

BIRD OF THE MONTH

PORT LINCOLN PARROT

Scientific Name: *Barnardius zonarius zonarius*

Other Common Names: The Port Lincoln Parrot is also known as Bauer's Parrakeet, Banded Parrot or the Yellow-naped Parrot, although these names are not widely used.

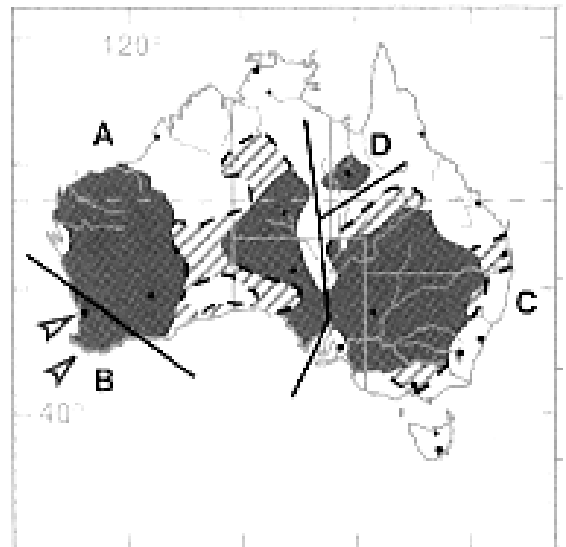
Group: The Ringneck family of Australian Parrots belongs to the genus, *Barnardius*. They are also referred to as Broad-tailed Parrots. The Ringneck group are widespread throughout the drier areas of Australia and there are four main subspecies recognised, namely :

Twenty-eight Parrot
Port Lincoln Parrot
Mallee Ringneck
Cloncurry Parrot

Average Lifespan: 18 year(s)

Compatibility: Average

Description: As stated above, the Port Lincoln Parrot belongs to the *Barnardius* group of Australian Parrots with long broad tails. The group also includes the slightly larger Twenty-Eight Parrot (*Barnardius z. semitorquatus*), a subspecies of the Port Lincoln, which is similar in appearance except for the red frontal band above the cere that is always present in the Twenty-Eight, it sometimes occurs in the Port Lincoln and the light green abdomen, the Paler Port Lincoln Parrot (*Barnardius z. occidentalis*), another subspecies of the Port Lincoln, the Cloncurry Parrot (*Barnardius macgillivrayi*), and the Mallee or Barnard's Parrot (*Barnardius barnardi*). In the wild, many hybrids occur.



A = Race *zonarius* E
B = Race *semitorquatus* E
C = Race *barnardi* E
D = Race *macgillivrayi* E
Hybrid zones not shown

*Distribution map of the
Australian Ringneck Parrot*



This is a large parrot that requires a large and sturdy cage as its beak is formidable. Even parent-raised birds quickly acclimatize and become tame and friendly to their keepers. Like the rosella, the Port Lincoln is not a cuddly bird that can be held or that always perches on the owner's shoulder. However, this can be advantageous if you own other birds that require more attention. The Port Lincoln is also not very aggressive toward other and smaller birds except when breeding. It is a hardy bird that lives an average 18 years, though some individuals may live much longer. Port Lincolns are good eaters and sometimes accept animal protein like mealworms.

The cock and hen are very similar in appearance. The top of the head is black and the lower cheeks are blue. There is a yellow band around the neck and the upper part and sides of the belly are yellow. The upper breast is green with a blue sheen, and the upper wing coverts are blue. The beak is grayish white and the feet are gray-brown. The iris is dark brown. This is a very stocky bird. Young birds are somewhat duller in color and have flesh-colored beaks. The related Twenty-eight (*Barnardius semiquartus*) Parrot occurs in a blue and a yellow mutation.

Port Lincolns have a high, clear repeated whistle call. They are lively and entertaining birds that can learn to talk in clear, cute voices.

Specific Care Information: The Port Lincoln is quite easy to care for compared to other parrots, if you have the space and do not want a cuddly pet. In captivity, the Port Lincoln requires a roomy aviary. Natural logs can be given to pairs, but they will often accept nest boxes 24 to 28 inches high (60 to 70 cm) with a floor area of 8 X 8 inches (20 X 20 cm).



Breeding and Propagation: In the wild, Port Lincolns nest in hollow eucalyptus limbs. The Port Lincoln has been bred in captivity since 1878. Breeding the Port Lincoln Parrot is relatively easy if a spacious aviary is provided. Hens lay four to seven white eggs about 1.2 by 1 inch (31 X 25mm). Incubation takes approximately 21 days, with the hen incubating alone although she may sometimes be fed by the male. The young birds stay in the nest for about 38 days before fledging and are generally fed by the hen. In another two weeks the young are independent; they reach their full plumage only at 14 or 15 months old.

References:

<http://www.centralpets.com/>

<http://www.birdkeepinginaustralia.com/>

Simpson & Day *Field Guide to the Birds of Australia*