



Hi everyone,

While assisting the Monash University student to locate flocks of Regent Parrots for trapping and subsequently placing trackers on to further our understanding of where they move about the landscape, it became evident that our previously largest breeding colony appeared to be very much down in numbers. Based on this observation, and because it has been 6 years since our last big effort to survey the whole breeding area in SA, we would like to attempt to conduct a nest survey in the breeding season this year (September- October). Whether this will be possible depends on how many volunteers we can muster to undertake this huge task. Details about the nest survey are given below. The team has continued to work on other aspects of the life of these intriguing birds in an effort to work out ways to ensure their survival into the future.

### **Nest camera project**

Darren Schmitke, with assistance from Recovery team members and other interested volunteers set four cameras in motion focussed on active Regent Parrot nest hollows during the last breeding season. A great deal of footage was obtained and this has been forwarded to Prof. Kleindorf at Flinders University who will engage her students in watching and analysing what happens around these hollows (competition, predation, number of fledglings etc.) We look forward to receiving this information and comparing it to the results of our last nest camera effort where 33% of the nesting pairs failed to complete the breeding effort which resulted in just 1.3 young per nest being successfully reared to fledging age.

### **Tracking**

Rosie Collins from Monash University attached trackers to eight Regent Parrots during the last breeding season. From this we will gain more knowledge about food sources, roosting areas and Dr. David McClelland (veterinarian) from the Adelaide Zoo checked the health of birds and tested for disease in the population. Due to a generous grant from Banrock Station we will be able to attach a number of trackers to birds early next year. These trackers are currently being tested on captive Regent Parrots at the Zoo.

## **Regent Parrot Spring Nest Survey 2017 - *Can you help?***

The community based Regent Parrot Recovery team is seeking expressions of interest from individuals or groups of people who may wish to volunteer for this years nesting survey. This is a unique opportunity to contribute to critical research which supports the recovery of the threatened Regent Parrot. No experience is required as training will be provided. The team has learned that the best approach to survey the whole breeding area along the River Murray in South Australia is to conduct the surveys in the following way:

- provide training in nest hollow location and detail recording;
- allocate short sections of the river corridor to each participant. (Sections generally require about a week of full time searching to complete the task);
- volunteers then search their area at any time over the two month breeding season (Sept/Oct) and engage as many helpers as they like (or, do it entirely on their own). The aim is to record details of every Regent Parrot nest hollow being used in that breeding season.

Ideally, volunteers would camp out in their allocated area for a period of time, enjoy nature in its entirety whilst searching for nesting hollows. Participants in past surveys have enjoyed wonderful and unique wildlife experiences such as encounters with Carpet Pythons, deafening Barn Owls, hundreds of frogs calling at night and the satisfaction of outsmarting elusive Regent Parrots into revealing their nest hollow locations.

Those people interested in volunteering are invited to contact Kevin Smith via email: [aquila43@bigpond.com](mailto:aquila43@bigpond.com) or Mike Harper via email: [theharpers@live.com.au](mailto:theharpers@live.com.au) The Regent Parrot is 'perched on the brink of extinction' - you can help save this beautiful species by donating your time while enjoying the River Murray environment.

Please pass on the email to which this newsletter is attached to anyone you think may be interested as we would welcome as many enthusiastic volunteers as we can muster in our efforts to assist with our projects.

Best wishes,  
Kevin Smith