

Major Mitchell's Cockatoo

Lophochroa leadbeateri



Moonlit
Sanctuary



My name is **Dusty**.
I like untying shoelaces and
nibbling on the work boots of my keepers.
Sometimes I like to whistle a tune or copy your words.

WHO AM I?

A small to medium size parrot - which means they are a type of **bird**.

They can only be found living in the wild in **Australia**.

They have a pale pink and white body.

The feathers on the top of the head are called a **crest**, they will look white when these feathers are down, but will be bright bands of red, orange, and yellow when raised.

QUICK ID KEY

Conservation Status
Vulnerable in Victoria

Diet
omnivore

Size
Weight 300- 500g
Length 40 - 60cm

FIND ME

They are never found far from water and like to live in semi-arid or arid scrubland or wooded grassland areas in Australia. They do need forest habitat for nesting.

They will prefer areas that have Eucalypt, Sheoak and Callitris trees so they can forage for food. Their home range is about 30kms.

You will find their nests in the hollow of mostly Eucalyptus trees, these holes or hollows can take up to 150 years to naturally form in the trees which makes them important spaces.

BREEDING

The breeding season is from August to December (Spring).

This species forms a life-long bond with their mate. The pair will place bits of wood and small stones in a hollow, which they like to use again every year.

The pair will have 2 - 5 eggs in a clutch, which are incubated for 25 - 30 days. Both the parents will look after the chicks and they will stay in the nest for the first 6 to 8 weeks before they fledge (leave the nest). They will form small, family groups that stay together for quite some time.

BEHAVING LIKE A COCKATOO

Major Mitchell Cockatoos are omnivores, eating fruits, nuts, roots, plant seeds and bulbs, but also insects. These birds are weak fliers so will fly for short distances before stopping to rest. They will often be found feeding on the ground.

They will use their claws for both holding onto their food and for climbing. They have very strong beaks to help them crack open hard seed and nuts as well as breaking tree bark.

They have a very distinctive “creek-ery-cree” call that can be heard for extremely long distances. This call will become louder and more frequent in times of stress.

They use their colourful crest feathers to help them attract a mate, but can also use them to warn off other males in their territory, or to let other nearby birds know about dangers.

THREATS

The biggest threat to this species is loss of their habitat, land clearing for farming and housing reduces the number of nesting sites. They do not like to nest near other Major Mitchell Cockatoos, which means more nesting sites are needed.

They are not able to create their own tree hollows, so rely on finding natural hollows big enough or ones that have been created by other species. These trees must be over 150 years old to have large enough hollows.

These nesting sites are also sought after by other bird species and small mammals, so there is a lot of competition for these highly valued homes.

Their native predators are large birds of prey such as eagles or falcons. Introduced foxes, and domestic or feral cats can also pose a threat.



INDIGENOUS NAME

Gugalarrin in the Yuwaalaraay language of New South Wales

FAST FACTS

Can live to be 50 – 60 years old in the wild and sometime more than 70 years in captivity

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The only cockatoo to have a multi-coloured crest

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Other names include
Pink Cockatoo
Leadbeater's Cockatoo

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Major Mitchell Cockatoos are very important seed dispersers across Australian ecosystems.

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Major Mitchell Cockatoos were named after explorer Major Sir Thomas Mitchell