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biosphere

# Glossy Black-Cockatoo Resilience Action Plan

INTERIM REPORT

**SECURING A FUTURE FOR THE GLOSSY BLACK-  
COCKATOO IN THE NOOSA BIOSPHERE RESERVE**



Produced by the Noosa Biosphere Reserve Foundation, February 2021

Image credits: Danika Royle

# The Issue

The Glossy Black-Cockatoo (*Calyptorhynchus lathami*) is the smallest of the black cockatoos and is classified as a vulnerable species in Queensland. Based on formal research and engaged citizen science, the Noosa Biosphere Reserve is considered a significant habitat for this shy and quiet bird with records of up to one third of the entire known population.

A renowned ‘fussy eater’ the Glossy Black-Cockatoo only feeds on the seeds of a small number of Casuarina species, particularly the *Allocasuarina littoralis* and *Allocasuarina torulosa*. We know that their feed trees and watering holes are currently under threat from a variety of issues including urban development and fires, but we still don’t know where their nesting trees are situated.

The lack of species management plan for this vulnerable species combined with increasing habitat destruction makes it more important than ever to better understand the bio-physical requirements of Glossy Black-Cockatoo and seek actions to enhance their resilience. The Glossy Black-Cockatoo is already vulnerable and without positive interventions its resilience may be under threat.

## What we are doing about it

In November 2020, in response to significant community concern, the Noosa Biosphere Reserve Foundation (NBRF) held a symposium with key stakeholders to share information on current on-ground conservation, care and research efforts across the Noosa shire and surrounding local government areas. Participants included leading experts in Glossy Black-Cockatoo research from the University of Queensland and University of the Sunshine Coast; local community conservation groups; local council representatives and the Glossy Black Conservancy. The objective of this symposium was to develop an action plan to ensure the future survival of this iconic species. Glossy Black-Cockatoo resilience requires



*“Research is extremely important to the Glossies’ survival.”*

Bob Carey  
Noosa Parks Association

resource for integrated work across land, water wildlife and people. The NBRF further aims to leverage strategic funding for critical conservation and management actions that invest in: filling gaps in understanding, coordinating and scaling of existing relevant initiatives and directly supporting stakeholder organisation's actions.

The symposium brought together a dedicated group of passionate individuals and organisations from a broad range of environmental, economic, social and governance backgrounds, to share their endeavours to protect the Glossy Black-Cockatoo. Stakeholder groups presented their experiences and findings and then broke out into separate groups to identify gaps and opportunities and set priority areas and actions.

Participants were asked to rank these key themes in order of priority, with the results as follows:

1. Protection
2. Research
3. Planning Policy and Advocacy
4. Monitoring
5. Funding
6. Mapping
7. Education
8. Planting/Regeneration
9. Engagement
10. Risk Mitigation

NBRF then collated the key findings of the symposium and sent out to participants for further feedback and comment in early December 2020. From this feedback, the overlap and key actions have been integrated to support implementation of the top three priority areas.

The revised national Glossy Black-Cockatoo guidelines are due to be published later this year. To ensure consistency in our recommendations, we will publish a final version of this interim report once we have had the opportunity to review the new guidelines.



*“Finding the nesting trees is a priority... then these trees can be protected from bushfire and other threats.”*

