

# Action statement

*Flora & Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*

## Regent Honeyeater (*Anthochaera phrygia*)

Taxon ID: 10603

Action statements are developed under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* (FFG Act). Their preparation and implementation complement the FFG Act strategy *Protecting Victoria's Environment – Biodiversity 2037* and its vision that “Victoria’s biodiversity is healthy, valued and actively cared for”.

### Species and Distribution



Regent Honeyeater. Image by Daniel Pendavingh.



This habitat distribution model displays the indicative range of the Regent Honeyeater based on occurrence records and likely habitat. See [NatureKit](#) for an interactive map. The Regent Honeyeater also occurs outside of Victoria.

### Conservation Status

#### Critically Endangered

**Listing criteria:** 3.1.3(b)(ii) of the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Regulations 2020.

This means that:

- the Regent Honeyeater has undergone, is suspected to have undergone, or is likely to undergo in the immediate future, a very severe reduction in population size.

**Corresponding International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) criteria:** A2a.

More information on IUCN listing criteria can be found here: [IUCN Red List of Threatened Species](#)

### Species Information

Species information such as its description, distribution, ecology and references are provided in the [Regent Honeyeater EPBC Conservation Advice](#).

## Threats

Threats listed below have been identified through expert consultation, published literature and spatial analysis.

Threat	Description
<b>Population dynamics</b>	
Changes in natural behaviours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is some evidence that smaller breeding aggregations (arising from small population size) may result in lower breeding success, as smaller groups may be less able to defend territories and resources from competitors.</li> <li>There is evidence that in fragmented populations, and among some captive-release birds, young males have lost knowledge of mating songs (and in some cases have learned incorrect songs). This results in reduced breeding success.</li> </ul>
Loss of genetic diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regent Honeyeaters are classified as Very High on the Genetic Risk Index. Significant decline in population size has exposed the species to genetic decline, which carries the risk of inbreeding depression, and loss of adaptive potential to environmental change and climate change impacts.</li> </ul>
Small population size	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Small populations are vulnerable to stochastic events.</li> </ul>
<b>Native species</b>	
Birds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Competition for food resources with Noisy Miner (<i>Manorina melanocephala</i>), Noisy Friarbird (<i>Philemon corniculatus</i>) and Red Wattlebird (<i>Anthochaera carunculata</i>) may reduce breeding success and survival.</li> <li>Native nest predators (e.g., Pied Currawong, Corvids, Butcherbirds) affect breeding success.</li> </ul>
Mammals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Common Brush-tailed Possum, Krefft's Glider and Squirrel Glider are significant nest predators, contributing to low breeding success.</li> <li>Over abundant native herbivores may limit recruitment and productivity of key forest and woodland species, impacting food availability for Regent Honeyeaters.</li> </ul>
<b>Climate change</b>	
Altered flowering or germination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Climate change may already be altering the flowering patterns of key eucalypt species, impacting food availability.</li> </ul>
Increased frequency and/or length of droughts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased frequency or length of droughts will likely alter and degrade foraging habitat. There is already evidence of reduced reproductive success in drought affected landscapes.</li> </ul>
<b>Habitat loss, degradation, or modification</b>	
Land use change/intensification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agricultural intensification and land use change alters hydrology, degrades habitat, and fragments populations. Removal of paddock trees through clearance to aid cropping practices, or dieback through excess nutrient loads and/or salinity, contributes to habitat loss.</li> </ul>
Livestock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Livestock contribute to habitat degradation and loss, through damage to mature trees and reducing seedling recruitment in forest and woodland habitats.</li> </ul>

Threat	Description
Vegetation clearing or damage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Historical and ongoing removal of native forests and woodlands has reduced availability of mature trees, other habitat components, and resulted in fragmentation of remaining habitat.</li> </ul>
<b>Fire</b>	
Altered fire regime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Too frequent or extensive fires can impact the flowering patterns of forest and woodland habitats, reducing food availability.</li> <li>A hotter, drier climate may increase the likelihood or frequency of fire impacting Regent Honeyeater habitat, with the potential to cause direct mortality and reduce habitat quality and/or extent.</li> </ul>
<b>Introduced species</b>	
Introduced herbivores	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fallow Deer (<i>Dama dama</i>), Sambar Deer (<i>Cervus unicolor</i>), feral goats (<i>Capra hircus</i>), feral pigs (<i>Sus scrofa</i>) and rabbits (<i>Oryctolagus cuniculus</i>) damage and degrade habitat.</li> </ul>
Introduced invertebrates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Honeybees (<i>Apis mellifera</i>) (both feral and commercial) may compete directly with Regent Honeyeaters for nectar, and indirectly reduce insect prey availability through competition with other insect species.</li> </ul>
Introduced plants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduced plants can change the structure and composition of habitats, degrading habitat, and may reduce food availability.</li> </ul>
Introduced predators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feral cats (<i>Felis catus</i>) prey on the species, particularly fledglings in nests.</li> </ul>
<b>Human disturbance</b>	
Firewood collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Firewood collection can lead to loss of critical habitat features.</li> </ul>

## Conservation Objectives

Conservation objectives are informed by the conservation status and criteria under which the species was listed under the FFG Act. This provides a framework to understand how we can work towards recovery and improve the species' conservation status over time as per the objectives of the FFG Act.

