

Importance of Box-Gum Grassy Woodlands for Superb Parrots

Box-Gum Grassy Woodlands are an endangered ecological community that have been drastically reduced in area and are highly fragmented across our landscape.

They contain a diverse mix of species including White Box (*Eucalyptus albens*), Yellow Box (*E. melliodora*) and Blakely's Red Gum (*E. blakelyi*), as well as shrubs, native grasses and herbaceous ground covers. Box-Gum Grassy Woodlands are essential habitat for Superb Parrots, as are other grassy woodland ecosystems.

Superb Parrots use these woodlands for shelter, nesting, feeding and roosting. Over 250 other native animal species also rely on these woodlands for their survival. These include mammals, woodland birds, frogs, lizards, snakes and bats.

Protecting woodlands in your area

- ✓ Identify and protect remnant woodlands
- ✓ Reduce grazing pressure to protect young trees
- ✓ Connect fragmented woodland habitats with replanting
- ✓ Leave dead and standing timber as habitat
- ✓ Protect trees with hollows as homes for native fauna
- ✓ Only source firewood from renewable sources
- ✓ Prevent fires and burning off in woodlands
- ✓ Reduce fertiliser use near woodlands
- ✓ Control weeds and feral animals



Further information

- Saving Our Species (SoS) Superb Parrot profile: <https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/threatenedSpeciesApp/profile.aspx?id=10645>
- Birds in Backyards: www.birdsinbackyards.net/species/Polytelis-swainsonii
- National Recovery Plan for Superb Parrots (*Polytelis swainsonii*)
- Plants recommended for Superb Parrot habitat planting, Conservation Volunteers Australia
- Plants recommended for Superb Parrot habitat planting: Greening Australia or Department of Planning and Industry
- Contact your Local Land Services office or the Department of Planning and Industry threatened species team near you
- www.facebook.com/savingoursuperbparrot
- www.savingoursuperbparrot.org.au

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PROTECT SUPERB PARROTS & Box-Gum Grassy Woodlands



SAVING OUR SPECIES

The Superb Parrot

Other names: Green Leek and Barraband Parrot.

Scientific name:
Polytelis swainsonii

Superb Parrots are one of Australia's most beautiful birds.

They are also a threatened species, with fewer than 5,000 - 10,000 adult birds remaining in the wild.

Superb Parrots are a bright green coloured medium-sized parrot with a long narrow tail, and distinctive call.

Males have a yellow and green head with a red crescent across the throat. Females and juveniles are usually a dullish blue-green colour. Length: 40 cm including tail 26 cm. Average weight: 130-160g.

Their call is a loud, distinctive 'currack currack' often heard before they are seen. Birds usually feed early or late in the day, and 'loaf' in the tree-tops during the day.

When females are nesting, males are often seen flying in small groups. They visit feeding areas and return regularly to regurgitate food for their mates or offspring.

Where do Superb Parrots occur?

Superb Parrots predominantly occur in the Riverina, South-West Slopes, Central-West Slopes and Plains and Northern Plains regions of NSW, and northern Victoria.

They undertake seasonal north-south migration throughout their range, flying south to breed in late spring/early summer and north for winter.

Superb Parrots breed around the Murrumbidgee, Murray and Edward Rivers, and in the vicinity of Yass, Boorowa, Young, Cowra, Orange and Molong.



Nesting occurs September–December, when females lay and incubate between 4–6 eggs in a hollow limb of a dead or mature Eucalypt tree.

Nests are usually high above the ground and within 9 km of feeding sites. They nest in colonies and re-use nest sites for many years.

They feed in the outer canopy of trees, fruiting shrubs (especially wattles), on grain, and on the ground. They can be found in Box-Gum Grassy Woodlands, River-Red Gum forests, cypress pines, wattles and native grasslands.

Known threats to Superb Parrots

- ✗ Loss of hollow bearing trees
- ✗ Clearing of woodlands
- ✗ Poor regeneration of trees, shrubs and grasses used for nesting and feeding
- ✗ Vehicle strike while feeding on spilt grain on roadsides
- ✗ Feral bees, exotic birds and feral cats
- ✗ Illegal trapping and egg collection
- ✗ Firewood collection in nesting areas

How to protect Superb Parrots in your area

- ✓ Establish if they occur in your local area
- ✓ Protect breeding and feeding areas
- ✓ **Retain isolated farm trees, dead trees, and trees with hollows**
- ✓ Plant trees, shrubs and grasses for habitat and feeding
- ✓ Prevent grain spills and watch out for Superb Parrots on road sides
- ✓ Report nesting or feeding behaviour to the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage
- ✓ Learn about Superb Parrots via your local birdwatching groups, Catchment Management Authority or the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage
- ✓ **Do not burn hollow logs and hollow trees**



Dead trees, and trees with hollows are essential habitat



Do not destroy dead trees with hollows

