



Glossy Black Conservancy News No. 15 November 2015

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New Arrival at Currumbin Sanctuary

In June this year Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary, a friend of the Conservancy, successfully bred their first Glossy Black-Cockatoo chick! The parents had previously had unsuccessful breeding attempts, and the chick hatched from the second egg of the past breeding season.



*Glossy Black-Cockatoo chick at 5 days.
Photo: Currumbin Sanctuary.*



*Glossy Black-Cockatoo chick at 26 days.
Photo: Currumbin Sanctuary.*

Glossies are slow growing birds that only raise one chick every two years. In eastern Australia, the nesting season lasts from around March to September.

In the wild, females lay a single egg which is incubated for around 30 days until it hatches. The nestling fledges (leaves the nest) 84-96 days after hatching and is then fed by both parents until at least the onset of the following breeding season. During this period, the juvenile accompanies its parents at all times.

There are some further stories about Glossy Black-Cockatoo breeding and nesting in this edition of the Conservancy newsletter, read on for further information!

2015 Glossy Black-Cockatoo Birding Day

Earlier this year, the Conservancy ran the annual Glossy Black-Cockatoo Birding Day on Sunday May 3rd. 184 observers signed on for the day with 60 birds seen. Additionally, 81 feed trees were identified with chewed she-oak cones (orts). The Scenic Rim recorded the most number of birds with 19.

Congratulations to the lucky survey participants who were randomly selected to win some fantastic prizes!

- **Margaret Cameron** - Homestead Haven midweek stay courtesy of [Mt Barney Lodge](#).
- **Geoff Hardcastle** - Scenic Rim Trail Experience courtesy of [Spicers Retreats](#).
- **Christine McMaster** - Family pass courtesy of [Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary](#).
- **Tanya Fountain** - 2 adult passess courtesy of [Australia Zoo](#).
- **Jon Shuker** - Parrot box courtesy of [Hollow Log Homes](#).
- **Vanessa Perry** - "Parrots of the World" book courtesy of [Griffith University](#).

Thank you to everyone who took the time to participate in this year's Birding Day, whether you were fortunate enough to spot a glossy or not.



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GBC Breeding Activity

2015 has been a productive year for the reporting and monitoring of Glossy Black-Cockatoo nest sites, with multiple sites now being monitored on the Moreton Bay islands and in the Scenic Rim in south-east Queensland, and on the Tweed coast in north-eastern NSW.

Further afield, Alison Burrell has reported a nest site in a eucalypt tree on a 5 acre block in Nelson on the north-western outskirts of Sydney. In early April, Alison observed that the male would feed the incubating female first thing in the morning, disappear for the rest of the day but return around 4:40 pm daily for the evening feed, when the female would leave the nest for approximately 15 minutes to briefly beg for food from the male, fly to a nearby dam to drink before returning to the nest.

Alison saw the female being harassed by Sulphur-crested Cockatoos that chased her when she emerged from the nest on a number of occasions, and noted that goannas have also been seen climbing the tree in the past.



Two Sulphur-crested Cockatoos harassing a nesting female Glossy Black-Cockatoo (half emerged from the nest hollow at the base of the left trunk fork) at Nelson, NSW. Photo: Alison Burrell.

The Glossy-Black Cockatoos appeared to be active at the nest site for only around two months, whereas it takes nearly four months to fledge a chick from the time of laying, which suggests the nest may have failed. However, Alison recently photographed a Glossy-Black Cockatoo family with a fledgling visiting the property, and the yellow markings on the female closely match those of the female photographed at the nest entrance, so the nesting may have been successful after all!



An adult male (left), adult female (centre) and juvenile (right) Glossy Black-Cockatoo at Nelson, NSW. The juvenile is distinguished by numerous small, pale-yellow check spots and having more black tail bars than an adult. Photo: Alison Burrell.

A recent paper published in the journal *Emu* by Elizabeth Williams and Bruce Thomson of the University of Queensland has shown that the pattern of yellow feathers on the heads of adult females vary substantially and



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individual females can be distinguished from one another by unique patterns of yellow feathering.

Other large parrots, especially Sulphur-crested Cockatoos and Galahs, are well known threats to the breeding success of Glossy Black-Cockatoo, since these species compete for similar-sized nest hollows that are typically found only in very large, old eucalypt trees, a resource that may be critically limiting in many landscapes. At a promising nest site on the Tweed coasts, fierce competition from Sulphur-crested Cockatoos and Galahs appears to have caused the abandonment of the site by Glossy Black-Cockatoos this year.



