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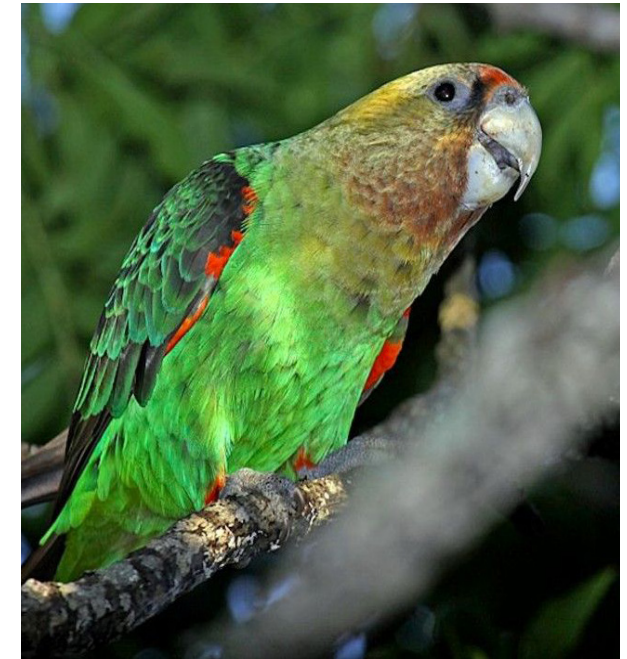


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## Cape Parrot

South Africa's Bird of the Year 2023



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***Often confused with the more widely distributed Grey-headed Parrot, the Cape Parrot is the only endemic parrot species in South Africa, with a wild population estimated at less than 1000 birds representing considerably less than 500 breeding pairs. This bird species' whole lifestyle is centred on Yellowwood trees (South Africa's national tree).***

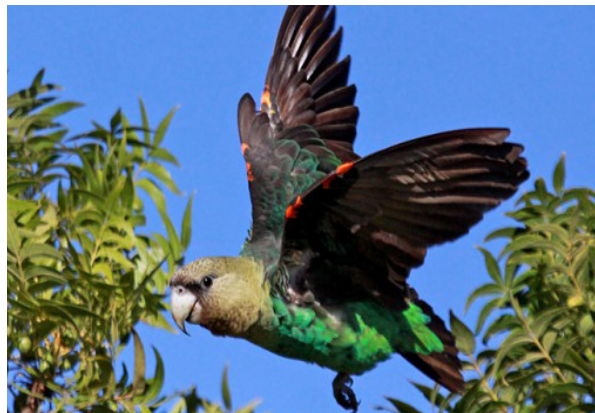


### **How to recognise a Cape Parrot**

The Cape Parrot is a medium to large parrot. The feathers on the head, throat and neck are olive yellow to golden brown, while the body and the wings are dark green. The thighs and outer edges of the wings are orange-red and the tail and flight feathers are bottle-green to black.

### **Distribution**

The Cape Parrot only occurs in South Africa and is closely associated with yellowwood forests. The current distribution of the Cape Parrot is restricted to forests from Hogsback in the Eastern Cape through to the Balgowan and Karkloof areas of KwaZulu-Natal. A small fragmented sub-population still persists in the Magoebaskloof region of Limpopo Province.



### **Habitat**

The Cape Parrot prefers Afromontane Southern Misbelt forests, which makes up a tiny portion (<0.5%) of South Africa's land surface, but are not confined to it.

### **Breeding and life cycle**

The Cape Parrot can live up to 30 years in captivity. They start breeding at 4–5 years of age, only breeding in alternate years. After an incubation period of 28–30 days, the female lays an average of four eggs. Only one or two are usually hatched and fledged. Both parents attend to the nest and regurgitate food to the young. The chicks fledge at 55–79 days after which they remain in groups with their parents.



### **Conservation status and what the future holds**

While the ultimate threat to this critically endangered species is habitat loss through the degradation and reduction in Afromontane Southern Mistbelt Forest, the more recent threats are infection and local poaching and trade.