



# Glossy Black Conservancy News

## No. 8 March 2010

*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 and the north coast of New South Wales, 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 Action Plan or fact sheets, please visit [www.glossyblack.org.au](http://www.glossyblack.org.au), get in touch with your local Conservancy partner or email [gbc@biodiversity.tv](mailto:gbc@biodiversity.tv).

### Welcome to 2010

2009 was a busy and successful year for the Conservancy and 2010 is shaping up to be busier!!

Highlights of 2009 included:

- Seven new Conservancy members
- Expansion into northern NSW
- Completion of the Envirofund schools project
- A successful Gold Coast census
- Drafting of the Conservation Guidelines (see feature article inside)

### Successful 2009 Census & 2010 Expansion

On Saturday 9 May 2009, Griffith University in partnership with Gold Coast City Council ran a census of Glossy Black-Cockatoos on the Gold Coast.

The result: 45 birds seen and 6 heard!

Following review and discussion of the results, the Conservancy has decided to expand the census! This year, we're setting out sights on October, when birds are out of nesting hollows so we can also get a picture of breeding success. This is also when South Australia conducts their census, see article page ?.

It's early days yet, but you if you want to get involved, please let us know, send an email to [gbc@biodiversity.tv](mailto:gbc@biodiversity.tv).

### Envirofund Schools Project Completed

The project delivered information and education on Glossy Black-Cockatoos to 31 schools across South East Queensland and northern New South Wales and included the planting of over 1,000 she-oaks (*Allocasuarina littoralis* and *A. torulosa*), most as part of broader biodiversity plantings.

One hundred and thirty copies of the education kit - containing materials for Prep to Yr 12 and with clear links to the Queensland curriculum - were distributed to schools, education centres and education professionals. The resource materials are also available as free downloads from the Glossy Black Conservancy's website, [www.glossyblack.org.au](http://www.glossyblack.org.au).

### Oh, oh – a mistake!

Have you ever got your she-oaks scrambled, your casuarinas confused, your Allocasuarinas all at sea? Well, apparently, so have we!

There's an error in the dichotomous keys in Unit 3 of the Education Kit relating to she-oak identification (Lessons 4 and 5). The **correct** identification information is:

*Allocasuarina littoralis* branchlets with 6-8 teeth  
cylindrical 'cones'

*Allocasuarina torulosa* branchlets with 4 teeth  
rounded 'cones'

Unfortunately this error is also in the Urban Areas Fact Sheet. Corrected versions of the Education Kit and Fact Sheet are now available from the Conservancy website.

Our apologies for any confusion or misidentifications this may have caused.



*The relatively docile nature of Glossy Black-Cockatoos makes them easy targets for budding and experienced photographers alike. Photographs also make identification simple. Photos: M. Schuler (left) & C. Jenkins (right)*

### Conservation Guidelines

Over the past 18 months, members of the Glossy Black Conservancy have been collaborating to develop Glossy Black-Cockatoo Conservation Guidelines.

The Guidelines aim to facilitate management and conservation of Glossy Black-Cockatoos across south-eastern Queensland and north-eastern New South Wales.

Dr Penn Lloyd was appointed in October 2009 to pull the Guidelines together. Dr Lloyd undertook a literature review and consulted with state and local government officials before Conservancy members undertook a two day workshop to review the results.

The Conservancy determined that the overall objectives of the Conservation Guidelines are to:

1. Facilitate the conservation of viable populations of Glossy Black-Cockatoos and their habitats across south-eastern Queensland and north-eastern New South Wales;
2. Improve our knowledge and understanding of the interactions between Glossy Black-Cockatoos, the environment and threats across south-eastern Queensland and north-eastern New South Wales;
3. Provide stakeholders with the information to establish and implement strategic, adaptive management actions and associated monitoring regimes that achieve the conservation objectives for the species and its habitats;
4. Provide advice on practical measures that can be used to achieve enhanced protection and conservation of Glossy Black-Cockatoo habitat;
5. Assist the implementation of management actions by coordinating a collaborative effort of stakeholders via a consistent approach;
6. Raise public awareness of the Glossy Black-Cockatoo, the threats it faces, and what the community can do to ameliorate these threats.

