Symposium Evening Presentation

# *Saving woodland birds isn’t that hard, right?*

## Dean Ingwersen

Woodland Birds Program Leader, BirdLife Australia

*Transcript edited by Dr Peter Mitchell and Ann McGregor, Biolinks Alliance*

Regent Honeyeaters are endangered due to loss of woodland habitat, but a combination of habitat restoration, captive releases, monitoring and research, and community involvement is working towards recovery of this and other woodland species.

## Summary

*Most woodlands in south-eastern Australia have been lost and the species that rely on them are threatened or extinct. Regent Honeyeaters used to be seen in vast numbers but are down to about 500 wild birds due to loss and degradation of habitat. The Regent Honeyeater Recovery Plan has four broad strategies. Habitat restoration and revegetation is creating a lot of new habitat. But behavioural studies show that Regent Honeyeaters are very mobile and use resources over wide areas, often on private land in the richer country. Big community programs at Capertee Valley, Chiltern. the Lurg Hills and elsewhere have revegetated around 1500ha of habitat and an additional 3,000 ha have been protected. Birds are just starting to use the 20 year-old plantings. Noisy Miners are a big issue and more honeyeaters use habitat where the miners have been culled. Noisy Miners also decline as habitat matures. Captive release has successfully re-introduced birds but they have failed to breed. Monitoring has demonstrated nest predation by many species including endangered Squirrel Gliders. A variety of techniques are being tried to limit this predation. In summary, habitat restoration is beneficial, but it is essential to monitor the effectiveness of the work and identify issues. Although it’s frustrating and hard work and with targets a long way off. But this doesn’t mean we shouldn’t have a go.*