



POLICY,
ADVOCACY
&
AN ENDANGERED
SPECIES

BLACK
COCKATOO
CRISIS



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Black Cockatoo Crisis HASS Lessons

Black Cockatoo Crisis links well to many areas of the HASS curriculum from year 5 through to year 12, including but not limited to:

Geography (e.g. mapping, land use change, impact of colonisation, cultural change)

Government & Democracy (e.g. policy, law, decision making, activism)

Civics & Citizenship (e.g. advocacy, citizenship, the 'common good', protest)

History (e.g. timeline of events, historic context, cultural & policy change over time)

This lesson provides material for an exploration of policy & advocacy in the context of conservation and competing land use needs. It incorporates a comparison of other conservation campaigns, policy commentary and community influence on policy development.

This Lesson: Year 9 Civics & Citizenship

- **Curriculum:** Develop knowledge and understanding relating to government policy and how individuals and groups participate in and contribute to civic life. Extend competencies and skills in: analysis, synthesis and interpretation; communication and reflection; problem-solving and decision-making, and; questioning and research.
- **Objective:** Students will be able to identify and explain competing pressures in conservation versus industrial or residential development. Students will be able to analyse the importance of advocacy, protests, and political activism to policy development for conservation.
- **Task:** Students will examine and compare 2 cases: the situation documented in the Black Cockatoo Crisis film, and the story of saving the Franklin River Dam in Tasmania. For each case students will identify:
 - the issue/situation (what is in contention);
 - the competing interests/needs;
 - advocacy or activism efforts; and
 - government policy.

Students will then participate in a group discussion to discuss their comparisons and evaluate the available evidence to draw conclusions about the importance of advocacy, protests, and political activism to conservation.

Preparation

Watch the *Black Cockatoo Crisis* film (at school or as homework).

Access Options:

Vimeo:

<https://vimeo.com/ondemand/blackcockatocrisis>

SBS On Demand:

<https://www.sbs.com.au/ondemand/movie/black-cockatoo-crisis/2295518787622>

Clickview:

<https://launch.clickview.net/open?AppLink=video:79607552>



Think-Pair-Share



“Advocacy and protests have no impact on government decisions”

True or false?

Why? What is your reasoning?



“Advocacy and protests have no impact on government decisions.”

- Do you think this statement is true or false?
- Why? What is your reasoning?
- Can you back up your belief with any evidence?

Discuss as a class.

Record the total ‘agree’ and ‘disagree’ on the board.

What is 'Policy'?

- Policy is a deliberate system of guidelines to guide decisions and achieve rational outcomes. It can be a law, regulation, procedure, administrative action, incentive, or voluntary practice of governments and other institutions.
- A policy is a statement of intent and is implemented as a procedure or protocol.
- Policies are generally adopted by a governance body within an organization.
- Policies can assist in both subjective and objective decision making.
- Policy decisions are frequently reflected in resource allocations.

Policy is created at all levels of Government.

Do you know what each level of government is responsible for? Test your knowledge of the three levels of government in Australia with this game!

<https://peo.gov.au/understand-our-parliament/how-parliament-works/three-levels-of-government/federal-state-and-local>



Government Policy in Australia

- The Cabinet, consisting of senior Ministers presided over by the Prime Minister, is the main policy-making body.
- Major policy and legislative proposals are decided by the Cabinet.
- The Prime Minister selects Ministers for Cabinet positions. Ministers are selected by the Prime Minister.

[\(Parliament of Australia, 2023\)](#)

FROM POLICY TO LAW



1



The **EXECUTIVE GOVERNMENT** decides policy, then drafts and introduces bills to Parliament



