890 2425
- Bengalese Breeders Society** (in recess) 1/52 Wine Drive Toowoomba 4350 Ph 4634 7549
- Border Fancy Canary Club of Queensland** 15 Arkwright St Welles Hill Brisbane 4121 Ph 3397 5233
- Brisbane & Northern Suburbs Budgerigar Society** 21 Forest Hills Drive, Morayfield Qld 4506 Ph 3886 8069 [www.bnsbsinc.com.au](http://www.bnsbsinc.com.au)
- Budgerigar Society of Bundaberg** 34 McNeilly St Bundaberg Ph 4152 3001
- Bundaberg Bird Breeders Club** PO Box 5471 Bundaberg 4670 Ph 4155 6221
- Bundaberg Canary & Cage Bird Society** 39 Greathead Rd Bundaberg 4670 Ph 4152 9637
- Burnett Bird Keepers Association** 235 Franklin Rd Wattle Camp 4615 Ph 4162 7635
- Caboolture Budgerigar Society** 9 Dussek Pl Burpengary 4505 Ph 3888 4198
- Capricornia Budgerigar Society** PO Box 5451 CQMC Rockhampton 4701 Ph 4926 1635
- Charters Towers Birdkeepers Club** PO Box 697 Charters Towers 4820 Ph 4787 3015
- Coral Coast Bird Club** PO Box 521 Proserpine 4800
- Downs Bird Breeders Association** PO Box 3401 Village Fair Toowoomba 4350 Ph 4630 4469 [www.dbba.net](http://www.dbba.net)
- Far North Queensland Bird Breeders Club** PO Box 336 Yungaburra 4884 Ph 4095 3683 [secretaryfnqbbc@gmail.com](mailto:secretaryfnqbbc@gmail.com)
- Fraser Coast Bird Club** 17 Park St Urangan Qld 4655 Ph 4128 9656
- Fraser Coast Budgerigar Society** 37 Nelson St Childers 4660 Ph 4126 3732
- Gladstone Budgerigar & Caged Bird Society** 20 Tucker Rd Boyne Island 4680 Ph 4973 9489 [www.gladstonecagebirds.com](http://www.gladstonecagebirds.com)
- Gold Coast Avian Bird Association** PO Box 7003 Gold Coast Mail Centre Bundall 4217 Ph 5522 6666 [www.goldcoastavianbird.org](http://www.goldcoastavianbird.org)
- Gympie Budgerigar Society** 9A Bruce Hwy Chatsworth 4570 Ph 5482 5612
- Gympie Cage Bird Club** PO Box 902, Gympie 4570
- Hervey Bay Bird Club** 70 Smelter St Aldershot 4650 Ph 4121 4605
- Ipswich Canary Society** Ph 3288 9249
- Ipswich Budgerigar Society** 37 Head St Laidley 4341 Ph 0401 447 517
- Mackay Aviculture Society** PO Box 5057 MMC Mackay 4741 Ph 0488 955 875
- Parrot Society of Australia** PO Box 75 Salisbury 4107 [www.parrotsociety.org.au](http://www.parrotsociety.org.au)
- Pheasant & Waterfowl Society of Australia (Qld)** Ph 0417 641 759
- Pine Rivers Budgerigar Society** PO Box 310 Kipparing 4021 Ph 3293 1311
- Queensland Avicultural & Canary Improvement Society** PO Box 27 Cotton Tree 4558 Ph 0411 401 419
- Queensland Bird Breeders Club** PO Box 6059 Logan Central 4114 Ph 3200 5836
- Queensland Council of Bird Societies** PO Box 236 Beaudesert 4285 Ph 0419 666 674 [qjdcbs@gmail.com](mailto:qjdcbs@gmail.com)
- Queensland Finch Society** PO Box 1600 Cooparoo 4151 Ph 3207 3386
- Queensland Pigeon Fanciers Society** PO Box 584 New Farm 4005 Ph 3358 3677 [barypigeons@bigpond.com](mailto:barypigeons@bigpond.com)
- Sarina Bird Club** 410 West Plane Creek Rd Sanna 4737 Ph 0438 162196 [donna295@bigpond.com](mailto:donna295@bigpond.com)
- South East Queensland Zebra Finch Society** 3 Kerr Pl Gympie 4570 Ph 5482 4545 [jag@spiderweb.com.au](mailto:jag@spiderweb.com.au)
- South Queensland Budgerigar Breeders Assoc** 131-141 Smiths Rd Caboolture Ph 5498 9788
- Sunshine Coast Avicultural Society** PO Box 302 Burpengary 4505 Ph 3888 5423 [gjones@st.net.au](mailto:gjones@st.net.au)
- Sunshine Coast Budgerigar Association** 8 Bangalow Court Cooroy 4563 Ph 5442 6726
- Surfers Paradise Budgerigar Society** PO Box 842 Mudgeeraba 4213 Ph 5530 3274
- Tableland Bird Breeders Club** PO Box 222 Mareeba 4880 Ph 4092 4898
- Thuringowa Bird Club** PO Box 397 Deeragun Townsville 4818 Ph 4778 7007 [www.thuringowabirdclub.org](http://www.thuringowabirdclub.org)
- Toowoomba Avicultural Society** PO Box 983 Toowoomba 4350 Ph 4693 1037
- Toowoomba Budgerigar Assoc** 24 Nioka Drive Highfields Ph 4352 0427 671 399
- Toowoomba Canary Club** PO Box 7068 Toowoomba South 4350 Ph 4635 0885
- Townsville Bird Breeders Club** 61 Halstead St Gulliver 4812 Ph 4779 4369
- Wide Bay Parrot Society** 2960 Maryborough Rd Hervey Bay Ph 0458 214 841
- Wynnum Redlands Budgerigar Society** 22 Stockyard St Wynnum West 4178 Ph 3393 3205
- Yorkshire & Norwich Canary Club of Qld** 9 Eynsford St Carindale 4152 Ph 3398 6893
- SOUTH AUSTRALIA — ph prefix 08**
- Adelaide Bird Club** 8 Panorama Drive Windsor Gardens 5087 Ph 8261 3886 [www.adelaidebirdclub.com](http://www.adelaidebirdclub.com)
- Adelaide Canary Society** PO Box 185 Goolwa 5214 Ph 8555 3836
- Adelaide New Colour Canary Club** 4 Rodriguez Drive, Paralowie 5108 Ph 8280 9011 [ozziebee\\_au@yahoo.com.au](mailto:ozziebee_au@yahoo.com.au)
- Avicultural Society of South Australia** PO Box 485 North Adelaide 5006 Ph 8380 9806 [www.birdkeepinginaustralia.com](http://www.birdkeepinginaustralia.com)
- ASSA Mid-North Branch** 1 Matra Rd Wallaroo 5556
- ASSA South-East branch** PO Box 9081 Mt Gambier West 5291 Ph 8725 8249 [ajdfward@hotmail.net.au](mailto:ajdfward@hotmail.net.au)
- ASSA York Peninsula Branch** 47 Edinburgh Rd Yorktown 5576
- Barossa Bird Club** PO Box 564 Greenock 5360 Ph: 8564 2546, 8524 4493.
- Budgerigar Breeders Club** 17 Adelaide Terrace Edwardstown 5039 Ph 8277 3278
- Budgerigar Society of South Australia** 17 Vine St Surrey Downs 5126 Ph 8288 7936
- Fleurieu Peninsula Cage Bird Society** 42 Heather Dve Christie Downs 5164 Ph 8384 5835
- Gawler & Districts Bird Club** 24 Magnolia St Tanunda 5352 [wiebrecht@ozemail.com.au](mailto:wiebrecht@ozemail.com.au)
- Gawler & Districts Canary Club** 13 Glenelg Lane Gawler 5118 Ph 8522 3394
- Limestone Coast Birdkeepers Club** PO Box 21 Naracoorte 5271 Ph 8764 6030 [gumbowie@rbm.com.au](mailto:gumbowie@rbm.com.au)
- Lower Murray Bird Club** PO Box 10 Mannum 5238 Ph 8569 1853
- Marsupial Society of Australia** GPO Box 2462 Adelaide 5001 Ph 8252 7800
- Mildura & Districts Bird Club** PO Box 1356 Centre Plaza Mildura 3501 Ph 5023 3924
- North East Budgerigar Society** 13 Dunkley Ave Firls 5070 Ph 8331 0097
- Port Augusta Bird Society** 9 Davies Cres Port Augusta 5700 Ph 8642 2276 [raysandy@bigpond.net.au](mailto:raysandy@bigpond.net.au)
