Regent flight to recovery

Title
Around 40 captive bred Critically Endangered Regent Honeyeater will be released in the Chiltern-Mt Pilot National Park in Victoria's North-east tomorrow according to BirdLife Australia. Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) Senior Biodiversity Officer, Glen Johnson said: "These birds were bred at Taronga Zoo in Sydney and will provide another boost to the Regent Honeyeater population." "We'll be attaching radio transmitters to about 25 of the birds that are being released, and all are fitted with unique colour leg band combinations to assist individual identification," Mr Johnson said. "We know from re-sightings of previously released birds that the captive bred Regent Honeyeaters can successfully breed with and recruit new fledglings into the wild population. Each time we find another captive-bred bird in the wild we learn a bit more about how they are adapting and behaving."

"The transmitters have been specially adapted for Regent Honeyeaters by Dean Ingwersen, BirdLife Australia's National Regent Honeyeater Recovery Co-ordinator and the team at Taronga Zoo. We will be working with skilled volunteers to track these transmitters and identify individuals based on the unique colour band combinations." Dean Ingwersen said: "Regent Honeyeaters, like other species of honeyeaters, rely on flowering events in our forests for their food, so they are relatively nomadic and can travel large distances." "This makes them a difficult species to study particularly when there are so few of them. Once again though, this project highlights the value of releasing captive-bred birds and of colour banding as a research and monitoring tool," Mr Ingwersen said. "There's so much we are still learning about Regent Honeyeater movements and habitat requirements and each detailed sighting report adds to our knowledge about individual birds and the species."