



SAVING OUR SPECIES

Swift Parrot

2018-2019 annual report card

Summary

Management sites	Central Coast; Riverina; Tarcutta Hills - Co-investment site
Action implementation	10 (of 10) management actions were fully or partially implemented as planned for the financial year.
Total expenditure	\$402,519 (\$149,338 cash; \$253,181 in-kind)
Partners	Australian National University; BirdLife Australia; Bush Heritage Australia; Central Coast Council; Greater Sydney Local Land Services; Greening Australia; Hunter Local Land Services; Lake Macquarie City Council; Murrumbidgee Landcare Incorporated; NSW Environmental Trust; Office of Environment and Heritage; participating landholders; Riverina Local Land Services



Scientific name:
Lathamus discolor

NSW status:
Endangered

Commonwealth status:
Critically Endangered

Management stream:
Landscape species

Photo: Dave Watts





Priority management site: Central Coast

Local government area:
Central Coast; Lake Macquarie;
Newcastle

Partners:

Australian National University;
BirdLife Australia; Central
Coast Council; Greater Sydney
Local Land Services; Hunter
Local Land Services; Lake
Macquarie City Council; Office
of Environment and Heritage

Population outcome

-  **On track**
-  **On track (inferred)**
-  **Not on track (inferred)**
-  **Not on track**

Monitoring

Species population monitoring by one or more methods indicates response to management over time and provides an outcome measure.

Monitoring metric	Species abundance
Annual target	At least 40 surveys statewide during each volunteer survey period.
Long term target	To obtain sufficient data on swift parrot distribution and habitat use across NSW to identify key habitat areas and resource requirements and to determine the species' response to management actions and climate variation.
Monitoring result	Up to 100 birds were observed foraging in just three profusely-flowering swamp mahogany trees.
Scientific rigour of monitoring method	Moderate
Conducted by	Greater Sydney Local Land Services

Investment

Participant	Cash	In-kind
Australian National University	\$15,847	\$7,525
BirdLife Australia	\$2,500	\$53,793
Central Coast Council	\$0	\$1,300
Greater Sydney Local Land Services	\$21,662	\$27,267
Hunter Local Land Services	\$0	\$4,149
Lake Macquarie City Council	\$0	\$4,000
Office of Environment and Heritage	\$0	\$4,617

Management actions

The following actions are those identified as being required in financial year 2018-2019 to secure the species in the wild.

Threat	Management action	Implemented as planned?
Collisions with human made structures resulting in death or injury.	Liaise with local planners about the most effective way to incorporate swift parrot conservation information into the planning process.	Yes
Habitat loss and fragmentation from forest harvesting, residential/industrial development, agricultural clearing, senscence and dieback.	Negotiate a 10-year conservation land management agreement for all sites with onground works.	Yes
Habitat loss and fragmentation from forest harvesting, residential/industrial development, agricultural clearing, senscence and dieback.	No new plantings this year given the emphasis on bush regeneration instead.	Conducted, but not as planned
Weed invasion impacting on habitat regeneration and health.	At least 280 hours of bush regeneration at an important swift parrot foraging site.	Yes
Changes in spatial and temporal distribution of habitat due to climate change.	Further climate research to be undertaken once a new climate expert can be involved.	Partial implementation (logistical delays).

Threat outcome

Assessment on the status of critical threats at this site.

Threat	Annual target	Threat status
Habitat loss and fragmentation from forest harvesting, residential/industrial development, agricultural clearing, senscence and dieback.	Planting survival rate of 85%.	Baseline data collection
Psittacine Beak and Feather Disease vulnerability.	Collect tissues samples for all injured birds that come into care.	Not assessed
Habitat loss and fragmentation from forest harvesting, residential/industrial development, agricultural clearing, senscence and dieback.	At least one event each year in each region.	On track
Changes in spatial and temporal distribution of habitat due to climate change.	More than one climate model produced and interpreted.	Baseline data collection
Collisions with human made structures resulting in death or injury.	Distribution of collision prevention guidelines to all Central Coast land managers and recruit council support for collision prevention.	Not assessed
Weed invasion impacting on habitat regeneration and health.	Weed removal from > 2 ha of swift parrot habitat.	On track

