

THE KING PARROTS

AN INTRODUCTION

#2 PAPUAN KING PARROT



MALE AT JURONG BIRD PARK,
SINGAPORE
Photo: Peter tan

The Papuan King Parrot, *Alisterus chloropterus*, also known as the Green-winged King Parrot, is found in West Papua [Indonesia] and Papua New Guinea. Its natural habitat is subtropical or tropical moist lowland forests and subtropical or tropical moist mountainous forests.

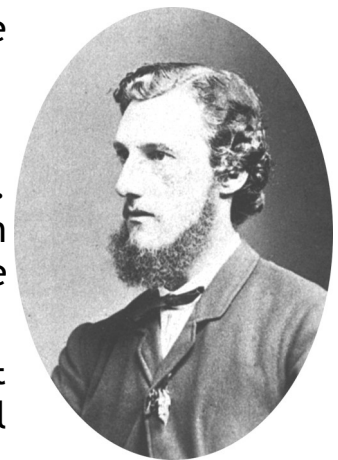
This King Parrot species is 36cm (14 inches) in length including a long broad tail. It has dark grey legs and orange irises. The three subspecies of the Papuan King Parrot all show some sexual dimorphism and in all three subspecies the male can be identified by a prominent broad pale-green band on each wing. The females of the subspecies are more markedly different than is the case with the males.

The male has a red head and neck, red under-parts, a blue back and rump, dark green wings (each with a broad band of pale-green). The male of the subspecies *A. c. chloropterus* has blue extending upwards from the back to the hind neck. The female of *A. c. chloropterus* and *A. c. callopterus* have a red abdomen, and the green over the head and neck is continuous with the green of the back and wings, while the chest has vague transverse green and red striations. The female of the subspecies *A. c. moszkowskii* has a red head, neck, chest, and lower abdomen, closely resembling the male, and only differs from the male by having a much smaller pale-green wing band.

The Papuan King Parrot was first described by the Australian ornithologist Edward Pierson Ramsay in 1879.

Three subspecies are recognized:

- *Alisterus chloropterus chloropterus* (Ramsay, E. P. 1879), the nominate subspecies, which occurs in eastern New Guinea to the Huon Peninsula in the north, and Hall Sound in the south.
- *Alisterus chloropterus callopterus* (Albertis & Salvadori 1879) is found in the Central Highlands west to the Weyland Mountains, the Sepik River area and upper Fly River.



Edward P. Ramsay
1842—1916

- *Alisterus chloropterus moszkowskii* (Reichenow 1911) is found in the north of the island, from Cenderawasih Bay east to the Aitape region.

The Papuan King Parrot is usually encountered in ones or twos, or in small flocks up to ten birds. It feeds quietly in dense forest, generally in small trees or on the lower branches of large trees, and is often unnoticed. The diet consists of berries, fruit, seeds and possibly some insects.

The Papuan King Parrot is listed as “Least Concern” on the IUCN Red List of threatened species.

R.V.C. with help from Wikipedia

May 2011

BIRD KEEPING IN AUSTRALIA