



## CORELLAS IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

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Little corellas are small white cockatoos, native to Australia. Since the 1960s, they have increased in distribution and abundance. Their success was probably facilitated by clearing of vegetation for agriculture and the provision of new drinking sources (e.g. stock troughs). They are now common right across South Australia, including in urban areas.

A second corella species occurs in South Australia, the long-billed corella has a distinctively long bill and red neck feathers (Fig. 1). It is less abundant than the little corella, but it will roost within their flocks. The species have two different levels of protection afforded under the *NPW Act 1972*, which affects options for their management.



Figure 1: Little corellas (right) and long-billed corellas (left) coexist.

## PROBLEMS WITH CORELLAS

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Cockatoos are intelligent birds and many people enjoy seeing them in urban areas. However, large flocks of little corellas can cause significant problems and many councils, schools, sporting clubs and communities have a history of problems with their management. Typical problems include:

- Damage to trees (Fig. 2)
- Mess and debris at roosting areas
- Noise pollution
- Loss of amenity
- Damage to facilities and electrical wires (Fig. 3)
- Damage to grass and lawn
- Community division and frustration
- A history of ineffective management actions



Figure 2: Tree damage by corellas.

## INEFFECTIVE ACTIONS

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Many groups have invested significant resources into developing strategies for corella management, but a state-wide review of their management<sup>1</sup> found little success and considerable conflict existed around the controls. Ineffective actions have been common in South Australia; they include the use of falconry and scare birds, culling (trapping and gassing), and non-lethal deterrents in the absence of lethal reinforcements.

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<sup>1</sup> Scanlon A., Roetman P., Stead M., Gray S., Lethbridge M. (2017). Little Corellas: social and ecological research for management in South Australia. Discovery Circle Initiative, University of South Australia, Adelaide. Available via the [Department for Environment and Water](#).



## A NEW APPROACH

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A new approach to managing corellas involves:

- Understanding why the problem exists at each site
- Using a strategic approach to deter corellas
- Using an ecological approach to modify habitat
- Enhancing native plantings in ways that are acceptable to the public, but are not ideal for corellas
- Developing habitats that promote biodiversity in townships and schools, including for small birds



Figure 3: Corellas on a suburban roof.

## SUCCESSION ECOLOGY – SERVICES

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Succession Ecology is a multi-faceted environmental consulting business. Our team includes an expert on corellas in South Australia, Dr. Annette Scanlon. She has researched the ecology and social impacts of little corellas (Fig. 4) for several years and is lead author of a comprehensive report on their management<sup>1</sup>. We also have a combined experience of over 60 years in vegetation and wildlife management.

Services include:

- Site-specific consultation and management planning
- Intervention management for problematic species
- Ecological and botanical expertise
- Community liaison and education
- Consultation services for other abundant birds and wildlife, including flying foxes
- Revegetation and weed management services
- Planning for resilient landscapes and climate-proofing



Figure 4. Little corella in urban park.

## CONTACT

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Dr. Annette Scanlon [Annette@successioneology.com.au](mailto:Annette@successioneology.com.au)

0488 919 218

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<sup>1</sup> Scanlon A., Roetman P., Stead M., Gray S., Lethbridge M. (2017). Little Corellas: social and ecological research for management in South Australia. Discovery Circle Initiative, University of South Australia, Adelaide. Available via the [Department for Environment and Water](#).