2



Bills are considered by **PARLIAMENT**



3



If passed by the Parliament, the bills are approved by the **GOVERNOR -GENERAL**



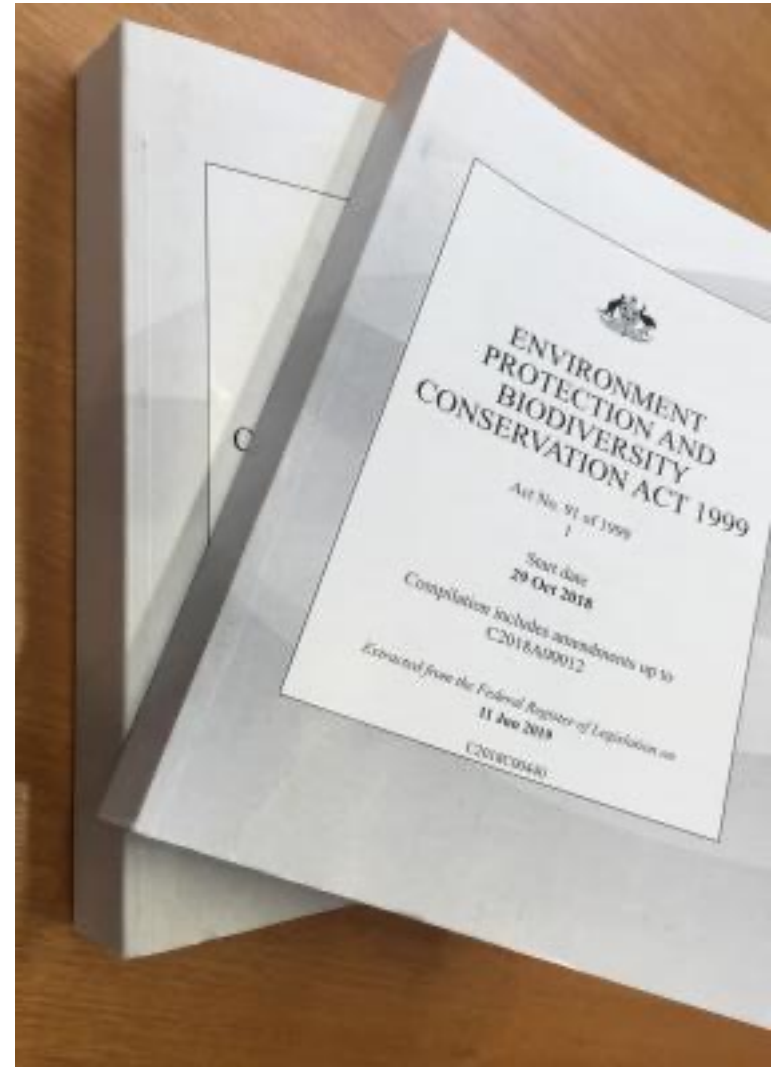
4



Bills become Acts of Parliament and therefore laws, which are administered by Government Departments

Who writes Policy?

- Government employees (policy officers) develop the draft policy in consultation with stakeholders (industry, community, and NGO's)
- The draft policy gets sent to the government minister responsible for that portfolio, or to Cabinet.



Conservation & Government Policy

Conservation often involves conflicting goals or values.

Balancing economic development with environmental protection generates passionate public debate and can throw the government into conflict.

What factors do the Australian and/or Western Australian Government consider before it approves further development of remaining Black Cockatoo Habitat?



Government & Democracy: Advocacy

Advocacy is defined as any action that speaks in favour of, recommends, argues for a cause, supports or defends, or pleads on behalf of others.

It is used in formal and informal situations. in both legal and civic contexts.



Government & Democracy: Activism

Activism is defined as the policy or action of using campaigning to bring about political or social change.

Activism is an important part of the democratic process. Individuals and communities have the power to shape government policy and society by campaigning for change.



An activist is someone who takes steps to make the change happen. People may become activists to support a cause or issue that they are passionate about.



