

Galah

FAMILY: *Cacatuidae*

GENUS: *Cacatua*

SPECIES: *roseicapilla*

Description:

Small pink and grey cockatoo with white periophthalmic eye ring. In the Eastern states, these birds often have a white cap whereas those in the west usually have a light pink cap. Slight sexual dimorphism with females having pink irises and males dark (brown). Adult birds are resident and strongly gregarious. Length:350mm.

Distribution:

Prior to the arrival of Europeans, the Galah was essentially restricted to the arid interior. Over the past few decades, however, it has increased its range to include most of mainland Australia and eastern Tasmania.

Habitat:

Essentially open habitats including semi-desert, plains, open woodland, farmland, grainfields and golfcourses/parklands.

Diet:

Seeds gathered mainly on the ground.

Breeding:

Variable, but usually February to July in the north and July to December in the south. Galahs are usually single brooded, but may nest twice in good seasons.

Usual nesting site is a tree cavity at heights varying from 2 to 20m above ground. Nests (cavities) have been recorded in rocky outcrops and cliffs. Both the male and female spend considerable time preparing the nesting site, sometimes spending a great deal of time chewing bark and rotten wood away from the nest entrance. The nest is used in subsequent seasons and is most often lined with eucalypt leaves. Both sexes incubate the eggs and care for the young.

In captivity hollow eucalypt logs are best suited for breeding. The log should have natural entrance spouts, be approximately 30-60 cm in internal diameter, and about 50cm or more in length. Vertical or inclined logs are acceptable. The preferred nesting material is leaves or any available herbage (eg grass). a mixture of wood shavings and dirt or peat moss.

Clutch:

3-4 white oval eggs. Incubation period: 30days. Fledging usually occurs at 56 days.

Mutations and Hybrids:

Galahs have a greater number of mutations than any other Cacatuid. They include: Albino (sex linked); Dilute (recessive); Cinnamon (2 recessive forms and 1 sex

linked); Silver(maybe another form of Cinnamon); Off-white (lacking both pink and grey) and Grey and white - a mutant where the pink is replaced by off-white).

Hybrids have been recorded with the Gang-gang, Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, Major Mitchell , Little Corella, Slender-billed Corella and Lesser Sulphur-crested Cockatoo