

# Rainbow lorikeet

Scientific Name: *Trichoglossus haematodus*

The rainbow lorikeet is aptly named. Its head is violet-blue, upper breast is orange-red, the abdomen is dark blue margined with some red and the back is bright green. It has a greenish-yellow tail and a red beak with a yellow tip. It is about 30cm in length. The males and females are almost identical, though the latter has a smaller head.

## Habitat

The rainbow lorikeet can be found from the Kimberley region of Western Australia east to Cape York and south to Tasmania and Adelaide. In South Australia it extends north to the Flinders Ranges and west to Eyre Peninsula. It is also found on Kangaroo Island. It is rare in Tasmania, and uncommon in Victoria. Originally, they were confined to forested and woodland areas but have spread more widely with human intervention and are now commonly found in urban and suburban areas.

## Diet

Like other lorikeets, it is largely dependent on the flowering eucalypts, which provide it with nectar, blossoms, pollen and seeds. The tongue terminates in a hairy brush which enables the birds to collect the liquid nectar from deep inside the flowers of gum trees.

## Reproduction

Like most Australian parrots, lorikeets are hole nesters. A hollow trunk or eucalypt branch are usually chosen where two white eggs are laid and incubated for just under a month. The chicks are fed a liquid diet of partially digested nectar and pollen regurgitated by both parents.