**POLICY,
ADVOCACY
& CONSERVATION**

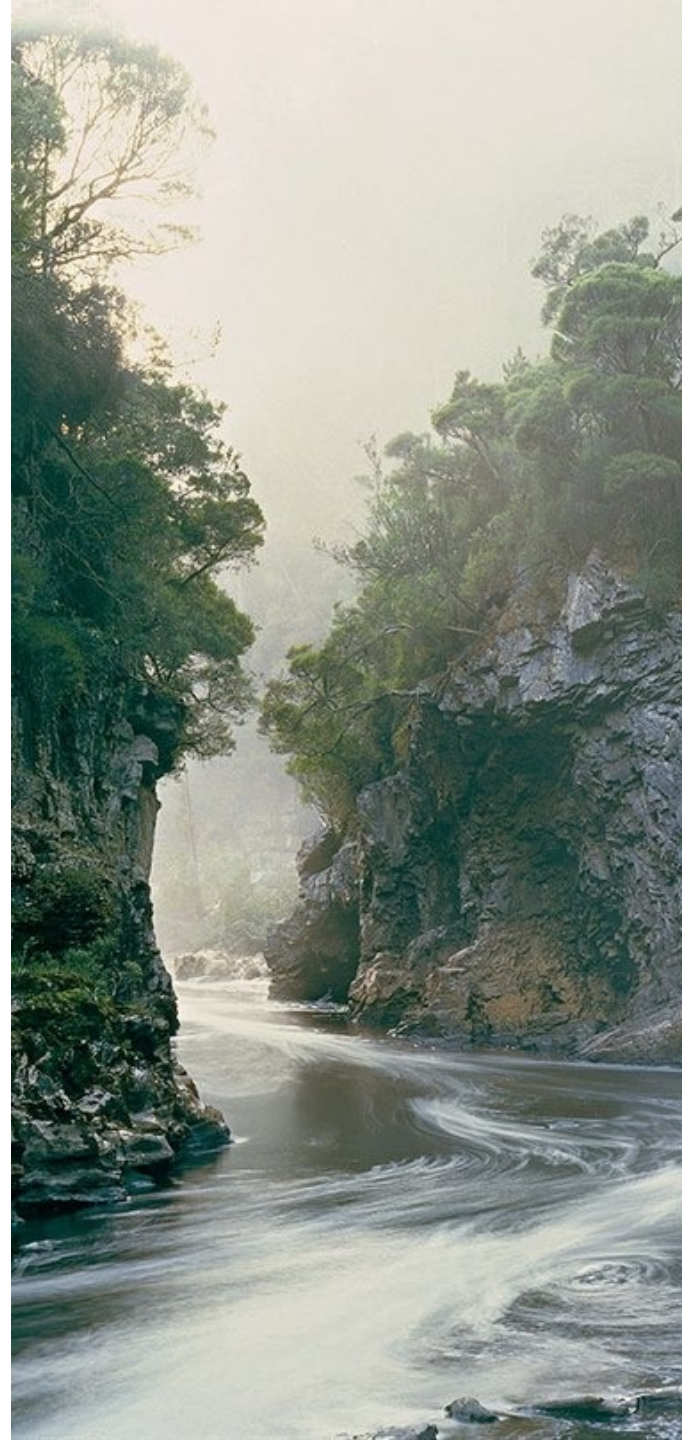
CASE STUDIES

Case 1

Franklin Dam, Tasmania

In 1978 the Tasmanian Hydro-Electric Commission—with approval from the Tasmanian Government—announced plans to build a dam on the Franklin River to generate hydro-electricity.

Image: Morning mist, Rock Island Bend, Franklin River, Tasmania by Peter Dombrovskis (remastered & cropped from original)Source: [Wild Island Tasmania](#)



Case 1

Franklin Dam, Tasmania

Tasmanians were sharply divided over the proposal.

Many supported the project for the economic benefits it would bring to the state.

Others opposed it because of the damage it would cause to an environmentally sensitive wilderness area.



Case 1

Franklin Dam, Tasmania

Protesters opposing the dam mounted one of the largest environmental campaigns in Australian history.

Actions to protect this wilderness area included a large and sustained non-violent protest campaign against the dam, and *World Heritage listing* of the area.



Case 1

Franklin Dam, Tasmania

The newly elected Hawke Labor government intervened and the project was abandoned in 1983.

The Examiner 142nd year
Launceston 31 8111, Devonport 24 1731, Hobart 24 8111, Burnie 31 2864
Vol. CXLII, No. 96, Saturday, July 2, 1983, 56p. 25c.

Geelong won't trouble NTFA, says Withers — Back Page

Doorknock appeal tomorrow

THE SALVATION ARMY

NO DAM!

