

TAXON SUMMARY

Western Rosella (wheatbelt)

1	Family	Psittacidae
2	Scientific name	<i>Platycercus icterotis xanthogenys</i> Salvadori, 1891
3	Common name	Western Rosella (wheatbelt)
4	Conservation status	Near Threatened: c

5 Reasons for listing

There has been a decline in density over at least half the area of occupancy of this subspecies that is likely to continue (Near Threatened: c).

	Estimate	Reliability
Extent of occurrence	250,000 km ²	high
trend	decreasing	medium
Area of occupancy	5,000 km ²	medium
trend	decreasing	medium
No. of breeding birds	10,000	low
trend	decreasing	high
No. of sub-populations	10	low
Largest sub-population	2,000	low
Generation time	5 years	low

6 Intraspecific taxa

P. i. icterotis (coastal south-western Australia) is Least Concern. Subspecific status has been questioned, differences possibly being clinal (R. E. Johnstone).

7 Past range and abundance

Endemic to the semi-arid and southern interior of south-west Western Australia, east of ???? Hills, Toodyay, Kojonup, and Stirling Ranges to Parker Range, Frank Hann National Park and Ravensthorpe, in areas receiving between 300 and 400 mm annual average rainfall (Schodde and Mason, 1997, Johnstone and Storr, 1998, Higgins, 1999, P. Mawson). Intergrading with *P. i. icterotis* in the south-west.

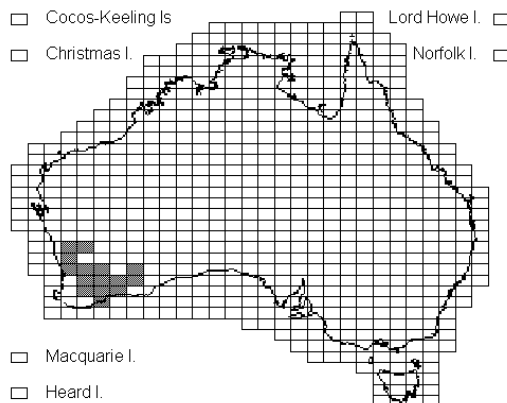
8 Present range and abundance

Local extinctions have occurred in 25% of local government authorities, representing about 40% of the total range, mostly in the north and east (Saunders and Curry, 1990, Saunders and Ingram, 1995, Mawson and Long, 1996, Mawson and Johnstone, 1997). Still declining in wheatbelt, but stable in western woodland and forest (Mawson and Johnstone, 1997).

9 Ecology

The wheatbelt subspecies of Western Rosella lives in woodland, and its persistence is associated with habitat remnants (Higgins, 1999). The main food of the western subspecies is the seeds of casuarinas, but it also takes seeds from grass, weedy herbs and fruit (Long, 1984, 1985, Higgins, 1999). Nesting of this

subspecies is in hollows with the average clutch size being 5.6 (Higgins, 1999).



10 Threats

Clearance of vegetation for agriculture, which has destroyed much of the habitat in the wheatbelt (Saunders *et al.*, 1985), is the main threat to this species (Mawson and Long, 1996). Clearing has immediate effects on availability of casuarina and, along with grazing, also has long term effects on availability of nesting hollows, as suitable old trees are not being replaced (Mawson and Long, 1994).

11 Recommended actions

- 11.1 Monitor sub-populations in remaining strongholds.
- 11.2 Determine whether hollow availability and/or shortage of food are significant threats in the wheatbelt.
- 11.3 If hollow availability limiting, develop a community-based nestbox program; support rehabilitation of Salmon Gum woodlands.
- 11.4 If food limiting, determine when and where resource bottleneck occurs and develop mitigation strategies.

12 Bibliography

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