

## DATA EXCHANGE

### Lifespan data for a range of bird species at Taronga Zoo, Sydney, New South Wales

Taronga Zoo has housed a wide range of Australian species in its bird collection over many decades with the collection presently numbering approximately 120 native species. Taronga Zoo now uses networked computer data systems that have incorporated and replaced hand written records. While numerous species are no longer displayed in the zoo's collection their individual data are retained in the animal records system and in some instances these records can add to the overall knowledge of the species life history. In particular, they can provide information about species' longevity. The following is a short summary of some of the lifespan records taken from the Zoo's ARKS data records which extend the known age of thirteen species (as recorded by the ABBBS database) and in the case of the Paradise Riflebird provide information where none previously existed.

Currently in the living collection there is also a 14 year old wild caught Regent Honeyeater and a 13 year old captive born Regent Honeyeater. The 28 year old Noisy Friarbird is a female that came into the collection from Taronga Western Plains Zoo as a fledgling in 1983. The Blue-faced Honeyeater, a female, originally came from Currumbin Sanctuary as a hand-raised orphan. The Magnificent Riflebird was a wild caught male bird from Iron Range, Qld. in 1975, estimated to be of juvenile age at the time of collection. Most recently the Paradise Riflebird which had lived in the Rainforest Aviary died, aged 24 years, having originally been acquired from the wild at Coopers Creek, NSW, as an immature bird in 1987.

**TABLE 1**

Longevity of thirteen species of birds held in captivity at Taronga Zoo compared with those data held by the ABBBS. (y = years; m = months)

Species	Longevity	Sex	ID No.	Zoo (Z) or wild born (W)	ABBBS Data	
Forest Kingfisher	<i>Todiramphus macleayii</i>	9 y 7.4 m	M	A10017	Z	2 y 9.6 m
Sacred Kingfisher	<i>Todiramphus sancta</i>	14 y 5.2 m	F	920149	Z	8 y 0.8 m
Red-backed Fairy-wren	<i>Malurus melanocephalus</i>	8 y 4 m	F	870637	W	7 y 6.8 m
Variegated Fairy-wren	<i>Malurus lamberti lamberti</i>	12 y 1 m	M	980000	Z	10 y 11.6 m
Lovely Fairy-wren	<i>Malurus amabilis</i>	13 y 7.2 m	M	770066	Z	12 y
Regent Honeyeater	<i>Anthochaera phrygia</i>	16 y*	M	950496	W	10 y 0.8 m
Blue-faced Honeyeater	<i>Entomyzon cyanotis</i>	15 y 5 m	F	950533	W	9 y 1.5 m
Noisy Friarbird	<i>Philemon corniculatus</i>	28 y 4 m *	F	830184	W	9 y 9.7 m
Grey Shrike-thrush	<i>Colluricincla harmonica</i>	15 y	F	820133	W	14 y 8.9 m
White-browed Woodswallow	<i>Artamus superciliosus</i>	12 y 1 m	M	A60343	Z	1 m
Apostlebird	<i>Struthidea cinerea</i>	12 y 7 m	F	860477	Z	4 y 4.5 m
Paradise Riflebird	<i>Ptiloris paradiseus</i>	23 y 2 m	M	870604	W	no data
Magnificent Riflebird	<i>Ptiloris magnificus</i>	15 y 2.6 m	M	750023	W	12 y 0.2 m

\* alive at 26 March 2012

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*Editor's note: These data have been collected on captive birds and probably don't reflect the true longevity of wild birds but do give an indication of the potential lifespan of these species.*