



COMMONLY CONFUSED SPECIES

Like the flagship hollow-dependent **Swift Parrot** (*Lathamus discolor*), these eight species are all hollow-dependent for nesting and co-occur with Swift Parrots to varying extents throughout their range – sometimes sharing the same tree when foraging. The various lorikeet species pictured primarily rely upon nectar food sources, whereas Rosellas predominantly consume seeds. The Red-rumped Parrot differs to the others, as it almost exclusively feeds on the ground consuming seeds, buds and other plant matter.



RAINBOW LORIKEET (A)

Trichoglossus moluccanus

Habitat - Woodlands, open forests, heaths, urban areas. Expanding range.

Notes - Strikingly colourful lorikeet. Its underwing pattern and colour are somewhat similar to Swift Parrot, but differs in having yellow on the undertail. Constantly screeching call, particularly in flight. Noisy and sociable, often in large flocks.



SCALY-BREASTED LORIKEET (M)

Trichoglossus chlorolepidotus

Habitat - Open forests, woodlands, urban areas.

Notes - Occurs along east side of NSW and Qld, with small population around Melbourne. Red beak and underwing somewhat similar to Swift Parrot, but differs having an all green tail and head. Noisy screeching call.



MUSK LORIKEET (A)

Glossopsitta concinna

Habitat - Dry open forests, woodlands, orchards, urban plantings.

Notes - Differs from Swift Parrot in having long red ear patches/cheek, and no red on wings and tail. Sociable, with large foraging flocks. Metallic screeching call made when in trees and in flight.



LITTLE LORIKEET (M)

Glossopsitta pusilla

Habitat - Open forests, woodlands, and sometimes urban plantings.

Notes - Broadly similar red pattern on head to the Swift Parrot, but lacks blue and yellow colours. Also has no red on wings, has a short, stubby tail and is considerably smaller than a Swift Parrot. Call is a shrill, high-pitched "zzit". Rarely seen in large flocks.



PURPLE-CROWNED LORIKEET (M)

Glossopsitta porphyrocephala

Habitat - Drier open forests, woodland, mallee.

Notes - Widespread in Victoria, but few records further north. Dark-purple crown and yellow-red ear patch. In flight, underside of chest and abdomen are pale blue, short all green tail, red on underwing like Swift Parrot. Noisy call is a short harmonious "zit-zit-zit" mostly seen in small flocks.



RED-RUMPED PARROT (M)

Psephotus haematonotus

Habitat - Open grasslands, timbered plains, watercourses, woodlands, mallee, forests.

Notes - Widespread in south-eastern Australia in NSW and Victoria, small populations in South Australia and south-western Queensland. Feeds in small flocks or pairs on the ground, also forage in trees for fruits and seed. Males are brightly coloured, females are a paler brown.



GREEN ROSELLA (T)

Platycercus caledonicus

Habitat - Moist wooded habitats in Tasmania. Also found in heathlands, grasslands, orchards and gardens.

Notes - Very small amount of red on the forehead and blue cheek patches. Much more solidly built than the Swift Parrot and spends a lot of time on the ground feeding. Call is a metallic "cussick cussick" or piping "king kweek". Usually seen in pairs or small groups.

EASTERN ROSELLA (A)

Platycercus eximius

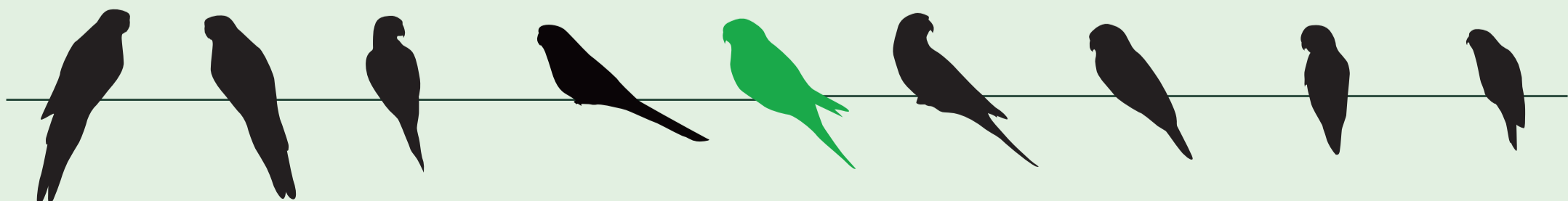
Habitat - Woodland, farmland, parks and gardens.