The key objectives of this action statement are:

- Mitigate threats to populations and habitat to increase resilience, increase genetic fitness and minimise future population decline
- Increase knowledge of biology, ecology, distribution, demography, emerging threats, and conservation requirements.
- Support community participation and improve awareness of the Regent Honeyeater and conservation of its habitat.

## Conservation Actions

The actions below have been identified through expert consultation, published literature and spatial analysis. Actions are listed in alphabetical order to allow all interested parties to prioritise based on their context, capacity and capability. Landscape scale actions may mitigate threats for other species. For more information on where to undertake actions that benefit multiple species and identify the most beneficial locations to undertake actions for this species, please refer to [NatureKit](#).

Action	Description
Avoid and/or mitigate impacts associated with fire management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that species distribution data and ecological information is available and considered in fire management activities.</li> <li>Undertake biodiversity values check prior to fuel management in areas of the species habitat, to confirm treatment suitability and timing.</li> </ul>
Community engagement and awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain and improve community awareness, understanding and involvement in conservation efforts.</li> <li>Increase landholder awareness about the Regent Honeyeater and its ecological requirements, including the importance of habitat trees and the impact of livestock grazing on this habitat. Provide guidance to landholders and land managers on the contexts when changes to grazing, such as exclusion, may be required.</li> </ul>
Compliance and enforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake risk-based compliance and enforcement activities to limit the impacts of illegal native vegetation removal and firewood collection.</li> </ul>
Control introduced herbivores *	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement effective management and control of introduced herbivores to limit impacts on foraging habitat.</li> </ul>
Control introduced plants*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement effective management and control of introduced plants where they cause smothering of foraging habitat.</li> <li>Note many nectar-producing introduced plants also provide food resources for Regent Honeyeaters.</li> </ul>
Develop, update, and apply forestry protections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain prescriptions for this species under the Code of Practice for Timber Production 2014 (as amended in 2022) (the Code).</li> <li>Where relevant, incorporate species-specific protection measures into plans and permits relating to timber harvesting operations in native forest on private land.</li> </ul>
Ex-situ management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain and increase the captive breeding program to provide insurance against overall extinction risk, and provide birds for release into the wild, to prevent extinction in the wild and provide tools for genetic management.</li> <li>Improve captive husbandry practices to maximise success of translocation programs, including developing training programs to overcome losses of wild behaviours.</li> </ul>
Manage over-abundant native species	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manage native species where they represent significant risks to site occupancy, survival, or breeding success through competition (e.g., Noisy Miners).</li> </ul>
Permanent protection *	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate incentives, voluntary agreements, covenants and other permanent protection measures to protect and restore habitat.</li> </ul>

Action	Description
Protect key habitat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify the species' needs, and opportunities to manage risks through appropriate siting and design, when planning new developments or changes to land use that will further reduce habitat extent and/or condition.</li> <li>Protect nests from predation of chicks and fledglings, including preventing or limiting nest access by native predators such as possums and gliders, currawongs, corvids and butcherbirds, and feral cats.</li> </ul>
Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand the causes of breeding success and failure and integrate this knowledge into potential management actions.</li> <li>Improve understanding of movement patterns.</li> <li>Understand the impact of competition with native species, and the benefits of management options.</li> <li>Investigate and consider the impact of competition for nectar from commercial honeybee hives at key sites.</li> </ul>
Restoration and/or revegetation *	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Restore and/or revegetate habitat in degraded and/or fragmented landscapes. Where possible incorporate silvicultural techniques to accelerate maturity of key species.</li> <li>Investigate the benefits and opportunities to restore mistletoe species such as Box Mistletoe (<i>Amyema miquelii</i>) and Long-flower Mistletoe (<i>Dendrophthoe vitellina</i>) where fire or drought has caused significant mortality.</li> </ul>
Survey and monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Measure population size and trajectory, following best-practice methods for the species.</li> <li>Continue volunteer supported surveys during the breeding season and post-release monitoring.</li> </ul>
Translocation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and implement an effective translocation program, to reduce the risk of extinction in the wild. Adaptive management of the program to be informed by research and structured decision support tools such as Population Viability Analysis and Specific Needs Assessment.</li> </ul>

\*Indicates landscape-scale actions that may deliver benefits to multiple species

## Past actions

The key conservation management actions listed below have been delivered in the past 10 years.