"There is almost no aspect of life which ... may not be the ... possible subject of Commonwealth legislative power."
— Sir Harry Gibbs

"I want to reassure Tasmanians that the Commonwealth will not in any sense retract from any of its commitments."
— Mr Hawke

"... a sad, sad day for Tasmania, but the decision stands and we must accept it."
— Mr Gray

Landmark ruling expands Federal powers

By PHIL BECK

CANBERRA — The High Court has ruled that the Gordon-below-Franklin dam will not go ahead, in a landmark decision which represents a significant expansion of Federal powers.

But the Prime Minister, Mr Hawke, moved quickly to assure the States that his Government would not rush into new areas as a result of the decision.

"That would be totally at odds with our consensus-building approach to government," Mr Hawke said.

He said he welcomed the four-three High Court judgment in the Federal to dissent over the victory.

The Tasmanian Premier, Mr Gray, said: "It's a sad, sad day for Tasmania, but the decision stands and we must accept it."

"While we disagree, no responsible Government can consider breaking the law."

After talks with Mr Hawke on alternative job schemes, Mr Gray said he was bitterly disappointed at the case's outcome, but would accept the ruling.

He said the decision to cut off the State's resources was akin to closing down Victoria's La Trobe Valley coalfields.

"The expressed will of the Tasmanian people has been thwarted by the Labor Government," Mr Gray said.

"No vendetta" — PM

The Prime Minister, Mr Hawke, yesterday pledged to heal the wounds caused Tasmania by the long-running dams debate.

Mr Hawke said there never had been, and there never would be, any vendetta.

"We are ready to co-operate totally in seeing that the interests of Tasmanians are protected," Mr Hawke said.

Mr Hawke said it was impossible to estimate the total cost of compensation until discussions on Tasmania's future power requirements had been had.

Three hours after the High Court decision was announced, Mr Hawke gave the Premier, Mr Gray, a written commitment to maintain for one month the wages of both contractors and HEC employees working on the scheme for one month.

Mr Hawke said the commitment to find alternative work applied to both the present work force and those construction workers who expected to work on the scheme in the future.



Examiner
Tasmanians have been dealt a hurtful blow by the High Court decision, but they must reject bitterness and despondency and accept the need for unity.

And the Federal Government must appreciate the magnitude of the economic and social dislocation it has visited on this State.

Editorial, Page 6.

click!

• More on the dam, Pages 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 14, 15.

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Jeff Walker

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NOW \$159

SAVE \$99

TO PAGE 2

TO PAGE 2

Discussion Questions

1. *How important do you think the environmental protest campaign was to the decision not to build the dam?*
2. *The areas affected by the dam proposal gained World Heritage listing during the campaign. Why was this listing significant?*
3. Federal and state governments need to consider competing interests when they approve a project that has large economic benefits but a negative impact on the environment. *What competing issues can you identify in this case?*



“Advocacy and protests have no impact on government decisions”

True or false?

Case 2

Black Cockatoo Crisis

Three species of Black Cockatoo are at risk of becoming extinct.

Once seen in flocks of thousands that blackened the sky like rain clouds, Ngoolarks (Carnaby's Cockatoo) are now listed as 'Endangered' by the IUCN.

What role can advocacy & activism have in saving the species?



BLACK
COCKATOO
CRISIS

Population Decline

Once seen in flocks of thousands that blackened the sky like rain clouds, WA species of Black Cockatoos are now listed as **'Endangered'** by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN).





The film Black Cockatoo Crisis depicts people of various backgrounds working to save 3 Black Cockatoo species from extinction.

Impacts of Human Activities

Estimates show the population of Carnaby's Cockatoo has decreased by over 50% since European settlement.

