

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## **Wattle Bend Biannual Bird Watch Survey**

It's a glorious late autumn morning at 'Wattle Bend', the bushland property of Greville Wilton and Tanya Robertson-Cunninghame, on the banks of the Severn River. Gathered beneath the treetops are twitchers from across the New England region, searching the trees and skies for the elusive Regent Honeyeater.

Named for its striking plumage of yellow and black, the species was once found throughout parts of south-eastern mainland Australia; but, widespread clearance of woodland habitats has seen a rapid decline in its numbers, with the Regent Honeyeater now considered critically endangered.

The 'Wattle Bend' birders are just one of the many groups taking part in the biannual survey weekend for Regent Honeyeaters and Swift Parrots. The survey encourages volunteers across parts of Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and the nation's capital, to search for the fading species over two weekends in 2019: May 18-19 and August 3-4 (and up to a week either side of these weekends).

"It was a lovely morning at 'Wattle Bend', with Greville and Tanya hosting and feeding us," says Landcare Coordinator, Lucy Faithfull. "We added 26 birds to the survey, 3 of which were honeyeaters, with the Yellow Tufted Honeyeater being a first for a lot of us. But unfortunately, no Regent Honeyeater sightings."

The day drew people of every age, united by their love of birdlife. 11-year-old, Sam Walsh said: "It was just a really fun time and I got to get close with birds. The vegetation was great. I especially liked seeing the Yellow-tufted honeyeater for the first time..."

Sam's mother, Nerida Holznagel, also enjoyed taking part in the survey. "It was a great spot to bird watch. I enjoyed the opportunity to spend a peaceful and relaxing morning with my son and other friendly folks wandering along the Severn River. There were many woodland birds as the habitat was very good," she said. "Thanks to GLENRAC for organising this free community event, and the family at 'Wattle Bend' for hosting."

Community members are reminded that sightings of the Regent Honeyeater are significant, and should be reported at any time to GLENRAC, Dean Ingwersen ([dean.ingwersen@birdlife.org.au](mailto:dean.ingwersen@birdlife.org.au)), Mick Roderick ([mick.roderick@birdlife.org.au](mailto:mick.roderick@birdlife.org.au)) or on 1800 621 056 (free call).

This project is jointly funded through Northern Tablelands Local Land Services and the Australian Government's National Landcare Program, as part of GLENRAC's Regional Land Partnerships joint Project with the Northern Tablelands Local Land services.

**The 2019 Regent Honeyeater and Swift Parrot survey weekends are taking place on May 18-19 and August 3-4.**

**To find out more about the Regent Honeyeater, or how to get involved in the next survey weekend, contact Lucy Faithfull at GLENRAC by email: [glenrac@glenrac.org.au](mailto:glenrac@glenrac.org.au), or phone: 02 6732 3443, or visit BirdLife Australia at [www.birdlife.org.au](http://www.birdlife.org.au)**