The following key principles were agreed on:

1. Identify and conserve feeding habitat. High priority actions include developing a habitat suitability map to include in future Biodiversity Planning Assessments undertaken at State level, and protecting feeding habitat from land clearing and tree removal through the development approval process;
2. Identify new nest sites, monitor the use of known nest sites, and protect nest sites and suitable nesting habitat through the development approval process and the range of incentives available for conservation on private land;
3. Encourage ecological research, particularly movements of Glossy Black-Cockatoos and their use of the broader landscape, and the fire responses of its principal feed tree species;



*Following a day reviewing and revising the Glossy Black-Cockatoo Conservation Guidelines, Conservancy members enjoy a sunset ecotour at Mt Barney Lodge. Photo L. Gould*

4. Survey populations on a regular basis to monitor population trends, recruitment and distribution;
5. Promote and facilitate community interest and understanding of habitat requirements and conservation;
6. Promote and facilitate community participation in conservation; and
7. Adopt a strategic planning approach to conservation at the local and regional level by maintaining the Conservancy and implementing the recommended actions as resources permit.

The Guidelines also contain information on the distribution, identification, habits and habitats of the Glossy Black-Cockatoo and a summary of current statutory and policy frameworks relevant to Glossy Black-Cockatoo conservation.

The Guidelines will be finalised in 2010, distributed to land managers and made available on the Conservancy's website.



### Enhancing Habitat in Moreton Bay Region

Moreton Bay Regional Council recently initiated a Glossy Black-Cockatoo conservation program.

Sightings data and predictive mapping were used to identify properties, and targeted residents invited to participate in the conservation program by collecting seed from *Allocasuarina littoralis* and *A. torulosa*, preferred Glossy Black-Cockatoo food trees in the Moreton Region. Seed collected through the project is being propagated at Kumbartcho Community Nursery, and participating residents are entitled to receive 10 free trees in tube stock.

Eight Glossy Black-Cockatoo nestboxes will also be installed as part of the program; four on Council land and four on private land to be selected from residents participating in seed collection.

So far, 42 residents have registered in the program, indicating a significant increase in community awareness of Glossy Black-Cockatoos. The project has also improved Council's habitat and mapping data through verification of sightings. The results suggest that in the Moreton Region, the suburbs of Ocean View and Mount Mee in the west appear to provide the main habitat for Glossy Black Cockatoos.

### South Australian 2009 Census Results

South Australian Glossy Black-Cockatoos (*Calyptorhynchus lathami halmaturinus*) are endangered under state and national legislation and only found on Kangaroo Island.

Michael Barth, Glossy Black-Cockatoo Recovery Project Officer, provided this account of the 2009 census:

A much reduced **minimum total of 236 SA Glossy Black-Cockatoos found on Kangaroo Island during the October 2009 annual census** compared to recent censuses is due to the almost complete absence during the census period, of two of the six main flocks from all known feeding and roost sites. Portions of both flocks were eventually located in habitat areas adjacent to those usually occupied suggesting local shifts in feeding and roost sites possibly related to impacts of prolonged dry conditions on food availability. While there is no direct evidence of higher than usual adult or juvenile mortality, the small number of dependant juveniles found and low proportion of juveniles marked as nestlings identified during the census period is of concern, and possibly relates to wet weather in the post-fledging period and/or food availability.

**As there is insufficient information to indicate whether growth or losses have occurred, the population estimate from the previous census in 2008 remains unchanged at 340 – 360 Glossy Black-Cockatoos on Kangaroo Island.**

A minimum of 25 juveniles were produced in the 2009 breeding season and 9 were seen during the census period, including 3 identified of the 22 marked nestlings which fledged in 2009. Identification of banded



A volunteer at Kumbartcho Nursery sorts seed sent by Moreton Region residents. Photo B. May

cockatoos was limited to 18 observations since June 2009. Fieldwork during October was carried out by the project biologist (Lynn Pedler), the project officer (Mike Barth) and involved nearly 20 volunteers.

### Sighting Stories

#### Gooburrum Glossies

[T. Ingall]

Glossy Black-Cockatoos have been observed several times in our area over the past few months, as recently as on Monday 16 November, 2009, at about 4:00pm, but also at around 7:00am at other times previously.

Our property backs on to a sugarcane railway line and is semi-rural residential - treed acreage adjacent to remnant forest growth.

Two to five birds are often seen feeding quietly on she-oaks on the property and also in adjacent locations (trees in vacant land nearby, also in adjacent forest trees).

#### Puddles provide precious water

[L. Harbourn]

Pairs of Glossy Blacks are regularly seen on our property near Boonah, south west of Brisbane. Our 100 acres has higher ridges with she-oaks. I have been very close to the birds on several occasions over the years. They tend to frequent this area in the cooler months.