Peter Milne  
Noosa Council Glossy Black  
Conservancy Representative

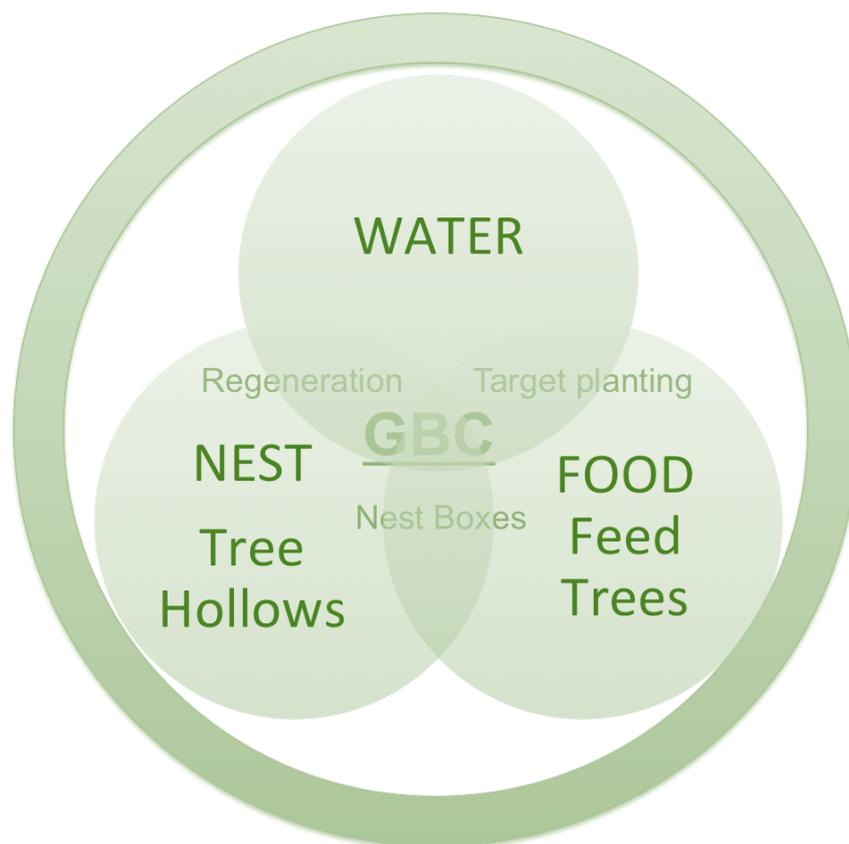
# Priority Action Areas

## 1. Protection

A fundamental priority of this Resilience Action Plan is to provide greater protection for the Glossy Black-Cockatoo. Gaps in understanding of the Glossy Black-Cockatoo’s behaviour, combined with ongoing and increasing pressures of development, have contributed to their listing as a vulnerable species. Our top priority is protection and regeneration of multiple habitat areas. This will be achieved through continued collaboration of diverse stakeholders. The emphasis is on protecting the Glossy Black-Cockatoo’s existing water and food sources as well as identifying habitat corridors. The lack of a species management plan currently undermines effective protection. There is potential to learn from other species management plans including the priority and protocols that were used in the NSW bushfires for the Wollemi pine. Appropriate regeneration plans will contribute toward protection and could also contribute to the development of more realistic offset criteria.

### ACTIONS

- 1.1 Develop a Glossy Black-Cockatoo Resilience Action Plan to capture, share and effectively utilise existing data and identify gaps.
- 1.2 Build stronger temporal and spatial protection of various habitat areas and corridors to ensure better management of current and future, watering, feeding and nesting trees.
- 1.3 Develop a comprehensive habitat regeneration plan considering mosaics of habitat for short, medium and long-term management of watering, feeding and nesting sites across multiple locations to support conservation goals.



## 2. Research

The foundation of better conservation is better understanding of the Glossy Black-Cockatoo (GBC) population and habitat to enhance effective management. Outcomes from the GBC Forum identified a need for multidisciplinary research linked across multiple areas. Capturing and sharing existing and future Glossy Black-Cockatoo data will be paramount to understanding the movement and behaviour of the GBC. Innovative research identified included feed tree identification; analysis and mapping; and satellite, drone and bio-acoustic monitoring.

Significantly, formal research has the capacity to be strengthened through strong citizen science monitoring and reporting on Glossy Black-Cockatoo locations and behaviours.

### ACTIONS

- 2.1 Combine existing knowledge with a suite of innovative tools for baseline mapping and ongoing monitoring of Glossy Black-Cockatoo population and habitat, especially the identification of nesting areas.
- 2.2 Collaborate with university partners, Council and private sector to develop a post-graduate study to map and monitor Glossy Black-Cockatoo habitat and nesting areas in the Noosa Shire.
- 2.3 Develop locally appropriate guidelines for constructing, siting, monitoring, evaluating and maintaining nesting boxes.
- 2.4 Identify and support ongoing volunteer programs and relevant research for Glossy Black-Cockatoo monitoring and management through citizen science and community engagement initiatives.

*“Protecting important habitat is the top priority.”*

Desire Gralton  
Glossy Team Sunrise

*“Developing a habitat regeneration program is absolutely crucial.”*

Dr Gabriel Conroy  
University of the Sunshine Coast

*“It is important to maintain a close working relationship with the Glossy Black Conservancy and local conservation groups to monitor baseline mapping of GBC nesting sites.”*

Dr Daniella Texieria  
University of Queensland

### 3. Policy, Legislation & Advocacy

One of the priority considerations to come from the Glossy Black-Cockatoo symposium is to utilise greater understanding of policy and legislation, combined with advocacy to mitigate potential impacts and enhance management of Glossy Black-Cockatoo. Noosa’s strong environmental record and brand means that environmental considerations and criteria within the biosphere reserve should be above and beyond State and Federal norms. At the heart of this is the need for greater awareness of, care about and resources for Glossy Black-Cockatoo conservation across multiple levels. In the absence of a State species management planning for Glossy Black-Cockatoo, Noosa Council could be a catalyst for enhanced biodiversity management by developing a Noosa Key Species Management Plan, starting with the Glossy Black-Cockatoo. A multi-pronged action approach is proposed to advocate for and enhance Glossy Black-Cockatoo (GBC) conservation:

