



Annual Count Dates Announced

Each year the Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo Recovery Team conducts a count of birds in the wild, last year we had over 100 people take part over the weekend and 452 Red-tailed Black-Cockatoos were counted.

To take part in the count all you need do is call Tim Burnard on 1800 262 062 and we will send you everything you need to know, including a map showing what area we would like you to search, how to go about finding the birds and how to record any sightings over the weekend (we are also happy for you to search your own areas but would greatly appreciate you contacting us prior to the count to let us know where you will be looking - this will avoid overlap). Basically, what's involved is, driving around your designated area for a couple of hours (best between 4.00pm and dusk) and stopping regularly to listen for the birds.

Next years count will be over the weekend of Feb 26 - 27 2000.

New Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo Poster

As mentioned in the Red Tail News issue 6, we have established a partnership with Southcorp Wines and as a consequence have produced an educational poster. The poster will soon be forwarded to schools, government offices, Doctors and Dentists surgeries, in fact any where that we think it will obtain public viewing. Southcorp Wines have also sponsored the printing of another run of stickers. If you would like a sticker, contact Tim Burnard on 1800 262 062. Thanks again to Southcorp Wines for paying not only for posters and stickers but also postage of posters.

We have also recently obtained a partnership commitment from Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority in Hamilton. They will sponsor the cost of equipment - ladders, G.P.S., field scope and the cost of installing 10 new Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo information centres.

Birds Australia has also secured grants from two separate trusts - RE Ross Trust and The Ray & Joyce Uebergang Foundation. Unfortunately, recent federal cuts to our funding have meant that we need to concentrate more in the area of

fundraising than was previously required, however the team is determined to continue research that will tell us what it is that has reduced Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo numbers to their current endangered status. If you know of any organisation or individual that may be interested in assisting this project please let us know.

How you can help the Recovery Team

This project relies heavily on the work carried out by volunteers. Recent groups to assist us with nest observation include the South Australian Biological Society and Vic Group of Birds Australia. There have also been quite a number of individuals (too many to name them all) who have helped with duties from folding newsletters to radio tracking, not to mention the many people who continue to assist with our understanding of patterns of movement by recording sightings on our 1800 freecall number. Some of the ways you can get involved are

1. The annual count on Feb 26 - 27 2000
2. Recording sightings of Red Tails on our 1800 number
3. Keep an eye out for banded birds (there are now 34)
4. Assisting with radio tracking in Naracoorte study area.

For more details contact Tim Burnard on 1800 262 062

Our first Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo information centre

Earlier this year the team was approached by Jennifer Cleary from the Carriage Nursery (Casterton), who wanted to help with the Recovery process. As a result, we have installed an information board in the Carriage nursery which tells the story of the Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo and how the general community can help save the bird. Following the recent funding of another 10 sites by Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority we are now looking for more plant nurseries interested in helping save the Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo. If you know of any other likely sites to set up information centres please let Tim know.

Research Update



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Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo

So far this nesting season we have located 12 nests, two of them in Brown stringybark hollows, the rest in dead red gums. Interestingly three of the nest sites were used last year by Red Tails. Another interesting finding was that of a bird fledging in late August - our first Winter fledging, and one that changes our thoughts on the duration of the breeding season.

Richard has been able to compare growth rates between our sub-species (*graptogyne*) and that of *samueli*, a common Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo subspecies from the West Australian wheatbelt. Initial impressions do not show any significant differences

Radio tracking studies are continuing however most transmitters in the Casterton study area have now ceased working. At the time of writing we have lost contact with all of the tagged birds in this area but not before Max the last bird being tracked lead us to one of the Brown stringybark nests mentioned earlier.

In early November, Richard was successful in attaching transmitters to 4 birds in the new Naracoorte study area. We are interested in collecting data from this area as the remaining Red Tail habitat is far more fragmented than in the Casterton study area. The transmitters being

used here are a new type which are lighter and are attached by the centre tail feathers. This means that the transmitters will be lost when the birds next moult, but by this time the battery would probably already have run out of puff anyway.

New Planning regulations in the Glenelg Shire Protect Red Tail habitat.

Recently, the Glenelg Shire passed regulations that will for the first time see the protection of dead Eucalyptus. The trees protected from felling are only those with hollows (solid trees which are more suitable for firewood are not included) with a diameter at breast height of greater than 60cm and only in areas identified as past nesting areas. West Wimmera Shire is currently going through a planning regulation overhaul and we are hopeful that they will follow in the steps of the Glenelg Shire and save the ever diminishing Red Tail nesting habitat.



A group of volunteers from the Victorian Group of Birds Australia about to go nest hunting. (Richard Hill - Field Biologist in centre)