

<http://galah.galahs.com.au>

ARTICLES 031 – 040

The Australia Galah

10 Referenced Articles

Full Text

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ARTICLE 031

Common Name:

- Galah

Scientific Name:

- *Eolophus roseicapillus* (Eastern Australia)
- *Kuhli* (Northern Australia)
- *Assimilis* (western Australia)

Life Span:

- 60 years +

Body Size:

- Male: 34cm
- Female: 34cm

Body Weights:

- Male: 353g
- Female: 347g

Sexing:

The Galah are monomorphic. Both male and female look the same in feather colouring. Although if you look closely at their eyes and note their colour you are able to determine their sex. Males have black eye colour while females have a pinkish deep red eye colour.

Male:

The beak is white fawny colour, while sitting on top of the crown an erectable greyish white short and stubby cocky comb. The cocky comb will be displayed in times of aggression, fright and mating rituals etc. With the cocky comb down, it forms a greyish cap that extends to the back of the head covering half. The remaining parts of the neck, face, chest and abdomen are pink in colour. The wings and underside of the vent are grey with greyish colour feet and black nails. There is pink colour flesh around the eyes.

Female:

Identical in appearance to the male with the exception of reddish pinkish colour eyes.

Young Birds:

Young birds are typically similar to the adults with the exemption of eye colour, being black in both male and females. Their pink feathers often have a greyish tinge on them, which will change after their first molt. Babies are sexually mature between the ages of 2.5 - 3 years.

Types and Hybrids:

I have seen a couple of varieties of Hybrids in which are all born sterile. These are:

- Sulphur crested Cockatoo x Galah
- Corella x Galah

Distribution:

Galah can be seen in many parts of Australia, because of this the Galah is so easily accommodated, commonly nesting wherever it decides and roaming in many house front lawns to graze for grasses and seeds etc.

Aviary Notes:

The Galah as noted before is a very common bird seen in all areas of Australia. Its large body size requires a large flight aviary that excludes any wooden frames. They are highly destructive to wood like all cockatoos, and will destroy wood in pieces as if it was like paper. The aviary size should be at least 3 meters D x 2 meters W x 2 meters H, If you have larger space for a bigger aviary and if you can afford it make a large aviary for them. There are a couple of reasons why the aviary needs to be large, firstly to accommodate the body size and enable it to fly quiet freely. The other reason is to enable you to provide large and deep nest boxes or logs. It doesn't really matter if the aviaries are the standard forms or suspended forms. I prefer the standard to allow me to fully enter the aviaries and interact with the birds. A good breeding pair that have been bred in captivity will maintain a quiet friendly attitude, and will not scatter around the aviary madlessly as you enter the aviaries.

Feeding and Diet:

The Galah is relatively very easy to maintain for a large bird. The diet should consist of a large parrot mix, pelleted foods, fresh high quality fruit and vegetable's. These types of diets will allow for perfect feather quality and of course it will keep your birds in great shape for breeding. Not to mention a variety of fruits will enhance the birds Psychological relief from stress of being caged. While in breeding the advantages are that the babies get a much more varied diet while growing.

List of common fruits and vegetables I feed are:

Fruits = Apples, Pears, Peaches, Cherries, Nectarines

Vegetables = Carrots, Corn, Lettuce, Capsicum, Spinach

Other = Hard boiled eggs, nuts (almond, cashews, peanuts etc.), pelleted foods,

Breeding:

When Breeding it is advisable to monitor both hen and cock for signs of aggression. If there is any signs of aggression a strategy that has been used by breeders is to clips the wings or a wing of the cock to slow him down a little, this will allow the hen some extra time to escape should she need to. Although having just said this its pretty rare for them to fight. The usual breeding season for Galah's is around July to December, and large nest boxes or logs should be placed in high positions and in different positions in the aviary. Such nest boxes can either be made out of thick wood or an alternative to a wooden nest box is a aluminium garbage bin with a hole cut out. To allow inspection of babies easier a hole with a cover should be placed down near the base of the breeding box or log. A nest box should be lined with chewed soft decaying woods and plain potting mix with out chemicals etc. should be sufficient. Plenty of foods should be made available when breeding Galah's as there babies grow extremely rapidly, and they will need all the nutrition as they can get to allow correct bone and body growth. Once the pair have eggs or babies don't harass them much , as many Galah's do not like to be checked on during incubation and rearing young, and often they will attack you if you enter the aviary so be careful.

