



FACTSHEET

Rock Parrot



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Common Name: Rock Parrot

Scientific Name: *Neophema petrophila*

Conservation Status: Listed as Least Concern under ICUN (2014). All Rottnest Island's fauna is protected under the *Rottnest Island Authority Act 1987*.

Habitat: Rocky Shores, In-shore Islands, Coastal Habitat, Scrub Heath, Salt Lakes

Body length: approximately 23 cm

Weight: 50-55 g

Gestation period: 18-21 days

Number of young: 1-5 (4-6 eggs)

Description:

The Rock Parrot is predominantly olive-green in colour with a yellow abdomen and blue forehead and face. It is stocky and plump in body shape and has a slender tail that is pale blue above with yellow tones underneath.

Diet:

Seeds, fruits of grasses, rushes, shrubs and salt-tolerant plants.

In the Wild:

Populations of Rock Parrot are found along coastal habitats and usually located within only a few hundred metres of the shore. The Rock Parrot favors perches in dense shrub, or in sand dunes and often nests in limestone rock crevices. Their preference for rock crevices may reflect the absence of suitable tree hollows rather than their desire for rocky tunnels.

The Rock Parrot mostly forages on the ground and feeds on seeds and fruits of a wide variety of grasses, rushes, shrubs and salt-tolerant plants. They fly in a rapid jerky motion and mostly move locally in pairs or small groups during breeding season (August-December). The call of the Rock Parrot sounds like a 'tsit-tseet'.

Rock Parrots were common on Rottnest Island prior to the 1940s but the population drastically declined due to predation by cats and the removal of young birds for the pet trade. Research into Rock Parrot population size is currently being undertaken by Department of Parks and Wildlife (DPAW) and Rottnest Island Authority, with several individuals already tagged by DPaW.

Threats:

- Pet trade
- Predation by cats
- Habitat loss

DID YOU KNOW?

The female incubates the eggs while the male feeds her by regurgitation, an act which is also reflected in courtship.