

SULPHUR-CRESTED COCKATOOS AT PINJARRA

In July 1972 Fauna Warden Bob Marshall made a positive identification of 24 mature Sulphur-crested Cockatoos (*Cacatua galerita*) at Pinjarra. This sighting was subsequently confirmed by Fauna Wardens Les Moss and Dave Mell although all can be excused for doubting the evidence of their own eyes.

The distribution of sulphur-crested cockatoos is described by Neville Cayley in "What Bird is That" as . . . "Australia (EXCEPT WESTERN AUSTRALIA, SOUTH OF THE FITZROY RIVER and western areas of South Australia)".

The most likely conclusion is that the birds had been liberated in the area, possibly as a single pair some years ago, and had built up to the present number. This is borne out by the statement of one local resident—" . . . the birds have been here for years. Originally there was one pair. I can remember a cousin having a pet one but I don't know what happened to it." Another resident

can remember seeing a pair in 1956, one of which could talk, and has counted up to 32 in the present flock.

Other sightings have been made in the south-west—at Kalamunda (1963, three birds) and West Swan (1964 several). A number were also recorded at Lake Claremont, and Lake Monger, but have now disappeared from those areas.

Even further back in time, Wildlife Authority member, Mr. Angus Robinson recorded the birds at Mandurah in 1935 and learnt that they had been released by "a man who came from the north". However, an elderly resident of Coolup states that the birds were once present in large numbers as far north as Armadale and other antediluvian residents report the previous existence of flocks at Harvey.

An identification "in the hand" would be necessary to determine whether the birds are of Kimberley or Eastern States origin, but the former does seem likely on the evidence so far acquired.

Sulphur-crested Cockatoos are fully protected and may not be kept in captivity except under license. They may not be trapped, shot or poisoned or interfered with in any way. The maximum penalty for breaching this section of the Fauna Conservation Regulations is \$200.