Eggs per clutch:

- 4-5

Incubation period:

- 29-30 days

Nest box size:

- Large nest boxes or logs sizes would be 30cm D x 30cm W x 60cm H

Noise level:

The Galah can be quiet noisy like all large birds. So if you are living in a house that is close to neighbours you should consider smaller types of birds, because the birds can be very vocal especially if they hear other Galahs flying above them.

What are these birds like for pets? The Galah, is a very nice looking bird, and its personality is quiet charming, although You will have to remember these birds do have loud screeches should they wish. And this can be irritating to some, and usually you will find that being neighbours. Please take care when deciding to have a Galah as a pet, I seriously can not stress that point enough. Many people go and buy these birds on impulse because they are quiet beautiful, and they do not think of the consequences should the bird become too loud. Don't think you will be able to stop it from screaming should it wish to vocalise. Because just merely placing the bird in dark rooms constantly will lead to future problems, and besides getting the bird to stop vocalising when it wishes, if taken into context would be just like me preventing you talking any time you wish to.

Weigh the pro's and cons before purchase, if you decide that you can accommodate such beautiful birds, then by all means go ahead, do some background research, find reputable breeders and above all make sure the birds are captive bred. Their personality is quiet sweet, while some hand raised birds particularly like to cling and bond to one person only. Once this happens other people in the house or visitors may get bitten, so extra caution may be needed. They are easy to look after if you can allow for a large cage. With all this said these birds are excellent value for money and provide a different character with their stunning colours and behaviours to any aviary, or inside they make adorable cuddly companions if treated correctly. Lastly, be aware of their long life span, too many birds are bought and after awhile surrendered because of their noise.

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<http://www.clickapet.com.au/factsheets/galah.html>

Accessed: 7 March 2005

ARTICLE 032

Galah

Cacatua roseicapilla

Description

The Galah (35 cm) can be easily identified by its rose-pink head, neck and underparts, with paler pink crown, and grey back, wings and undertail. Birds from the west of Australia have comparatively paler plumage. Galahs have a bouncing acrobatic flight, but spend much of the day sheltering from heat in the foliage of trees and shrubs. The voice is a distinctive high-pitched screech, 'chi-chi'. Huge noisy flocks of birds congregate and roost together at night.

Distribution and Habitat

The Galah is one of the most abundant and familiar of the Australian parrots, found in large flocks, in a variety of timbered habitats, usually near water. It occurs over most of Australia, including some offshore islands, and is becoming more abundant round areas of human habitation. The growth in population is largely a result of increasing availability of food and water. Escaped aviary birds have also contributed to these numbers.

Food and feeding

Galahs form huge, noisy flocks which feed on seeds, mostly from the ground. Seeds of grasses and cultivated crops are eaten, making these birds agricultural pests in some areas. Birds may travel large distances in search of favourable feeding grounds.

Breeding

Galahs form permanent pair bonds, although a bird will take a new partner if the other one dies. The breeding season is variable, but mainly from February to July in the north and July to December in the south. The nest is a tree hollow or similar location, lined with leaves. Both sexes incubate the eggs and care for the three or four young. There is a high chick mortality in Galahs, with up to 50 % dying in the first six months.

Galahs have been recorded breeding with other members of the cockatoo family, both in the wild and captivity. These include the Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, *C. galerita*.

* Crome, F. and Shields, J. 1992.

Parrots & Pigeons of Australia.

Angus and Robertson/National Photographic Index of Australian Wildlife, Sydney.

