

STATE TRAPPING BAN FOR THE NORTHERN ROSELLA

Platycerus venustus (Kuhl)

Reports from various authorities on the Northern Rosella state that it was once plentiful throughout its range of North-Western and Northern Australia from the Kimberley Division, Western Australia, to the Northern Territory/Queensland border. However since the turn of the century the numbers have decreased markedly and predictions are that the decrease will probably continue despite the virtual absence of human interference.

The Northern Rosella is seen in pairs or small parties of up to six or eight birds, usually in the treetops or on the ground searching for seeds. They are more difficult to approach than most of the other Rosellas and, when flushed from the ground, fly to the top most branches of a nearby tree until danger has passed.

Recent observations of the bird have shown it to be found on any mill between Halls Creek and Wyndham in Western Australia but they are generally scarce and very timid.

Because of the above mentioned status, the Western Australian Wildlife Authority has decided to place a complete ban on the trapping of all wild Northern Rosellas.

The Authority reported that a number of special permits had been issued over the years to allow the taking of the bird from the Kimberleys. These permits were issued with the intention of building up aviary stocks for breeding purposes, which would subsequently reduce the demand on wild stocks.

Concern had been expressed at the number of permits issued in this State as the Northern Rosella population was considerably less than that of the Northern Territory where trapping was not allowed. Members of the Authority agreed that this situation could lead to increased smuggling activity. It was decided that no more permits be issued to trap Northern Rosellas.