

TAXON SUMMARY

Turquoise Parrot

1	Family	Psittacidae
2	Scientific name	<i>Neophema pulchella</i> Shaw, 1794
3	Common name	Turquoise Parrot
4	Conservation status	Near Threatened: a

5 Reasons for listing

Although currently expanding, the area of occupancy of this species is still probably less than half of the size that it was a century ago (Near Threatened: a).

	Estimate	Reliability
Extent of occurrence	630,000 km ²	medium
trend	stable	medium
Area of occupancy	20,000 km ²	low
trend	increasing	medium
No. of breeding birds	20,000	low
trend	increasing	medium
No. of sub-populations	1	medium
Generation time	3 years	medium

6 Intraspecific taxa

None described.

7 Past range and abundance

Throughout south-east Australia from Suttor R., inland from Mackay, Qld, through eastern New South Wales, including suburban Sydney, to Melbourne, Vic. Declined rapidly in 1890s, with no reports of substantial numbers until 1920s (Jarman, 1973, Higgins, 1999).

8 Present range and abundance

In Queensland, now no further north than Maryborough and Fraser I., distribution in New South Wales patchy and, in Victoria, largely confined to north-east and east Gippsland (Higgins, 1999).

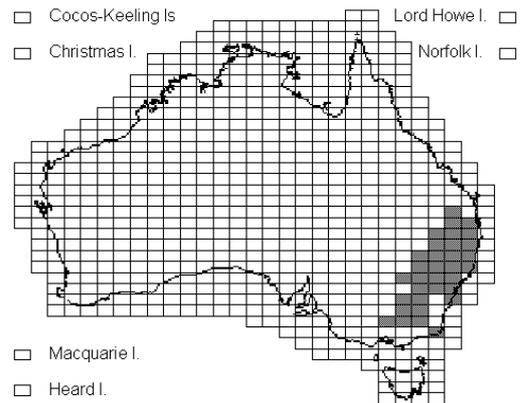
9 Ecology

The Turquoise Parrot lives in the foothills of the Great Dividing Ra., in open eucalypt woodlands and forests that have a grassy or sparsely shrubby understorey. It lays 4-5 eggs in hollows, in trees, stumps or even fence posts, and it feeds on the seeds of native and introduced grasses and other herbs, including weeds (Quin, 1990, Quin and Baker-Gabb, 1993, Higgins, 1999).

10 Threats

Much of the former habitat of the Turquoise Parrot has been cleared for agriculture, and this continues to prevent recovery of the species to pre-1890s levels over more than half the former range. Other current threats include fox and cat predation, loss of hollow-bearing trees in forests managed for timber, and

inappropriate burning that may favour a shrubby over the grassy understorey the parrots require (Quin, 1990, Quin and Baker-Gabb, 1993).



11 Recommended actions

- 11.1 Conserve native pasture and promote its use.
- 11.2 Maintain a buffer around known nesting areas in forests managed for timber production.
- 11.3 Maintain or establish feral predator control in nesting areas.
- 11.4 Maintain a fire regime that establishes a mosaic of fire ages.

12 Bibliography

- Higgins, P. J. (ed.) 1999. Handbook of Australian, New Zealand and Antarctic Birds. Vol. 4. Parrots to Dollarbird. Oxford University Press, Melbourne.
- Jarman, H. 1973. The Turquoise Parrot. *Aust. Bird Watcher* 4:239-250.
- Quin, B. R. 1990. Conservation and status of the Turquoise Parrot (*Neophema pulchella*, Platycercidae) in Chiltern State Park and adjacent areas. MSc thesis, Latrobe University, Melbourne.
- Quin, B. R. & Baker-Gabb, D. J. 1993. Conservation and management of the Turquoise Parrot *Neophema pulchella* in north-east Victoria. Melbourne, Arthur Rylah Institute for Environmental Research.

Comments received from

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