Site summary

The aim of this project was to control environmental weeds on 6.8 ha within Cockle Bay Nature Reserve at Empire Bay. Weeds targeted include blackberry, lantana, ginger and asparagus fern. The bush regeneration work took place within swamp oak sclerophyll forest on coastal floodplain and swamp oak floodplain forest endangered ecological communities. The site is known foraging habitat for the critically endangered Swift Parrot.

The primary weed control will be completed by professional bush regeneration contractors and with maintenance weed control by the Cockle Bay and Bouddi Bushcare groups under the supervision of NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service staff.

The project has delivered on a community engagement event with 35 people attending a “Swift Parrot Walk and Talk”. Local bird experts guided the group through the site, identified birds and discussed the importance of bird habitat.





Priority management site: Riverina

Local government area:
Cootamundra-Gundagai
Regional; Greater Hume Shire;
Wagga Wagga

Partners:

Australian National University;
BirdLife Australia; Bush
Heritage Australia; Greening
Australia; Murrumbidgee
Landcare Incorporated; Office
of Environment and Heritage;
participating landholders;
Riverina Local Land Services

Population outcome

-  **On track**
-  **On track (inferred)**
-  **Not on track (inferred)**
-  **Not on track**

Monitoring

Species population monitoring by one or more methods indicates response to management over time and provides an outcome measure.

Monitoring metric	Species abundance
Annual target	More than 40 surveys were conducted statewide during each volunteer survey period.
Long term target	Determine the response of the swift parrot population to habitat restoration. Determine the response of surrogate nectarivore species to habitat restoration. Monitor annual swift parrot distribution and habitat use across NSW.
Monitoring result	Up to 40 birds were recorded in a single flock.
Scientific rigour of monitoring method	High
Conducted by	Riverina Local Land Services

Investment

Participant	Cash	In-kind
Australian National University	\$16,681	\$9,084
BirdLife Australia	\$2,500	\$61,572
Bush Heritage Australia	\$0	\$2,518
Greening Australia	\$36,216	\$7,412
Murrumbidgee Landcare Incorporated	\$0	\$2,020
Office of Environment and Heritage	\$0	\$4,352
participating landholders	\$0	\$32,955
Riverina Local Land Services	\$53,932	\$30,617

Management actions

The following actions are those identified as being required in financial year 2018-2019 to secure the species in the wild.

Threat	Management action	Implemented as planned?
Habitat loss and fragmentation from forest harvesting, residential/industrial development, agricultural clearing, senescence and dieback.	Negotiate 10-year land management agreements with each landholder undertaking conservation work.	Yes
Habitat loss and fragmentation from forest harvesting, residential/industrial development, agricultural clearing, senescence and dieback.	Negotiate signed agreements to protect swift parrot habitat by using at least 4000 m of fencing.	Yes
Habitat loss and fragmentation from forest harvesting, residential/industrial development, agricultural clearing, senescence and dieback.	Negotiate signed agreements to plant over 7500 plants within ecosystem plantings containing forage tree species for swift parrots.	Yes
Weed invasion impacting on habitat regeneration and health.	Negotiate landholder agreements to undertake weed control activities.	Yes
Changes in spatial and temporal distribution of habitat due to climate change.	Continuation of this research will occur once a replacement climate expert is able to join the project.	Partial implementation (logistical delays).

Threat outcome

Assessment on the status of critical threats at this site.