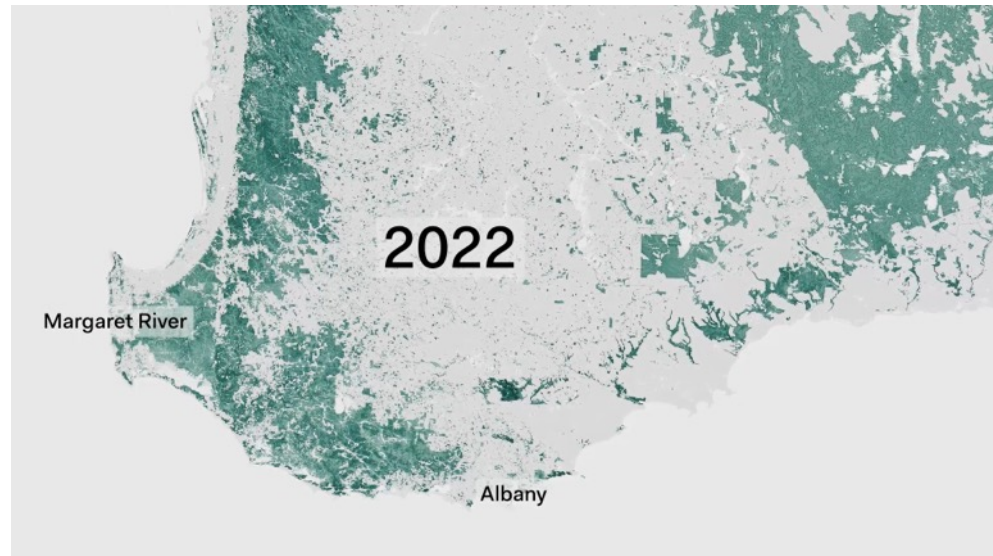
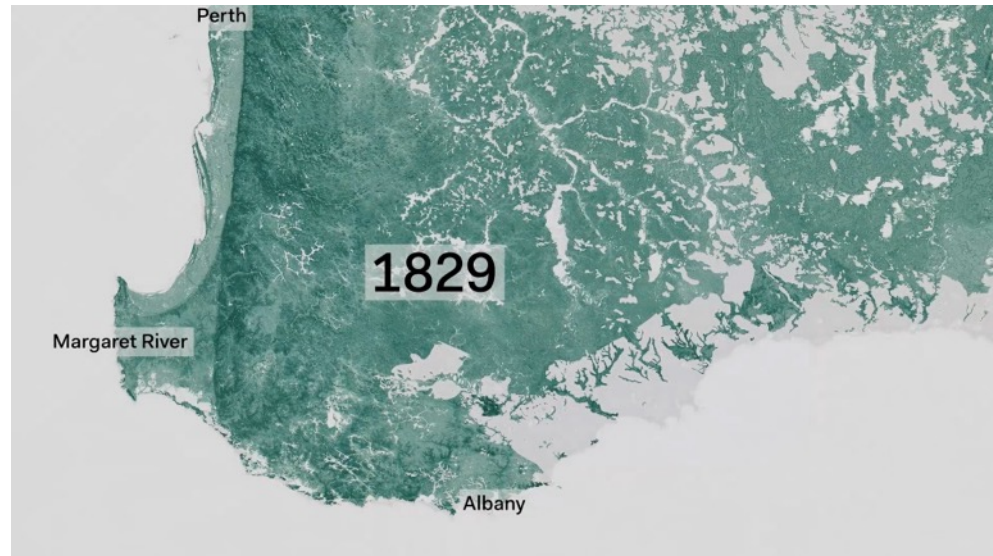
There are a number of reasons for this - all related to human activity.



Why are Black Cockatoos disappearing?

The decline has been mainly caused by a loss of habitat and breeding sites.

Approximately 87% of Black Cockatoo habitat has been cleared of native vegetation since the 1950s.



Group Work 1

Summarise the ***competing interests*** relating to conservation of Cockatoo habitat.



Competing land use: Strip mining



An aerial photograph showing a coastal landscape. On the left, there is a strip of natural vegetation, including yellowish-brown grasses and some dark green shrubs. A road with a white vehicle is visible, running parallel to the vegetation. To the right of the road, the land is a vast, flat, brownish-grey expanse, likely a field or a coastal plain, showing signs of agricultural activity. In the background, there are blue mountains under a cloudy sky.

