

JARDINE'S PARROT

Poicephalus gularis



Photo courtesy
Priam Psittaculture Centre
www.priam.com.au/farm

Jardine's Parrot, also known as the Red-fronted Parrot, is a medium-sized, mainly green, parrot occurring across wide areas of Africa. There are three subspecies. The extent and shade of the red or orange plumage on the head, thighs, and bend of wing varies depending on the subspecies.

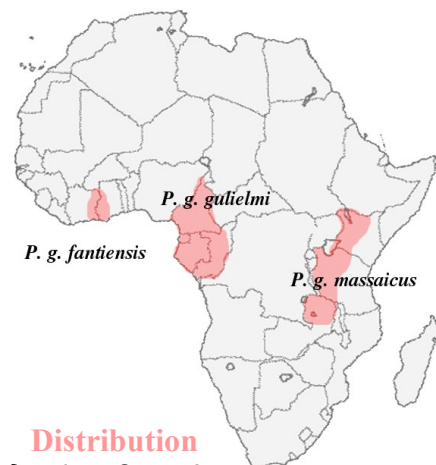
The species is 28cm (11") in length. It is mostly green and has a short black squarish tail. The black feathers on the head, neck, back, and wings have light green edges giving a scalloped appearance. The lower mandible is dark grey, while the upper has a horn coloured base and a dark grey tip.

The irises are red-orange, the eye-rings are pinkish-grey, and the legs grey-brown. The amount of red or orange on the fore-crown, the bend of the wing, and thighs varies in the three subspecies. The adults of both sexes are identical in appearance. Juveniles have blackish plumage above the beak instead of the red of the adults. They also lack the red on the wings and thighs, and have a pale beak and brown irises.

The first Jardine's Parrot to be scientifically identified was brought back live from the Congo to the United Kingdom by Sir William Jardine's son William on his return from a three-year cruise on HMS *Favourite*. Sir William gave the species the binomial name *Pionus Gularis* after his son, (In Latin: Gularis means "William's"), and published the species description in 1849.

There are now three recognised subspecies:

- *P. g. gularis*, Jardine 1849 - orange-red on forehead to fore-crown, wings, and thighs. Endemic in the Congo River basin.
- *P. g. fantiensis*, Neumann 1908 - the forecrown is orange and there is an orange-red or orange on the wings, slightly smaller. Endemic from Liberia to southern Ghana.



Map: Juan Caparrós

- *P. g. massaicus*, Fischer and Reichenow 1884 - is similar to *P. gularis*

except on the head the orange-red is less extensive occurring on the forehead above the beak. Endemic in the highlands (1800 to 3500m) of southern Kenya and northern Tanzania.

They fly swiftly making noisy calls above the forest canopy in pairs or small groups between their night-time roosts and feeding grounds. They feed quietly in the upper canopy of trees, where they are well camouflaged.



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Jardine's Parrot nests in tree cavities. The eggs are white and there are usually three or four in a clutch. The female incubates the eggs for about 27 days and the chicks leave the nest about 80 days after hatching.



Jardine's Parrot eggs
Photo: Juan Caparrós

The wild Jardine's Parrot population is difficult to estimate, because of its vast range. However, they are quite common throughout their range and are listed as "Least Concern" in the 2010 IUCN Red Category List.

R.V.C. with help from Wikipedia