

# Crimson Rosella

*Platycercus elegans*

## At a Glance...

### Size:

32-36 centimetres in length and 35 centimetres in height.

### What It Eats:

Seeds, fruits, nuts, flowers, shoots, nectar and insects.

### Gestation / Life Span:

Eggs take 20 days to hatch.

### Habitat:

Forests on the east coast of Australia from Victoria to Northern Queensland.

### Threats:

Domestic cats and foxes.

### What Is a Crimson Rosella?

As its name suggests, the Crimson Rosella is a 'crimson red' bird which is a species of the Parrot family. It is Australia's showiest and most familiar parrot. Its cheeks, flight feathers and tail are blue. There are several colour forms of Rosella's in Australia, including yellow and orange. The young of the Crimson Rosella are usually varied shades of green, with characteristic blue cheeks until they reach 12-15 months old.

The female resembles the male but is generally smaller with a narrower head and finer beak

The Crimson Rosella is a social bird who loves to bathe and has a variety of calls: a call of shrill, quickly repeated short notes given in flight (an alarm call); a high pitched, two or three note bell-like whistle (a contact call); a lower- pitched, softer call of five to ten quickly repeated whistled notes (a feeding or roosting contact call); and a rich, musical chatter between birds in trees.

### Where Does a Crimson Rosella Live?

The Crimson Rosella prefers humid forests on the eastern coast from Victoria to Northern Queensland, but can also be found in rainforests, dense eucalypt forests and timbered watercourses. They have also been introduced to Norfolk Island and New Zealand.



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## The Junior Ranger Way

Know before you go, respect parks and wildlife and leave no trace along your way, that's the Junior Ranger Way!

### Fascinating Fact:

The Crimson Rosella is often tame in parks and gardens. Remember do not feed native wildlife including Crimson Rosella's

## What Does a Crimson Rosella Eat?

Crimson Rosellas are seed eaters, but their diet also includes fruit, nuts, flowers, shoots, nectar and insects. They can sometimes be seen feeding on the ground, but they mostly feed in tree tops. They are also easily attracted to human food so be careful of your food when outdoors. Remember respect wildlife and do not feed them!

## A Crimson Rosella's Family Life

Breeding occurs between September and January. The male displays himself on a prominent branch or perch by raising his body to its full height, spreading his tail and ruffling body feathers. To end his performance he lowers his wings and bows in an up and down motion, chattering musically. The female responds in a similar fashion, but is less animated. This is often followed by a courtship feeding.

Crimson Rosellas nest in hollows located high in trees and lined with wood shavings and dust. The female alone incubates the four to eight cream rounded eggs, although both sexes care for the young. The chicks hatch after about 20 days and although they leave the nest after about 35 days, they remain dependent on their parents for a further 35 days.

Usually seen in pairs or small family groups, Crimson Rosellas are plentiful in Australia. Immature (or young) flocks can be seen in autumn and winter.

Crimson Rosellas nests almost exclusively in tree hollows, and although still common, Crimson Rosellas are suffering from habitat loss, in particular the loss of mature hollows in trees.

## Good parks to see Crimsoms Rosellas

Wilsons Promontory and the Dandenong Ranges National Parks are great areas to see Crimson Rosellas in Victoria.

## Want to Know More?

<http://www.amonline.net.au> (search: crimson rosella)