

13

Sapphire Lodge

This activity uses a hypothetical scenario to investigate the issues which threaten the survival of an endangered species

Materials

- Activity 11: Orange-bellied Parrot Information Sheet;
- Resources for creating brochure, poster or short promo video.

Background

As part of the promotion of its ecotourism policy, Glass Island Shire Council plans to release a small area of coastal land, for low impact tourist development, adjacent to a designated habitat of an endangered species the Sapphire-winged Parrot.

There is to be a 500 metre wide buffer zone established between the site available for development and the habitat boundary. The habitat site is the largest and most important of five known habitat sites.

The Sapphire-winged Parrot, which has similar but slightly different food requirements to the Orange-bellied Parrot, breeds on the mainland and migrates to Glass Island during its summer feeding season. Scientists have estimated the population of the Sapphire-winged Parrot to be approximately 500.

Interested parties are invited to present to the council an outline of a potential development scenario. An entrepreneur presents a proposal to develop 'Sapphire Lodge', a tourist resort/research station, which would accommodate 200 people in total. The proposal indicates the need to provide for an access road, an air strip, communication facilities, accommodation and services. It is intended that local contractors will be employed for the construction and installation works.

The entrepreneur, in a brief to the council, indicates that the project will be a low impact, environmentally sensitive, one level development, designed to cause as little disturbance as possible to the parrot's habitat. It will incorporate a research facility and will guarantee to visitors, in a carefully guided program, rare views of the Sapphire-winged Parrot during the eight months of the year it resides in the area.

Activities

1. Read the Orange-bellied Parrot Information Sheet. Compile a list of factors which could present threats to the survival of a similar species.
2. Use this list of threats and any other relevant information to design a brochure, poster or short promo which outlines and highlights the attractions of the development of Sapphire Lodge. Present this tourist destination as a positive step towards ensuring the parrot's survival.
3. Design a brochure, poster or short promo which outlines the point of view of the Friends of the Sapphire-winged Parrot, a small but vocal group determined to stop the project.
4. As a journalist, you have been assigned to research and write an impartial, yet informative, article for the general public about the proposed resort/research station development. The article should include:
  - Location map showing the proximity of the resort to the designated habitat;
  - Architect's impression of the main building;
  - An outline of who will benefit and how;
  - Discussion of the environmental effects of the proposed development;
  - Some information about the Sapphire-winged Parrot.

**Ecologue:** Is this building sustainable, sympathetic to its surroundings and fire proof?