The current two pairs of Glossies arrived earlier this year, March. They have spent more time on our property than usual. I hear them most afternoons coming down to our dam for a drink. They always make a single long call indicating they are on their way down from the hills. So



A typical non-glossy, Glossy Black-Cockatoo, with she-oak cone held firmly in her left foot. Photo C. Jenkins

on one occasion, when I heard the call, I walked up the driveway below their route to the dam. One pair stopped in the tree above me so I waited quietly and watched. To my delight the male flew to ground to drink from the puddle of water six metres in front of me. I didn't move a muscle and was rewarded with a rare opportunity to examine a male Glossy at close range for a while. Unfortunately a magpie flew over and scared him away before the female could join him.

My first sighting on the property was in our first year here in 2000. There was a group of about six glossies feeding in a she-oak and I walked right under the tree without knowing they were there until I heard a gentle clicking noise and looked up. I often sight she-oak nut chewing remains on my walks and also have one of their magnificent tail feathers.

Needless to say, our she-oak ridges will never be cleared.

### Water critical for Glossy Black-Cockatoos

[L. Hartley & B. McGuire]

We see and hear Glossies almost every morning and every night when they come to drink at the water at the back of the property.

We have been observing them since 2002. Numbers have varied over the years but from time to time they flock with 14 seen in 2003, 13 in April 2009 and 28 seen July 2009. We have witnessed fights between males while a female looked on and regularly see feeding of young.

The valley contains hundreds if not thousands of *Allocasuarina torulosa* and we have planted many *A. littoralis* so I guess we have an avian hot spot.

Below is an account of behaviour at the watering hole:

Friday, 28/08/09, 16.40 hrs: 5 birds (3 male, 1 female and 1 juvenile begging) came from the west. No feeding of the juvenile but the female groomed it. In the branches of an ironbark one of the males drove off another as he approached the female and then joined the female and the juvenile on the branch and engaged in mutual grooming. At 16.50 hrs all went to lower branches over the pool and over the next few minutes all

descended to drink. The male continued to drive off the other males while the female was drinking. 16.57 hrs all departed to the north-west.

17.00 hrs: 4 birds (2 males, 2 females), apparently two pairs, arrived from north-west.

17.02 hrs: 5 birds (2 males, 2 females, 1 juvenile) arrived from north-west.

17.05 hrs: 4 birds (2 males, 2 females) arrived from west.

With 13 birds waiting to drink there was such crowding that only about six or seven could get to the water at one time. There was some desultory pecking to achieve space and two birds flew to a branch until there was space to make a second attempt to drink. After drinking the birds rested in trees and about half stripped bark off mainly dead branches before flying off.

17.15 hrs: 2 departed to the west.

17.23 hrs: all remaining birds departed north-west.

### The importance of alternatives & observers

A well-known and regularly-used Glossy Black-Cockatoo roost tree at Sunrise Beach was cut-down on 16 December 2009. A local observer reported that when birds arrived to roost the next day, they seemed disoriented and flew away, failing to use nearby trees, which they have roosted in previously.

No birds were seen in the area for 11 days.

The Glossies have now returned. Roosting first in a nearby tree (one which hadn't been used as a roost for 10 years!) and then in other trees in the local area. The birds still arrive to the site of their old roost tree, however, and circle around, settling briefly in other nearby trees before eventually flying elsewhere in the local area.

In this instance, the availability of alternative roost trees has ensured the persistence of Glossies in the local area, at least in the short term. Without local observers keeping an eye on things, we'd also not be aware of the loss of a roost and any resulting impact. Thanks!!



Cozy cockatoos! A pair strengthens its bond through allopreening. Photo L&G. Burgstahler



