

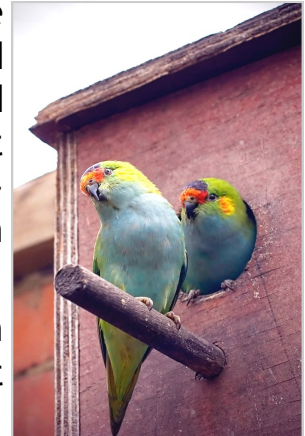
# THE PURPLE-CROWNED LORIKEET

*Glossopsitta porphyrocephala*

The Purple-crowned Lorikeet is also known as the Porphyry-crowned Lorikeet, Zit Parrot, Blue-crowned Lorikeet, Purple-capped Lorikeet and Purple-capped Parakeet. This delightful species is a small lorikeet featuring a purple crown, an orange forehead and ear-coverts, and a light blue chin and chest. It is found in scrub and mallee areas of southern Australia.

The species was first described by Lionel Dietrichsen in 1837, its scientific name is derived from the Ancient Greek words *porphuros* "purple" and *kephalē* "head".

Measuring around 15 cm (6 in) long, the male Purple-crowned Lorikeet has a dark purple crown, yellow-orange forehead and ear-coverts, deepening to orange lores, and green upperparts, tinted bronze on the mantle and nape. The chin, chest and belly are powder blue, while the thighs and under-tail coverts are yellowish-green. The green tail has some orange-red colouration at the base of the lateral feathers. There are large crimson patches under the wings that are visible when the bird is in flight. The beak is black, the iris brown and the feet grey. The female is similar but has a darker iris, paler ear-coverts and lacks the crimson patches. Juveniles are duller and lack the purple crown. It has a high-pitched call of "tsit" when flying.



A NESTING PAIR  
Photo: Ruth Ellison



Map: "Nrg800"

The range is southwest Western Australia, and southern South Australia, east from southern Eyre Peninsula, through the Gawler Ranges and southern Flinders Ranges and across Victoria to East Gippsland. It occurs on Kangaroo Island, but not in Tasmania. Locally nomadic, the Purple-crowned follows the flowering cycle food trees .

Although generally found in small groups, the species may congregate in larger flocks, often feeding in the company of Little, Musk and Rainbow Lorikeets. It is a fast, straight flyer and dwells mainly in the forest canopy far above the ground. Blossoms of various *Eucalyptus* and *Melaleuca* species, and the boobialla, *Myoporum insulare*, are favourite foods.

Breeding occurs from August to December with one brood laid. The nest is a small hollow in a tree, often with a knot-hole entrance. Sometimes the species nests in colonies. A clutch of 2-4 matte white roundish eggs, measuring 20 x 17 mm, is laid. The incubation period is around 17 days.

R.V.C. with help from Wikipedia