

INSPECTION OF POSSIBLE BLACK COCKATOO (*Calyptorhynchus spp.*)
BREEDING HOLLOW AT VASSE DIVERSION DRAIN, BUSSELTON.

T. KIRKBY.

The purpose of the survey was to inspect, in detail, a total of 14 hollows located in nine Drain, trees at the Vasse Diversion Busselton. The hollows were located on a previous survey undertaken in September 2016.

Three species of black cockatoo occur in the south west of Western Australia, Carnaby's Cockatoo *Calyptorhynchus latirostris*, Baudin's Cockatoo *C. baudinii* and the Forest Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo *C. banksii naso*. Carnaby's and Baudin's Cockatoo are known collectively as 'white-tailed black cockatoos'.

Both Baudin's and Carnaby's Cockatoos are listed (Endangered) under the Western Australian Wildlife Conservation Act, and the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (EPBC Act).

The Forest Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo is listed as Vulnerable under the Western Australian Wildlife Conservation Act and the EPBC Act.

All three species are known from the general area of the survey.

The tree species at the survey area likely to produce a breeding hollow for a black cockatoo are Tuart *Eucalyptus gomphocephala* and Marri *Corymbia calophylla*. These trees need to be at least 500mm diameter at breast height (DBH) in order to have formed a suitable hollow.

Methods

All trees of suitable size were inspected from ground level with binoculars for the presence of suitable hollows. Hollows which showed signs of use such as chewing or wear at the entrance were then photographed internally using a pole camera. A further photograph was taken of the outside of the hollow using a telephoto lens.

Results

The site was visited on the 13th February 2019.

Of the 14 hollows inspected, most were too small and only one hollow in a Flooded Gum showed any signs of use such as chewing at the hollow entrance (Plate 1). The hollow was located on the previous survey at 348397E - 6271333N. Closer inspection with a pole camera showed this hollow has extensive internal chewing (Plate 2). It is almost certainly a black cockatoo breeding hollow.



Plate 1. Chew marks on hollow in Flooded Gum.



Plate 2. Internal chewing.

Although all three species of black cockatoo are found in the general area of the survey it is likely this hollow belongs to Carnaby's Cockatoo. They are known to breed in Tuart Forest in the Busselton area (WA Museum). The nearest known breeding area for Forest Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo is 14 km to the east at the Whicher Range. The nearest confirmed breeding site for Baudin's Cockatoo is 38km east at Nannup, though these are also unconfirmed breeding records from the Whicher Range.