Threat	Annual target	Threat status
Habitat loss and fragmentation from forest harvesting, residential/industrial development, agricultural clearing, senescence and dieback.	A survival rate of at least 75%.	On track
Habitat loss and fragmentation from forest harvesting, residential/industrial development, agricultural clearing, senescence and dieback.	At least one event each year in each region.	On track
Changes in spatial and temporal distribution of habitat due to climate change.	More than one climate model produced and interpreted.	On track
Weed invasion impacting on habitat regeneration and health.	Primary weeding undertaken over 50 ha.	Baseline data collection

Site summary





The project continues to focus on negotiating and engaging with landholders and establishing land management agreements to undertake on-ground works to enhance and protect foraging habitat. Four landholders have committed to 10 year agreements with a total of 138 ha under protection and enhancement, containing identified priority swift parrot habitat. The necessary linear nature of habitat restoration work meant that there were increased funds required for fencing with a reduced number of hectares protected. Drought remains an ongoing issue with challenges particularly in relation to planting survival. An awareness-raising day was undertaken with the local community at Murraguldrie State Reserve, Tarcutta in August 2018. This was run collaboratively by Kyeamba Valley and Tarcutta Valley Landcare Groups. Approximately 12 people attended with Ian Davidson presenting and leading a bird walk. Whilst no swift parrots were sighted, feedback on the day was positive from participants gaining a better understanding about birds and bird watching as well as the importance of protecting swift parrots and their habitats. Continued monitoring and surveying by Birdlife Australia and Debbie Saunders (ANU) continues to improve our knowledge of the species in the Riverina region with a sighting of 40 birds in one flock at a priority site this year.

Priority management site: Tarcutta Hills - Co-investment site

Local government area:
Wagga Wagga

Partners:
Bush Heritage Australia; Office of Environment and Heritage

Population outcome

-  On track
-  On track (inferred)
-  Not on track (inferred)
-  Not on track

The population trend is unknown at this time because the species population was not monitored and a critical threat was not monitored or managed this financial year.

Monitoring

Species population monitoring by one or more methods indicates response to management over time and provides an outcome measure.

Species population monitoring was not conducted at this site this financial year - establishing management plan including monitoring, evaluation and reporting plan.

Site summary

This site is part of a project that is in start-up phase with planning activity underway. The project targets five threatened entities and is funded by a grant of \$450,780 over three years from the *Saving our Species* (SoS) Conservation Co-investment Partnership Scheme and a cash contribution of \$302,000 from Bush Heritage Australia over the life of the project. The funding agreement was signed late in the 2018-19 financial year by each party (SoS and Bush Heritage Australia), confirming the allocation of resources for both cash and in-kind contributions. For the 2018-19 financial year, the grant instalment was \$165,845. Expenditure will be reported on in the next financial year.

Bush Heritage Australia (BHA) has recently been approached by a neighbour with an opportunity to purchase the southern portion of a property adjoining the existing BHA Tarcutta Hills reserve (433 ha) in the south-west slopes of NSW. The intended property purchase (referred to as "Woodleigh" in this proposal) is an area of 288 ha (which would be subdivided from a larger 733 ha property). Woodleigh and Tarcutta Hills reserve are situated within an Important Bird Area (IBA) identified by Birdlife Australia for the protection of the critically endangered swift Parrot. BHA is a partner in the *Saving our Species* swift parrot project (coordinated by the Australian National University) through our existing Tarcutta Hills reserve. BHA will purchase the southern part of the Woodleigh property and on-ground works on Woodleigh and some additional works on Tarcutta Hills reserve including:

- Revegetation of a cleared area of approximately 60 ha in the north-east corner of Woodleigh with suitable local *Eucalyptus* and understorey species to improve connectivity for swift parrots.
- Weed control targeting significant infestations (blackberry and St Johns wort) mainly in the north-east corner of the Woodleigh in advance of revegetation work.
- Feral animal control targeting fox, deer and rabbit populations. Feral deer are a key threat to understorey shrubs and young eucalyptus due to browsing and rubbing.

Saving our Species 2018-2019 annual report card for Swift Parrot (*Lathamus discolor*). For more information refer to the specific strategy in the Saving our Species program.