- Port Pirie Bird Club** 27 Booyoolie Street Laura 5480 Ph 8663 2320
- Port Pirie Budgerigar Society** 5 Wardang Ave Maitland 5573 Ph 8832 2857
- Riverland Birdkeepers Club** PO Box 1130 Loxton 5333 Ph 8582 1119
- Roller Canary Society of South Australia** 7 Brookhaven Crt Woodland Ridge 5159 Ph 8270 4183
- Southern Cage Bird Society** 30 Hounslow Avenue Tomensville 5031 Ph 8346 6347 [edward@mathewshotels.com.au](mailto:edward@mathewshotels.com.au)
- TASMANIA — ph prefix 03**
- Avicultural Society of Tasmania** PO Box 714 Moonah 7009 Ph 0408 720 130
- Border Fancy Canary Club of Tasmania** PO Box 227 Lilydale 7268 Ph 6395 1111
- Budgerigar Society of Tasmania** PO Box 371 Sorell 7172 Ph 6265 2779
- Launceston Canary & Cage Bird Society** 21 Reubens Rd Rosevale 7292 Ph 6396 6172
- Northern Tasmania Budgerigar Society** 18 Jamison St Prospect 7250 Ph 6334 3202
- North West Bird Club** PO Box 59 Wynyard 7325 Ph 6431 1114 [richardson-birds@dodo.com.au](mailto:richardson-birds@dodo.com.au) [www.northwestbirdclubtasmania.org.au](http://www.northwestbirdclubtasmania.org.au)
- North West Canary Society of Tasmania** 66 Bird St Acton 7320 Ph 6431 7909
- Southern Tasmania Canary Society** 43 Coleman St Moonah West 7009 Ph 6272 0191
- Tasny Finch Club** 22 Inkerman St Tnabunna 7190 [sandmgramham@bigpond.com](mailto:sandmgramham@bigpond.com)
- VICTORIA — ph prefix 03**
- Australian Canary Association** 51 Whitesides Ave, West Sunshine 3020
- Avicultural Society of Australia** 52 One Tree Hill, Ferny Creek 3786 Ph 9755 2935 [stephanie.webber@harrison.org.au](mailto:stephanie.webber@harrison.org.au) [www.birds.org.au](http://www.birds.org.au)
- ASA Ararat branch** 160 Possum Gully Rd Adelaide Lead Ph 5461 2158
- ASA Ballarat branch** PO Box 15 Gordon 3345 Ph 5368 9288
- ASA Bendigo branch** PO Box 2171 Bendigo Mail Centre 3554 Ph 5447 9931
- ASA Centre West branch** 1172 Cross Forest Rd Cobden 3266 Ph 5595 2215
- ASA Geelong branch** PO Box 865 Geelong 3220 Ph 0402 262 112
- ASA Gippsland branch** PO Box 147 Trafalgar 3824 Ph 5163 1433
- ASA Goulburn Valley branch** 239 Maryann Rd Echuca 3564 Ph 0429 016 957
- ASA Northern branch** 25 Margaret St Cohuna 3568 Ph 5456 2778
- ASA Pheasant & Waterfowl branch** 120 Shotton Rd Mt Eliza Ph 5975 3774
- ASA Sunraysia branch** PO Box 3058 Mildura 3502 Ph 5027 3345
- ASA Swan Hill branch** PO Box 1128 Swan Hill 3585 Ph 5033 1969
- ASA Western District branch** 50 Spencers Rd Kirkstall 3283 Ph 5565 8084, 0417 180 973 [chloebrown50@hotmail.com](mailto:chloebrown50@hotmail.com)
- Border Fancy Canary Club of Melbourne** 3 Lattimer Pl Tullamarine 3043 Ph 9338 3472
- Border Fancy Canary Club of Victoria** 6 Reynella Close Vermont South 3133 Ph 9801 4043
- Budgerigar Council of Victoria** 145 Moray St Fawkner 3060 Ph 03 9359 3315 email [secretary@bcv.asn.au](mailto:secretary@bcv.asn.au)
- Colour Canary Breeders of Victoria** 53 Cattleton Rd Viewbank 3084
- Dandenong Canary Society** 4 Waintree Crt Endeavour Hills 3802 Ph 0420 566 722
- Fife Fancy Club of Victoria** 4 Beale Crt Templestowe 3106 Ph 9846 7493
- Geelong Canary Improvement Society** 4 Parramatta Rd Weribee 3030
- Gippsland Canary Club** 8 Burrage St Moe 3825 Ph 5127 3711
- Gloster Fancy Canary Club of Victoria** 11 Palm Court Frankston 3199 Ph 8707 0240
- Latrobe Valley Avicultural Club** PO Box 3237 Gippsland Mail Centre Morwell 3841 Ph 03 5983 0093.
- Melbourne Canary Improvement Society** 15 Ballina Terrace Vermont South 3133 Ph 9803 8230
- Mildura & Districts Bird Club** PO Box 1356 Centre Plaza Mildura 3501 Ph 5023 4777
- Mornington Peninsula Avicultural Society** PO Box 4210 Frankston Heights LPO 3199 Ph 9770 1231
- Northern Districts Canary Improvement Society of Victoria** 4 Parramatta Rd Weribee 3030 Ph 9741 5874
- Pheasant & Waterfowl Society of Australia** Ph 5978 7397, [info@pwsa.org.au](mailto:info@pwsa.org.au)
- Southern Canary Club** PO Box 151 Ormond 3204 Ph 9578 4964
- Sunraysia Canary Society** PO Box 470 Red Cliffs 3496 Ph 5024 1434
- Victorian Canary Society** 956 Mt Dandenong Tourist Rd Montrose 3785 Ph 9761 8470
- Victorian Norwich Canary Club** 54 McNamara Ave Airport West 3042 Ph 9374 2098
- Victorian Zebra Finch** 0431 539 517, 0408 337 498 [avisfelis@bigpond.com](mailto:avisfelis@bigpond.com)
- Wimmera Bird Club** PO Box 221 Horsham 3402 Ph 5382 2826
- Yorkshire Canary Club of Victoria** 4 Millar Rd Tullamarine 3043
- WESTERN AUSTRALIA — ph prefix 08**
- Avicultural Society of Western Australia** PO Box 55 Victoria Park 6979 Ph 0418 946 363
- Budgerigar Society of WA** 31 Yallambee Cres Wanneroo 6065 Ph 9405 2464
- Crested Budgerigar Club of Aust** 28 Okewood Way Morley 6062 Ph 9377 2420 [unique@members.capricorn.com.au](mailto:unique@members.capricorn.com.au)
- Cage Bird & Wildlife Society of Western Australia** 35 Torcross St Wamboro 6169 Ph 9593 4917
- Finch Society of Western Australia** PO Box 2351 Malaga 6944 Ph 9401 7656
- Geraldton Bird Club** Ph 0409 791 072 [jcoles@bigpond.com](mailto:jcoles@bigpond.com)
- Mandurah Avicultural Society** 125 Cooper St Mandurah 6210 Ph 08 9535 3983
- Melville District Cage Bird Society** 40A Harfoot St Willagee 6156 Ph 9349 2172
- Metropolitan Budgerigar Club** 69 Wilber St Rossmoyne 6148 [brett.wood@iag.com.au](mailto:brett.wood@iag.com.au)
- Midland & Northern Districts Cage Bird Club** 359 Warwick Rd Greenwood 6042 Ph 9447 9238
- Pheasant & Waterfowl Society of Australia** 9295 3316 [info@pwsa.org.au](mailto:info@pwsa.org.au)
- Rare Budgerigar Club of WA** 3/14 Mackay Cres Gosnells 6110 Ph 9398 6598, 0418 934 334
- South West Avicultural Society** PO Box 923 Bunbury WA 6231 Ph 9725 1761 [trevormogulan@bigpond.com](mailto:trevormogulan@bigpond.com)
- South West Budgerigar Club Mandurah** 0402 409 937 [swbudgerigarclub@yahoo.com.au](mailto:swbudgerigarclub@yahoo.com.au)
- Western Australian Budgerigar Council** 0402 409 937 [wabudgerigarcouncil@yahoo.com.au](mailto:wabudgerigarcouncil@yahoo.com.au)