Past action	Description
Community engagement and awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Volunteers are involved in twice yearly surveys and complete additional monitoring throughout the breeding season. This includes significant community involvement in post-release monitoring of birds at Chiltern-Mt Pilot National Park.</li> <li>Long-term and ongoing engagement with private landholders, especially those adjoining the Chiltern-Mount Pilot National Park, and community groups including Friends of and Birders Albury Wodonga, support continued community awareness and involvement in the Regent Honeyeater program.</li> </ul>

Past action	Description
Develop, update, and apply forestry protections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Regent Honeyeater has a current species-specific prescription in the Code:</li> <li>In the Midlands Forest Management Area (FMA): If Regent Honeyeaters are present in an area not listed as a regularly used site, exclude the area from timber harvesting operations until its significance for Regent Honeyeaters can be assessed by the Recovery Team and appropriate prescriptions devised.</li> <li>In the Bendigo, Mid Murray, North East and Portland-Horsham FMAs: Apply a protection area extending 100 m from regularly used sites. Surround the protection area with a management area of 150 m.</li> <li>The risk of forestry operations was assessed for this species in 2020 under the Victorian Government Threatened Species and Communities Risk Assessment. Additional permanent protections were not found to be required.</li> </ul>
Liaise with stakeholder groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extensive ongoing liaison and project coordination with Birdlife Australia, Taronga Zoo, Zoos Victoria and the National Regent Honeyeater Recovery Team to coordinate and improve the captive breeding and release program.</li> </ul>
Manage over-abundant native species	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Noisy Miner control was undertaken in key habitat within and adjacent to the Chiltern-Mount Pilot National Park.</li> </ul>
Permanent protection *	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Permanent protection of Regent Honeyeater habitat occurring on private property has been achieved through conservation covenants.</li> </ul>
Restoration and/or revegetation *	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planting of tube stock or direct seeding and habitat protection measures to allow existing habitats to regenerate naturally has been carried out for over 30 years in Lurg Hills and around Chiltern-Mount Pilot National Park.</li> </ul>
Survey and monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Surveys have been conducted regularly since 2005 to monitor the population and to collect demographic information.</li> </ul>
Translocation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A captive breeding program was established in 1995. The first release of captive bred birds was in 2000. Since then, 296 birds have been released, 287 of these into Chiltern-Mt Pilot National Park. Monitoring of birds post release has been conducted to determine post release survival. Minimum survival rates from the most recent 2017 release were 78% after 10 weeks.</li> </ul>

## Decision Support Tools

Decision making for conservation actions is supported through the following Victorian Government tools which may be of assistance in choosing the most appropriate or beneficial actions for biodiversity:

- [Choosing actions for nature: NatureKit](#)
- [Biodiversity Knowledge Framework](#)

## Further Information

- [Regent Honeyeater Species Forecast Report](#)
- [Conservation Advice – Regent Honeyeater](#)
- [Commonwealth Species Profile and Threats database](#)
- [Threatened Species and Communities Risk Assessment](#)





- [Victoria's changing climate – understanding the impacts of climate change in Victoria](#)
- [Code of Practice for Timber Production 2014](#)
- [Genetic Risk Index](#)
- [Commonwealth Threat Abatement Plans](#)
- [Flora and Fauna Guarantee Regulations 2020](#)
- [IUCN criteria summary](#)

## Get Involved and Take Action

If you are interested in supporting this species' recovery, there are some important things you need to consider.

The Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) is committed to engaging and partnering with Traditional Owners on how they wish to be involved in the planning and implementation of actions for this species. Steps must be taken to avoid harm and where appropriate ensure actions can deliver cultural benefits.

You can find advice about required approvals, land manager and/or owner permissions, options and incentives for private land conservation, and engagement with Traditional Owners and public land managers here: [Action statements \(environment.vic.gov.au\)](#)

To identify the relevant Traditional Owners, use the [Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Register and Information System \(ACHRIS\) Welcome to Country and Acknowledgements Map](#).

You can also register your interest in taking action so we can connect you to other people or organisations working to help us secure the future for this species at [threatened.species@deeca.vic.gov.au](mailto:threatened.species@deeca.vic.gov.au)

## Reporting Actions

Activity data is critical to monitoring the implementation and progress of actions and evaluating action statements. These data are also used to:

- Determine progress towards achieving the contributing targets for [Protecting Victoria's Environment – Biodiversity 2037](#).
- Inform the five-yearly State of the Environment Report.

For guidance on reporting actions undertaken on this species, refer to [Activity Data](#).

## Submitting Monitoring Data

The Victorian Biodiversity Atlas (VBA) provides a foundational dataset showing where biodiversity occurs across the Victorian landscape and how it may have changed over time. As a core input for decision support tools that inform conservation action, public land management, research activities and reporting, we encourage all participants in the delivery of on-ground actions to submit species records and observations, including for introduced plants and animals, as they carry out their projects.

For further information see: [Victorian Biodiversity Atlas \(environment.vic.gov.au\)](#)

Sign up and begin submitting your data today at: <https://vba.biodiversity.vic.gov.au/>



## Acknowledgment

We acknowledge and respect Victorian Traditional Owners as the original custodians of Victoria's land and waters, their unique ability to care for Country and deep spiritual connection to it. We honour Elders past and present whose knowledge and wisdom has ensured the continuation of culture and traditional practices.

We are committed to genuinely partner, and meaningfully engage, with Victoria's Traditional Owners and Aboriginal communities to support the protection of Country, the maintenance of spiritual and cultural practices and their broader aspirations in the 21st century and beyond.



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