

## Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo critical habitat left to burn

By Helen Pitman, Regional Coordinator— Birds Australia Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo Recovery Project

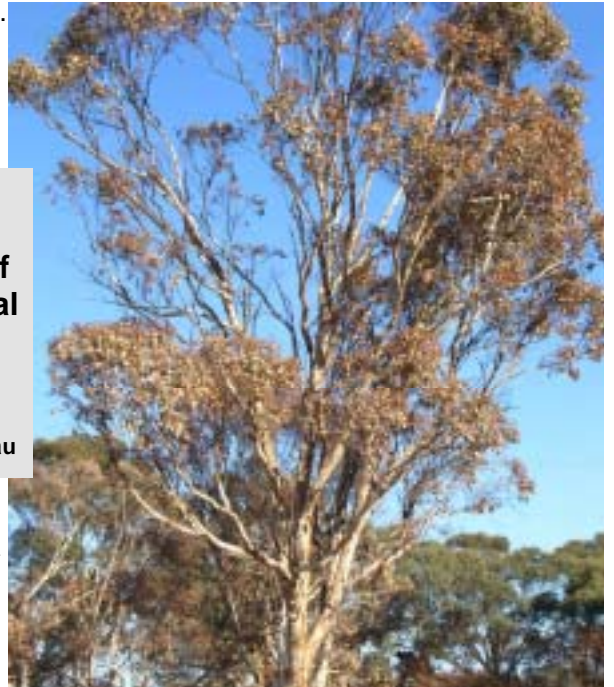
The non-nesting season for 2006 has been busy with on-ground recovery actions such as revegetating and fencing. This edition of Cocky Notes highlights some of the activities that have been going on across the Wheatbelt in regards to Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo recovery.

Something that has been brought to my attention, and is cause for some concern, is the destruction of trees. Throughout the Wheatbelt, paddock fires have been left to burn unsupervised, impacting on important patches of remnant woodlands. These woodlands are vital to the survival of Carnaby's Cockatoo and other species, due to the highly modified and fragmented landscape they rely upon.

Carnaby's Cockatoo nest in various Eucalypt species, such as Salmon Gum and Wandoo. Suitable nesting hollows take a minimum of 150 years to form and even dead stags are important to the Cockatoos. Paddocks are burnt annually to remove stubble left over from harvesting, and to halt the growth of

weeds. Great care needs to be taken to ensure remaining woodlands in the Wheatbelt are protected and left standing. This will ensure nesting hollows and corridors for Carnaby's Cockatoo and other wildlife.

If you have remnant woodlands or heathlands on your property, and are interested in protecting or revegetating the area, the project may be able to help fund this work. It is vitally important not to lose anymore of this wonderful habitat.



**For more information  
on how you can  
maintain your patch of  
bush contact your local  
Landcare office or  
Helen on 9383 7749,  
0428 762 292 or  
h.pitman@birdsaustralia.com.au**



*Burnt trees in remnant bushland adjacent to paddocks  
(Photos by Helen Pitman)*

## The 'Great Cocky Count': a Great Success!

By Bansi Shah— Swan Coastal Coordinator Birds Australia Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo Recovery Project

The 'Great Cocky Count' is a phrase that anyone interested in conservation and environmental issues on the Swan Coastal Plain will undoubtedly have heard. The first of its kind, the count was part of the new Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo project on the Swan Coastal Plain which was aimed at determining how many Carnaby's Cockatoos there are and where they are in the Swan Region.

The count was conducted by people from all walks of life, anywhere within the region and over a 2.5 hour period during the afternoons of 12 February, 26 March and 14 May 2006. The count received tremendous support and has been extremely successful in engaging local communities. An estimated 2,080 hours were spent by over 600 volunteers observing for Carnaby's Cockatoos; 186 volunteers covered 122 sites in May, 273 people covered 153 sites in March and 428 people covered 243

sites in February. The presence of Carnaby's cockatoos over the three surveys was recorded at 26% to 43% of observation sites.

Results from the Cocky Count are currently being collated and analysed. They will be released as soon as possible, and a seminar is planned for Thursday 12 October (see page 4 for details).

I would like to extend a big thank-you and congratulations to all the volunteers who participated in the 'Great Cocky Count'. Thanks also to all the Volunteer Coordinators for their help and dedication. The coordination of such a large number of volunteers is no mean feat and couldn't have been achieved without them!

Keep up to date with all the latest information and news by visiting the project website on [www.carnabyscockatoo.org](http://www.carnabyscockatoo.org).