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Finches               | <input type="checkbox"/> Parrots   | <input type="checkbox"/> Pheasants |
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\$84	\$77	\$70	\$63	\$56	\$49	\$126	\$119	\$112	\$105	\$98	\$91

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Australian Government

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# PROGRESS REPORT

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TO THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT  
AND ENERGY JUL 16 - DEC 17



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Department of the Environment and Energy acknowledges the Traditional Owners of country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures and to their Elders both past and present. We are committed to working respectfully with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and give particular acknowledgement to their use, knowledge and custodianship of Australia's native plants and animals over countless generations.

The Department supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their aspirations to maintain, protect and manage their culture, language, land and sea country and heritage. For more information please see the [Reconciliation Action Plan](#).

# COMMISSIONER'S MESSAGE

I am proud to deliver this progress report, which reflects the work of my office and predecessors. This is the fourth report on the Australian Government's efforts to fight threatened species extinction. It also marks more than two years since the release of the Threatened Species Strategy.

Key achievements during this period include:

- Mobilising over \$255 million for projects that include outcomes for threatened species.
- Providing a competitive grants round under the Threatened Species Recovery Fund.
- Launching Australia's first Threatened Species Prospectus.
- Raising awareness of Australia's threatened species through the use of innovative engagement techniques.
- Increasing momentum and action under the Threatened Species Strategy.

In addition, we have maintained our close working relationships with the community, Indigenous Australians, scientists, zoos, other governments, and on-ground practitioners. This collective effort continues to drive on-ground action and momentum for threatened species recovery. We all have a role to play and I would like to thank our partners for their continuing commitment and passion to saving Australia's threatened species.

I would also like to thank my predecessors, Mr Gregory Andrews and Mr Sebastian Lang. Australia's first Threatened Species Commissioner, Gregory Andrews, was instrumental to the success of the Threatened Species Commissioner model and Threatened Species Strategy so far. Sebastian Lang continued this work as Acting Commissioner and was very helpful with my transition into the role.

The focus remains firmly on driving more action and effort towards achieving the year three targets in the Strategy. We are tracking well and will continue to grow and leverage investment to create a brighter future for our threatened species.

My commencement as the new Commissioner also provides an opportunity to reflect on our efforts to date, and consider areas for increased focus and improvement. We are working with our colleagues in the Department to evaluate our effectiveness and we will use this to guide continuous improvement across our work.

For anyone interested in a conversation about threatened species, or in learning more about how Australia is fighting extinction, there is an open invitation to join the Commissioner's [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#) page.



A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Sally Box'.

**Dr Sally Box**  
Threatened Species Commissioner

# SAVING SPECIES SUCCESS STORIES

## November 2016

Following emergency baiting in August, a **reduction in cat numbers and boost in central rock-rat** numbers detected in the Western MacDonnell Ranges in the Northern Territory

## March 2017

**240 critically endangered southern corroboree frogs** released into disease-free enclosures at Kosciuszko National Park, New South Wales

**Night parrots sighted** for the first time in Western Australia

## April 2017

**Eastern bettongs bred on the mainland** for the first time in 100 years at Mulligan's Flat, Australian Capital Territory

Almost **100 critically endangered regent honeyeaters** released into the wild at Chiltern-Mt Pilot National Park, Victoria

**Norfolk Island green parrots** translocated to nearby Phillip Island, New South Wales

## May 2017

**Black-flanked rock-wallabies** reported to have doubled in Kalbarri National Park, Western Australia

## July 2017

First successful **gene-pool widening event for the eastern barred bandicoot** occurred in Victoria

## October 2017

**Artificial nests for the shy albatross** deployed on Albatross Island

**90 eastern barred bandicoots** released on Phillip Island, Victoria

**Night parrots sighted** for the second time in Western Australia

## November 2017

**200 more purple wattles** discovered in north Queensland

## December 2017

**400 more Morrisby's gums** discovered in Tasmania



# MOBILISING RESOURCES

Under the Threatened Species Commissioner model we have sought to build momentum and mobilise resources to support threatened species recovery. Since the establishment of the Commissioner model in 2014, we have mobilised more than \$255 million for over 1200 projects that include outcomes for threatened species. Through this funding, we are helping to improve or maintain populations of our threatened species and ecological communities by improving habitat quality and connectivity, carrying out critical scientific experiments, removing threats, or by undertaking direct interventions to boost threatened species populations.

The National Landcare Program (NLP) continues to be a key investment in Australia's natural resources and supports the Threatened Species Recovery Fund, Landcare Networks, the 20 Million Trees program and Australia's 56 regional natural resource management (NRM) organisations. The combination of these important and well-designed programs ensures that on-ground work to fight extinction continues with the help of local communities. The new \$450 million investment into Regional Land Partnerships is a significant commitment to biodiversity and we look forward to identifying, collaborating and promoting projects that provide positive outcomes for threatened species.

The National Environmental Science Program continues to grow and drive significant action by supporting the latest research into threatened species. I am confident this research will continue to provide the science needed for saving species.

We also continue to build partnerships with the philanthropic and business community to identify opportunities and leverage additional resources for threatened species. The Threatened Species Prospectus, launched in February 2017, has been a catalyst for collaboration with a range of organisations.