Notes - Much more red on the head than a Swift Parrot, and also has prominent white cheek patches. Contact call is a "chit-chit" or "chit-chit-chut" or a piping "pwink-pwink" when perched. Usually seen in pairs or small flocks. Often feeds on the ground.



SIZE COMPARISON

Green Rosella	Eastern Rosella	Rainbow Lorikeet	Red-rumped Parrot	Swift Parrot	Musk Lorikeet	Scaly-breasted Lorikeet	Purple-crowned Lorikeet	Little Lorikeet
34-37cm	33cm	30cm	24-30cm	23-26cm	24cm	20-23cm	17-19cm	16-18cm



KEY: occurs in T=Tasmania only, A=Australia (mainland and Tasmania), M=Mainland only

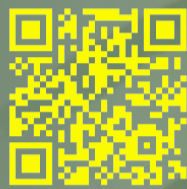
IDENTIFYING THE CRITICALLY ENDANGERED SWIFT PARROT

REPORT ALL SIGHTINGS

Birdata: birdata.birdlife.org.au

or

Email: woodlandbirds@birdlife.org.au



SCAN ME

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE SWIFT PARROT OR TO HELP SUPPORT OUR PROGRAMS VISIT:

WWW.BIRDLIFE.ORG.AU



Swift Parrot photo courtesy of Mindaribba Local Aboriginal Land Council



INTRODUCTION

The Swift Parrot is a medium-sized, fast flying parrot (up to 80km/hr). In summer, they breed in hollows of old-growth habitat in Tasmania. All birds then fly across Bass Strait to spend autumn and winter foraging in woodland across the south-eastern Australia mainland. In spring they return to Tasmania.

SCIENTIFIC NAME

Lathamus discolor

SIZE

23-26cm

LIFESPAN

~10 Years

POPULATION

~750 birds

STATUS

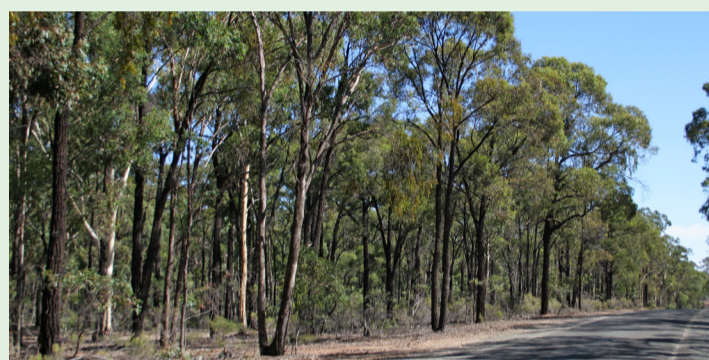
Critically Endangered

MAIN THREATS

Habitat Loss & Predation



HABITAT



Swift Parrots tend to favour certain types of trees in temperate forest and woodland, but they will also use trees (particularly large old specimens) in urban and other 'created' habitats (e.g. gardens). The key tree species favoured on the mainland include:

- Grey Box (*Eucalyptus microcarpa*)
- White Box (*E. albens*)
- Yellow Box (*E. melliodora*)
- Mugga Ironbark (*E. sideroxylon*)
- Red Ironbark (*E. tricarpa*)
- Spotted Gum (*Corymbia maculata*)
- Forest Red Gum (*E. tereticornis*)
- Swamp Mahogany (*E. robusta*)
- Yellow Gum (*E. leucoxylon*)

While breeding in Tasmania, they are found predominantly in stands of Tasmanian Blue Gum (*E. globulus*), Black Gum (*E. ovata*) or Brooker's Gum (*E. brookeriana*).

POPULATION DECLINE



Long-term monitoring by ecologists and citizen scientists shows that the Swift Parrot population is in a perilous decline. The main culprit throughout its range is habitat loss and fragmentation – both historic and ongoing.

