

# Common Bronzewing Pigeon

*Phaps chalcoptera*

Conservation status: least concern

The Common Bronzewing is a medium-sized, heavily built pigeon. Their plumage ranges from grey, to dull brown, and they have a distinct white line that runs around and under each of their eyes. The males also have white or pale yellow forehead and a pinkish breast. The most iconic characteristic of the Bronzewing is the patches of iridescent colour on their wings, ranging from green, blue, red, gold and bronze. This colouring is what led to their name.

Their call is a low and rhythmical “oom” sound. Bronzewings are a particularly shy bird, and will fly off with a loud clattering of wing when approached or startled.

## Habitat and diet

Bronzewings are hardy birds that can be found in most habitat types around Australia, with the exception of particularly barren deserts and dense rainforest. This can include biomes such as forests, grasslands, shrublands and heathlands. In more urban settings they can also be sighted in yards and parks where there is ample food and water supply.

They are most commonly sighted near bodies of water as they need to drink frequently. Bronzewings primarily feed on the seeds of native plants such as wattles and the Ruby Saltbush. Over the years they have also adapted to feed on the seeds of non-native species such as wheat and tree lucerne.

They spend much of their time on the ground where they feed, and are most commonly sighted alone or in small groups. They build nests closer the ground, low down in trees and bushes.

## Where to spot them in Bayside

Despite being one of Australia’s most common pigeons, the Common Bronzewing has become increasingly rare. They can however, still be sighted in parks and heathlands where there is abundant native flora such as Cheltenham Park, Long Hollow Heathland and George Street Heathland.

## References and Further Reading

<https://www.birdsinbackyards.net/species/Phaps-chalcoptera>

<https://animalia.bio/common-bronzewing>

<https://www.reptilepark.com.au/common-bronzewing/>

[bayfonw.org.au](https://www.bayfonw.org.au)  [@bayfonw](https://www.facebook.com/bayfonw)



### HINT

Look for the beautiful iridescent wing patch

## Threats

The primary threat to the Common Bronzewing is loss of habit and habitat fragmentation, caused by urban development. The loss of low growing native shrubs and natural water sources are particularly damaging to their survival.

In recent years, Friends of Native Wildlife Inc has run a number of community planting days, planting food trees and shrubs to improve Bronzewing habitat and encourage their numbers to increase in Bayside. This has included locations such as the former Sandringham Golf Driving Range, George Street (near Wangara Road) in Sandringham.

## You can help

What can you do to encourage Bronzewings to visit your yard? Plant their favourite food, the Ruby Saltbush, and have a consistent water supply in a suitable bird bath.

Help us determine whether the Bayside population is increasing by reporting your sightings: [www.bayfonw.org.au/sighting-report](http://www.bayfonw.org.au/sighting-report)

## JOIN US! [www.bayfonw.org.au](http://www.bayfonw.org.au)

**Friends of Native Wildlife** are volunteer residents of Bayside (Melbourne, Australia) active in conserving local native fauna. We promote conservation of our wildlife through education and engagement, surveys, advising local authorities and working to improve habitat.

Check out our website and subscribe to our newsletter for upcoming events, project news, and to learn more about wildlife in Bayside and how you can help to preserve it.

**You can help!** For a tiny \$5 annual membership fee, you can support the work of FoNW. Thank you!