



RED TAIL News

February 2002

Page 1

Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo

Annual Count

This years Annual Count will be held on Saturday 27th April. As we mentioned in earlier Red Tail News the new date has been chosen for several reasons. First it is safer to survey the stringybark forest areas outside the fire season, when the weather will be cooler and the sandy tracks firmer and easier to drive on. Secondly all the birds will be feeding in stringybark at this time of year, rather than some in Buloke and some in Stringybark, hopefully giving more consistent results between years. One problem in counting in February has been that in some years all the birds are in the buloke and most Buloke is on private land. Sometimes we find lots in the buloke and other years we find very few, which maybe because the birds are feeding in trees in paddocks, well off the road and are not detected. Much more of the stringybark forest is on public land. Most Red-tailed Black-Cockatoos tend to be in flocks by April, which are easier to find because they are noisier, hopefully meaning that we will find more of the birds. So we'll see how it goes this year.

The other change is that you are encouraged to spend more time trying to count any Red-tailed Black-Cockatoos you find. Red-tailed Black-Cockatoos are very social and like to feed together. They are also very hard to count when in flocks. If you find Red-tailed Black-Cockatoos we ask you to count the cockatoos carefully, follow them if necessary and listen out for other cockatoos nearby. If a flock is feeding in stringybark trees, count them, listen out for other birds nearby, and when you are sure you have counted all the birds in the vicinity, flush the cockatoos by walking up to them until they take flight, and then count the flock as it flies off. Very often you will find that there are far more birds than you could count while they were feeding, because so many remain hidden amongst the foliage of the tree; often twice as many.

Using these new methods we hope to get a better idea of the total number of cockatoos, which is so important for convincing governments and private landowners of the importance of protecting Red-tail habitat.

If you would like to participate in the annual count please contact Richard on 1800 262062, and if you wish, nominate the area that you would like to survey.

Report your sightings now!

In the lead up to the annual count it is really important for us to know where the cockatoos are so that we can concentrate counting in those areas. So please if you see cockatoos between now and 27th April please report your sightings on the sighting phone number 1800 262062. If anyone would like extra Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo stickers contact Richard on this number and he'll mail you some.

Farewell to Tim Burnard

After four years as Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo Extension Officer, Tim has moved on a new job with the Eastern Barred Bandicoot Recovery Team working for the Natural Resources and Environment Department of Victoria. The Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo Recovery Team wishes to thank Tim for his great work during this time and wishes him well in his new job.

Thankyou from Martine Maron

Thanks to all the residents of the West Wimmera and Frances districts for their kind assistance with my study. During the summers of 2000 and 2001, I studied the feeding behaviour of Redtails in Buloke, and relied heavily on reports of sightings by local residents. Almost all the work was carried out on private land, and I am indebted to everyone who allowed me access to their properties - the whole thing would have been impossible without you all! The study has been a success, and I will endeavour to write a summary of the findings for an edition of this newsletter. In the meantime, I am now doing a PhD, and I will be around for another three years! So sightings of Redtails in Buloke are still much appreciated, and can be phoned in to 1800 262 062.



RED TAIL News

February 2002

New Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo Fencing Project in the Glenelg-Hopkins Catchment Management Authority area.

Trust for Nature, a Victorian organisation has recently received money from the Natural Heritage Trust to assist landowners to fence off Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo habitats within the Glenelg-Hopkins Catchment Management Authority area. A grant of \$4/m or \$4000 per kilometre of fence is available to protect areas of stringybark or Red Gum within this area. To receive this grant the landowner must sign a legal management agreement over the area. This agreement may restrict or exclude grazing

depending on the landowners wishes. It *does not* prevent grazing, as most of you would be aware that grazing may be very useful to reduce the fire hazard in an area, or that treed areas on a property are very useful at certain times of year to provide stock shelter. There is no limit to the size of area that can be protected.

Contact Sue Mudford (03 5599 5223)

2

Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo



This photo is of Anne and Milton McArthur's property (Wrattenbully, SA) which has regular visits by red-tails. They received funding through Sustaining The South (a funding source in South Australia) and fenced some (50acres) of brown stringybark on their property.

Remember that funding is available throughout the Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo areas to assist protecting their habitat. For further information ring Richard Hill on 1800 262 062.

If you have any sightings of Red Tails or you want to find out more you can contact:

*Richard Hill, Project Officer
Telephone 03 5581 2469 or 1800 262 062
Email richardhill@hotmail.net.au
Website www.redtail.com.au
PO Box 82, CASTERTON, 3311*

*Proudly Sponsored by Hansen Print
Naracoorte, Mount Gambier & Horsham*