

MAKING FARMS LESS ATTRACTIVE TO GALAHS, LITTLE CORELLAS AND RINGNECK PARROTS

Some birds have increased in numbers since clearing for agriculture, and now large numbers may do quite a lot of damage to remnant and replanted trees. Along with clearing for agriculture, the provision of food (grain) and water (stock troughs) has enabled them to increase in numbers and extend their range. To help keep numbers down, landholders should organise their activities so that, as far as possible, food and water is available to stock but not to parrots.

1 Hand feed stock in the late evening

If grain is put out for stock during the day, parrots will share it. However, parrots do not feed at night, so, if hand feeding is done at dusk, the stock get to eat all of it and only the left-overs remain for the parrots to glean. Thus, with less food available, there should be lower survival rate of the parrots.

2 Farm hygiene

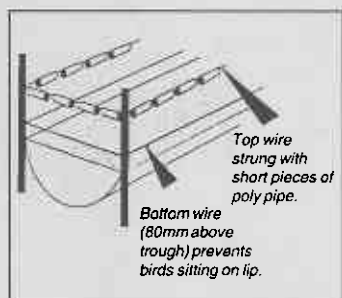
It is important to deny parrots access to spilt grain around silos and storage bunkers. Spills should be swept up and buried, while open bunkers should be covered or netted to exclude the birds. This is most important during autumn/early winter when seed sources on the farm are at their lowest.

3 Scare flocks when they first begin to congregate

When flocks of corellas and galahs first start coming together to congregate at their summer roosting sites, they can be scared away and 'moved on' if they are continually disturbed during the evening for the first week or so. If a group of property owners do this over a large area, the birds will lose condition as they are continually harassed, and survival rate into the next season will be lower.

4 Limit parrot access to stock troughs.

During investigation into the problem of corella damage in South Australia, the following design was found to be effective in keeping birds away from stock troughs. It could also, however, have a detrimental effect on other bird species, such as mudlarks, whose insect control activities mean they should be encouraged on the farm. So if you decide to try it, choose a trough near the house, which you can monitor carefully for effect.



Tanks should be covered and troughs modified as shown to prevent the birds perching on the edge to drink. Corellas need fresh water daily, so if you limit their access, you should limit the numbers which can survive in your area. However, the equipment needs to be in good repair,

as leaking or overflowing troughs or tanks provide puddles where the birds will preferentially drink.

None of these suggestions provides a 'final answer' to the parrot problem, but every little helps.