

Superb parrot

Polytelis swainsonii
Vulnerable



Target: secure the superb parrot by protecting mature trees and woodland, and increasing habitat and landscape connectivity

Over the last five years, *Saving our Species* (SoS) has improved a huge amount of habitat crucial for the survival of the superb parrot (*Polytelis swainsonii*). Habitat loss, in particular the loss of living and dead hollow-bearing trees that are crucial for breeding, is a major threat to this striking parrot. There are two superb parrot SoS projects that work closely with program partners: *Saving our superb parrot of the Southern Tablelands and South West Slopes* and *Restoring and enhancing habitat for the superb parrot in the Riverina*.

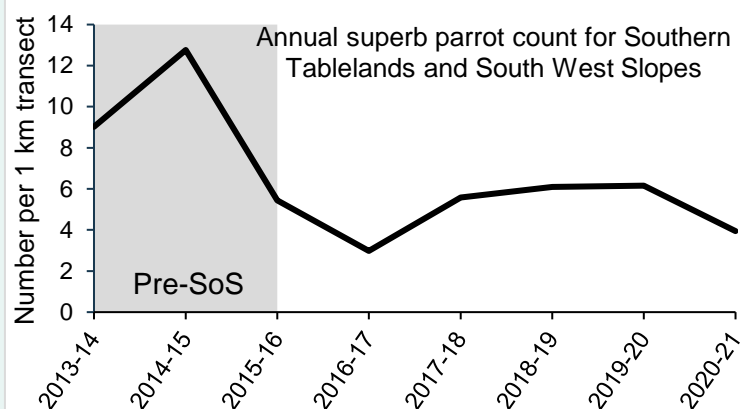
Both projects showcase the importance of developing long-term community partnerships that bring different skills and talents to the table, resulting in increased awareness and hands-on community participation in conservation. Key outcomes of the two SoS projects include:

- Over **270 hectares** of remnant box gum woodland threatened ecological community (TEC) habitat have been protected and **60 hollow-bearing paddock trees** fenced-off from stock.
- Over **25,000 tubestock trees** and shrubs have been planted, and over **3000 tubestock paddock trees** planted and protected with cattle-proof tree guards.
- Direct seeding of **438 hectares** of sandhill pine woodland TEC and **50 hectares** of box gum woodland TEC has been undertaken.

Trajectory: decreasing

In the short term (2013–14 to 2020–21) the superb parrot's Southern Tablelands and South West Slopes population trend appears to be decreasing slightly.

Ongoing habitat loss across the species' range will ultimately see further declines unless we are able to protect existing habitat and plant new habitat.



Partners

Both SoS-led projects have strong and collaborative participation from multiple partners, including five Landcare groups, Greening Australia, NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, South East and Riverina Local Land Services, Coleambally Irrigation and local field naturalist groups. Knowledge exchange occurred through field days, where different Landcare groups demonstrated the best ways to plant and maintain trees.

These projects have benefitted local communities by employing local businesses for everything from graphic design and catering to sign making and fencing, and funded salaries for Landcare support officers.

What did we find?

These projects have achieved outstanding on-ground outcomes so far, with over 25,000 tubestock trees planted and over 3000 tubestock paddock trees planted and protected with cattle-proof guards, plus a huge amount of foraging habitat improvement. Another standout outcome was 438 hectares of sandhill pine woodland TEC and 50 hectares of new box gum woodland TEC revegetated and enhanced. Many mature hollow-bearing trees and several hundred hectares of remnant woodland habitat have been fenced and protected against stock across private land. The key to these on-ground habitat restoration successes has been the teamwork, knowledge sharing, shared commitment, and impressive level of 'in-kind' contributions and clever cost-saving initiatives that each partner has brought to the project. The suite of different skills that each partner has offered and the ability for all of these to come together cohesively has made both projects standouts of the SoS landscape species management stream.

Efforts to protect and restore woodland habitat on farms for the superb parrot also helps a large suite of other threatened woodland birds, reptiles and mammals.

The momentum and interest in these projects continue to build and it is important that we continue planting new trees and shrubs for the

superb parrot and encouraging sustainable farms with shade and shelter for stock and humans.



Tree hollows provide crucial habitat for superb parrots and many other threatened species. Photo: David Parker/DPIE

Enlisting the community to monitor for birds

- Participants in the community monitoring program submit transect counts and individual sightings, with some counting parrots every year at the same spot for over seven years!
- Since 2013, a total of 230 transect counts have been conducted and over 2200 superb parrots have been recorded. This includes over 1000 new location records made by community observers on the Atlas of Living Australia's superb parrot [BioCollect](#) portal.



Community members and volunteers participating in a transect count. Photo: Alex Pike/DPIE

Saving our Species is a NSW Government flagship program delivered by the Environment, Energy and Science Group in the Department of Planning Industry and Environment. To find out more about threatened species in New South Wales and the *Saving our Species* program, visit the [Saving our Species webpage](#).