

# Capacity building

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## School students supporting our super Swifty

Murrumbidgee Landcare Inc



### Building and sharing an education package on a local threatened species

#### The issue

The Swift Parrot (*Lathamus discolor*) is a spectacular bright green and red parrot found across the Riverina and many parts of south-eastern Australia during the autumn and winter months. In spring they migrate a distance of up to 4,000 km to their breeding grounds in Tasmania.

With only approximately 750 birds thought to remain in the wild, Swift Parrots are now listed as Endangered in NSW and Critically Endangered at a National level.

The National Recovery Plan for the Swift Parrot recommends actions to protect and enhance known habitat, an activity which Murrumbidgee Landcare has been actively involved in with for several years. However additional recommended actions are to engage the community in Swifty conservation, and improve understanding of their habitat use. These actions require commitment from local landholders and community members - but many are not aware of these birds, the threats they face, or what they can do to help them.

#### The solution

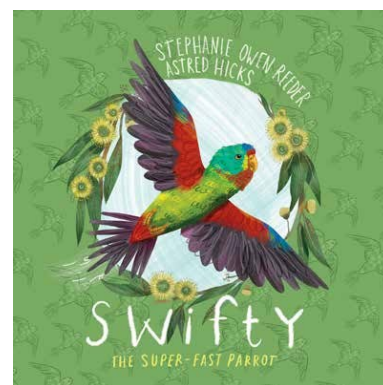
Nearing the completion of the main part of the ten-year Saving Our Species project to protect Swift Parrots, of which Murrumbidgee Landcare was a partner, the consortium proposed the development of an education package. The Swift Parrot education package would be designed to educate students about these wonderful birds, and motivate them to engage in activities to protect and enhance their habitat. Educating students has the benefits of engaging the younger generation, but also helps spread the message across generations as children share their newfound knowledge with parents, friends and other family members.

#### The impact

Together with PeeK Designs, we developed two education packages – one for Stage 2 and one for Stage 3, to share with primary students across our region.

The education packages contain engaging information about identifying Swift Parrots, learning about their breeding, migration and life cycle, and understanding their diet and habitat requirements. It also describes the conservation status of the species, threats and conservation efforts, with many local stories. There are activities, games, online stories and more, to embed the learnings through an interactive platform that helps students learn in entertaining and fun ways!

In addition, the package is supplemented by the book “Swifty: The super-fast parrot”, which was created in consultation with ecologists involved in our project. The book provides a lovely gift for each school's library, to continue the learning and motivation to protect this special bird.



#### Key facts

- 12 organisations working together
- 2 threatened species education packages produced

#### Project Partners



This initiative is made possible by the NSW Landcare Enabling Program, a collaboration between Local Land Services and Landcare NSW supported by the NSW Government.

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