RECOVERY OUTLINE

Regent Parrot (eastern)

1	Family	Psittacidae
2	Scientific name	*Polytelis anthopeplus monarchoides* (Schodde, 1993)
3	Common name	Regent Parrot (eastern)
4	Conservation status	Endangered: A1a, B1+2e

5 Reasons for listing

There is evidence of rapid decline in two of the species 'three sub-populations (Endangered: A1a). The area of occupancy has decreased to the extent that the population is now fragmented (B1), and a continuing decrease in population size is likely (2e).

	Estimate	*Reliability*
Extent of occurrence	*140,000 km²*	*high*
trend	*stable*	*high*
Area of occupancy	*500 km²*	*low*
trend	*decreasing*	*medium*
No. of breeding birds	*1,500*	*low*
trend	*decreasing*	*medium*
No. of sub-populations	*3*	*medium*
Largest sub-population	*750*	*low*
Generation time	*5 years*	*low*

6 Infraspecific taxa

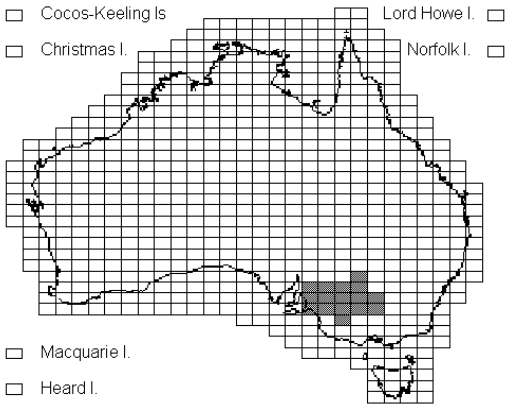
P. a. anthopeplus (western mallee region) is Least Concern, as is the species.

7 Past range and abundance

Breeding along Murray R., from Bordertown, S. A., to Kerang, Vic., including the lower Avoca R., lower Wakool R., Murrumbidgee R. downstream of Hay, possibly Darling R. near Pooncarie, and along the Wimmera R. from Dimboola to Wyperfeld National Park (Joseph, 1978, Burbidge, 1985, Harper, 1989, Ayers *et al.*, 1996, Higgins, 1999). Non-breeding birds occurred throughout the eastern mallee region (Higgins, 1999).

8 Present range and abundance

Breeding now confined to three widely separated areas: between lower Wakool River and Narandoc, east of Mildura; the lower reaches of the Wimmera R., where breeding now infrequent around Lake Albacutya; and from Renmark to Morgan. Although birds travel more widely during the non-breeding season, there are few recent records between the three major sub-populations. From the mid-1980s to early 1990, there were estimated to be 250 to 350 breeding pairs in the lower Wimmera, and surveys over the same period found at least 93 nests in South Australia and 55 in New South Wales/Victoria (Beardsell, 1985, Burbidge, 1985, Harper, 1989, F. Noelker). In 1997, 59 nests were recorded between lower Wakool R. and Narandoc. There have been no recent surveys in Victoria, but appear to have been marked declines in South Australia since 1987 (M. Harper). Sub-population in Mallee Cliffs State Forest and Kemendoc Nature Reserve, N. S. W., estimated at 400 individuals in 1993, was down to 150 in 1997 (R. Webster and D. Leslie). At that time, numbers were estimated to be 200 individuals in South Australia, 500 in New South Wales and 750 in Victoria (R. Webster and D. Leslie).



9 Ecology

The eastern subspecies of Regent Parrot nests in riverine River Red Gums *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* and Black Box *E. largiflorens* woodlands, using hollows in dead or living eucalypts that have a minimum girth of 25 cm (Burbidge, 1985, Harper, 1989, Oldroyd *et al.*, 1994). It forages for seeds of grasses and herbaceous plants in mallee within 20 km of the nesting site, particularly where Christmas Mallee *E. socialis* or Yellow Mallee *E. incrassata* dominate (Burbidge, 1985, Ayers *et al.*, 1996, Higgins, 1999). It will also take berries, blossom, other pant material and lerp, as well as fallen grain and fruit in orchards and vineyards (Beardsell, 1985).

10 Threats

The apparent decline of the subspecies in New South Wales may be an artefact of seasonal differences, but could also be the result of clearance of mallee for agriculture, which has destroyed much feeding habitat within 20 km of nest sites. Clearance has also affected the other sub-populations and there continues to be pressure to clear some remaining patches for horticulture. Much remaining feeding habitat has also been separated from breeding habitat and continues to

be grazed, which may reduce its value to Regent Parrots, or has been harvested for charcoal (Burbidge, 1985). Nesting habitat has also been destroyed, and its regeneration prevented through logging for timber, firewood collection, ringbarking on agricultural land, salinisation and waterlogging (Burbidge, 1985, Webster and Llewellyn, 1991, Higgins, 1999). Feral honey bees have excluded Regent Parrots from many hollows around Lake Albacutya (F. Noelker), and occupy some hollows that are suitable for Regent Parrots in Wyperfeld National Park, although overall hollow availability there may not be limiting (Oldroyd *et al.*, 1994). Use of agricultural and horticultural crops by the Regent Parrots has exposed a proportion of the population to poison, shooting, and, when feeding on spilt grain, traffic accidents (Burbidge, 1985).

11 Information required

11.1 Determine effects of grazing and mallee harvesting for charcoal on suitability for foraging by breeding Regent Parrots.

11.2 Develop an efficient means of feral beehive removal.

11.3 Develop appropriate non-lethal damage mitigation techniques for fruit-growers.

12 Recovery objectives

12.1 Stabilise existing sub-populations.

13 Actions completed or under way

13.1 Sub-populations have been surveyed at irregular intervals.

13.2 Guidelines have been developed for forestry in riparian breeding habitat.

13.3 In N. S. W., clearing of the mallee is restricted within 20 km of the Murray River.

13.4 Some corridors connecting breeding and feeding areas have been identified.

14 Management actions required

14.1 Cease clearance of remaining Regent Parrot habitat, monitoring compliance biennially.

14.2 Using appropriate incentives, undertake extension with land-holders that have suitable woodland habitat to promote sound management of remnants and encourage greater connectivity between sub-populations.

14.3 Develop and implement appropriate management guidelines for all woodland on public land, particularly timber reserves, transport corridors and local government land.

14.4 Monitor population size regularly, both along Murray R. and in the Wimmera.

15 Organisations responsible for conservation

New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service, South Australian Department of Environment and Heritage, Victorian Department of Natural Resources and Environment.

16 Other organisations involved

Landcare groups, Greening Australia, local government, native title holders, State Forests of New South Wales, New South Wales Department of Land and Water Conservation, Murray Darling Basin Commission, bird-watching societies, fruit-growers.

17 Staff and financial resources required for recovery to be carried out

Staff resources required 2001-2005 *0.2* *Extension Officer*

Financial resources required 2001-2005

Action	*Conservation agencies*	*Other funding sources*	*Total*
Determine effects of grazing and charcoal harvesting on habitat quality	$15,000	$30,000	$45,000
Develop and apply an effective means of removing feral beehives	$20,000	$15,000	$35,000
Develop and apply non-lethal damage mitigation techniques	$15,000	$30,000	$45,000
Monitor numbers biennially	$10,000	$30,000	$40,000
Extension and landscape management [1]	$60,000	$100,000	$160,000
Appropriate management of public lands [1]	$125,000	$250,000	$375,000
Total	$245,000	$455,000	**$700,000**

1 Costs divided among all threatened bird taxa from mallee lands; in addition to those being expended as a part of other programs.

18 Bibliography

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Comments received from

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