



## media release

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### **Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo in finalist's flutter**

It loves only one partner throughout its lifetime and prefers 150-year-old trees to nest in - there's no doubt that the Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo is one quirky bird.

Now that quirkiness, and threatened status, is gaining attention with a Birds Australia WA project being named a finalist in the Department of Environment and Conservation's 2009 Environment Awards.

Birds Australia WA's Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo Recovery Project has been nominated in the Biodiversity Conservation Category for its work in identifying and monitoring breeding sites across the South Coast and Great Southern regions, and the protection of the iconic bird's habitat.

Birds Australia WA project manager for the South Coast, Raana Scott, said the project began in 2006 and has since become a major success with 35 landholders around the South Coast and South Eastern Avon Basin now involved with the bird's recovery and 23 new nesting sites being discovered.

Ms Scott said it was essential to the species' survival that all old trees were retained because the hollow nesting birds were loyal to their breeding grounds and needed trees of a minimum age of 150 years to breed.

"We know that the population has decreased by at least 50 per cent in the last half century and a number of breeding populations have already become extinct. It is thought that many of the birds we see today are ageing birds and once they die out the population will further plummet," she said.

Birds Australia WA, with help from almost \$300,000 in South Coast NRM funding, has been working on protecting the Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo habitat through fencing, weed control and revegetation efforts. The organisations have also brokered voluntary management agreements and conservation covenants.

Collectively, private landholders have protected over 1,000 hectares in the last three years, including significant stands of remnant vegetation such as salmon gum, wandoo woodland and proteaceous heath to ensure the cockatoo breeds successfully.

The winners of the 2009 Environment Awards will be announced on Friday, November 27, at the Hyatt Regency Hotel.

For more information about the awards, visit <http://www.dec.wa.gov.au/community-and-education/wa-environment-awards/index.html>

**ENDS**

## **Background**

Birds Australia Western Australia (BAWA) is a regional group of Birds Australia, a national organisation committed since its formation in 1901 to the conservation, study and enjoyment of Australia's native birds and their habitats.

The South Coast stage of the Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo Recovery Project began in 2006. The project in its entirety has been running since 2000.

Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo are a highly visible semi-migratory species that rely on various vegetation types across geographically distinct areas throughout their annual cycle. Because of these habits, they rely on vegetation occurring on various land tenure across large tracts of land. To effectively monitor and instigate recovery actions for the species across their distribution, many individuals, groups and professionals need to be engaged and informed.

Major successes to date include the protection of 323ha of critical nesting and feeding vegetation at the most significant nesting sites identified on the South Coast. This site supports at least 20 nesting pairs directly and another 20 pairs are suspected to be nesting in surrounding vegetation spread across four properties. A management plan is currently being developed to ensure the sites are maintained and hollow repairs have been carried out to prolong the life of natural hollows.

Other successes include securing a conservation covenant of approximately 90ha of priority Salmon Gum nesting habitat, containing a minimum of 10 nesting pairs and associated feeding and navigation habitat. Birds Australia WA is developing a management plan for the site to ensure its protection into the future.

During the 2008 nesting season 28 individuals contributed nearly 500 hours to nest searching across the South Coast region. Sightings are regularly received from community members and in 2009 Birds Australia WA conducted a week long Community Cocky Count which attracted over 50 participants.

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**South Coast Natural Resource Management Inc. is the leading regional group for natural resource management on the South Coast of Western Australia. As an independent non-profit organisation, we work with the community to improve the environment by preserving and protecting unique plants and animals, managing land and waterways, and sharing knowledge and skills in natural resource management.**