## RECENT FUNDING ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- 25 January 2017 – [Minister Frydenberg announced \\$475,000 for 8 new projects under the Threatened Species Strategy](#)
- 17 March 2017 – [\\$86,000 Norfolk Island Green Parrot Crowdfunding campaign successful](#)
- 5 June 2017 – [Minister Frydenberg announced \\$29 million in additional funding for threatened species on World Environment Day](#)
- 7 September 2017 – [Minister Frydenberg announced 19 new grants from the Threatened Species Recovery Fund](#)
- 8 December 2017 – [Minister Frydenberg announced \\$18 million funding boost under the 20 Million Trees program](#)

<b>Funding mobilised since July 2014 until December 2017</b>		
<b>Program</b>	<b>Number of projects</b>	<b>Funding mobilised</b>
<b>20 Million Trees</b>		
Grant Round 1: 2014-15	50	\$3,940,936
West Melbourne	1	\$5,000,000
Cumberland Corridors Grants Round	13	\$4,565,441
National Service Provider - Tranche 1	22	\$16,320,513
National Service Provider - Tranche 2	10	\$7,286,382
Grant Round 2: 2015-16	63	\$4,903,078
National Service Provider - Tranche 3	12	\$14,000,000
Grant Round 3: 2016-17	52	\$4,202,210
<b>National Landcare Program</b>		
25th Anniversary Landcare Grants	92	\$1,594,500
Tasmanian Devil Conservation Projects	3	\$3,300,000
<b>National Environmental Science Program</b>		
Threatened Species Recovery Hub	22	\$29,980,000
<b>Threatened Species Targeted Projects</b>		
Commonwealth National Parks	11	\$2,500,000
Targeted Threatened Species projects – 2015	11	\$722,000
Targeted Threatened Species Summit Projects	20	\$6,667,151
National Bilby Festival and Western Ground Parrot Workshop	2	\$45,000
Kangaroo Island and Bruny Island cat eradication	2	\$1,181,500
Threatened Species Recovery Fund	30	\$5,000,000
Targeted Threatened Species Strategy Projects – 2017	7	\$392,573
Targeted Threatened Species Projects – Emerging Priorities	8	\$1,095,000
<b>Marine threatened species initiatives</b>		
Nest to Ocean Turtle Protection Program	13	\$3,791,877
Raine Island Recovery Project	1	\$400,000
Turtle and Dugong Protection Plan	4	\$5,000,000
<b>Green Army Program</b>		
Rounds 1-4	645	\$113,992,462
Election commitments	112	\$19,990,000
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1206</b>	<b>\$255,890,622</b>

- Funding is for a broad range of activities, including threatened species conservation activities.
- Figures provided for the Green Army are approximate and are calculated on the 2015-16 indexed figure of \$176,732. Election Commitments are calculated on the 2016-17 indexed figure of \$178,482.
- Funding for some projects is provided in partnership with state & territory governments.
- A total of \$29.98 million has been committed for the NESP Threatened Species Recovery Hub. As at Dec 2017, 22 projects had been announced with further projects under consideration.
- A total of \$5 million has been approved and announced for the Threatened Species Recovery Fund. As at Dec 2017, 30 projects under the fund have been initiated with further projects under consideration.



# THREATENED SPECIES RECOVERY FUND

In 2016, the Australian Government announced a dedicated \$5 million Threatened Species Recovery Fund, supported by the National Landcare Program. The Recovery Fund was put in place to support the excellent work undertaken by local community groups fighting extinction. When the Recovery Fund was announced, nine projects were also launched and these are now underway with action on the ground.

In May 2017, a competitive grants round of the Threatened Species Recovery Fund was launched where more than 300 project applications were received from across Australia. The high response and standard of applications is testament to our industrious conservation community in Australia and its commitment to fighting extinction.

For Threatened Species Day on 7 September 2017, the Minister for the Environment and Energy the Hon Josh Frydenberg MP announced the 19 successful projects from the competitive grants round, valued at \$3.117 million. These new projects are beginning now with action on the ground. We look forward to sharing more updates on these great projects as they roll out over the next 18 months.

Under the Recovery Fund, Minister Frydenberg has been able to fund important strategic projects that align closely with the Threatened Species Strategy. The first two strategic projects were announced on 11 May 2017, and support the creation of feral free island safe-havens on French Island in Victoria and West Island in the Northern Territory.

The Recovery Fund has been such an important opportunity to enable on-ground conservation practitioners to deliver positive outcomes for threatened species. It is delivering improved habitat for helmeted honeyeaters, critical disease research for parrots and another insurance population of Gilbert's potoroo, just to name a few.

You can read the details of each project on the [National Landcare Program website](#).





## **Mallee emu-wren given a lifeline through the Threatened Species Recovery Fund**

Our incredible mallee emu-wren was on the brink of extinction. In 2014, the tiny, blue-breasted wren became extinct in South Australia due to large wildfires. Today, it is only found in three closely located Victorian populations.

On Threatened Species Day in 2017, the mallee emu-wren received \$225,000 through the Threatened Species Recovery Fund. This funding was provided to the Natural Resources SA Murray-Darling Basin (SAMDB) Management Board to transfer 60-80 birds back into South Australia in order to re-establish a population. This work is also providing valuable insight for future translocations of the species. This latest funding builds on a \$100,000 investment from the Australian Government that enabled the science and planning for translocation.

The mallee emu-wren is one of 20 priority birds targeted for recovery under the Threatened Species Strategy and we are working hard to improve its trajectory by 2020. By re-establishing a population in South Australia, we are reducing the immediate extinction risk to the species. We must then work to protect and recover the populations across South Australia and Victoria.

Undertaking a translocation like this requires a huge effort and needs many committed partners. This project will be delivered by the SAMDB Management Board, Zoos SA, Birdlife Australia, Rotary, the Victorian Government, Zoos Victoria and a number of universities. Along with these partners, the project is drawing on national experts from the Threatened Mallee Birds Steering Committee, and the local community. By working together with such a wide range of passionate people, we boost the chance of saving the mallee emu-wren.





# THREATENED SPECIES PROSPECTUS

Strong partnerships are critical to saving our threatened species. They bring together volunteers, community and conservation groups, scientists, farmers, businesses, and state and territory governments, to protect the bush and its wildlife. By working together, we can effectively prioritise and maximise resources to protect threatened species and find enduring solutions.

On 20 February 2017, Minister Frydenberg launched the [Threatened Species Prospectus](#) at Taronga Zoo. The Prospectus invites the business, industry and the philanthropic sectors to join us in the fight against extinction and builds on our approach of using science, action and partnership to recover threatened species. This Prospectus showcases 51 important, action-oriented projects that are ready to deliver results for our threatened plants and animals. These projects will benefit an identified 211 (16%) of Australia's threatened plants, 39 (36%) threatened mammals and 25 (18%) threatened birds.

The launch event was attended by a wide range of interested partners including Qantas, Rio Tinto Group, National Australia Bank and other members of Sustainable Business Australia. The US Consul General Valerie Fowler also attended and called upon US businesses to invest in saving our native species. Since then, we have engaged heads of 50 ASX listed companies, received enquiries from a range of interested funders and promoted the Prospectus at a number of events across Australia.

Since its launch in February 2017, the Prospectus has mobilised commitments for Australia's plants and animals to the value of more than \$6 million. For example, San Diego Zoo Global has committed to fund a \$500,000 project to support the platypus and at least five threatened freshwater fish species. Organisations like Birdlife Australia, the Foundation for Australia's Most Endangered Species and World Wildlife Fund Australia are partnering with the Australian Government through the Prospectus to mobilise significant philanthropic contributions. We have also promoted crowdfunding as an opportunity for individual citizens to contribute to Prospectus projects. Some \$86,000 was raised by Birdlife Australia to establish an insurance population of the Norfolk Island green parrot, in partnership with Parks Australia.



