

Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo

Calyptorhynchus funereus



Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoos are easy to identify due to their large size and distinctive markings. They are the largest Australian cockatoo and are 55-65cm long. They are black with yellow patches and yellow panels in their tail feathers. These birds have a distinctive call that can be heard as they fly over the tree tops. They are known to gather in large flocks of up to one hundred.

Diet

Their diet is varied but consists mainly of seeds of native trees, particularly the native sheoaks (*Allocasuarina spp.*) but also *Eucalyptus*, *Acacia*, *Banksia*, *Xanthorrhoea* and *Hakea* species. They also strip the bark from the trees to find tree-boring beetles and moth larvae. Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoos have large, powerful bills for biting into the cones of pines and banksias. The upper part of the beak pierces the cone and hooks in while the lower part cuts through.

They have also adapted to feed on seeds of introduced Radiata (*Pinus radiata*) or Aleppo Pine (*Pinus halepensis*) often in commercial plantations because many of their native food sources have been cleared.

Breeding

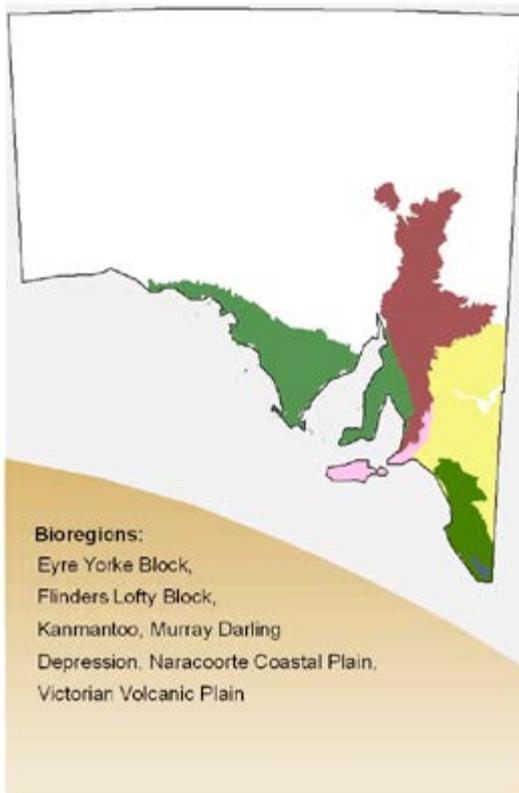
Nests are made in large hollows in old trees. Females incubate the egg(s) and it takes four weeks for the hatchling to emerge. Males provide food while the females are incubating and rearing the chicks. Females usually lay two eggs, but almost always only feed one chick, so that only one chick survives. The nestling fledges in about three months but does not become independent until just before the next breeding season (around six months).

Habitat

Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoos are found throughout south-eastern Australia, and are not listed as nationally threatened. The population on Eyre Peninsula, is considered critically endangered. This is because it is isolated from other mainland and island populations and has undergone dramatic decline since European settlement.

Threats

Loss of habitat (clearance of food and nesting trees), competition for nesting hollows with bees and other birds and animals and, predation (e.g. by Wedge-tailed Eagles) due to lack of cover, are the major threats to the Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo. Predation of eggs by Common Brushtail Possums (*Trichosurus vulpecula*) can also be a problem.



Map courtesy of Mapping Unit, Customer and Commercial Services.

Map is not intended to indicate spatial distribution of the species, only the bioregions in which the species is found.



A distinctive local! Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoos can be sighted in many Adelaide Hills conservation parks and visit the city parklands.

Conservation

Conservation of the wild population and its habitats, replanting of native food sources and habitat trees in this area, and a captive breeding program, are some of the positive actions being taken to help this population recover.

You can help the Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo by:

- keeping an eye and ear out if you go walking in the Adelaide Hills – you might see or hear a group of Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoos flying around
- finding out about revegetation or other conservation programs in your local area
- helping out on community revegetation activities and projects
- making sure you save food and habitat trees for the Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoos, and other threatened species, if you live on a property.



Photo by Jason Van Weenen

Yellow-tailed Black-cockatoo

For further information

Public enquiries

For more local information on any of the species in this resource please contact your nearest Natural Resource Centre office on:

Eastwood: (08) 8273 9100

Gawler: (08) 8523 7700

Lobethal: (08) 8389 5900

Willunga: (08) 8550 3400

Education enquiries

For teachers wanting more information about environmental education resources and opportunities please contact the relevant NRM Education sub regional team on:

Northern Adelaide: (08) 8406 8289

Barossa: (08) 8563 8436

Central Adelaide: (08) 8234 7255

Southern Adelaide: (08) 8384 0176

Southern Fleurieu: (08) 8551 0524