Competing land use: Agriculture



Competing land use: Urban development



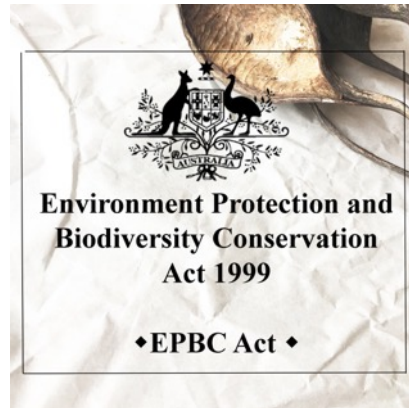
Competing land use: Water Management

Group Work 2

Research what
Government Policy is
relevant to the
conservation of Black
Cockatoo in WA



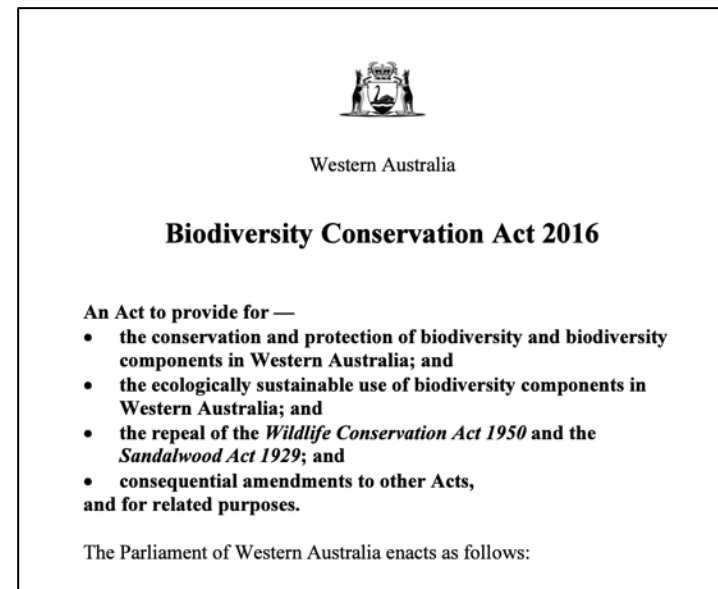
EPBC Act



Threatened Species Strategy 2021–2031



WA Biodiversity Conservation Act





Australian Government

Department of Climate Change, Energy,
the Environment and Water

Climate change

Energy

Environment

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← [The Threatened Species
Action Plan 2022-2032](#)

[Saving Native Species](#)

[Priority Species](#) >

[Priority Places](#)

[Development and consultation](#)

[Threatened Species Strategy
2015-2020](#)

Carnaby's Cockatoo

Common name

Carnaby's Cockatoo

Scientific name

Zanda latirostris

EPBC status

Endangered

Government Policy:

- Priority Protection and maintenance of existing habitat for both nesting and foraging
- Reduce competition for hollows and provide supplementary hollows, including the ongoing maintenance of supplementary hollows where required.
- Planting feeding habitat, including working with land managers to create additional food sources for the birds.
- Provide safe drinking areas near urban roost areas, to encourage cockatoos away from watered roadside verges.



Photo: Claire Greenwell



Australian Government

Threatened Species

STRATEGY 2021–2031



Policy to Strategy

How does [The Australian Government's Threatened Species Strategy 2021–2031](#) relate to the content of the film?

- How does the strategy propose to address the Biodiversity Crisis?
- What evidence will be required to assess if the strategy is effective?

2019 Great Cocky Count Report

Summary of Key Findings

Carnaby's population stable in the Perth region

Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo

Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo is a threatened species endemic to southwest Western Australia. In the months between January to July, most Carnaby's move from the wheatbelt region where they breed, to coastal areas, including the Perth Metropolitan Area and other parts of the Swan Coastal Plain. Carnaby's are particularly vulnerable to increasing levels of clearing for forestry, urban and industrial development across the southwest. It is therefore important we understand the population size and distribution of Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo across their species range.

The Great Cocky Count

The Great Cocky Count (GCC) is an annual, citizen science survey for black-cockatoos in Western Australia. The survey occurs throughout the southwest on a single evening in April. Volunteers are allocated to known roost sites and count the number of black-cockatoos that arrive at the site to roost for the night. The tenth GCC was held on Sunday 7 April 2019.



WWF/Pixel Photo
birds are in our nature

The 2019 Count: key findings

In 2019 750 volunteers surveying 397 roost sites across the southwest. 2019 recorded 22,647 white-tailed black-cockatoos across the species range, which is the highest number recorded in GCC history. A significant number recorded east of Yankeepine plantation Carnaby's Black-Cockatoos. 6,104 Forest Red-tailed Black-Cockatoos recorded at 119 occupied roosts.