## Recent Records

### Sightings in Brief

- Christmas Creek, Lamington, 23 Jan, 2 birds [L. Hartley]
- Gap Creek, Lamington, 30 Jan, 12 birds flying over [L. Hartley]
- Commodore Court, Sunrise Beach, 10-17 Jan, pair feeding in 3 *C. equisetifolia* street trees; these trees consistently used for many years [B. Carey]
- Lakewood Drive, Lake Weyba, 12 & 13 Jan 2010, 3-5 birds feeding on *A. littoralis* [T. Lennon]
- Newfield Street, Sunrise Beach, 27 Dec 2009, 6:30pm, pair roosting in tall Eucalypt [B. Carey]
- Orcades Street, Sunrise Beach, 15 Dec, pair mating in roost tree [B. Carey]
- East Edward Corbould Bushland Reserve, 7 Dec, 7.30am, 6-8 birds feeding [C. Jenkins]
- Orcades Street and Bond Court Park, Sunrise Beach, Nov, up to 13 birds roosting, highest number since late 2008, often two groups of 3 birds with a juvenile being fed on arrival, and possibly a 3<sup>rd</sup> trio [B. Carey]
- Burgess Creek, 19 Nov, 3 birds feeding in tree along lower pathway [J. Baker]
- Gooburru, 16 Nov (and previous months), 2-5 birds feeding [T. Ingall]
- Pinaroo Park, Noosa Junction, 10 Nov, 5:30pm, 5 birds drinking [B. Carey]
- Ranger Ct, Sunrise Beach, 3-11 Nov, after weeks absent, 2-5 birds seen feeding in 3 trees early morning and late afternoon [H&F. Alk]
- Pinaroo Park, Noosa Heads, 2 Nov, 3 birds [B. Carey]
- Ben Lexcen Drive, Noosa Junction, mid Oct, 4 birds at flying over [B. Carey]
- Kathleen McArthur Conservation Park, 11 Oct, 11.15am, pair feeding [Brian, Australia Zoo]
- Ranger Ct, Sunrise Beach, 10 Aug – 20 Sep, 2 birds feeding on several occasions [H&F. Alk]
- Orcades Street, Sunrise Beach, Sept, 4-10 birds roosting (2 pairs and 2 family trio's) [B. Carey]
- Burgess Creek, Castaways Beach, Sept, 4-10 birds [B. Carey]
- Sunrise Beach, Sept, various sightings of 3 birds feeding at Ranger Court, Comet Street Park, and along Ben Lexcen Drive [B. Carey]
- Peachester, Sept, 6 birds (3 pairs?) [V. Blaik]
- Orcades Street, Sunrise Beach, 30 Aug, 6 birds (with 2 juveniles begging and being fed) returned to roost following absence of 6 months; their arrival this year is 3 weeks earlier than recorded in past years [B. Carey]
- Pinaroo Park, Noosa Heads, 28 Aug, 15 birds feeding [R. Gooch]
- Squirrel Creek State Forest, north of Moore, Aug, 2 pairs, one pair with a large juvenile, feeding on *A. torulosa* - interestingly the last known record was from 1997 [R. Thomas]
- Pinaroo Park, Noosa Heads, 18 Aug, 19 birds [B. Carey]



- Cnr Kiata Place and Naturi St, 17 Aug, pair feeding in one of 3 known feed trees on this block [B. Carey]
- Enterprise St, Sunshine Beach (boundary of Noosa Heads National Park), 16 Aug, pair feeding [B. Carey]
- Peregrine Springs Golf Course, 11 Aug, 3 birds [H. Alk]
- Coomlingah State Forest, near Monto, 4 Aug, 2 birds feeding in she oaks [P. Pickering]
- Pinaroo Park, Noosa Heads, 27 Jul – 11 Aug, pair and juvenile feeding in *A. littoralis* [B. Carey]
- Sunshine Beach High School, 15-18 Jul, 2-3 birds feeding [B. Carey]
- A.W. Dann Park, Cooyar St, Noosa Heads, 19 Jul, 3 birds flying over [B. Carey]
- Comet Drive and Park, Sunrise Beach, 20-24 Jul, single male feeding in various trees [B. Carey]
- Ben Bennett Botanical Reserve, 24 Aug, 6 birds roosting late afternoon [S. Aspland]
- Currimundi Lake (opposite Noel Burns Park), 23 Aug, 10am, 3 birds across the creek feeding in the casuarinas (observed from fishing pontoon at park) [D. Crane]
- Ben Bennett Botanical Reserve, 20 Aug, 9am, 3 birds roosting [A&S. Franks]
- Queen St Carpark, opps Ben Bennett Botanical Reserve, 20 Aug 8.30am, 2 birds feeding quietly for some time in the casuarina [D. Crane]
- Mahogany Drive, 10 Jul, 5-6 birds flying south [E. Crook]
- Pinaroo Park, Noosa Heads, 29 Jul, pair flying out [B. Carey]
- Sunshine Beach High School, 29 Jul, trio (incl. juvenile) feeding in *A. littoralis* [B. Carey]
- Lipton St Park, Sunrise Beach, 22-28 Jul, 2-3 birds feeding [B. Carey]
- Ben Lexcen Drive, Sunrise Beach, 27 Jul, 3 birds feeding in new feed tree [B. Carey]
- Weyba Downs (roundabout between Eumarella Rd and Emu Mountain Rd exits, Sunshine Hwy), 18 Jun, 2 birds feeding [E. Crook]
- Pinaroo Park, Noosa Heads, 15 Jun, 8 birds (incl. 1 begging juvenile, which was fed by a male bird) [B. Carey]
- Ozcare Home grounds, Cooyar St, Noosa Heads, 6 June, 1 bird [B. Carey]
- Lake Currimundi, 5 Jun, 2 birds flew over Nicklin Way just before Ahern Bridge [D. Crane]
- Naturi St Park, Noosa Heads, 4 Jun, lone bird feeding [B. Carey]
- Pinaroo Park, Noosa Heads, 3 Jun, 5 birds [B. Carey]
- Lipton St Park, Sunrise Beach, 1 & 2 Jun, 2-3 birds [B. Carey]
- Cooyar St (near Noosa Fire Station), 1 Jun, pair feeding along 100m strip [B. Carey]
- Cnr Warragai Pl and Tarina St, 1 Jun, pair in tagged feed tree [B. Carey]
- Pinaroo Park, Noosa Heads, 25-26 May, 7-12 birds [B. Carey]
- Lipton St Park, Sunrise Beach, 26 May, single female briefly in Silky Oak [B. Carey]

