Title Good news from the Hunter Valley in New South Wales, Australia: up to 50 Critically Endangered Regent Honeyeaters have been recorded at a single property which was placed under a covenant by BirdLife Australia?s (BirdLife Partner) Woodland Birds for Biodiversity Project to protect its woodland vegetation. The world population of the Critically Endangered Regent Honeyeater is somewhere between 500 and 1000 birds, so it was exciting to discover a congregation of 50 of the honeyeaters on a property near Quorrobolong in the Hunter Valley ? the largest congregation of the species seen anywhere for years. More exciting was that the land where they were seen was placed under a covenant by BirdLife Australia?s Woodland Birds for Biodiversity (WBFB) Project last year, with the protection of Regent Honeyeaters and other woodland birds in mind. ?That they and flocks of Swift Parrots have been recorded on a property under covenant vindicates what we are trying to achieve,? said Dean Ingwersen, Woodland Birds for Biodiversity Project Manager, ?and we are working to place other properties under covenant to preserve more of their habitat.? The remnant vegetation on the property had been managed sympathetically by the landholder so that it was a haven for Regent Honeyeaters and plenty of other declining woodland species, including Swift Parrots, Turquoise Parrots, Glossy Black-Cockatoos, Speckled Warblers, Powerful Owls and Brown Treecreepers. In most years, flowering stringybark trees attract Regent Honeyeaters to the area in August, but this year they arrived months early, drawn in by profuse flowering of Spotted Gums; and now the stringybarks are about to burst into flower, so the honeyeaters are likely to remain for a little longer yet. There are currently 80+ Regent Honeyeaters in the Hunter Valley, all within a radius of a few kilometres. Keen to take advantage of this unusual congregation, a multi-agency team led by WBFB decided to catch some of the birds for banding. Starting at 2.30 am and undaunted by cold and foggy conditions, the team worked by torchlight to erect a strategic array of mist-nets around the birds? roost trees to catch them as they left at first light. It was an outstanding success. Almost as soon as the nets were in place, the honeyeaters burst from their roosts among the foliage ? most flew straight into the nets. After being carefully removed, they were fitted with coloured leg-bands. Nearly half of those captured were first-year birds. ?A healthy proportion of the honeyeaters we are seeing fledged within the last year ? it?s great news,? said Dean. ?It shows that last year?s breeding success was reasonably high, which is encouraging for the survival of the species overall.? The colour-bands will allow researchers to follow the fortunes of these youngsters, and it is hoped that they will shed some light on their poorly understood lives. The Woodland Birds for Biodiversity project is funded by the Australian Government?s Caring for Our Country program. **Subscribe to The BirdLife Pacific Quarterly E-Newsletter**