Project	Page	State	Lead Delivery Partners	Action update (All figures are GST exclusive)
Supporting Two-Way Science: Bilby Protection the Aboriginal Way	12	WA	Bush Heritage Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This was successful through the Threatened Species Recovery Fund Open Round, which mobilised <b>\$218,020</b> in Australian Government funding for this project.</li> <li>Additional contributions leveraged from Bush Heritage Australia and Central Desert Native Title Services total <b>\$131,400</b>.</li> </ul>
Cockies Saving Cockys: Saving the South Eastern Red-Tailed Black-Cockatoo	14	SA	BirdLife Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BirdLife Australia approached the Australian Government with a partnership opportunity to help protect these parrots. The Australian Government mobilised <b>\$75,000</b> towards the project from the National Landcare Program.</li> <li>Additional contributions leveraged from South East NRM Board and Birdlife Australia total <b>\$35,000</b>.</li> </ul>
Ensuring Western Australian Threatened Plants Have a Future	17	WA	WA Department of Parks and Wildlife	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Australian Government has mobilised <b>\$200,000</b> in funding from the National Landcare Program to enable work to begin on this project.</li> <li>Additional contributions leveraged from WA Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions total <b>\$121,500</b>.</li> </ul>
Saving the Platypus and Threatened Australian Freshwater Fish Species	18	VIC/NSW	Cesar and the University of Melbourne	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>San Diego Zoo Global has agreed to fully fund this project with a <b>\$500,000</b> commitment.</li> </ul>
Establishing a New Island Safe Haven for the Norfolk Island Green Parrot	23	NSW	Parks Australia and BirdLife Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Commissioner, BirdLife Australia and Parks Australia partnered to launch a crowdsourcing initiative, which generated <b>\$86,000</b> towards the project.</li> </ul>
Saving Australia's only Purple Wattle	28	QLD	Bush Heritage Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Australia Government has mobilised <b>\$80,000</b> in funding from the National Landcare Program to support this project.</li> <li>Additional contributions leveraged from CSIRO, NSW Herbarium and Bush Heritage Australia total <b>\$23,899</b>.</li> </ul>
Bringing Alwal, the Golden-Shouldered Parrot, Home	31	QLD	Olkola Aboriginal Corporation and Bush Heritage Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Australian Government has mobilised <b>\$90,000</b> in funding from the National Landcare Program.</li> <li>Additional contributions leveraged from Bush Heritage Australia and Queensland's Department of Environment and Heritage total <b>\$176,000</b>.</li> </ul>
Establishing the Eastern Barred-Bandicoot on Phillip Island	36	VIC	Phillip Island Nature Parks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Considerable contributions are being made by Zoos Victoria, Phillip Island Nature Parks, the VIC Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, and the Ian Potter Foundation to deliver elements of this project.</li> </ul>

Project	Page	State	Lead Delivery Partners	Action update (All figures are GST exclusive)
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Through the Commissioner's office, we have also been able to secure a <b>\$10,000</b> contribution from the Conservation and Wildlife Research Trust.</li> </ul>
Saving the Regent Honeyeater from Extinction	41	VIC	Birdlife Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This was successful through the Threatened Species Recovery Fund Open round, which mobilised <b>\$249,570</b> for this project.</li> <li>• Additional contributions from various organisations (Lurg Regent Honeyeater project volunteers, Capertee Valley project volunteers, North East Water, Parks Victoria, Indigo Council, North East Catchment Management Authority, VIC Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, community and school groups, Sporting Shooters Association and Birdlife Australia) total <b>\$329,890</b>.</li> </ul>
Saving One of Australia's Most Threatened Eucalypts	42	TAS	NRM South (Tasmania)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This was successful through the Threatened Species Recovery Fund Open Round, which mobilised <b>\$82,000</b> in Australian Government funding for this project. The project extends beyond the Prospectus proposal and also leverages <b>\$15,000</b> from the Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service.</li> <li>• Additional contributions from seven organisations (Conservation Volunteers Australia, Understorey Network, Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service, Tasmanian Seed Conservation Centre, Threatened Plants Tasmania, Wildcare Inc, University of Tasmania – School of Plant Sciences, NRM South, and TAS Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and the Environment) total <b>\$272,651</b>.</li> </ul>
Boosting Numbat Populations For the Future	45	WA	WA Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Australian Government mobilised <b>\$150,000</b> in funding from the National Landcare Program towards elements of this project.</li> <li>• Additional contributions leveraged from the Foundation for Australia's Most Endangered Species and WA Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions total <b>\$160,000</b>.</li> </ul>
Returning the Warru (Black-footed Rock Wallaby) to Country	48	SA	Zoos SA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Australian Government mobilised <b>\$200,000</b> in funding from the National Landcare Program for this project.</li> <li>• Additional contributions from four organisations (Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Land Management, Natural Resources Alinytlijara Wilurara, Zoos SA, Volunteers) total <b>\$717,290</b>.</li> </ul>
Building the World's Largest Island Safe Haven	58	SA	Kangaroo Island NRM, Kangaroo Island Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This was successful through the Threatened Species Recovery Fund Open Round, which mobilised <b>\$236,500</b> in Australian Government funding for this project.</li> <li>• Additional contributions from various groups (Softfoot Wildlife sanctuaries, SA Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources, Natural Resources Kangaroo Island, Landholders, Friends of Parks groups, Kangaroo Island NRM Board, and Kangaroo Island Council) total <b>\$475,500</b>.</li> </ul>

Project	Page	State	Lead Delivery Partners	Action update (All figures are GST exclusive)
Returning the Mallee Emu-Wren to South Australia	62	SA/VIC	BirdLife Australia, Zoos SA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This was successful through the Threatened Species Recovery Fund Open Round, which mobilised <b>\$225,322</b> in Australian Government funding for this project.</li> <li>Additional contributions leveraged from eight organisations (Zoos Victoria, VIC Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, SA Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources, Threatened Bird Network, RLB Ecology, Zoos SA, SAMDB NRM Board, Rotary Murray Bridge) total <b>\$266,264</b>.</li> </ul>
Aussie Ark – A Refuge for Threatened Australian Mammals	67	NSW	Australian Wildlife Ark inc. (Aussie Ark)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Commissioner has continued to promote the merits of this project and was guest speaker at a dinner held by Aussie Ark where funds were raised for the project.</li> </ul>
Emergency Interventions to Save the Orange-Bellied Parrot	71	NSW	Priam Psittaculture Centre Research and Breeding, Charles Sturt University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Elements of this project were successful through the Threatened Species Recovery Fund Open Round, which mobilised <b>\$250,000</b> in funding from the Australian Government for vaccination protocols for controlling psittacine beak and feather disease.</li> <li>Additional contributions leveraged from five organisations (Priam Psittaculture, Zoos Victoria, TAS Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment, Charles Sturt University) total <b>\$273,362</b>.</li> </ul>
Saving the Western Ground Parrot from Extinction	77	WA	WA Department of Parks and Wildlife	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Association for the Conservation of Threatened Parrots have agreed to contribute <b>\$200,000</b> to this project. The project was brought to their attention when they were provided a copy of the Threatened Species Prospectus.</li> <li>The Friends of the Western Ground parrot are also contributing <b>\$30,000</b> for the recovery program and to support the WA Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions field team.</li> </ul>
Securing Survival for the Critically Endangered Plains Wanderer	83	VIC/NSW	Taronga Conservation Society Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Considerable investment is being made by the NSW and Victorian governments to deliver elements of this project.</li> </ul>
Preventing the Decline of the Shy Albatross	113	TAS	Tasmanian Government, WWF Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Australian Government mobilised <b>\$100,000</b> in funding from the National Landcare Program towards this project.</li> <li>Additional contributions leveraged from four organisations total <b>\$164,250</b> (Tasmanian Albatross Fund, WWF Australia, TAS Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and the Environment and CSIRO)</li> </ul>



# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement has continued to be a priority for the Commissioner and we have had a hugely successful year. The Commissioner spoke at significant conferences and symposiums, met with scientists in the field, facilitated a visit of Traditional Owners to Canberra to share knowledge, held community roundtable discussions, and took part in national days of celebration and awareness raising.