<http://www.amonline.net.au/factsheets/galah.htm>

Accessed: March 2005

ARTICLE 033

Galah

Cacatua roseicapilla

Other name

ROSE-BREASTED COCKATOO

The Galah is one of the most commonly seen parrots and is abundant throughout most of Australia. Its habitat is mainly woodlands and open grassland. It is usually seen in pairs or in large family flocks. Like most parrots the Galah feeds on the ground on seeds, grasses and fruit and can travel some distance for food, returning to their nest area to roost at night. Breeds mainly from August to November, earlier in the northern parts of Australia. It is thought that the Galah mates permanently and returns to the same nest site year after year. Nests in tree hollows, lined with eucalypt leaves and twigs. Lays between 2 and 5 eggs, with incubation by both parents for approximately 30 days. Young fledge in about 8 weeks.

http://www.members.optusnet.com.au/~fourth_crossing/galah.htm

Accessed: March 2005

ARTICLE 034

Galah

FAMILY: Cacatuidae

GENUS: Cacatua

SPECIES: roseicapilla

Description:

Small pink and grey cockatoo with white periophthalmic eye ring. In the Eastern states, these birds often have a white cap whereas those in the west usually have a light pink cap. Slight sexual dimorphism with females having pink irises and males dark (brown). Adult birds are resident and strongly gregarious. Length:350mm.

Distribution:

Prior to the arrival of Europeans, the Galah was essentially restricted to the arid interior. Over the past few decades, however, it has increased its range to include most of mainland Australia and eastern Tasmania.

Habitat:

Essentially open habitats including semi-desert, plains, open woodland, farmland, grainfields and golfcourses/parklands.

Diet:

Seeds gathered mainly on the ground.

Breeding:

Variable, but usually February to July in the north and July to December in the south. Galahs are usually single brooded, but may nest twice in good seasons.

Usual nesting site is a tree cavity at heights varying from 2 to 20m above ground. Nests (cavities) have been recorded in rocky outcrops and cliffs. Both the male and female spend considerable preparing the nesting site, sometimes spending a great deal of time chewing bark and rotten wood away from the nest entrance. The nest is used in subsequent seasons and is most often lined with eucalypt leaves. Both sexes incubate the eggs and care for the young.

In captivity hollow eucalypt logs are best suited for breeding. The log should have natural entrance spouts, be approximately 30-60 cm in internal diameter, and about 50cm or more in length. Vertical or inclined logs are acceptable. The preferred nesting material is leaves or any available herbage (eg grass). a mixture of wood shavings and dirt or peat moss.

Clutch:

3-4 white oval eggs. Incubation period: 30days. Fledging usually occurs at 56 days.

Mutations and Hybrids:

Galahs have a greater number of mutations than any other Cacatuid. They include: Albino (sex linked); Dilute (recessive); Cinnamon (2 recessive forms and 1 sex linked); Silver(maybe another form of Cinnamon); Off-white (lacking both pink and grey) and Grey and white - a mutant where the pink is replaced by off-white).

Hybrids have been recorded with the Gang-gang, Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, Major Mitchell , Little Corella, Slender-billed Corella and Lesser Sulphur-crested Cockatoo.

<http://www.birdworld.com.au/records/cockatoo/galah.html>

Accessed: March 2005

ARTICLE 035

Galah

Cacatua roseicapilla

Family:

Cacatuidae

Status:

Resident / Common

The Pink and Grey Galah has a very distinct character. They play at all times of the day, no matter what activity presents them. Hanging upside down from telephone wires, sliding down light poles are some of their favourite games. A regular flock that visits Mawson Park, Hillarys regularly enjoys playing on the swings. High pitched calls and harsh screeching always accompany the arrival of a flock, or even just a pair of Galah. They can be found foraging on open grass, playing fields, lawns and in native gardens, for seeds, shoots, blossoms, fruits and insect larvae. They roost at midday/mid-afternoon, in tall eucalyptus. As with most parrots and cockatoos, they gather in the evening in large flocks at prominent water holes, to drink, bath and roost. They will often tease smaller birds of prey, swooping and dodging them or even perching next to them with crest raised and wings held open. This is also a game indulged by Corella species. The Galahs found in Perth are of the race *assimilis*, has a pink crest and a pale grey eye ring.

Size:

35 - 36cm

Voice:

Loud screeching cries. Young have scratchy wheezing cries.