# Development of a feral bee control strategy for Western Australia

By Jennifer Jackson, Dept CALM written for Western Wildlife January 2006

When we think of feral animals, we often think of the more conspicuous ones, such as foxes, rabbits and cats, but another well known exotic animal is having a negative impact on our environment in Australia. European honey bees (*Apis mellifera*) were introduced to Australia soon after European settlement in the 1820s. They were introduced for honey production, and to help pollinate plants and crops. However, since that time the managed bees have been swarming from their parent hives to form feral bee colonies. Although they are the same species, feral bees differ from managed bees. Feral bees are generally aggressive, have a tendency to swarm and they are of little value for commercial honey production.

Here in Western Australia, feral bees are taking over hollows in trees at an alarming rate, and in the process evicting native birds and mammals that use those hollows for shelter or nests. Of particular concern is that the bees take over the nest hollows of our three iconic and threatened species of black cockatoo, the forest red-tailed black cockatoo (*Calyptorhynchus banksii naso*), Carnaby's black cockatoo (*Calyptorhynchus latirostris*) and Baudin's black cockatoo (*Calyptorhynchus baudinii*).

Current forms of bee control are considered costly and time consuming because eradication is usually done on a hive by hive basis. However, recent research carried out in New Zealand has found an effective way to control bees, making the bees come to us, instead of us going to them. By presenting a small amount of pesticide with a sugar solution in a specially designed bait station, feral bees within a 500m radius can be attracted to the bait stations quickly and in large numbers. The bees consume the bait and return to the hive, and because the pesticide kills bees by ingestion and contact, if only 11% of the bees in a nucleus colony consume the bait, the entire colony dies.

With financial support from the Water Corporation, CALM will undertake research in the south west of the State to determine if the methodology used in the New Zealand study can effectively be utilised to control feral bees in Western Australia.



Feral bee (Photo taken by Jacqueline Hay Dept Environment and Conservation)

The research will investigate:  
the most effective method to attract bees to the bait;  
any risks posed to non-target native species (vertebrate or invertebrate) through proposed control methods, and eliminate or mitigate those risks to an acceptable level;  
the distances travelled by feral bees to a bait station, and the density of bait stations needed to treat a specific area;  
how long it will take to kill feral bee hives in a specific area; and how often hives or areas will need to be treated to keep them free from feral bees.

From the research undertaken by CALM, a Feral Bee Control Strategy suitable for Western Australian conditions will be developed, with the aim of reducing feral bee numbers in areas where they negatively impact on our native flora and fauna, without affecting the beekeeping industry.

In the meantime, if you have feral bees on your property, we would like to know. Our aim is to develop a database of the positions of known feral bee colonies throughout Western Australia. A GPS co-ordinate would be great; however details of your property location would suffice. Please contact the feral bee project officer on 9334 0103, or email [jacquelineh@calm.wa.gov.au](mailto:jacquelineh@calm.wa.gov.au)



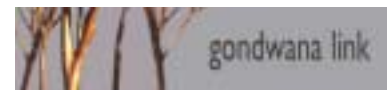
Female Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo (Photo taken by John Lauri)



Department of Environment and Conservation

## Support for Carnaby's Recovery Project

The Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo Recovery Project involves a number of other organisations that play an important role by providing support, expertise and funding for the project. Birds Australia would like to acknowledge WWF-Australia and the Department of Environment and Conservation for their continued support and expertise, and Natural Heritage Trust and Northern Agricultural Catchment Council for funding the cross regional project. With the addition of the new south coast project we would also like to acknowledge funding and other support from the South Coast Regional Initiative Planning Team (SCRIPT) and Gondwana Link.



## Project T-Shirts \$18

Available in all sizes. If you would like one please contact Helen

## Katanning District Landcare Committee

Taken from an article written for Bird Notes by Kathleen O'Brien, Land for Wildlife Officer

The Katanning District Landcare Committee (LCDC) is working hard to help save Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo in their region. The Katanning LCDC is currently coordinating a Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo Project within the Katanning and Kent Shires, which is funded through South West Catchment Council (SWCC) and has shown a steady increase in private landholder partnerships in the past six months

Local farmers within the Katanning and Kent Shires have been very interested in participating in on-ground work such as fencing and revegetating critical Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo habitat. These on-ground works are funded by the SWCC Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo Project and are facilitated by the Katanning LCDC with government agencies such as *Land for Wildlife*, CALM Katanning District doing the ground assessment for habitat areas and possible revegetation sites.



Potential Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo nesting hollow, Katanning Shire (Photo taken by Helen Pitman)

Anyone who might like to provide assistance by volunteering for tree planting or fencing projects in the future could contact Jill Richardson at Katanning Landcare on 9821 4327.



## Local nurseries help in the fight to 'Restore the Balance'

By Helen Pitman, Regional Coordinator

Plants from the Proteaceae family, including *Banksia*, *Hakea*, *Grevillea* and *Dryandra* species, form the Carnaby's Cockatoo natural diet. Much of the heathland where these species exist has been removed from the Wheatbelt to make room for agriculture over the past 50 years. The Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo recovery project aims to 'restore the balance' of the amount of native species available in the Wheatbelt.