Through engaging with a wide range of conservation practitioners, we have greater insight into the various approaches for protecting and recovering our threatened species across Australia. We have had the privilege to meet with local communities and witness the incredible work underway that is powered by passionate and dedicated volunteers, and supported by the Australian Government. We are continuing to gain a better understanding of what is needed on the ground now and also into the future, and how government can better work with the community.

We were thrilled to be invited to international gatherings, twice, to share our experiences on threatened species recovery. In September 2016, Commissioner Andrews was invited to be the keynote speaker at the Association of Zoos and Aquariums annual meeting in San Diego. We had the privilege of sharing the story of Australia's fight against extinction with approximately 2,000 delegates from across America. In February 2017, Commissioner Andrews visited New Zealand, at invitation from the New Zealand Threatened Species Ambassador, to help guide the preparation of their Threatened Species Strategy. In May, the Commissioner returned to participate in the launch of the NZ Strategy.

The Commissioner's social media profile has continued to go from strength-to-strength over the last year. We have grown our platforms to now include Instagram and had success with innovative engagement

activities. Social media remains one of our most powerful tools for encouraging policy discussion, raising awareness of threatened species issues, and broadcasting the conservation efforts of community groups and organisations.

We were also honoured to receive the Invasive Species Council's Annual Communication award for our efforts to engage with the public and raise awareness about the impact of feral cats and other invasive species.



## #TSBakeOff, livestreaming and a yellow mohawk on Sunrise

We have trialled new ways of using social and traditional media to engage a broader audience and continue to build support for threatened species recovery.

By far the most successful and enjoyable social media endeavour was the Threatened Species Bake Off in 2017. To raise the profile of Threatened Species Day, the public was invited to bake a threatened species-themed dessert and post the photos to Facebook, Twitter or Instagram, using the hashtag #TSBakeOff. We received over 100 entries from all across Australia, with media coverage from Australian Geographic, ABC and Channel Nine. Entries were judged by journalist and commentator Ms Annabel Crabb, ecologist Dr Rebecca West and Commissioner Andrews.



On a number of occasions, we livestreamed threatened species events to allow a broader audience to engage directly with the Commissioner. Our first livestream took people behind the scenes at the release of 100 critically endangered regent honeyeaters into Chiltern-Mt Pilot National Park in Victoria. The stream was viewed more than 4,800 times with people

engaging in real time with the event. Our second livestream took place at a Community Roundtable Meeting held in Canberra in June 2017. During the event, viewers were able ask questions and have them answered during the meeting. This proved successful, with over 243 comments received and the majority of questions addressed. Our most recent livestream event invited people to join us on Threatened Species Day at Parliament House, where a range of threatened species were present and projects were announced under the Threatened Species Recovery Fund. Livestreaming offers a unique opportunity for people to directly connect with the threatened species initiatives and the Commissioner.

Finally, Commissioner Andrews took to breakfast television to raise both money for, and awareness of, the fight against extinction. In October 2016, the Commissioner appeared live on Channel Seven's Sunrise program as part of a fund raising challenge to have his hair shaved and dyed into a yellow Mohawk. This raised almost \$3,000 for the species through the Edge Pledge fundraising platform. Sunrise averages 527,000 viewers nationally.





# NEXT STEPS - TOWARDS YEAR THREE

## **Threatened Species Strategy Year Three Report**

On 2 December 2016, the first report on the implementation of the Threatened Species Strategy was released. It described our efforts against the year one targets in the Strategy, which were overwhelmingly positive. Of the 26 targets due in year one, 21 were completed in full, seven of these were overachieved, and five were partially met. The full report is available on the [Department of the Environment and Energy's website](#).

The Strategy has been in place for just over two years and we have started to see some fantastic results across Australia. Momentum to implement the Strategy has remained strong and we have continued to embed action to fight extinction into business as usual for the Department. Beyond on-the-ground action, we have included a focus on strategic planning to strengthen our approach. We held the third and fourth National Feral Cat Taskforce meetings, funded a best-practice island eradication workshop for ten Australian islands, undertook public consultation on Recovery Team Governance – Best Practice Guidelines and announced the [30 priority plants under the Strategy](#) on 7 September 2016.

The next formal report against the Strategy is due in late 2018 and will outline our efforts against the year three targets. Between reports, and to ensure accountability, the Office of the Threatened Species Commissioner prepares annual reporting on progress against each of the targets. This allows the Department to focus effort where it is most needed and better track the impacts of our investments. Progress against the year three targets can be found at the back of this report.

Each year, we look to review effort against the Strategy targets, to ensure action is directed where it is most needed. We also take time to reflect on the direction of the Action Plan in the Strategy and assess opportunities to apply new knowledge to enhance its relevance and effectiveness. There is always room to adapt our approach and consider how best to address any emerging priorities. This will be a key focus in the lead up to year three reporting.

## **Threatened Species Prospectus**

The Threatened Species Prospectus has enjoyed early success as a 'signal' to the private sector that threatened species recovery is looking for partnerships. A number of projects have been successfully brokered and are underway. Notwithstanding its positive start, the concept is relatively new to government and we have identified some aspects of the Prospectus to strengthen for the future. As we continue to promote projects in the Prospectus to potential investors, we will look to establish enduring reporting arrangements to track the ongoing interest and investment in Prospectus projects, along with the outcomes these projects achieve for threatened species.

## National Landcare Program – Phase 2

In 2017, the Australian Government announced a \$1 billion investment in the next phase of the National Landcare Program (NLP). Building on the first phase, the NLP will continue to connect and engage with local communities as part of its efforts to protect Australia's unique environment and natural resources. The Program will work in partnership with governments, industry, communities and individuals to protect and conserve Australia's natural resources, including threatened species. We are continuing to work closely with our colleagues in the Department to embed a threatened species focus into our programs and look forward to some fantastic threatened species outcomes from the next phase of the NLP.





# TARGET TRACKING

## KEY



Met



On track for completion by due date



Further data collection and analysis required



Medium risk to completion by due date



High risk to completion by due date

## YEAR ONE TARGETS



### REMAINING YEAR ONE TARGETS

<b>Curiosity® cat bait approved and deployed</b>	Ongoing. Assessment by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority is continuing. A commercialisation strategy is being progressed within the Department of the Environment and Energy.	
<b>Database of all recovery teams made publicly available</b>	Ongoing. Consultation is underway seeking interest from recovery teams in national registration. Details of these recovery teams will be progressively added to a publically available database as recovery teams register interest, and have their Terms of Reference accepted.	
<b>Australian Government, in consultation with the states and territories, publishes best practice guidelines for recovery team governance</b>	Complete. The Recovery Team Governance Best practice guidelines are available on the Department of the Environment and Energy <a href="#">website</a> .	