Greater Perth-Peel Region

The Greater Perth-Peel Region of the Peel Coastal Plain and the No. 1 Plateau. The minimum population of Black-Cockatoo in the Greater Perth-Peel Region is 13,984.

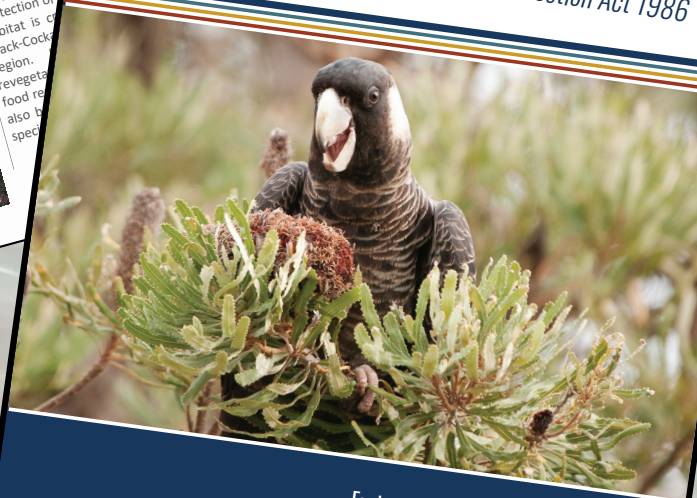
Trend analysis of roost counts for Black-Cockatoo in the Perth-Peel Region over recent years (2013-2018) has stabilised. However, a decline of 35% (approx) was recorded in 2019.

On the Perth-Peel Region, many of Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo roost sites, many of which are protected under the Protection of the Environment Act 1986, habitat is cleared for agriculture, revegetation, and food reserves. Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo also breeds in these areas.



EPA Advice: Carnaby's Cockatoo in Environmental Impact Assessment in the Perth and Peel Region

In accordance with section 16(j) of the Environmental Protection Act 1986



Environmental Protection Authority

May 2019

Reporting

helps to:

- validate efforts,
- maintain momentum for action, and
- ensure transparency, accountability efficient investment.

Restoration & Mitigation Strategies



The Threatened Species strategy 2021-2031 identifies 8 key action areas that are fundamental to the recovery of threatened species, divided into 2 groups:

- DIRECT ACTION
- SUPPORTING ACTION

Plus:

- MONITORING AND REPORTING

(Commonwealth of Australia, 2021)

DIRECT Action

- Mitigating new & established threats
- Conserving restoring and improving habitat
- Emergency preparedness & response
- Climate change adaptation & resilience

INDIRECT Action

- Effective planning for conservation
- Knowledge & tools
- Forging stronger partnerships
- Community leadership & engagement



Class Discussion: Conservation Policy

Professor Hans Lambers said :

“the Baudin & Carnaby are endangered, and Forest Red Tailed Cockatoo are threatened. All three are protected under environmental legislation but these laws are failing to safeguard these species.” (BCC 06.25)

What do you think this means?





Group Work 3

Summarise the **conservation actions** shown in the film.

Include all forms of supporting actions as well as advocacy and activism.

Monitoring (Citizen Science)

The [Great Cocky Count](#) (GCC) is a citizen-science survey conducted by volunteers, and the biggest single survey for black-cockatoos in Western Australia.



Habitat Provision

Installing artificial nesting hollows in breeding areas.

**Trees need to be at least 300 years old to form suitable nesting hollows and due to clearing insufficient old trees exist.*



Rehabilitation & Wildlife Care



Volunteers Rehabilitate and transport sick and injured Cockatoos.



Carnaby's Black Cockatoo feeding in a Pincushion Hakea (*Hakea laurina*).
Photo: Sallyanne Cousins

black cockatoos



Encourage life into your garden: plant for black cockatoos

Heather Waugh and Douglas Betts Volunteer Master Gardeners

Help save an entire species and get free help in the garden in exchange? That's a deal that's hard to refuse!

We're talking about the Carnaby's Black Cockatoo (*Calyptorhynchus latirostris*).

Of the three black cockatoo species in the South-West of Western Australia, Carnaby's is the most threatened, listed as endangered under the Commonwealth Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999.