#### ACTIONS

- 3.1 Local – Increase community and stakeholder understanding of the GBC and identify opportunities to increase attention about and support for GBCs.
- 3.2 Direct meeting with Blue Care to explain the Noosa Biosphere and share results from the GBC symposium. Propose ways to mitigate the proposed development’s impacts on GBC habitat, and enhance community engagement.
- 3.3 Council – monitor development applications. Continue discussions with Noosa Councillors about the Biosphere concept, with designated sites being sustainability leaders.
- 3.4 Propose that Noosa council develop a GBC Species Management Plan.
- 3.5 State - Work with the state member to push for GBC Species Management Planning including habitat protection for vulnerable and threatened species. Widely engage stakeholders to ensure biodiversity, appropriate offsetting and species management, including GBCs, are considered a priority under the SEQ NRM planning process.
- 3.6 Identify and review of historical Development Applications to ensure Environmental Impact Assessments outline the current status and are in line with contemporary conservation approaches to guide Council decisions.

#### TIMELINE

STAGE 1	NBRF symposium to collect information from key Glossy Black-Cockatoo conservation and management stakeholders in Noosa and seek input for a prioritised list of actions.	Nov 2020
STAGE 2	NBRF collate the prioritised list of actions and prepare a draft conservation prospectus for the Noosa Biosphere Glossy Black-Cockatoo population.	Dec 2020
STAGE 3	Circulate draft Glossy Black-Cockatoo resilience action plan prospectus for review by key stakeholders and recognised specialists.	Feb 2021
STAGE 4	Finalise Glossy Black Cockatoo Resilience Action Plan and seek funding sources to implement key actions.	March 2021
STAGE 5	With funding granted/secured, prepare call for applications to support implementation.	April 2021
STAGE 6	ACTION PLAN IMPLEMENTATION	Commence May 2021

# Action Plan

ACTIONS	ORGANISATIONS	TIMEFRAME
<b>PROTECTION</b>		
1.1 Develop a GBC Resilience Action Plan to capture, share and effectively utilise existing data and identify gaps	NBRF, GBC Forum stakeholders	March 2021
1.2 Build stronger temporal and spatial protection of various habitat areas and corridors to ensure better management of current and future, watering, feeding and nesting trees.	Noosa Council, State Gov, local conservation groups	April 2021
1.3 Develop a comprehensive habitat regeneration plan considering mosaics of habitat for short, medium- and long-term management of watering, feeding and nesting sites across multiple locations to support conservation goals.	Noosa Council, State Gov, local conservation groups, GBC	May 2021
<b>RESEARCH</b>		
2.1 Combine existing knowledge with a suite of innovative tools for baseline mapping and ongoing monitoring of GBC population and habitat, especially the identification of nesting areas.	Research partner, local community groups, GBC	May 2021
2.2 Collaborate with LendLease and a research partner to develop a post-graduate study to map and monitor GBC habitat and nesting areas in the Noosa Shire.	NBRF, Lendlease, USC, GBC	May 2021
2.3 Develop guidelines for constructing, siting, monitoring, evaluating and maintaining nesting boxes.	Research partner, local community groups, GBC	May 2021
2.4 Identify and support ongoing volunteer programs and relevant research for GBC monitoring and management through citizen science and community engagement initiatives.	NBRF, Noosa Council, local community groups, GBC	May 2021

ACTIONS	ORGANISATIONS	TIMEFRAME
<b>POLICY, LEGISLATION &amp; ADVOCACY</b>		
3.1 Local – Increase community and stakeholder understanding of the GBC and identify opportunities to increase attention about and support for GBCs.	Local community conservation groups, NEEH, Noosa Council	
3.2 Direct meeting with Blue Care to explain the Noosa Biosphere and share results from the GBC symposium. Propose ways to mitigate the proposed development’s impacts on GBC habitat, and enhance community engagement.	NBRF, Noosa Council, Lend Lease/BlueCare, local conservation groups, GBC	
3.3 Council – Continue discussions with Noosa Councillors about the Biosphere, with designated sites being sustainability leaders.	Noosa Council, NBRF	
3.4 Propose that Noosa Council develop a GBC Species Management Plan with the State Government.	Noosa Council, DES	
3.5 State – Work with the state member to push for GBC Species Management Planning including habitat protection for vulnerable and threatened species. Widely engage stakeholders to ensure biodiversity, appropriate offsetting and species management, including GBCs, are considered a priority under the SEQ NRM planning process.	Sandy Bolton MP, DES, HLW, NDLG, Noosa Council	
3.6 Identify and review of historical Development Applications to ensure Environmental Impact Assessments represent the current status and are in line with contemporary conservation approaches to guide Council decisions.	Noosa Council, State Gov	

# People Matter

We would like to thank all the participants of the Glossy Black-Cockatoo Symposium for their time and dedication to preserve this threatened species. Special thanks to “Glossy Bob” Carey for his unwavering commitment to raising awareness of the plight of this special bird and to Maxine and Spencer Hitchin and Desire Gralton for their courage and determination in protecting the Glossy Black-Cockatoo habitat. The fight continues.

