

TAXON SUMMARY

Regent Parrot (western)

1	Family	Psittacidae
2	Scientific name	<i>Polytelis anthopeplus anthopeplus</i> (Lear, 1831)
3	Common name	Regent Parrot (western)
4	Conservation status	Least Concern

5 Reasons for listing

Although a decline in density has been recorded across half the range of this subspecies (Near Threatened: c), there has been a partly complementary increase in extent of occurrence and, in some areas, population (so Least Concern).

	Estimate	Reliability
Extent of occurrence:	360,000 km ²	high
trend:	increasing	medium
Area of occupancy:	10,000 km ²	low
trend:	stable	medium
Estimated population:	20,000	low
trend:	stable	medium
No. of sub-populations:	1	high
Generation time:	5 years	low

6 Intraspecific taxa

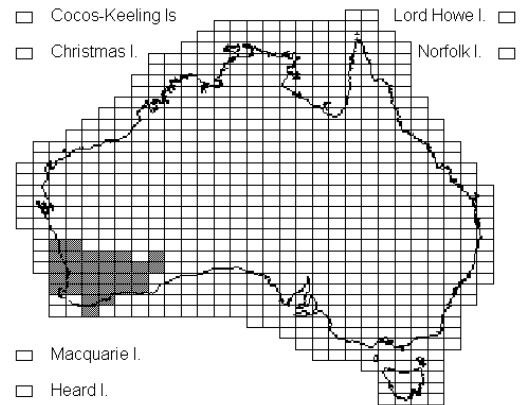
P. a. monarchoides (eastern mallee region) is Endangered.

7 Past range and abundance

Endemic to south-west Western Australia, between Geraldton, Kalgoorlie, Israelite Bay, Albany, Bunbury, Absent in extreme south-west and vagrant to north and west of usual range as far as Carnarvon and Nullarbor Plain (Higgins, 1999). After clearing of wheatbelt, increased rapidly in abundance and was declared as vermin in some places during 1930s and 1940s (Saunders and Ingram, 1995).

8 Present range and abundance

Range contraction since 1960s in central and northern wheatbelt (Saunders and Ingram, 1995, Mawson and Johnstone, 1997), and, by 1990, extinct from 14 of 66 wheatbelt shires in which it was found in 1970 (Mawson and Long, 1996). Extinction most extensive between Gingin, Wongan-Ballidu and Narembeen. Range extension and continuing increases in numbers recorded in extreme south-west of state since 1981, but this appears to be the result of summer post-breeding dispersal, and not of resident birds (Mawson and Long, 1996). However some evidence of increase in numbers of sightings in wheatbelt in 1990s (Saunders and Ingram, 1995), along with increases on Swan Coastal Plain (Higgins, 1999, Johnstone and Storr, 1999), where now resident (A. H. Burbidge).



9 Ecology

The western subspecies of Regent Parrot lives in eucalypt woodland and mallee, nesting in hollows in eucalypts, particularly Salmon Gum *Eucalyptus salmonophloia*. Average clutch size is about five (Mawson and Long, 1996, Higgins, 1999). The parrots feed on a wide variety of fruits and seeds of native and exotic plants (Long, 1984, Long and Mawson, 1994), including the increasingly prevalent agricultural crop, canola (S. McNee).

10 Threats

Clearance of woodland and mallee for agriculture has destroyed much of the breeding habitat in the wheatbelt (Saunders *et al.*, 1985, Mawson and Johnstone, 1997) and, in some areas, remaining nest sites are increasingly scarce because trees are being killed by rising soil salinity (Mawson and Johnstone, 1997). There has been little recruitment of nest trees, which are mostly well over 100 years old (Mawson and Long, 1994).

11 Recommended actions

- 11.1 Monitor numbers in remaining strongholds.
- 11.2 Determine whether hollow availability and/or shortage of food are significant threats in the wheatbelt.
- 11.3 If food limiting, determine when and where resource bottleneck occurs and develop mitigation strategies.

12 Bibliography

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Comments received from

Allan Burbidge, Ron Johnstone, Shapelle McNee, Peter Mawson.