

## TAXON SUMMARY

# Scarlet-chested Parrot

1	Family	Psittacidae
2	Scientific name	<i>Neophema splendida</i> (Gould, 1841)
3	Common name	Scarlet-chested Parrot
4	Conservation status	Least Concern

### 5 Reasons for listing

The range of this species fluctuates substantially in response to climatic conditions. Overall, there has probably not been a decline in either area of occupancy or density of more than 50% (so not Near Threatened: a or c).

	Estimate	Reliability
Extent of occurrence	2,300,000 km <sup>2</sup>	medium
trend	stable	medium
Area of occupancy	20,000 km <sup>2</sup>	low
trend	fluctuating	medium
No. of breeding birds	10,000	low
trend	fluctuating	medium
No. of sub-populations	1	medium
Generation time	3 years	low

### 6 Intraspecific taxa

None described.

### 7 Past range and abundance

Drier parts of southern Australia from western New South Wales to west coast of Western Australia (Higgins, 1999), although the scarcity of records from extremities of range over the past century suggests distribution was not continuous. Flocks seen regularly at any site at edge of range are usually ascribed to irruptions from elsewhere, but exact nature of movements or patterns of abundance not understood (Higgins, 1999).

### 8 Present range and abundance

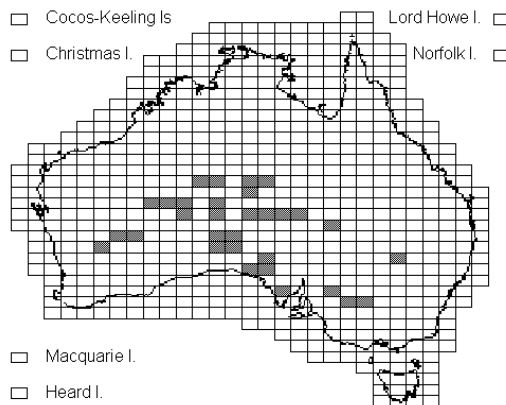
Most records from Great Victoria Desert with a small population, apparently resident, on Gluepot Station in eastern South Australia (Johnstone and Storr, 1998, Higgins, 1999). Appears to have declined in Western Australian goldfields (Saunders and Curry, 1990) and no records from Western Australian coast since 1854 (Higgins, 1999). Fewer records from New South Wales in 20<sup>th</sup> than 19<sup>th</sup> century (Smith *et al.*, 1995, Higgins, 1999), only a single record from Queensland since 1929 (Maher, 1995, Higgins, 1999), and few recent records from Victoria and Eyre Peninsula, S. A. (Higgins, 1999).

### 9 Ecology

The Scarlet-chested Parrot is usually found in mallee eucalypt, Gimlet *Eucalyptus salubris* or mulga *Acacia* woodland with an understorey of *Triodia* hummock

grassland (Ford, 1971, Higgins, 1999). They nest in tree hollows, laying 4-6 eggs (Higgins, 1999).

Irruption may be in response to rainfall, but use of habitat may also be related to fire history, with at least some records outside the core range being in recently burnt areas (Blakers *et al.*, 1984, Robinson *et al.*, 1990). Though generally a bird of wooded country, The Scarlet-chested Parrot is frequently found in open habitat in years of irruption.



### 10 Threats

Habitat clearance has rendered much of southern South Australia and north-west Victoria unsuitable, although large fragments remain, and grazing and altered fire regimes have probably had a detrimental effect elsewhere (Reid and Fleming, 1992). Provision of permanent water in semi-arid rangelands may also have favoured Bourke's Parrots *Neopsephotus bourkii* over Scarlet-chested Parrots (Saunders and Curry, 1990, Landsberg *et al.*, 1997). As large numbers are held in captivity, where the species breeds readily, illegal trapping for the bird trade is not considered a threat (Shephard, 1989), though may have affected numbers at Gluepot in the 1960s (D. Baker-Gabb).

### 11 Recommended actions

- 11.1 Maintain a regime of low fire frequency and minimise grazing throughout range and particularly in reserves in Murray Mallee.
- 11.2 Determine environmental correlates of patterns of abundance in the Great Victoria Desert.

## 12 Bibliography

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### Comments received from

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