

## Red Rumped treasure

by Matthew Palmer

### Introduction

In this month's article, Matthew Palmer, a local bushcare group member, focuses again on our Centenary Suburbs' bird life, this time a member of the parrot family.

The large flocks of parrots seen in our suburbs can be deceiving as parrots are often long-lived and any declines in breeding rates are therefore not immediately noticed.

All the more reason to look after the habitat of our treasures like the Red-rumped Parrot.

**Ed Parker – Nature Watch coordinator**

The Centenary Suburbs is fortunate to have numerous colourful specimens of the parrot family. Rainbow Lorikeets and Scaly breasted Lorikeets are abundant.

Little Lorikeets, Pale Headed Rosellas and King Parrots are commonly seen but one of the most unusual residents and arguably the most striking is the Red-rumped Parrot.

While the Red-rumped Parrot (*Psephotus haematonotus*) is a parrot mainly of the interior of Australia, an isolated colony lives along a stretch of the Brisbane River near Amazons.

They can be seen on or close to the ground eating their favourite food, the seed of long grasses.

The adult male Red-rumped Parrot is mainly a blend of striking bluish green which melds to yellow on the stomach, blue on the tips of his wings and a distinctive red rump from which his name is derived.

The female has the same colour blending as the male but the colours are duller with a more olive complexion. When fully grown the Red-rumped Parrot reaches 28cm.

Red-rumped Parrots spend nearly their entire lives along watercourses and nest in a hollow of a eucalyptus. Nesting takes place between August and February.

The Red-rumped Parrot's normal call is a shrill whistle, "suweet-weet..... suweet-weet....", each syllable ending with an upward inflection. While perched or squabbling they have different calls.

*This regular Nature Watch column is contributed by your local Centenary bushland care groups.*

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