

Carnaby's Cockatoo

Zanda Latirostris



Conservation status: **Endangered (WC Act)**
Endangered (EPBC Act)

Range: Spread sparsely throughout the greater south west of Western Australia from Kalbarri to east of Esperance. Extinct in at least 30 per cent of its former range.

Nesting habitat: Eucalypt woodlands. Nests in the hollows of old (at least 130 years old) smooth-barked eucalypts including Salmon Gum and Wandoo but also Tuart, Flooded Gum, Karri, Bullich and Marri.

Feeding habitat: Woodlands, forests, heath and scrub.

Diet: The flowers, nectar and seeds of *Banksia*, *Dryandra*, *Hakea*, *Eucalyptus*, *Corymbia* and *Grevillea*. They also eat seeds of pine trees, fruiting nut trees (especially almonds and macadamias), the flesh and juice of apples and persimmons, as well as insect larvae.

Lifespan: 25 - 50 years in the wild.

Males: Black bill, pink eye ring and dusky white ear patch. Juvenile males resemble adult females until about three years old.

Females: Greyish white bill, grey eye ring and yellowish white ear patch.

- Threats:**
- The most significant threat continues to be from loss of habitat. The vast majority (more than 87 per cent) of their habitat has been cleared since European settlement, mostly for wheat/sheep farming in what we now call the Wheatbelt. A warming and drying climate places added pressure on that habitat.
 - Poaching of eggs and chicks from the wild and illegal shooting sadly still occurs today as it has in the past.
 - Competition for limited nest hollows with feral European honey bees and other cockatoos (galahs and corellas) which occur in unnaturally high numbers.
 - Vehicle strikes.

The iconic Carnaby's Cockatoo is an amazing species.

Named in honour of Western Australian farmer and ornithologist Ivan Carnaby, it is one of the very few migratory parrots, moving annually between its inland woodland breeding habitat and coastal areas during the non-breeding season (January - June).

Loud and gregarious, it mates for life and lives for a very long time though only reproducing at a slow rate. This masks the full extent of their decline as the population continues to age.

In the 1930s Ivan Carnaby was the first to recognise that there were two species of white-tailed black cockatoos. Carnaby's Cockatoo can be distinguished from the similar looking Baudin's Cockatoo by having a broader and shorter upper bill and a different call described as a short 'weeyou-weeyou' or 'weeloo-weeloo'.

While flocks today may number hundreds of birds, in the early days of the Swan River Colony it was not uncommon to see flocks that "blacked out the sky". These flocks would have consisted of tens of thousands of birds. Imagine the sight and sound of that!

Sadly, today their total population is estimated at only 10,000 to 20,000 and declining.

How can I help?

- The Black Cockatoo Conservation Centre is working hard to protect our threatened black cockatoos by rehabilitating injured birds for release back into the wild, revegetating degraded areas for new cockatoo habitat and educating the community. We are mostly volunteers and you can support our work by volunteering or making a donation via our website - www.blackcockatoorecovery.com
- Contact Kaarakin (9390 2288) if you find an injured or sick black cockatoo in need of care.
- Lend your support to the protection of all remaining Carnaby's Cockatoo habitat.
- Report poaching or shooting to the Department of Parks and Wildlife (1800 449 453).
- Include some local native plants in your garden like banksias and hakeas and you'll be rewarded by visiting Carnaby's Cockatoos, hopefully for many years to come.
- If you're an orchardist, contact the Department of Agriculture and Food for information on appropriate ways to protect your crops such as netting and 'sound guns'.



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