*Juvenile Glossy Black-Cockatoo in flight at Nelson.
Photo: Alison Burrell.*

If you have an interesting Glossy Black-cockatoo story or photo, we would love to hear from you! Email the Conservancy at gbc@biodiversity.tv.

Please remember to also submit submit Glossy Black-Cockatoo sightings throughout the year via the Conservancy's online data portal at http://www.glossyblack.org.au/Submit_sightings.html.

Macleay Island GBC Nest

On the 14th of July 2015 Redland City Council (RCC) crew installed an aluminium collar around a tree on Macleay Island with a Glossy Black-Cockatoo chick in one of the

hollows (see photo on next page). The tree was on Council land and is a known nesting tree for glossies.

Local residents and avid Glossy Black-Cockatoo monitors Meryl Dobe and Irene Wyatt raised concerns for the new chick when a large goanna was sighted near another nest tree on the island. It was decided to do everything possible to ensure the survival of this glossy chick!



Glossy Black-Cockatoo nest tree on Macleay Island (tree hollow circled). Photo: Lisa Bailey.



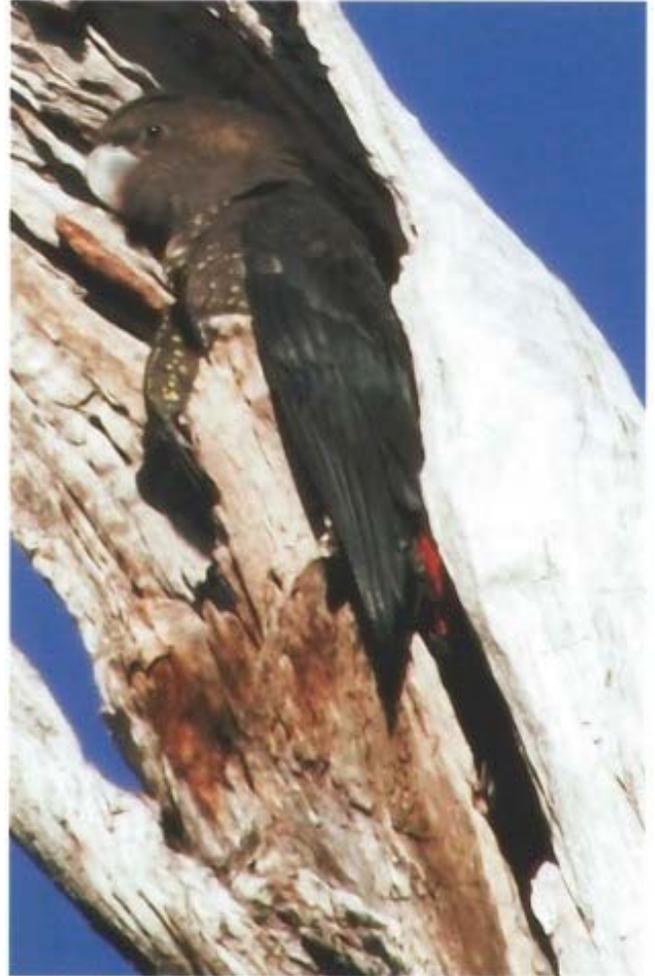
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L-R: Wayne Keddie - RCC, Simone Kemp-Weymouth - RCC, Russell Schmidt - RCC, Meryl Dobe - Glossy monitor, Rod Truman - RCC, Irene Wyatt - Glossy monitor, with aluminium tree collar installed on a known nest tree to prevent goanna predation. Photo: Lisa Bailey

The effort to install the tree collar was clearly worth it, as the chick successfully fledged just over a month later on 18th August!



Glossy Black-Cockatoo chick on Macleay Island just prior to fledging. Photo: Phil Maltby.

Golden Ort Award 2014

At the 2014 Glossy Black Conservancy Year In Review meeting, it was agreed that the recipient of the Conservancy's annual "Golden Ort" Award would be Russell Island resident Holly Keddie.

Holly has become a wealth of information and knowledge for birds that fly dialy between North Stradbroke Island and Russell Island. Holly also showed tremendous dedication and commitment in attempting to save a stranded Glossy Black-Cockatoo chick in September,



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sleeping beneath a tree overnight to keep predators away from him (see article in April newsletter).

Congratulations and thank you for your efforts Holly!



Holly Keddie with the 2014 Golden Ort award, with Conservancy members Penn Lloyd (left) and Adrian Caneris (right). Photo: Lisa Bailey

The recipient of the 2015 Golden Ort Award will be determined at the Conservancy's annual Year in Review meeting at Mt. Barney Lodge on 1-2 December!



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