In Tasmania, large hollow-bearing nesting and forage trees continue to be lost through logging. Sugar Gliders (an introduced species in Tasmania) are now known as a major predator of eggs, nestlings and adult birds during the breeding season, where the risk of predation is elevated in habitats disturbed by logging activities.

Additional threats across their range in Australia include aggressive and overabundant native nectarivores (like the Noisy Miner), collisions with infrastructure, and altered flowering patterns and lerp availability due to climate change and loss of foraging habitat.

HOW TO FIND A SWIFT PARROT

Swift Parrots aren't easy to find, but there are cues that increase your chances:

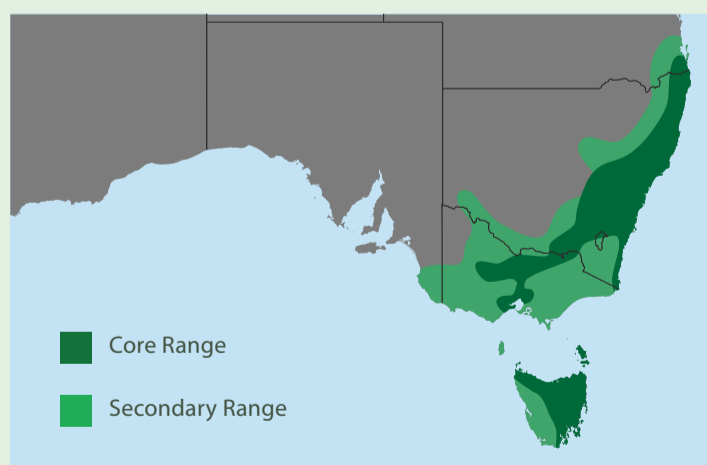
- **Look for profusely flowering eucalypts** (see Habitat section)
- **Search for other nectar-feeders**, like lorikeets and small honeyeaters.
- **Learn the calls** – Swift Parrot calls have a distinctive loud 'pip-pip-pip', particularly as they fly off.
- This is often the only way you will know they are there. You can **hear the call** by visiting our web site: www.birdlife.org.au

WHAT ARE LERPS?

Attached to the surface of eucalypt leaves, the small pale dome-shaped lerps (< 6mm across and 1-2 mm high) are secreted by insects called psyllids as a by-product of their leaf-eating lifestyle. Full of sugars and starch, lerps are consumed by Swift Parrots whenever and wherever available.



ECOLOGY & MOVEMENT



The Swift Parrot is a unique nectar-feeding parrot that annually migrates across Bass Strait from its summer breeding grounds in Tasmania to 'overwinter' in south-eastern mainland Australia. Some birds fly as far as coastal south-east Qld, making it the world's longest known parrot migration.

On the mainland they preferentially seek eucalypt-dominated temperate woodlands with abundant blossom or lerps to feed on, but will also use urbanised areas on occasions. Breeding is tightly linked to flowering of key eucalypt species in Tasmania. They are a gregarious species and are often observed in small or large flocks.

SEEN OR HEARD A SWIFTY? LET US KNOW

With such a vast potential distribution, searches and sightings (including hearing their distinctive call) by birdwatchers are critical to scientific knowledge and conservation of the Swift Parrot. One of the best ways to record a sighting is to **take a photo** or **video with audio**, no matter how poor the quality may be. Photos can allow us to identify the species, age the birds, help determine behaviour and identify the habitat they're using.

Wherever possible, it is also important to document:

- Date and time of observation
- Location (as specific as possible)
- Number of Swift Parrots seen or heard
- Behaviour and other species present
- Breeding activity (Tasmania only)
- The presence of flowering eucalypts, lerp or other food sources.



REPORT ALL SIGHTINGS

MAINLAND SIGHTINGS: woodlandbirds@birdlife.org.au

or birdata.birdlife.org.au or join the Mainland Swift Parrot Search.

TASMANIAN SIGHTINGS: Report data to birdata.birdlife.org.au or you can also report to the Tasmanian Governments Natural Values

For more information on the Swift Parrot or if you would like to help our programs scan the QR code or visit: www.birdlife.org.au

BirdLife Australia. Woodland Birds.