



Amazing Animals Fact sheets

Native Parrots

Around 300 species of the parrot family have been recorded throughout the world, extending from the tropics to the subtropical and colder parts of the Southern Hemisphere. 56 species are found in Australia, and only five of these are found elsewhere in the world. The parrot family includes cockatoos, lorikeets, rosellas, ringnecks and budgerigars.



Golden-shouldered Parrot

This parrot has, over the years, become increasingly endangered. Even when it was first discovered in 1858, it only had a limited distribution, so the numbers in the wild were probably not really high even in those days. Since that time a considerable reduction of its distribution range has occurred with a corresponding drop in the wild population. The point has now been reached where ornithologists who search for it only enjoy occasional sightings.

The Golden-shouldered Parrot is high up there with the beautiful parrots. The adult male is a particularly striking bird; the forehead, lores and feathers below the eye are lemon-yellow, the crown and nape are black, the mantle and back grey-brown, the shoulder of the wing is golden yellow, the neck, throat and breast are a beautiful turquoise-blue and lower abdomen, thighs, vent and undertail coverts are scarlet red. The adult female has a pale buff-yellow forehead, a bronze-brown crown and nape, dull yellow-green back, wings, neck and breast, and light green abdomen, vent and undertail coverts.

Habitat

The Golden-shouldered Parrot is centered in strip of dry, well grassed savanna woodlands, about 130 x 240km around Musgrave, Cape York Peninsula. Sporadically in interior and along west coast of rang. After breeding, bird travel towards west coast and return to central and eastern districts at the start of breeding season.

Diet

The Golden-shouldered Parrot diet is almost entirely of small grass seeds which they pick up from the ground or strip deftly from seeding heads. The birds spend much of the morning and late afternoon out feeding and drinking, often mixing both activities. They prefer to drink at small and shallow holes that they can walk into.

Breeding

Golden-shouldered parrots nest in a chamber in a termite mound through the entrance tunnel of 40-50cm long. They breed between April and August and two broods may be reared in a season.

Endangered Species!

Very low numbers are left in the wild. Native Parrots are at risk of extinction within the next ten years.

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