**Whose Ort is that?**

[I. Pert]

Those of us with Glossy Black-Cockatoos in our areas are familiar with the chewings or orts found under feed trees.

Back in March 2001, I was fortunate enough to have both Red-tailed and Glossy Black-Cockatoos feeding on the same *Allocasuarina littoralis* tree in Noosa Heads. Later when examining the ground under the tree, I was amazed to see entirely different shaped orts from the Red-taileds, exactly like small pineapples cut down the middle lengthways (see photo below). The branchlets chewed off were also much longer.

Presumably, the Casuarina fruit is always eaten this way. I was not close enough to observe their method as Red-taileds are very flighty birds and not common in my immediate area – a flock of 11 or 12 are seen only occasionally around January each year when they come in to feed on White Cedar (*Melia azedarach*) and Bloodwood (*Corymbia intermedia*).



Not all orts are from Glossy Black-Cockatoos. In the photo above, left of the pen are orts from Red-tailed Black-Cockatoos and on the right orts from Glossy Black-Cockatoos. Photo: I. Pert

**Ort Report**

Finding chewed cones, or orts, under she-oak 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 present.

- Coomanglah State Forest, Monto, 6 Sep [P. Pickering]
- Kathleen McArthur Conservation Park, 4 Sep [D. Crane]
- Lake Currimundi, 3 Sep [D. Crane]
- Dame Patti Park, Sunrise Beach, Aug-Sep [B. Carey]
- Enterprise Street, Sunshine Beach, Aug [B. Carey]
- Comet Street Park, Ben Lexcen Drive & Lipton St Park, Sunshine Beach, 22 Jul [B. Carey & D. Burrows]
- Ben Lexcen Drive (Lipton St Park to Beacon Court), 28 Jun [B. Carey]
- Sunshine Beach High School, 28 Jul [B. Carey]
- Anglican Church, Sunshine Beach 28 Jun [B. Carey]
- Sunrise Beach/Cooloola Estate, Noosa Heads, May/Jun [B. Carey]
- Lipton St Park, Sunrise Beach, 26 May [B. Carey]
- Pinaroo Park, Noosa Heads, 26 May [B. Carey]

**Report your Sightings!**

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

**GBC Member Activities**

All members have contributed to development of the Glossy Black-Cockatoo Conservation Guidelines

**BAAM** [A. Caneris]

- Management of Conservation Guidelines project

**BASQ** [E. Anderson]

- Activities with schools as part of Envirofund Project

**Birds Queensland** [L. Cole]

- On-going maintenance of the sightings database

**Brisbane City Council** [K. Matthews]

- Activities with schools as part of Envirofund project

**BrisBOCA** [R. Bloss]

- Working with Main Roads to protect feed trees

**Griffith University** [G. Castley]

- Coordinated inaugural Gold Coast Birding Day
- Research in northern NSW and Tweed Coast areas
- Interactive Gold Coast distribution map (see website)

**Ipswich City Council** [S. Fitzsimmon]

- Article in Council's 'Environment Matters' newsletter

**Logan City Council** [L. Rosevear]

- Activities with schools as part of Envirofund project
- New Wildlife Sightings Database, visit website

**Moreton Bay Regional Council** [B. May]

- See article this newsletter

**Mt Barney Country Lodge** [T. Larkin]

- Hosted Conservation Guidelines workshop
- Activities as part of Bird Week, 9-13 September

**North Burnett Regional Council** [L. Dorahy]

- Information displays at regional shows
- Reporting and verification of sightings

**Redland City Council** [L. Bailey]

- Activities with schools as part of Envirofund project

**SEQ Catchments** [L. Gould]

- Management of Envirofund project
- Newsletter compilation

**Sunshine Coast Regional Council** [C. Jenkins]

- Activities with schools as part of Envirofund project

The Glossy Black Conservancy acknowledges our partners:

