

# News Release

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## Call for Regent Parrot sightings

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The Riverland has some new neighbours – brightly coloured Regent Parrots are returning to the region to breed. To help monitor these rare birds the Department for Environment and Heritage is calling on local landholders and community members to report Regent Parrot sightings.

Whether in the mallee or on a fruit block all sightings are valuable as they highlight the type of habitats important to the bird. Sightings can also indicate possible threats to the parrot and determine conservation actions to protect the species for the future.

Regent parrots are listed as vulnerable at both a state and national level. Their range has declined since the early 1900's and there are now believed to be fewer than 500 breeding pairs in South Australia.

Mark Schultz, a Threatened Species Ecologist with the Department said he is particularly interested in hearing from anyone who observes the parrot feeding.

"We currently have a good idea of where the birds nest but we need to know more about where they go feed and if they are feeding on the ground, shrubs or trees," he said.

"Regent Parrots breed between August and November. While in the Riverland they nest in the hollows of mature and dead River Red Gums. They have been recorded foraging for food in mallee woodlands up to 12km from their nests and in agricultural areas such as fruit and almond orchards."

Primarily seed eaters, Regent parents will sometimes feed on insect larvae in addition to the seeds, buds and flowers of native and introduced plants.

All male feeding flocks can sometimes be seen heading to and from their nests near the River Murray. This is during the 5 week periods where female parrots incubate their eggs and sit with the newly hatched chicks.

Regent parrots are colourful, pretty birds. They are medium sized parrots weighing 160 – 190g. Males may be slightly larger than the females. The male is brightly coloured with a golden-yellow head neck and shoulders. Females and juveniles are similar but are greener, particularly around the head and neck.

To report a Regent Parrot sighting or find out more about these magnificent birds contact 8595 2181. The research project is a partnership between the Department and the Murray Darling Basin NRM Board, and is funded through the Natural Heritage Trust.

**Images available on request.**

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