VESS
VANUATU ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE SOCIETY

Threatened Species Factsheet No. 16

# PALM LORIKEET

## What are they called?

**Scientific**:
*Charmosyna palmarum*

**Other English**:
Green Palm Lorikeet

**French**: Loriquet des palmiers

**Bislama**: Smol Nasiviru

**Vernacular (Local name):**
Denga (Nokovula Santo)
Vini (Tongoa)

## What do they look like?

These small lorikeets grow to 16cm and are almost entirely green. The wings have a darker shade while the underparts are paler and yellowish. The feathers around the base of the bill are red with the bill itself being reddish orange. They have some olive brown feathers on the back of the neck, and a yellow tipped tail.

Females have less brown on the neck, and less red feathers on the chin.

## A little bit about them:

Palm lorikeets are small slender birds found on some islands in Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands. They are usually found in flocks up to 30 birds in mountain forests up to 1600m elevation, but also feeding in the canopy of flowering trees including coconuts in coastal areas. They travel between suitable habitats on and between different islands. Historically they are found on all Vanuatu islands except Torres.

They feed mainly on nectar and pollen from flowering trees, including coconut blossoms at the coast.

Source: Ray Pierce Pacific

## Did you know?

- These birds have a fluctuating range with local extinctions and recolonisations over time.

Palm Lorikeets are classified as Vulnerable (VU) on the IUCN Red List.

**Why are they threatened?**

- Loss of habitat as forested land is being cleared for agriculture, gardens and other developments.
- Predation by invasive species such rats and cats.
- Parasitic disease Avian Malaria.
- Increase in extreme weather events cited as a future threat as a result of climate change.

## What they do for us?

- Palm Lorikeets pollinate coconut and other palms by feeding on blossoms and spreading pollen between them.
- They increase the range of tree species by dispersing seeds from the fruit they eat, in their droppings.
- They can provide tourism opportunities through bird watching activities.

## What can we do for them?

- ✓ Establish and register Community Conservation Areas (CCAs) that include habitat of the Palm Lorikeet
- ✓ Carefully manage land clearing to preserve important habitat.
- ✓ Castrate and spay pet cats and dogs to reduce feral animals preying on adults, chicks and eggs.

**Want to know more?**

- ❖ IUCN website: www.iucnredlist.org
- ❖ Book: ***Birds of Melanesia*** by Guy Dutson

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