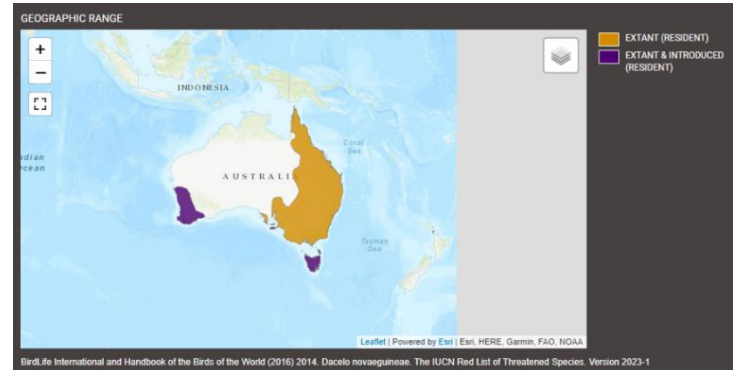


Laughing Kookaburra



Classification

Kingdom: Animalia
Phylum: Chordata
Class: Aves
Order: Coraciiformes
Family: Alcedinidae
Genus: *Dacelo*
Species:
novaeguineae



Range, Habitat, Conservation Status

- **Range:** Found throughout eastern Australia. They have also been introduced to Tasmania, the extreme south-west of Western Australia, and New Zealand.
- **Habitat:** Eucalyptus woodlands and open forests. They can occur in almost any area with trees big enough to contain their nests and open patches with sufficient hunting areas.
- **Conservation Status:** Least Concern

Physical Characteristics

- **Body Length:** ~15.5 to ~17.5 inches (40-45 cm)
- **Wingspan:** Up to 26 inches (66 cm)
- **Weight:** 7 to 16 ounces (198-453 g)
- **Lifespan:** Average of 5.7 years in the wild. Can live up to 15 years in human care.
- **Identifying Traits:** Light beige or white head and breast with brown wings and back. The head has a brown stripe like a mask crossing each eye. The beak is heavy, and boat shaped. Both sexes have a rusty red tail with black bars and white tips. The female is slightly larger than the male.

Behaviors

- **Feeding:** Even though they are part of the kingfisher family, they primarily eat insects, worms, and crustaceans. They may also eat small snakes, reptiles, frogs, birds, and rodents. Small prey items are eaten whole, but larger prey items are killed by bashing them against the ground or a tree branch.
- **Breeding:** August to January and starts with the male feeding the female.



- **Nesting:** The nest is a bare chamber in a naturally occurring tree hollow or in a burrow excavated in an arboreal (tree-dwelling) termite mound. Lay 2 to 3 eggs by the dominant female, but up to 5 more eggs may be laid by female helpers. The incubation period is 24 to 29 days.
- **Migration:** Not Migratory
- **Call:** Loud "koo-koo-koo-koo-koo-kaa-kaa-ka". Shorter calls are used for courtship, finding others, raising an alarm, begging for food, and showing aggression.

Resident Bird(s)

Name: Bindi

- **Age:** Hatched in 2019
- **Sex:** Female
- **Background:** Hatched at another educational facility/zoo in the United States. See her during fly-bys.
- **Unique Individual Traits:** She always laughs at her keepers' jokes even when they are terrible.

Fun Facts!

- Laughing Kookaburras are the largest member of the kingfisher family.
- Laughing Kookaburras have been referred to as the "bushman's alarm clock" due to their loud vocalizations heard at dawn and dusk.
- A breeding pair establishes a year-round territory that is also used by four to five of its adult offspring, which serve as helpers. These helpers do their share of incubating the eggs, keeping the chicks warm, feeding their young siblings, and defending their parents' territory.
- Kookaburras are part of the kingfisher family, and the Belted Kingfisher is a member of this family native to North Carolina.

Importance

- As small carnivores, Laughing Kookaburras play an integral role in the ecosystem by controlling small animal populations.

Sources

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