

## Death sparks fear for future of birds

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*HABITAT CONCERNS: The endangered ground parrot.*

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birds' continued protection once redevelopment of the airport proceeds. Nor is the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act likely to be the federal backstop it once was.

Ground parrots have very long legs, toes and claws

They move very quickly across the ground and despite being strong in the air, rarely fly except to escape a potential threat. Even then they only rise vertically no more than 10 metres before tracking just above the heathland in either an arc or zig-zagging pattern before dropping back into cover.

Ms Douglas said fragmentation of once linked coastal heathland had made the ground parrot extremely vulnerable.

THE death of an endangered bird at Marcoola, one of a species whose survival is being increasingly threatened by the loss of habitat, has raised serious concerns about the rollback of legislation meant to protect it and other creatures in a similar predicament.

The survival of the beautiful ground parrot, a 30-33cm long creature with a long tail and green, yellow colouring with brown and black flecks and a red band above the beak, has been critical to the assessment of a number of development projects across the region.

Sunshine Coast Environment Council spokeswoman Narelle McCarthy said while its endangered listing had been an issue raised as part of a number of development approval processes it had not slowed the large scaled development that has claimed a lot of the region's coastal heathland.

The bird found dead in front of the Marcoola 7-11 this week is believed to have come out of a small population located on Sunshine Coast Airport where, because of its fenced perimeters, the creature has found a sanctuary of sorts.

Ground parrots usually nest and inhabit thick coastal heathland vegetation. Ms McCarthy said those living on the airport had adapted to modified habitat because of the protection provided from wild cats and foxes.

However, changes to the Vegetation Management Act won't ensure those