



Return Flight



What is the orange-bellied parrot?

- The orange-bellied parrot is a small bird that lives in Australia.
- They are one of only three species of parrot that migrate.

Illustration: A pair of orange-bellied parrots.

Australian Parrot Population Rises!

The numbers of a critically **endangered** species of Australian parrot are improving.

Until recently, the numbers of orange-bellied parrots in the wild had decreased rapidly. Not only were they on the critically endangered list, but scientists suggested they might become **extinct** within five years.

However, a recent count of orange-bellied parrots, **migrating** north for the winter, shows that there are now more of these beautiful birds. Every year, the parrots fly south, from mainland Australia to an Australian island called Tasmania.

Researchers were worried when, last year, only 23 parrots returned to Tasmania to breed.

Nature groups have been working hard to help the orange-bellied parrot. They have tried to improve their habitats and protect them from animals that hunt them. They've also released new parrots into the wild.

This year, there are more than 100 orange-bellied parrots leaving Tasmania and travelling north to the Australian mainland.

This is the largest flock seen in more than a **decade**. For years, people have worked hard to help the birds and some ideas have been quite creative.

In 2018, some of these tiny, colourful creatures were flown in a private jet across the sea to spare them from their normal exhausting migration!

People are now getting ready for when the parrots return to Tasmania. The Orange-Bellied Parrot Tasmanian Program have said, "Planning for the 2020-21 breeding season has begun."

Glossary

endangered	In danger of becoming extinct.
extinct	No longer exists.
migrating	When animals move to a different place, usually to breed or to find food.
decade	A period of 10 years.

Questions

1. Fill in the gap to complete this sentence from the text.

Researchers were worried when, last year, only _____ parrots returned to Tasmania to breed.

2. Tick which of the following statements are true and which are false.

	True	False
Scientists are no longer worried about the orange-bellied parrot.		
The orange-bellied parrot is at risk of becoming extinct.		
They migrate south for the winter.		
They migrate north for the winter.		

3. Find and copy one example of the work groups have done to increase the numbers of orange-bellied parrots.

4. 'In 2018, some of these tiny, colourful creatures were flown in a private jet across the sea to spare them from their normal exhausting migration!'

Tick the word below that does **not** mean 'exhausting'.

- ☐ difficult
☐ draining
☐ easy
☐ tiring

5. How do you think scientists felt when they heard about the increase in orange-bellied parrots?

6. Tick which the **two** headlines which best summarises the story.

- ☐ Enormous Australian Birds Bounce Back
☐ Small, Colorful Australian Birds Bounce Back
☐ Numbers of Orange-Bellied Parrots Begin to Soar
☐ Numbers of Orange-Bellied Parrots Begin to Dive

Answers

1. Fill in the gap to complete this sentence from the text.

Researchers were worried when, last year, only **23** parrots returned to Tasmania to breed.

2. Tick which of the following statements are true and watch are false.

	True	False
Scientists are no longer worried about the orange-bellied parrot.		✓
The orange-bellied parrot is at risk of becoming extinct.	✓	
They migrate south for the winter.		✓
They migrate north for the winter.	✓	

3. Find and copy one example of the work groups have done to increase the numbers of orange-bellied parrots.

Accept any answer from the following: they've tried to improve their habitats; they've tried to protect them from animals that hunt them; they've also released new parrots into the wild.

4. 'In 2018, some of these tiny, colourful creatures were flown in a private jet across the sea to spare them from their normal exhausting migration!'

Tick the word below that does **not** mean 'exhausting'.

- ☐ difficult
☐ draining
☒ **easy**
☐ tiring

5. How do you think scientists felt when they heard about the increase in orange-bellied parrots?

Accept any answer which refers to their feelings of relief or happiness due to the effort they have put into saving them, e.g. I think they felt happy because they had been trying to save the parrots and it is working.

6. Tick which the **two** headlines which best summarises the story.

- ☐ Enormous Australian Birds Bounce Back
☒ **Small, Colourful Australian Birds Bounce Back**
☒ **Numbers of Orange-Bellied Parrots Begin to Soar**
☐ Numbers of Orange-Bellied Parrots Begin to Dive