Nesting Ecology:

Pairs nest in hollowed out trees, 4 to 20m above the ground, and can produce 2 to 5 eggs. They breed from July to December, or when rain and food is good.

Australian Distribution:

Patchy distribution over much of Australia.

Carine Open Space

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<http://www.birdsofperth.com/terrestrials/parrots/G.html>
march 2005

ARTICLE 036

Galah Nursery

In November (late Spring) the Galah's use the Mallee Box trees in the gully behind our house as a nursery. They leave their young here, in their own trees but in the company of other galahs of similar age while the parents go off to find food. They return from time to time to feed their young. The feeding is a noisy affair and very amusing to watch and especially to hear. The young petition their parents for food with such a noise that one would think that they are being tortured. When the parent finally nonchalantly condescends to deliver the food, it does so by thrusting its beak into the beak of the young bird who makes a great show by throwing its head backwards and forwards while making a big noise. Galah's are seed eaters and the young get a regurgitated porridge. My family once reared a young galah and we kept it as a pet for over ten years. When young we fed it porridge with a tea spoon and it made the same action and noise. It learned to make a sarcastic cough to mimic our chain-smoking neighbour. It had a small vocabulary and would dance on request. On occasions it would hang upside down from the roof of it's cage and squawk extremely loudly while flapping it's wings, crest raised as if in surprise. I have heard the native birds making the same sound occasionally as they roost. They can be real clowns. Their flight is often aerobic and they seem to enjoy their lives. A 'galah' in the Aussie vernacular is applied to a person who is a bit of a kidder and a clown or who is harmlessly foolish.

<http://users.chariot.net.au/~sah/wildlife/galah.htm>

Accessed: March 2005

ARTICLE 037

Galah

I was a little pink Galah
Just sitting on the highway tar.
Just sitting, eating on the road
Wheat that spilt from someone's load.
Fighting for the finest seed
Disgusted with my parents greed,
Then flying high to miss the cars
Which often flatten slow galahs.
Then landing on the road once more,
To get the wheat we'd missed before.

Just then I found a lovely grain
It made the other wheat look plain
It was big and rounded but
It had fallen in a rut.
My friends were squawking, "There's a car,
Get off the road you mad galah!"
I didn't fly I'd just about
Got that delicious seed dug out
My friends were making quite a fuss
Squawking that "the car's a bus!"

I got the seed an' flew but splat
And now I'm feeling rather flat,
A very sore and sorry bird.
The driver hadn't even heard
And here I am stuck on the grill
Feeling quite a dopey dill,
But not everyone can poach
A ride upon a tourist coach
And as I drive about today
I see the world a different way.

Life's not only piles grain
Sprinkled there like golden rain.
There's other things along the road,
A dead wombat and flattened toad,
And there's a mangled kangaroo
A victim of the highway too,
A blue tongue lizard though it great
To lie and thermo regulate
In the middle of the road
But he's squashed there like the toad.

The wombat with his tiny stride
Ran but found the road too wide,
The roo had some grass to munch,
Saw the lights and hopped then crunch.
Now eating them are hawks and crows,
There's never any dead of those
And up here on the grill with me
There's moths, grasshoppers and a bee,
A butterfly, a dragon fly,
The highway caused them all to die.

So all of you who use the road,
Drive a car or spill a load,
Or fly towards the bright headlight
Or hop across the road at night
Or lie there baking in the sun
Or run across the road for fun
Or eat grass along the side
Just think of all of us who've died.

© David McK. Berman 1984

Galah

I know, I know, you think I'm stupid don't you.

Well I've got news for you. I'm am no more stupid than those silly old white cockatoos.

I love cracking open the grass seeds and those little nuts I find in the paddocks.
Farmers curse me because sometimes I nick a bit of their wheat.

But deep down, I'm just a silly old galah.

<http://www.mossproducts.com.au/Garden%20Decor/gd11191.htm>
March 2005

ARTICLE 038

Pink and Grey Galah:

Researched by Sarah & Ebony

COMMON NAME:

Pink and Grey Galah or Willie-Willock

SCIENTIFIC NAME:

Cacatua roseicapilla

HABITAT:

These birds are a common sight all over Australia, except in Tasmania. They live in flocks of 30 to 1000 birds. Pink and Grey Galahs live in trees and nests. They are found in the Australian bush and around the outback. They are often seen nibbling on farmer's crops. They nest in hollow trees or limbs.