Australian Government, in consultation with the states and territories, establishes method to allow recovery teams to report annually on progress, with a focus on recovery actions and outcomes

Complete. The Recovery Team Annual Progress Report – Guidelines were made available on the Department of the Environment and Energy [website](#). The report remains as a “Draft for Consultation” while an on-line version of the report is developed and trialled.



## PROGRESS TOWARDS YEAR THREE

### FERAL CATS

Eradication of feral cats underway on five identified islands

The five islands have been identified (Christmas Island, Bruny Island, Kangaroo Island, French Island and Dirk Hartog Island) and action is underway on each island. Other islands are also being investigated, such as West Island.



Five remaining mainland feral-free areas identified and with actions underway

Work is underway to scope remaining areas. In areas that have been identified, action is underway with delivery partners, including state and territory governments, non-government organisations and the science community.



Five million hectares of cat control, using the best techniques for each location

Different techniques are being used across Australia for landscape management including aerial baiting, skilled shooting and trapping, detector dogs, exclusion fencing, cat squitter traps and Indigenous hunting. We have supported over 1.4 million hectares of cat management in Western Australia alone.



Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) has been contracted to complete the second national feral cat control survey, which will include an assessment of hectares of cat control. Results from this survey will be included in year three reporting.

Best practice feral cat management across 1 million hectares of Commonwealth land

Efforts to tackle the impact of feral cats is underway at Christmas Island, Kakadu and Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Parks. A new \$500,000 investment for feral cat knockdown in Commonwealth National Parks is helping to deliver on this target.



RMIT has been contracted to complete the second national feral cat control survey, which will include an assessment of cat control on Commonwealth land. Results from this survey will be included in year three reporting.

<b>1 million feral cats culled at the national level</b>	RMIT has been contracted to complete the second national feral cat control survey, which will include an assessment of the number of feral cats culled. Results from this survey will be included in year three reporting.	●
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## MAMMALS

<b>Action underway for all 20 mammals to improve their population trajectory</b>	All 20 mammals identified in the Strategy have projects underway that contribute to their recovery.	✓
<b>At least 10 identified mammals demonstrating an improved trajectory</b>	Data collection and analysis is underway to deliver robust reporting against this target in year three.	●
<b>Projects evaluated and management adapted where required</b>	A continuous improvement approach is central to the implementation of the Threatened Species Strategy. The Office of the Threatened Species Commissioner regularly evaluates projects and action to-date.	●





## BIRDS




<b>Action underway for all 20 birds to improve their population trajectory</b>	All 20 birds identified in the Strategy have projects underway that contribute to their recovery.	✓
<b>At least 10 identified birds demonstrating an improved trajectory</b>	Data collection and analysis is underway to deliver robust reporting against this target in year three.	●
<b>Projects evaluated and management adapted where required</b>	A continuous improvement approach is central to the implementation of the Threatened Species Strategy. The Office of the Threatened Species Commissioner regularly evaluates projects and action to-date.	●

## PLANTS

<b>Recovery actions underway for at least 30 threatened plants</b>	Recovery actions are underway for 27 threatened plant species through the 20 Million Trees Program. This is in addition to over 100 threatened plant species benefiting from Green Army projects since the release of the Strategy.	
<b>Recovery actions underway for at least 40 threatened ecological community sites</b>	Recovery actions are underway through the 20 Million Trees Program at 54 threatened ecological community sites across Australia.	
<b>At least 50 per cent of Australia's known threatened plant species stored in conservation seedbanks</b>	The National Seedbank Partnership, with support from the Office of the Threatened Species Commissioner, is collecting seed from across Australia, with an initial focus on Kakadu National Park.	

## RECOVERY PRACTICES

<b>Australian Government and majority of states and territories operate under the common assessment methodology for species listing</b>	Seven of the nine Australian jurisdictions have signed the memorandum of understanding for the Common Assessment Method and are progressing relevant administrative and legislative amendments where required. All jurisdictions are actively participating in an interjurisdictional working group.	
<b>All 20 birds and 20 mammals with 2020 recovery targets in the Action plan have up-to-date conservation advices or recovery plans in place</b>	Updated recovery plans or conservation advices are being prepared to ensure all birds and mammals with 2020 recovery targets in the Threatened Species Strategy Action plan have up-to-date plans or advices in place.	
<b>Based on the work-plan, up-to-date conservation advices or recovery plans are in place for all high-priority species and ecological communities</b>	Updated recovery plans or conservation advices are being prepared for the high-priority species and ecological communities determined by the Department of the Environment and Energy.	
<b>All recovery teams follow best practice governance procedures</b>	The Recovery Team Governance Best Practice Guidelines have been on the Department of the Environment and Energy <a href="#">website</a> , and teams interested in national registration will submit their Terms of Reference in accordance with national governance procedures. The Department is working with recovery teams to increase participation in the process.	

<p><b>All active recovery teams report annually on progress</b></p>	<p>The Recovery Team Annual Progress report has been published on the Department of the Environment and Energy <a href="#">website</a>, and a new online version of the monitoring and reporting tool is being developed. It will be piloted in June 2018.</p>	
<p><b>All projects funded under the 20 Million Trees and Green Army Programs, that involve threatened species or ecological community recovery, are guided by the relevant conservation advice or recovery plans</b></p>	<p>All grant applications have included a section that requires proposals to demonstrate how the work connects with scientific research, and aligns with relevant plans such as Conservation Advices, Recovery Plans, Regional NRM Plans and Threat Abatement Plans.</p>	
<p><b>Identified high-priority species and ecological communities reviewed, and work plan for updating conservation advices and recovery plans is varied as required</b></p>	<p>Forward work plan has been established and is currently being delivered by the Department of the Environment and Energy.</p>	

DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND  
ENERGY

BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION DIVISION – **SUPPLEMENTARY BRIEF**

SENATE ESTIMATES, February 2018

Threatened Species Prospectus

s22



Contact Officer: s22  
Telephone: 02 6275 s22

Cleared by (SES level): Sally Box  
Telephone: 02 6274 s22  
Date: 07/02/2018

s22

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- The Association for the Conservation of Threatened Parrots in December 2017 committed **\$200,000** to a Prospectus project to help recover the western ground parrot in Western Australia.

s22

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s22

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**From:** Box, Sally  
**Sent:** Monday, 18 June 2018 4:00 PM  
**To:** Murphy, Paul  
**Cc:** s22 s22 s22 s22 Jonasson, Kylie; s22 s22 s22  
**Subject:** RE: Double checked with team here and with WA colleagues [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Awesome, thanks Paul.

Sally

---

**From:** Murphy, Paul  
**Sent:** Monday, 18 June 2018 3:38 PM  
**To:** Box, Sally  
**Cc:** s22 s22 s22 s22 Jonasson, Kylie ; s22 s22  
**Subject:** RE: Double checked with team here and with WA colleagues [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

How about:

- The Department, as the CITES Scientific Authority for Australia, has looked into the organisation and identified no concerns. This included inquiries with the CITES Scientific and Management Authorities of Germany, who were supportive of the zoo.
- The Association is a legitimate private zoo, whose aim is to conserve threatened parrots around the globe.

---

**From:** Box, Sally  
**Sent:** Monday, 18 June 2018 2:58 PM  
**To:** Murphy, Paul s22  
**Cc:** s22 s22  
s22  
**Subject:** FW: Double checked with team here and with WA colleagues [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Hi Paul

We received a media enquiry from Lisa Cox (Guardian) re our activities on western ground parrot. In our response, we noted that one of the Prospectus projects has been supported by the Association of the Conservation of Threatened Parrots. The journalist has asked a follow up question on this, which suggests she is likely to include in her story.