These cheeky birds, punctuating Perth skies with their raucous 'wee-lar' calls during the first half of each year, are up against tough odds. They breed in the Wheatbelt, using hollows in mature trees as nests to raise their chicks. In some areas more than 90% of the native vegetation has been cleared. After breeding they

return to the coastal plain, where widespread clearing for urban areas and agriculture has caused a dramatic loss of feed habitat.

Numbers of this iconic species have halved since the 1960s. They have vanished from one-third of their former range and it is thought that most of the birds we see today are too old to breed. Will our children or grandchildren farewell the last of these beautiful birds?

Thankfully, our gardens are opportunities for vital urban habitat. Carnaby's eat seeds, flowers and insect larvae. They feed on some of our beautiful native plants, such as banksias, hakeas and grevilleas, as well as the fabulous Marri (*Corymbia calophylla*). Of course, not everyone can fit a Marri tree in their garden, but here are some striking and adaptable options that Carnaby's will love.



Marri fruits, or 'honky nuts', are a favourite food of black cockatoos
Photo: Sallyanne Cousins

Planting Cockatoo Food & Shelter

- Choose the right plant for your situation: look for the '*Choose for Black-Cockatoos*' label in nurseries, or refer to information on ["How to Plant Black-Cockatoo Friendly Gardens"](#)
- Use prickly hedges to provide shelter. If planting low plants, make sure Carnaby's will feel safe enough to come to the ground.
- Don't place food plants next to roads. Birds can get hit by traffic.
- Supply clean fresh water in your garden.



Advocacy

NGO's such as BirdLife Australia and Kaarakin represent the needs of Black Cockatoos, recommending habitat conservation and pleading with government on behalf of the broader community.

Their lobbying aims to influence the decision-making of the government or opposition representatives in the exercise of their official functions.

Activism

Vigorous campaigning to protect Black Cockatoo Habitat.

Guerilla gardening

Non-violent direct action sometimes leading to arrest.



What can be done to save them?

- **Change ‘net loss’ of habitat to ‘net gain’, by planting more food trees and protecting what’s left**
- Plant black cockatoo food trees in your garden (e.g. banksia, hakea, macadamia)
- Put out a water source, even a small bird bath – and keep it full of clean water
- Get involved in council-run planting days to plant more food for black cockatoos
- Become a Citizen Scientist! - join the BirdLife Australia annual [“Great Cocky Count”](#)
- Report injured black cockatoos to the rescue service at Kaarakin Black Cockatoo Conservation Centre or DBCA’s wildlife helpline
- Learn more about black cockatoos
- Write to councillors and Ministers and ask them to save Carnaby’s Cockatoo by protecting their habitat





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DIRECTED AND PRODUCED BY JANE HAMMOND

Curriculum links

- Students identify, analyse and explain significant interconnections between people, places and environments and explain changes that result from these interconnections and their consequences.
- By the end of Year 10, students refer to key events, the actions of individuals and groups, and beliefs and values to explain patterns of change and continuity over time. They analyse the causes and effects of events and developments and explain their relative importance. They explain the context for people's actions in the past. Students explain the significance of events and developments from a range of perspectives. They explain different interpretations of the past and recognise the evidence used to support these interpretations (Year 10 History Achievement standard).
- Critically analyse information and ideas from a range of sources in relation to civics and citizenship topics and issues (ACHCS056)
 - analysing how information can be used selectively to persuade citizens (for example, in a debate about a suggested constitutional change)
- Reflect on their role as a [citizen](#) in Australia's [democracy](#) (ACHCS060)
 - raising awareness of different perspectives (for example, about sustainability challenges)
- Use democratic processes to reach consensus on a course of action relating to a civics or citizenship issue and plan for that action (Year 9) - ACHCS087, (Year 10) - ACHCS100
- Use democratic processes to reach consensus on a course of action relating to a civics or citizenship issue and plan for that action
- Present evidence-based civics and citizenship arguments using subject-specific language (Year 9) - ACHCS088, (Year 10) - ACHCS101
- Reflect on their role as a citizen in Australian, regional and global contexts (Year 9) - ACHCS089, (Year 10) - ACHCS102

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