

FIELD OBSERVATIONS OF GLOSSY BLACK COCKATOOS. At 18.00 on 19 November 1988 I noticed that a mature Wedge-tailed Eagle *Aquila audax* had flushed a flock of Glossy Black Cockatoos *Calyptorhynchus lathami* from the trees in Waterfall Gully, Western River Conservation Park, Kangaroo Island, South Australia.

The Eagle was ascending through the flock with its wings half closed, as if coming out of a stoop. The cockatoos flew out of the gully and formed a huge boomerang-shaped formation overhead that was *ca* 30 metres across. I counted 47 birds in this flock and 10 others that were about 15 metres behind. They were very vocal as they headed east, with the *ca* 40 knot westerly gale that was blowing, and appeared to go down into a pine plantation 1.5 km away.

About 20 minutes later they flew back to Waterfall Gully, appearing to have little trouble flying into the strong wind. This time 50 birds were counted in the main boomerang formation, and 10 others again trailing the flock were suspected to be juveniles. The birds called continuously as they descended into the gully and disappeared from view.

At 18.45 I walked down to the top of the waterfall, to a position that looks directly down into the gully, to locate where the cockatoos had gone to roost before darkness fell. They were soon found with the aid of a 20× telescope. Twenty-seven were feeding in a stand of Drooping Sheoak *Allocasuarina verticillata* 350 metres away, across the gully. As the wind was gusting to 30 knots in the gully, it was difficult to see any markings on the birds, except for a female with an almost completely yellow head, making her visible without the use of the telescope.

After 15 minutes the cockatoos started to fly up the gully, in groups of three to five, and land in the eucalypts all around me. The first to arrive were females and noticeably different birds that had a cinnamon-coloured wash on their heads and barred orange tail-patches. These birds seemed to be juveniles, and they continuously flew from the eucalypts, circled me, and flew back again. Some alighted to within 10 metres of me

for short periods. Three pairs were involved in mutual-preening. Each consisted of a female with yellow head markings and a cinnamon-headed bird. Six cinnamon-headed juveniles were producing a call not unlike that of a juvenile Silver Gull *Larus novaehollandiae*, although not as drawn out.

As the cockatoos flew back in two loose flocks to their original location, I noticed that seven adult males and seven females had some secondary wing and central tail feathers missing. They were last seen that evening at 19.45.

The following morning at 05.50 two Glossy Black Cockatoos flew into Waterfall Gully from the south. While I was climbing down into the gully to locate the flock, before the birds dispersed into many smaller gullies, a Wedge-tailed Eagle dived amongst the sheoaks and put them to flight. The Eagle made only one pass, and the cockatoos flew a short distance to settle in trees on the northern slope. I proceeded towards them through the dense trees and heard the birds long before they were sighted, the juvenile squeaks being very distinct. Finally, I moved to where they were feeding on underdeveloped seeds of the sheoaks. Fourteen were also perched in a huge eucalypt. Most were preening, and quite a few were mutually-preening: males preening females and females preening juveniles. Further up the gully were eight juveniles perched together in a eucalypt. They were also mutually-preening each other and calling at intervals.

At 08.15 about 40 birds flew up from further down the gully to join those I was observing. A group of 14 juveniles settled in one section of a large eucalypt and two others settled with females close by. The rest of the cockatoos perched singly, except for three male and female pairs and two female and juvenile pairs.

Two Funereal Cockatoos *Calyptorhynchus funereus* and seven Galahs *Cacatua roseicapilla* were observed flying with the flock and remained with it till I left.

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CORRIGENDUM

A recent Bird Note titled Field Observations of Glossy Black Cockatoos, by L. Bebbington (*S. Aust. Orn.* 31: 54) included the following statement: 'Finally, I moved to where they were feeding on under-developed seeds of the sheoaks.' This should have been 'feeding on the unopened cones of sheoaks.' I am grateful to Neville Forde for pointing out the error, and to Larry Bebbington for confirming Neville's comments. Also, Neville was interested to know the species of eucalypt the cockatoos were using as a perch-tree (mentioned in paragraphs seven and eight of Larry's note). The answer is South Australian Blue Gum *Eucalyptus leucoxylon*.