

Slender- (Long) billed Corella

FAMILY: *Cacatuidae*

GENUS: *Cacatua*

SPECIES: *tenuirostris*

Description:

Medium white cockatoo with a small white crest, a reddish crescent on the breast, reddish forehead and blue/grey periophthalmic ring (of a different shape than that of the Little Corella). Slight sexual dimorphism with being slightly larger and females sometimes having slightly smaller mandibles and/or slightly less colour on the throat and face. Generally found in pairs or small parties during the nesting season, but highly gregarious in feeding or roosting flocks outside those times.

Length: 370mm.

Subspecies:

The relationship of the Slender-billed Corella with the Long-billed Corella of south-western Australia has been cause for considerable disagreement, but currently the latter is considered to be a subspecies of the Little Corella.

Distribution:

Restricted to southeastern Australia, extending from the Riverina south to the vicinity of Melbourne and west to the Coorong in South Australia. Its numbers and range has drastically declined following the arrival of Europeans.

Habitat:

Essentially open country near woodland or River Red Gum forests, cereal crops and native grasslands near water.

Diet:

Foraging is almost entirely on the ground and diet includes bulbs of native and introduced plants, seeds and fruits.

Breeding:

From July to November.

The usual nesting site is a tree cavity, most often in a large River Red Gum, but has been known to burrow into cliffs and high banks when suitable nest sites are not available. Both the male and female prepare the nesting site, and both share incubation and care for the young.

In captivity it has been difficult to provide these birds with acceptable nesting boxes or logs. It would appear that the best course of action is to provide them with a range of nesting opportunities (boxes and logs, presented horizontally, vertically and inclined, etc.). The preferred nesting material is a mixture of wood shavings and dirt or peat moss.

Clutch:

2-3 white oval eggs. Incubation period: 24 days. Fledging usually occurs at 56 days.

Mutations and Hybrids:

Hybrids have been recorded with the Greater Sulphur-crested Cockatoo and the Galah