

Ring-necked Parakeet, *Psittacula krameri*



Overview

Short description of *Psittacula krameri*, Ring-necked Parakeet

This species draws attention by its frequent loud screeching calls. Both sexes are predominantly bright yellowish-green, with long, pointed wings and tail, and a strong red bill. Males have a black throat and a black and pink neck ring.

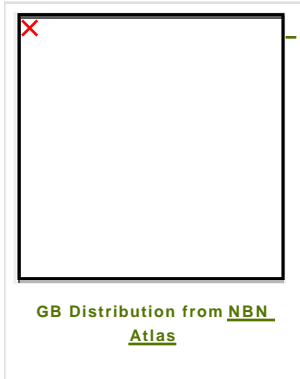
Description of *Psittacula krameri*, Ring-necked Parakeet status in GB

A substantial and expanding breeding population of ring-necked parakeets (also known as rose-ringed parakeet) is established in parts of southern England. Their raucous calls are a familiar sound in many London parklands. Spectacular roosts, drawing birds from a wide area, often contain several thousand in just a few trees.

Habitat summary: *Psittacula krameri*, Ring-necked Parakeet

The species is found mostly in urban or suburban habitats, such as parkland, and especially in the London area.

Distribution map



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Last updated:

September 27th 2016

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Overview table

Environment:	Terrestrial
Species status:	Non-Native
Native range:	Africa, China, Indian Subcontinent, Indo-China, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Burkina, Benin, Bhutan, Central African Republic, Ivory Coast, Cameroon, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Ghana, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Sri Lanka, Liberia, Mali, Myanmar, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Nepal, Pakistan, Sudan, Sierra Leone, Senegal, Chad, Togo, Uganda, Vietnam
Functional type:	Herbivore
Status in England:	Non-Native
Status in Scotland:	Non-Native
Status in Wales:	Non-Native
Location of first record:	Northrepps
Date of first record:	1855

Invasion history: *Psittacula krameri*, Ring-necked Parakeet

Origin

The species is native across central Africa from west to east and has separate populations that occur from Afghanistan east through northern India to Myanmar. GB populations may originate mainly from India.

First Record

There is a long history of occurrence in GB, with a first record of breeding in Norfolk in 1855. However, the present naturalised population dates only from 1969.

Pathway and Method

The origin of the population is the pet trade and both the accidental and the deliberate release of birds from captivity.

Species Status

The species occupied 63 10-km squares in GB by 1988–91, nearly all in the London area. In 1996 a simultaneous roost count reported a population size of approximately 1,500 and by 200102 numbers had risen to approximately 5,900. Population modelling has revealed that populations in Greater London have increased by approximately 30% per year, and those in Thanet by 15% per year, but that the range has expanded by only 0.4 km per year in the Greater London area and so far not at all in Thanet. Further non-native populations are established widely across Europe, Asia, North America and southern Africa.

Ecology & Habitat: *Psittacula krameri*, Ring-necked Parakeet

Dispersal Mechanisms

Parakeets are strong and confident fliers, but are non-migratory. The species' habit of communal roosting involves some birds in daily roosting flights of 15 km or more. Birds appear to be reluctant to venture beyond commuting range to a roost, but dispersal could become rapid once the species establishes a broader network of roosting sites.

Reproduction

Likes most parrot species, they are dependent on large tree-holes as nesting cavities. Three to six eggs are laid, and an average 1.9 chicks are raised per nesting attempt. Breeding begins early, and there can be two broods per season.

Known Predators/Herbivores

The only natural predators thought likely to pose a threat are the sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus* and goshawk *A. gentilis*.

Resistant Stages

None known.

Habitat Occupied in GB

The species is found mostly in urban or suburban habitats, such as parkland, but is expected to colonise more rural areas as the population grows. Large trees with natural cavities are required for nesting. Extensive use is made of bird feeders throughout the year.

Distribution: *Psittacula krameri*, Ring-necked Parakeet

There are currently centres of breeding across south and west London and in east Kent. Clusters of records around Birmingham, Manchester and South Yorkshire may indicate incipient colonisation of those areas. The species might occur almost anywhere as a recent escape.

Impacts: *Psittacula krameri*, Ring-necked Parakeet

Environmental Impact

There is some evidence, from Belgium, that ring-necked parakeets may be competing for nest holes with some native birds, such as nuthatch *Sitta europea*. *Otherwise, the species currently appears to have little ecosystem impact.*

Health and Social Impact

There is potential for noise nuisance, and risks to human health associated with fouling, in the vicinity of large communal roosts.

Economic Impact

In its native range in India, rose-ringed parakeet is considered one of the most destructive bird pests of agriculture, for example reducing maize yields. In GB, the species can damage fruit trees and has been reported to have reduced the output of a vineyard to only one sixth of the expected wine production (Hamilton 2004). Rose-ringed parakeets can carry diseases such as Newcastle disease and *Cryptosporidium* that also infect poultry, and might have impacts also on that industry.

References & Links: *Psittacula krameri*, Ring-necked Parakeet

Identification

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