



The Place To Be

Media Release

From the Department of Sustainability and Environment

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RADIO TRACKING AN OPTION TO HELP SAVE REGENT HONEYEATER

A plan to radio track the endangered Regent Honeyeater to learn more about its movement patterns following the current breeding season is about to commence.

The species has fallen to critically low levels during the last five years with less than 50 birds believed to occur in Victoria.

“Recent surveys show that perhaps fewer than 1000 birds remain in the wild in Australia,” DSE Biodiversity Officer, Sarah Kelly, said.

“Their decline appears to be due to a steady reduction of its habitat and competition for remaining nectar resources.”

Ms Kelly said National Threatened Species Day, today, was an opportune time to raise awareness of the Regent Honeyeater’s plight and the importance of the north east Victorian breeding grounds.

“During winter and spring, the honeyeaters concentrate at main box ironbark breeding areas around Chiltern and Benalla, among other interstate locations.”

The elusive behaviour of the Regent Honeyeater makes planning for its conservation difficult.

Ms Kelly said the recent banding of 11 birds in Chiltern would assist volunteers and biodiversity officers to better identify individual birds and survey their movements.

“The proposal to radio track the birds will allow us to monitor species more closely, and identify habitats and locations used after the breeding season – a period when Regents normally go off the radar.”

The north east project, which has the support of the North East Catchment Management Authority, Friends of Chiltern National Park and the Natural Heritage Trust, is part of the species’ national recovery plan.

“The plan aims to secure and enhance the habitat at all regularly used sites, by protecting key breeding trees and ensuring regeneration of new stands.”

National Threatened Species Day is held on September 7 each year to encourage the community to help conserve Australia’s unique native fauna and flora. First held in 1996, the day helps focus on issues such as climate change and the threat to many native species, which are already under the threat of extinction

Residents and landowners can help the Regent Honeyeater by reporting sightings of the bird to DSE offices throughout the region or the DSE Customer Service Centre 136 186.