As you know, the Association has received some negative press and consequently, the WA Government has expressed some nervousness regarding entering into an agreement with this organisation (reputational risk only, as no exchange of birds is proposed).

The media team will give the MO the heads up on potential sensitivities, but I thought it would be useful to also advise the MO of the due diligence undertaken by this Department on the Association.

Based on our conversation from last week, I just wanted to confirm that the following is correct:



- The Department, as the CITES Authority for Australia, has looked into the organisation and found no adverse findings. This assessment found that the Association is a legitimate private zoo, whose aim is to conserve threatened parrots. This assessment was supported by the Department's Office of Compliance.
- The Department also contacted the CITES Authority in Germany. It has not made any adverse findings against the Association either.

If the above is correct, I'll also advise the WA Government.

Cheers,  
Sally

---

**From:** s22  
**Sent:** Monday, 18 June 2018 2:17 PM  
**To:** s22 s22  
**Cc:** Box, Sally s22 Media <[Media@environment.gov.au](mailto:Media@environment.gov.au)>  
**Subject:** FW: Double checked with team here and with WA colleagues [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

?

s22  
Media Manager  
Communications and Engagement Branch  
Department of the Environment and Energy  
GPO Box 787, CANBERRA ACT 2601  
T 02 6274 s22 M s22  
s22



The Department acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures and to their elders both past and present.

**From:** Lisa Cox [<mailto:lisa.cox@theguardian.com>]  
**Sent:** Monday, 18 June 2018 1:54 PM  
**To:** s22  
**Subject:** Re: Double checked with team here and with WA colleagues [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Thanks s22. And can I just double check that the Association for the Conservation of Threatened Parrots that you refer to in the responses is this one <https://www.act-parrots.org/?lang=en>

Thanks again

Lisa

-----  
**Lisa Cox**  
Environment Reporter  
The Guardian | Australia  
-----  
+61 (0) 409 049 151  
[lisa.cox@theguardian.com](mailto:lisa.cox@theguardian.com)  
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twitter: [@ LisaMCox](https://twitter.com/LisaMCox)  
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[theguardian.com/au](#)

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On 18 June 2018 at 13:25, s22 [REDACTED] wrote:

Yes, there is a captive breeding trial at Perth Zoo.

Cheers s22 [REDACTED]

s22 [REDACTED]

Media Manager

Communications and Engagement Branch

Department of the Environment and Energy

GPO Box 787, CANBERRA ACT 2601

T 02 6274 s22 [REDACTED] M s22 [REDACTED]

s22 [REDACTED]



The Department acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures and to their elders both past and present.

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s22

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**From:** s22  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 20 June 2018 6:08 PM  
**To:** s22 s22  
**Cc:** s22 s22  
**Subject:** FW: Association for the Conservation of Threatened Parrots. [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]  
**Attachments:** IOU Working Grp Psittaciformes 2018.pdf

Just FYI – I will need to call him.

---

**From:** Murphy, Paul  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 20 June 2018 6:05 PM  
**To:** s22  
**Subject:** FW: Association for the Conservation of Threatened Parrots. [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Can I please flick this one to you? Suggest phoning him... Thx

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**From:** Allan Burbidge s22  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 20 June 2018 5:30 PM  
**To:** Murphy, Paul  
**Cc:** Manda Page ; Sarah Comer  
**Subject:** FW: Association for the Conservation of Threatened Parrots. [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Hi Paul,

Thank you for your advice to Sally Box concerning ACTP and their activities. As Sally would have explained to you, we have received funding recently from ACTP, but given the allegations made about ACTP concerning the export of 12 CITES listed parrots from Dominica to ACTP in Germany earlier this year, we are a little concerned about potential reputational damage for us.

We are relieved to hear the information passed on to us by Sally, including the information that the CITES Scientific and Management Authorities of Germany are supportive of ACTP. However, there are still some uncertainties from our perspective, as there have been allegations that ACTP and some Dominican government officers arranged the export of the parrots without CITES documentation properly executed by Dominica's CITES Management and Scientific Authorities (e.g. see attached). Or, indeed, without any written analysis of the situation or statement of intent. Unfortunately, there has been a lot of opinions and innuendo flying around, and it's a little difficult for us to sort out reality from slander in this instance.

We'd be interested to hear any comments you may have on this. If it's easier to ring me, my phone numbers are listed below.

Cheers,  
Allan

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Dr Allan H. Burbidge  
Principal Research Scientist  
Dept of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions  
Woodvale Research Centre,  
Locked Bag 104, Bentley Delivery Centre WA Australia 6983  
Tel (08) 9405 s22 Fax (08) 9306 1641 s22  
& Adjunct Assoc Professor, School of Science, ECU



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**From:** Manda Page  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 20 June 2018 11:13 AM  
**To:** Allan Burbidge  
**Subject:** FW: Association for the Conservation of Threatened Parrots. [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Dr Manda Page  
Principal Zoologist  
Biodiversity and Conservation Science | Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions  
17 Dick Perry Avenue, Technology Park Western Precinct, Kensington, 6151  
**P:** Locked Bag 104, BENTLEY DELIVERY CENTRE, 6983  
**T:** (08)9219 s22 | [www.dbca.wa.gov.au](http://www.dbca.wa.gov.au)



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**From:** Box, Sally s22  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 20 June 2018 9:31 AM  
**To:** Manda Page s22  
**Subject:** Re: Association for the Conservation of Threatened Parrots. [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Of course, no probs at all. He's terrific and would be happy to have a bit more of a chat about the process they went through. S

Sent from my iPhone

On 20 Jun 2018, at 10:23 am, Manda Page s22 wrote:

Thanks Sally  
Would you have any objections if we contacted Paul for further clarification (if needed)?  
I see he was cced in but just wanted to check if OK to contact him directly.  
Nice to see you yesterday.  
Manda

Dr Manda Page  
Principal Zoologist  
Biodiversity and Conservation Science | Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions  
17 Dick Perry Avenue, Technology Park Western Precinct, Kensington, 6151  
**P:** Locked Bag 104, BENTLEY DELIVERY CENTRE, 6983  
**T:** (08)9219 s22 | [www.dbca.wa.gov.au](http://www.dbca.wa.gov.au)

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**From:** Box, Sally s22  
**Sent:** Monday, 18 June 2018 2:36 PM  
**To:** Margaret Byrne s22 Manda Page  
s22  
**Cc:** Murphy, Paul s22 s22  
s22  
**Subject:** Association for the Conservation of Threatened Parrots. [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Hi Margaret, Manda,

The recent media enquiries regarding western ground parrots reminded me that I was going to follow up with you re our Department's enquiries into the Association for the Conservation of Threatened Parrots.

I have spoken with Paul Murphy (who heads up our wildlife trade branch, cc'd) and I can advise that:

- The Department, as the CITES Scientific Authority for Australia, has looked into the organisation and identified no concerns. This included inquiries with the CITES Scientific and Management Authorities of Germany, who were supportive of the zoo.
- The results of our enquiries suggest that the Association is a legitimate private zoo, whose aim is to conserve threatened parrots around the globe.

I hope this is helpful in your deliberations.

Cheers,  
Sally

**Sally Box**  
**Threatened Species Commissioner**  
02 6274 s22