

Gang-gang Survey Progress Report July 2014

Survey sightings

The Gang-gang survey has now been running six months covering the late summer, autumn and winter months. The community response has been fantastic and largely enabled by the Atlas of Living Australia portal. Approximately 75% of observations are being entered on-line with a pleasingly low error rate (about 2%).

There are now 368 registered users of the on-line COG/ALA portal and a total of 2,068 records. The largest group of Gang-gangs so far observed is 55 birds seen flying across Uriarra Crossing on 16 June by a lucky observer.

An analysis of the autumn survey records, at the broad urban scale, shows the following distribution of observations.

	No. reported suburbs	Average no. reports/suburb
North Canberra	13	34.5
South Canberra	20	17.7
Belconnen	9	12.3
Weston Creek	8	6.6
Gungahlin	6	2.3
Tuggeranong	6	1.8
Queanbeyan	2	1.0

Within Belconnen virtually all observations are from Aranda and Bruce whilst in north Canberra they are from Acton, O'Connor, Hackett, Watson, Ainslie and Campbell; in other words those suburbs bordering the Black Mountain, Mt Ainslie and Mt Majura Nature Reserves. In south Canberra the suburbs of Deakin, Red Hill and Hughes bordering Red Hill Nature Reserve have the most observations as do the suburbs of Fisher and Pearce bordering Cooleman Ridge and Mt Taylor. See below.

	Suburb	No. reports	Nature Reserve
North Canberra	Hackett	124	Mt. Ainslie NR, Mt Majura NR
	Ainslie	69	
	Campbell	63	
	Reid	61	
North Canberra/Belconnen	Acton	104	Black Mt NR, Bruce Ridge NR
	O'Connor	73	
	Aranda	56	
	Bruce	33	
South Canberra	Deakin	44	Red Hill NR
	Red Hill	38	
South Canberra/Weston Creek	Torrens	33	Mt Taylor NR, Cooleman Ridge NR
	Fisher	23	
	Pearce	15	

The location of Gang-gangs varies with preferred habitat type and age and location of suburb. Up to 20 and 30 birds have been reported. For observations where the sex of the bird has been identified, the same number of males and females has been reported.

Gang-gangs are feeding on small seeds including eucalyptus seeds and seeds of the introduced Chinese Pistachio, Chinese Elm and more recently the Hawthorn. Eucalyptus bicostata appears to be a favoured feeding tree. During the autumn period and into the winter the group size has increased from 2.57 in March to 4.75 in June.

Community engagement

July was a big month for the Gang-gang cockatoo at the ACT Legislative Assembly. The Gang-gang was the most popular subject at COG's 50th Birthday Photo Exhibition (with 5 entries from members) and Chris Davey presented an informative talk about the Gang-gang survey at COG's Public Forum, 'Landscapes for Birds'. A number of forum attendees expressed interest in being part of the August Muster Count.

We participated in an interesting story on ABC local radio's morning program with Genevieve Jacobs. Bruce Thornton who works at the ANU looking after Halls of Residence regularly sees up to 40 Gang-

gangs along Daly Road. A few lucky birdos have since sighted this large of group Gang-gangs with many juvenile birds, including this gorgeous young female and shy male. (Photos Kathy Eyles)



A reminder that the August Muster Count is coming up (21- 27 August) and we want as many people as possible in the COG region involved in our winter count. This Muster will help us

track the expected movement of birds from the mountains to the plains. The hard copy data form for Muster week can be downloaded from the website. The form has been slightly revised to provide room for observers to record information about feeding and bird interaction. As for the May Muster count, records can also be entered using the electronic form at the end of the Muster week. Instructions for the Muster count and both forms can be found on the Muster page.

<http://canberrabirds.org.au/observing-birds/gang-gang-survey/gang-gang-muster-instructions/>

As we head towards spring we encourage observers to continue submitting their daily observations and to keep an eye out for breeding and nesting activity. Observers of any obvious breeding behavior and/or nesting are asked to send in these sightings via ggquery@canberrabirds.org.au

If you are unsure how to participate in the Gang-gang survey details of how to contribute can be found at

<http://canberrabirds.org.au/observing-birds/gang-gang-survey/>

If you have any queries please email to ggquery@canberrabirds.org.au

The GG survey project team