



Glossy Black Conservancy News No. 6 November 2008

The Glossy Black Conservancy is a not for profit consortium that seeks to increase awareness and promote a collaborative conservation management approach for Glossy Black-Cockatoos across South East Queensland, through a partnership between government, private enterprise, researchers and the wider community.

For further information on any of the articles in this newsletter, copies of the 2008 Action Plan or fact sheets, please visit www.glossyblack.org.au, get in touch with your local Conservancy partner or email GBC@biodiversity.tv.

Education Kit now available!

Hurray! The Education Kit is now available! Thanks to the efforts of Conservancy representatives, EnviroComm consultants, Kingfisher Creative graphic designers and funding from the Australian Government, an attractive, user-friendly and informative set of educational resources has been developed. One hundred kits were able to be produced with the grant funds and these will be distributed to schools that have expressed interest in the project. All the resources developed are also available on the Conservancy's website, www.glossyblack.org.au. We look forward now to visiting schools, doing presentations to students and coordinating feed tree plantings.

Training & Information Workshops

A very successful workshop series has been completed around SEQ. Over 100 people attended the workshops, held in Boonah, Burpengary, Gatton, Gympie and Wivenhoe. The workshops aimed to raise awareness of Glossy Black-Cockatoos in areas where few sightings have been received. Participants learnt how to identify Glossies from similar birds and recognise feed trees, as well as gain an insight into habitat needs and threats to survival. A lot of new information was learnt also from workshop attendees! Did you know that Glossies can be so fussy they won't eat the seeds from cones on the interwoven branches of a neighbouring tree?



Participants in the Wivenhoe training workshop were lucky enough to find abundant orts; sure evidence of Glossy Blacks. Photo: D.Niland

Welcome to Bundaberg Regional Council

The Conservancy is expanding!

Welcome to new partner, Bundaberg Regional Council.



Great also to have continuing support from the recently amalgamated Moreton Bay, Sunshine Coast and North Burnett Regional Councils.

2008 Year in Review

On 10 December, SEQ Catchments will host the 2008 Year in Review. During this annual event, Glossy Black Conservancy representatives will review progress against the 2008 Action Plan and identify activities and priorities for 2009. If you would like to be part of the Conservancy's 2009 Action Plan, please get in touch with a Conservancy partner or email GBC@biodiversity.tv.

The Conservancy's 2008 Action Plan identified priority actions for the year as:

- Continue with community awareness activities and training for partners and the community:
 - Implement the community and school kits and plantings project;
 - Enhance the Conservancy's website;
 - Develop new fact sheets and newsletters;
 - Roll out training workshops in specific areas across SEQ; and
 - Disseminate existing Conservancy educational material.
- Support research that will assist in better understanding species movement patterns, habitat utilisation and key threats to Glossy Black-Cockatoo resources:
 - Griffith University research; and
 - Finalise species regional management plan.
- Utilise data received to enhance our understanding of the Glossy Black-Cockatoo:
 - Progress the analysis and mapping of current Conservancy data.
- Expand the Conservancy across SEQ.
 - Target new partners to ensure a regional approach.
- Seek further financial support from organisations (i.e. through grant funding).

She-oak Identification

Did you know there are 12 species of she-oak found in south-east Queensland? Eight are species in the genus *Allocasuarina* and four in the genus *Casuarina*. Of these, four species are known to be favoured Glossy Black-Cockatoo food trees:

- *A. inophloia*, Thready-barked she-oak
- *A. littoralis*, Black she-oak
- *A. torulosa*, Forest or Rose she-oak; and
- *C. cristata*, Belah

Glossies are also known to regularly feed in *C. equisetifolia* (Coastal she-oak) and occasionally *A. luehmannii* (Bulloak) and *C. cunninghamiana* (River she-oak). It is not known whether the birds feed in the other five species.

So, how do you know which species of she-oak you're looking at?