DIET:

The Pink and Grey Galah eats grass, grass roots, crumbs, fruit, nuts, oats and wheat. They gather most of their food from the ground after the ripened seed has fallen.

DESCRIPTION:

A Pink and Grey Galah looks like a cockatoo. It has a hooked, grey beak and it has pink and grey feathers on its body. The back wings and tail are grey. It is about 360mm long, including 150mm for the tail. The skin around the male eye is white and powdery and the female has pink eye colouring.

PILBARA LOCATION:

In the Pilbara, we often see wild Pink and Grey Galahs on people's lawns, on shrubs during the day and in tall gum trees eating the sugar from the leaves. Unfortunately, some are even kept in cages.

SOMETHING INTERESTING:

Pink and Greys are the most beautiful birds. When a large flock is feeding, one galah usually has its head up looking out for danger. Only 10 out of 100 fledglings survive but once these birds reach adulthood they live for many years.

<http://www.dampier.wa.edu.au/pinkgrey1.html>

Accessed: March 2005

Pink and Grey Galah:

Researched by Natasha & Robert

COMMON NAME:

Pink and Grey Galah or Rose Cockatoo

SCIENTIFIC NAME:

Cacatua roseicapilla

HABITAT:

They are common throughout most of Australia. They like savannah woodlands and open grasslands.

DIET:

Pink and Grey Galahs eat seeds from the ground, native plants, fruit, nuts, cereal crops, wheat and oats.

DESCRIPTION:

The Pink and Grey Galah has a pink tummy and grey wings and tail. Galahs have an oval shaped tummy and a round head. They are usually seen in flocks of 30 to 1000 birds.

How big is it?

The Pink and Grey Galah is around 36cm long with a tail around 15cm long.

PILBARA LOCATION:

They can be seen gathering seeds from the ground around the Pilbara grasslands, public and private lawns. They most often feed in flocks as this provides them with greater safety.

SOMETHING INTERESTING:

The name "Galah" was given to these birds by the Aboriginals.

<http://www.dampier.wa.edu.au/pinkgrey2.html>

Accessed: March 2005

ARTICLE 039

Donpaulna Aviaries

The Common Galah

(Rose-breasted Cockatoo)

Many people do not appreciate the character of our so called common Galah, but if given a chance they can delight even the more advanced aviculturists. Although not kept widely in aviaries by more advanced breeders, because of their common tag, the few people that do keep them can vouch for their pleasant nature and delightful playfulness. Although Galahs make great companions when kept as single pets in small cages, I must admit that I would rather see them in pairs set up for breeding purposes in aviaries. Aviary space is not a necessity to these cockatoos, they will be more than pleased in an aviary 1.8m long x 1.2m wide x 1.8m high, but larger would be better for them. Being very playful birds that spend lots of time on the ground, I believe suspended cages not to be suitable, although in saying that they have been housed and breed in them without many problems. My Galah aviaries are 2.8m long x 1.4m wide x 2m high, with concrete floors at the rear where feeding is done, and 10mm river gravel for the rest of the floor space. Drains have been installed for better rain drainage, drained by 60mm aggie pipe running through the middle of all aviaries. For me I enjoy seeing my birds having fun foraging on the aviary floors looking for spilt vegetables, fruit or nuts, which have been dropped from their containers. Like all my seed eaters my Galahs are fed in Thomson Aviary seed hopper products, fed at the rear of the aviaries under cover, with water done in glazed dishes at the very front by an automatic watering system. A sunflower and mixed seed diet is very adequate for these birds main food source, with a supplementary diet of most greeneries, apple, corn and other vegetables quite suitable.

Description of these birds is, common race only, general body parts darkish pink; forehead, crown and nape whitish-pink; wings and tail grey; vent, rump, upper tail whitish grey; iris dark brown in males and red in females. Immature birds have duller plumage and the iris is brown in both sexes.

