

Orange-bellied Parrot

Neophema chrysogaster



The Orange-bellied Parrot is one of the rarest birds in Australia, with around only 50 individuals left in the wild. They feed on, and near, the ground. As adults the birds reach about 21cm in length. Their distinctive alarm call, an orange spot on their bellies and their bright grass-green colours help to identify them against other *Neophema* parrots like the Blue-winged or Elegant Parrots.

Diet

They forage in saltmarshes on low shrubs and groundcovers. They eat mainly seeds, fruits, flowers and berries of saline vegetation e.g. chenopods (salt bushes), Sea Rocket (*Cakile maritima*) and Bidgee-widgee (*Acaena novae-zelandiae*).

Breeding

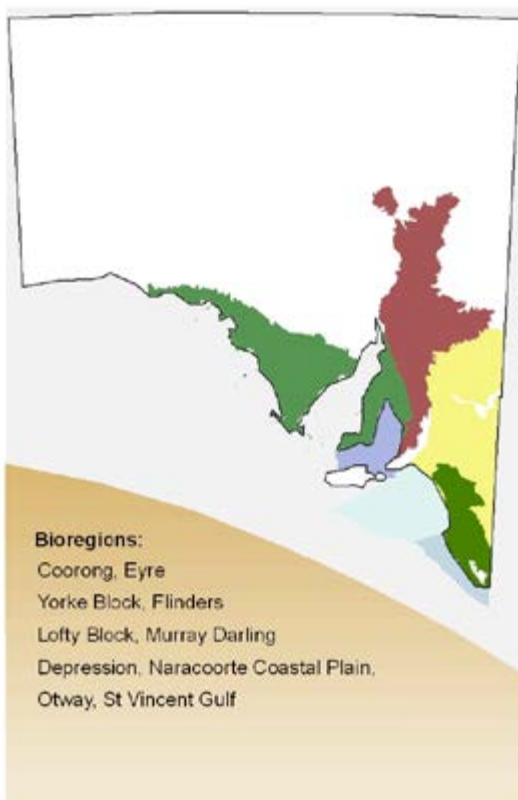
These birds breed in November-December only in south-western Tasmania. They nest on a bed of rotten wood chips in the hollows of living eucalypts. They lay four to six eggs each season that are incubated for about 20 days by the female. Young parrots are then fed by both parents.

Habitat

Orange-bellied Parrots live in coastal areas and migrate every year, flying from their breeding grounds in Tasmania to as far west as Gulf St Vincent, though most South Australian records are from the South East and Coorong. When in South Australia, dune systems, coastal wetlands, saline depressions, and sheltered beaches are their preferred habitat areas.

Threats

Loss of habitat (wintering grounds in north-western Tasmania and saltmarshes along coastal south-west Victoria and south-east South Australia including the Coorong) is the major threat to the Orange-bellied Parrot. Predation by cats and foxes of their already small population is a threat, as well as the declining quality of saltmarshes due to water diversion and/or drought.



Map courtesy of Mapping Unit, Customer and Commercial Services.

Map is not intended to indicate spatial distribution of the species, only the bioregions in which the species is found.



There are only three species of migratory parrots in the world and the Orange-bellied Parrot is one of them! They are also one of the world's most endangered species.

Conservation

The Orange-bellied Parrot Recovery Project aims to protect and restore foraging and roosting habitat for this endangered bird in SA through a range of on-ground management activities. Some of these activities include weed control, rabbit control, revegetation with foraging/roosting plants, and breeding them in captivity (e.g. at Adelaide Zoo).

You can help the Orange-bellied Parrot by:

- volunteering with a local conservation group to help monitor their population or restore their habitats
- spreading the word about the Orange-bellied Parrot – tell your family and friends all about it or do some more research and give a talk to your class
- being a responsible pet owner – desex your cats and dogs, keep them inside at night and don't take them into national parks.

For further information

Public enquiries

For more local information on any of the species in this resource please contact your nearest Natural Resource Centre office on:

Eastwood: (08) 8273 9100

Gawler: (08) 8523 7700

Lobethal: (08) 8389 5900

Willunga: (08) 8550 3400

Education enquiries

For teachers wanting more information about environmental education resources and opportunities please contact the relevant NRM Education sub regional team on:

Northern Adelaide: (08) 8406 8289

Barossa: (08) 8563 8436

Central Adelaide: (08) 8234 7255

Southern Adelaide: (08) 8384 0176

Southern Fleurieu: (08) 8551 0524