Key features to note are:

- Tree habit: size (shrub or tree) and shape (upright, spreading, weeping)
- Seed cone: size (width and length) and shape (oval, cylindrical, squat)
- Branchlet: thickness (thin or thick) and no. of "teeth"
- Tree bark: colour (dark brown, black, greyish) and texture (rough, scaly, smooth, fissured, shaggy, corky)
- Habitat: coastal, mountain, creeks, swamps



The habit and habitat of she-oaks gives a clue to which species they are. Forest She-oaks are a small (~20m) tree with an upright form, found in coastal hills and mountains. Photo: SEOC



A key to she-oak identification is the size and shape of the seed cones and the colour and texture of the bark. Forest She-oak has relatively large oval-shaped cones and corky, fissured and dark greyish brown bark. Photos: SEQC

A History of Harvesting by Ted McCosker

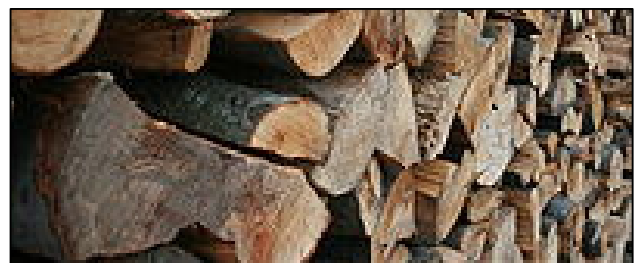
Not many people realise that in the early days of settlement (1890s- 1945) every small town had its own baker and that the prized wood for their ovens was "Oak/Casuarinas of various types". Because of its clean burning properties; heat and lack of after taint in the ovens.

Teamsters and timber fellers of that time would bring bark the mature trees then when they had died and seasoned, fell them and sell to the bakers as "cordwood" for their fires. This information directly from my grandfather.

This of course led to all the easily accessible mature trees being taken except for places such as the back country and inaccessible areas such as the more remote parts of Blackall Range.

Of course not knowing the relationship between the Glossy Black-Cockatoo and these trees plus the land clearing the birds suffered.

However, there is hope as in many areas such as the Glass House Mountains district where my grandfather and others operated there are now some fine stands of oaks regenerating. Though there is still a great risk; for while the mature trees can take a slow fire such as the Aborigines would have lit; all the younger trees are very vulnerable to wild fire so there has to be a balance system of Hazard Reduction burning otherwise it is back to square one for the trees and their dependant birds.



Cordwood (or firewood) stacked for storage Photo: Wikipedia

Sighting Stories

Magnificent Mt Barney

Mt Barney is a special spot and not just for Glossy Blacks. Here's a story sent in by a local landholder:

Having read about your Boonah workshop, I would like to share with you that my sister owns a property bordering the Mt Barney World Heritage area and we regularly see a flock of Glossy Blacks there. We camp and watch their antics during the morning, day and evening.

Last year we had an addition to the flock which now numbers thirteen, yes 13. There is a good supply of she-oak trees and it is an incredible sound and sight when they are all together feeding, the debris on the ground looks as though they have cut up the trees and spread the sawdust all around, and the noise of feeding is fantastic.

They come together in the mornings and will feed together and then in the evening break up into pairs or threes or fives and roost in different parts of the valley.

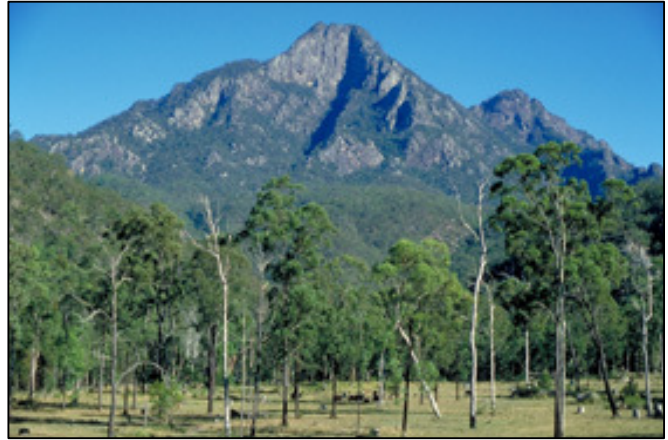
As you would understand we do not spread the word widely about where they are because I believe this is a unique number of birds in one area and we would hate to stress them with an overload of visitors etc.

It is a rare sight indeed, one which we want to protect.