As reported in edition 8 of 'Cocky Notes' the project is lucky to be working with four local nurseries in the Northern Agricultural Region who are growing Carnaby's preferred species. This year 11 landholders will revegetate their land with these species. All the landholders have Carnaby's nesting or feeding on their properties, and this revegetation will have a direct effect on the local Carnaby's populations (see story below).

Hopefully this can happen in 2007 as well. If you have Carnaby's visiting your property and would like to revegetate with Carnaby's preferred species then contact Helen for more details.



Hakea Species at Salmon Gums nursery, Moora TAFE (Photo by Lesley Bellamy)



Mixture of Proteaceous Species at Wongan Trees nursery, Wongan Hills (Photo by Helen Pitman)

## Wyening Mission Farm planting day

By Helen Pitman, Regional Coordinator

The Young Family have been on a mission recently, and have worked together with students from Penrhos College and other Western Australian schools to revegetate an area of their property with Carnaby's preferred food species. The Wyening Mission Farm is lucky enough to have nesting Carnaby's on their property, and by revegetating are ensuring there will be food for adult Carnaby's and their offspring in the future. Habitat loss is



Students planting trees and having fun (Photo by John Young)



Students working together to get the planting done (Photo by John Young)

the main factor contributing to the decrease in population numbers, and revegetation is an effective recovery action that will hopefully provide food for future generations as well.

1500 seedlings of *Hakea* and *Banksia* species have been planted, and with the arrival of rain recently hopefully a large percentage will thrive, growing into mature plants to provide a sustainable food source.

# The 'Great Cocky Count': So how many are there?

**Date:** Thursday 12 October 2006  
**Time:** 6.00 – 7.30pm  
**Location:** WA Ecology Centre, 167 Perry Lakes Drive, Floreat



The 'Great Cocky Count' is a phrase that you've undoubtedly heard. In fact, you may have been one of the 600+ volunteers that spent an estimated 2,080 fun hours observing for Carnaby's Cockatoos!

Come and hear about Birds Australia's Carnaby's Cockatoo Project on the Swan Coastal Plain, including results from the 'Great Cocky Count'.

**6.00 pm Meet Rennie the famous Carnaby's Cockatoo and friends.**  
(Live display by the Black Cockatoo Rehabilitation Centre).

**6.30 pm The 'Great Cocky Count': so how many are there?**  
(Presentation by Bansi Shah, Swan Coastal Coordinator).

**7.00 pm Drinks & nibbles provided.**  
(Mingle with fellow enthusiasts and volunteers).

**RSVP by Thursday 5 October 2006. Please include your name & number of people attending.**

**Email:** [seminar@carnabyscockatoo.org](mailto:seminar@carnabyscockatoo.org) **Tel:** 0428 946 001.

## Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo sightings

- 8 Carnaby's seen feeding on Great Eastern Hwy, 5km West of Moorine Rock (near to Southern Cross)
- 10 Carnaby's seen flying east 70km east of Merredin
- 1500 – 2000 Carnaby's - South of Condingup town-site ~20km

**A big Thank You to all our  
volunteer reporters!**

## Save a tree in 2006

Cocky Notes is now available on the website [www.carnabyscockatoo.org](http://www.carnabyscockatoo.org) and via email. If you would like to change your method of receiving Cocky Notes please email Helen at [h.pitman@birdsaustralia.com.au](mailto:h.pitman@birdsaustralia.com.au)



© B. Shah



© E. Lehmann



© B. Shah

## Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo Recovery Project

The tenth edition of Cocky Notes was produced with funding from the Department of Environment and Heritage Cross Regional Funding Program through the lead region for the project, Northern Agricultural Catchment Council (NACC). The Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo Recovery Project will be funded by this program from October 2004 to October 2007 and Birds Australia WA gratefully acknowledges this support.

The Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo Recovery Project involves a number of other organisations that play an important role by providing support, expertise and funding for the project. Birds Australia would like to acknowledge WWF-Australia and the Department of Environment and Conservation for their continued support and expertise, and with the addition of the new south coast project we would also like to acknowledge funding and other support from the South Coast Regional Initiative Planning Team (SCRIPT) and Gondwana Link.

Birds Australia is a national non-profit organisation working to conserve Australian native birds and their habitats. Birds Australia WA Inc is a state-wide group with an active interest in the enjoyment of birds and the research and conservation of the state's birds.

**Helen Pitman - Regional Coordinator**  
**0428 762 292**  
[h.pitman@birdsaustralia.com.au](mailto:h.pitman@birdsaustralia.com.au)

**Bansi Shah - Swan Coastal Coordinator**  
**0427 707 047**  
[b.shah@birdsaustralia.com.au](mailto:b.shah@birdsaustralia.com.au)