Breeding in captivity is regularly achieved, but branches with gum leaves for nesting material must be provided. Sometimes blocking the entrance to the nest site with softwood for chewing stimulates breeding activity. A clutch of eggs is usually 3, but up to 5 is possible, with incubation lasting around 23days. Fledging is done 7 weeks later, with the parent birds feeding them for many weeks after that. I have placed Galah eggs under Alexandrine Parrots to hatch out one year, the reason for this was because I lost the cock bird and was concerned the hen would not rear the young by herself. They hatched them out, but after a few days refused to feed them and let them die. When taken away from their parents for hand rearing around 2 to 3 weeks is a usually a good age. Galahs are very noisy babies when hand rearing, with their cries for food being somewhat a little hard to bare at times. The end result is a beautifully tamed companion which usually stays very quiet.

Mutations are becoming more frequent in captivity, with birds such as Lutino, Blue, Cinnamon, and Albino now established in aviculture.

We in Australia are lucky to have three species of Galahs, the most common being the Eastern or common race (*Eolophus roseicapillus*), with the Western (*Eolophus assimilis*), and Northern (*Eolophus kuhli*), being the other two. The common races distribution covers most of Australia, with the Western only found in lower and central W.A., with the Northern and more rarest being found in the top end of W.A. and into the Northern Territory. Galahs are very hardy cockatoos with a size of 35cm, with the Kuhli only being 28 to 30 cm.

In the wild breeding is done by rainfall, and in a good year double clutches are very possible. These birds nest in hollow stumps or trees ranging from 1 to 20 metres off the ground. After fledging the young birds stay in groups and can be seen congregating together with other birds while feeding. Australia is world known for its massive flocks of Galahs flying at great pace through the sky. In some parts of the country flocks are so enormous that means of culling is done by poisoning or shooting to protect grain crops. This also destroys other species such as Corellas and Sulphur crested Cockatoos. This may seem a little unfair, but due to habitat decline these birds gather in huge numbers to feed on farmers crops such as sunflower etc. In the wild these birds feed on seeding grasses, fruits, berries, nuts, roots, buds, herbaceous plants, and grains such as oats, sunflower and wheat. As mentioned earlier they are very playful birds and in the wild they can be seen flying doing acrobatic tricks, spinning in mid air and hanging upside down from electricity wires.

CONCLUSION:

Galahs are very common birds in Australia and over looked by many aviculturists, which in my view is a shame. They make very good aviary and pet birds and are very hardy, so little problems occur with them. Although they can be kept in small aviaries they prefer good open spaces to muck about in, and love foraging on the ground. Because of this worms do occur, but can be treated quite easily with medication. Pink and Greys as they are also known as are delightful little cockatoos and given the change they deserve would be loved by even the advanced aviculturists.

Yours in Aviculture, Paul Stevens.

http://cust.idl.com.au/pstevens/the_common_galah.htm
Accessed: March 2005

ARTICLE 040

Galah Fact File

Eolophus roseicapillus

The Galah is one of the most abundant and familiar of the Australian parrots and is found in large flocks in a variety of timbered habitats, usually near water. It occurs over most of Australia, including some offshore islands, and is becoming more abundant around areas of human habitation. The growth in population is largely a result of increasing availability of food and water. Escaped aviary birds have also contributed to these numbers.

Galahs form huge, noisy flocks which feed on seeds, mostly from the ground. Seeds of grasses and cultivated crops are eaten, making these birds agricultural pests in some areas. Galahs may travel large distances in search of favourable feeding grounds.

Galahs form permanent pair bonds, although a bird will take a new partner if the other one dies. The breeding season is variable, but is mainly from February to July in the north and July to December in the south. The nest is a tree hollow or similar location, lined with leaves. Both sexes incubate the eggs and care for the three or four young. There is a high chick mortality in Galahs, with up to 50 % dying in their first six months.

Distribution:

Throughout Australia

Habitat:

Forests and woodlands, coastal heath

Status:

Common

Size:

35 cm

Call:

A high-pitched screech of 'chi-chi' which is loud when in large groups

http://www.faunanet.gov.au/wos/factfile.cfm?Fact_ID=346

Accessed: March 2005