[R.Stanfield]



A female Glossy enjoys a feed of Black She-oak. Photo: T.Saunders



World Heritage listed Mt Barney is a favourite for Glossies. Photo: EPA

Sightings in Brief

- Spoonbill St, Peregrin Beach, 16 Nov, pair feeding in *A. littoralis* [L.Bollen]
- Orcades St, Sunrise Beach, regular sighting in Sep & Oct including return of 3 birds to roost 27 Sep, all snuggled up together, too dark and high to see markings. This is significant, marking the regular late September arrival back into this area, generally up until early January, and the flock has been up to 14 birds in nearby roost trees, in previous years. [B.Carey]
- Lipton Park, Sunrise Beach, 22 Sep, pair observed feeding on *A. littoralis* [B.Carey]
- Marcus High Dunes section, Noosa National Park, 22 Sep, pair flying over [B.Abraham]
- Cooloola Estate, Noosa Heads, 12 Sep, several active feed tree sites and a pair of Glossies feeding on one of the many identified *A. littoralis* [B.Carey]
- Noosa Heads, 10 Sep, 4 birds seen drinking from stormwater channel [B.Carey]
- Moonare Crescent, Noosa Heads, 9 Sep, pair feeding in *A. littoralis* in remnant heath, at least 3 feed trees currently with fresh orts [B.Carey]
- Pinaroo Park, Noosa Junction, 1 Sep, pair noted feeding, nearby tree had evidence of fresh chewings/orts from the past week or so [B.Carey]
- Kamala Drive, Lake MacDonald, 27 May, 2 birds flying to roost; recently fledged juvenile accompanied by an adult female; parent fed the juvenile 6 times before the juvenile took flight to a roosting position lower down and within the foliage on a nearby *E. grandis* [Jim McKendry]
- Forest Acres, Lake MacDonald, 25 May, each evening on dusk two pairs of birds fly North West towards Pomona; third pair (possibly breeding) stays; lone bird roosting in a *Eucalyptus grandis* (flooded gum) on Kamala Drive, Lake MacDonald [Jim McKendry]
- Peachester, Dec 07, two birds feeding [V&M.Blaik]
- Neville Lawrie Reserve, from 4 May, 3 birds (male, female and juvenile) regularly sighted after an absence of about 20 months; recent rains providing alternative water points; 4 new feed trees identified [Jim Napier]

Ort Report

Finding chewed cones, or ort, under casuarina trees is a pretty good clue that Glossy Black-Cockatoos may have been feeding in the tree. The colour of the chewed flesh indicates how long ago the birds were there; the whiter the cone, the more recently a bird was there.



- Long Gully Reserve, Grandchester, 14 Oct [D.Niland]
- Laheys Lookout, Tamborine Mountain, 6 Oct [D.Niland]
- Dam on private property, Crossdale, 26 Aug [W&A.Harvey]
- Anglican Church, Sunrise Beach, 22 Sep, recent chewings [B.Carey]
- Sunshine Beach High School, 2 new feed trees, 2 Sep [B.Carey]
- Spillway Common, Wivenhoe, 25 Aug [D.Niland]



Evidence of a Glossy Black feast, ort, around on the ground under a Forest She-oak at Crossdale. Photo: W&A.Harvey

GBC Partner Activities

BAAM

- Developing draft regional management plan for Glossy Black-Cockatoos
- Drafting a fact sheet on 'Glossy Black-Cockatoos in Urban Backyards'. This will contain information on bird and feed-tree identification, the importance of water and recording sightings. [A. Caneris]

Birds Queensland

On-going maintenance of the database; 120 new sightings & 75 new locations since May 2008. [D.Niland]

Brisbane City Council

- Presentation to Bald Hills State School as part of Envirofund project.
- New biodiversity section on the website has a link to the GBC website on our threatened species page (visit http://www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/BCC:BASE:700694259:pc=PC_678).

- Posters and brochures distributed at all relevant Council events. [A.Selles].

BrisBOCA

Working with Main Roads to protect Glossy feed trees on verges of arterial roadways [R.Bloss]

Griffith University

Plans are underway for a Glossy Black Birding Day on the Gold Coast where volunteers are assigned to specific locations to record as much information about any glossy blacks and feeding trees as possible in one day. The day is proposed for May 2009. If all goes well, this may be extended across SEQ. [G.Castley]

SEQ Catchments

- Funding for training and information workshops
- Management of Envirofund project
- Newsletter compilation [L.Gould]

Sunshine Coast Regional Council

Developing guidelines for Conservancy partners. [S.O'Keefe]

Report your Sightings!

If you have seen a Glossy Black-Cockatoo or found some ort, please complete a Sightings Report.



The markings on female Glossies varies; this female has fine speckling, previous photo shows blotchy head markings. Photo: B.Prince

The Glossy Black Conservancy acknowledges the support of:

