

WESTERN GROUND PARROT (KYLORINY)

PEZOPORUS FLAVIVENTRIS

STATUS: CRITICALLY ENDANGERED

ESTIMATED WILD POPULATION: FEWER THAN 200 INDIVIDUALS

A BIT ABOUT THE WESTERN GROUND PARROT

The Western Ground Parrot, known by the Noongar name Kyloriny, is one of Australia's most elusive and endangered birds. This medium-sized parrot (80–105g) is generally green in colour, mottled with black and yellow, and features a distinctive red band above its beak. Unlike most parrots, and despite being relatively strong flyers, Kyloriny spends most of its time on the ground where it nests and forages in dense vegetation. These parrots feed on seeds, fruits, and flowers, and typically forage on the ground or in low shrubs. Kyloriny are generally solitary and are not known to establish territories. It is rarely seen, with its presence most often detected by its distinctive, whistling calls heard around sunrise and sunset.

WHERE DOES IT LIVE?

Kyloriny is restricted to low, floristically diverse, near-coastal dry heath along the south coast of Western Australia. These habitats are characterised by a mosaic of recently burnt and long-unburnt vegetation which the species needs to find both food and cover. While it was once found widely across the south coast of Western Australia, its range has now contracted to one natural population in Cape Arid National Park and Nuytsland Nature Reserve east of Esperance, and a recently translocated group of individuals just east of Albany.

HOW RARE IS IT?

Kyloriny is now considered one of the rarest parrots in the world. As recently as 2004, it could be found across much of the south coast of Western Australia. However, by 2012, its range had declined to a single wild population. Following devastating bushfires and habitat loss, the total number of individuals is now estimated at fewer than 200. A recent translocation has begun the process of establishing a second small population, but the species remains at severe risk of extinction. It is listed as Critically Endangered under both WA and national legislation, and holds the same status on the IUCN Red List.

WHAT ARE ITS MAIN THREATS?

The survival of Kyloriny is threatened by a number of serious pressures:

- Bushfires, particularly large-scale wildfires, pose a serious threat of wiping out remaining wild populations.
- Introduced predators, such as foxes and feral cats, prey on the parrot—especially due to its unusual habit of nesting on or near the ground.
- Historical habitat loss and fragmentation has cleared large areas of the species' critical coastal heathland habitat.
- Limited genetic diversity makes the species more vulnerable to disease and less able to adapt to environmental changes.
- Climate change, including rising temperatures and reduced rainfall, may affect breeding success and the availability of food resources.
- Phytophthora dieback, which kills key plant species in heathland ecosystems, degrades important foraging and nesting habitat.

HOW HAS IT MADE A COMEBACK?

Guided by the South Coast Threatened Birds Recovery Team, conservation efforts have helped prevent the extinction of Kyloriny. Key recovery actions, led by the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions in collaboration with project partners, have included:

- Beginning the process of establishing a second wild population through a wild-to-wild translocation.
- Ongoing introduced predator control, targeting feral cats and foxes in key habitat.
- Fire management planning to ensure that a suitable mix of vegetation is maintained and that unburnt refuge areas are protected.
- Protection of existing habitat through access control measures and dieback hygiene protocols.
- Research and trialling of captive breeding as a potential method to increase population numbers.
- Research to better understand the species' ecological requirements and improve habitat management.
- Population monitoring to track changes in abundance and distribution over time.



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WHAT DOES IT NEED NEXT?

Despite conservation efforts, Kyloriny remains at critical risk. To ensure its survival, urgent ongoing action is needed and includes:

- Continued protection of current and potential future habitat.
- Ongoing and intensified predator control for feral cats and foxes in both known and potential habitats.
- Further translocations to establish additional populations at suitable sites.
- Expanded monitoring and research to better understand population status, population health, genetics, and ecological needs.
- Continue trialling and researching captive breeding to investigate its potential to contribute to the species conservation.
- Increased community awareness and involvement to promote conservation actions and reduce human impacts.

INTERESTED IN GETTING INVOLVED IN KYLORINY RECOVERY WORK?

Check out the Friends of the Western Ground Parrot webpage: western-ground-parrot.org.au and contact Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions: albany@dbca.wa.gov.au

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