## How You Can Help

1. Connect with one of our local community groups to get involved in protecting important habitat of the Glossy Black-Cockatoo.
2. Get involved in citizen science and upload your Glossy Black-Cockatoo sightings to the [Glossy Black Conservancy](#) to support research.
3. Be a Glossy Black-Cockatoo advocate and let council, political representatives and others know that actions for Glossy Black-Cockatoo resilience are important to you.
4. Donate to the Glossy Black-Cockatoo [Campaign](#).

Your support will go directly towards seed-funding research and on-ground actions to better understand and protect critical Glossy Black-Cockatoo habitat in the Noosa Biosphere Reserve. All donations over \$2 are tax deductible.

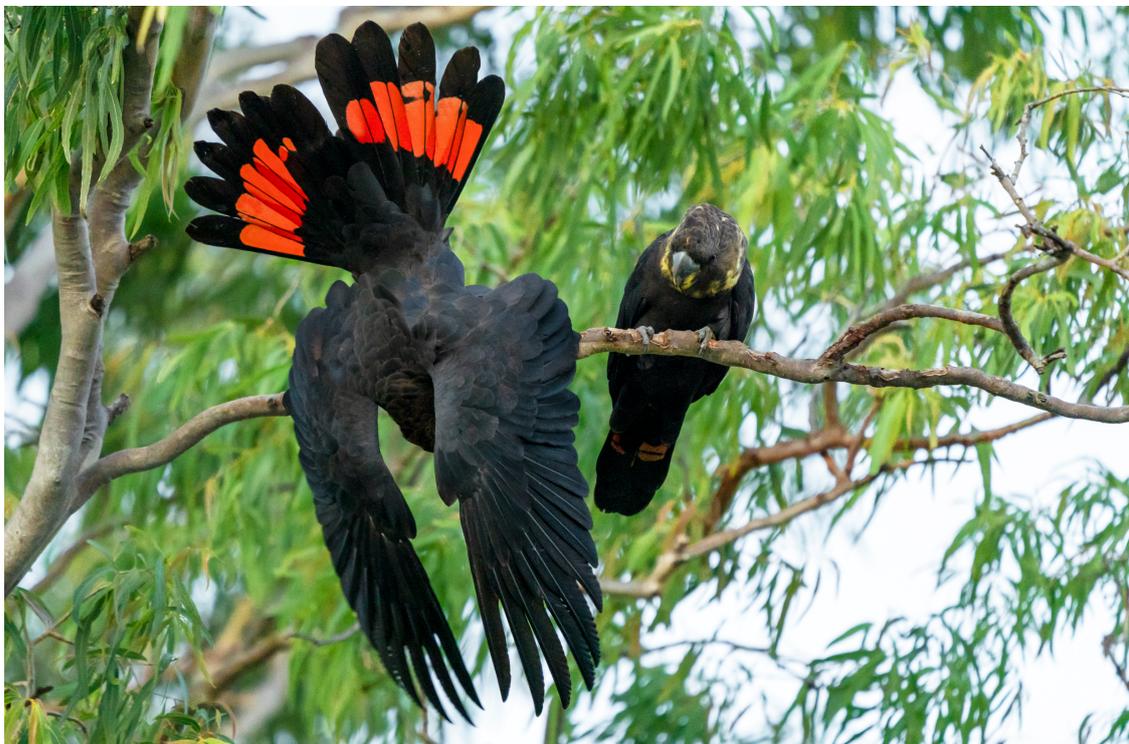


Image credit: Danika Royle

# About Noosa Biosphere Reserve

Noosa was designated as a Biosphere Reserve under the UNESCO Man and Biosphere Program in 2007, in recognition of the region's commitment to conserving biodiversity and managing sustainable development.

The Noosa Shire is a unique learning site for sustainable living. The factors that have helped shape the Noosa Biosphere Reserve include its unique natural landscape, social history, cultural traditions, government and regulatory systems as well as its political, social and economic activities. UNESCO Biosphere Reserve status helps Noosa demonstrate to communities around the world how environmental protection lies at the heart of a community's prosperity and success.

## The Noosa Biosphere Reserve area:

- The Noosa Biosphere Reserve is the geographical area known as the Noosa Shire, plus 3km offshore.
- The Noosa Biosphere Reserve was the first in Queensland and covers approximately 150,000 hectares of freshwater/tidal and terrestrial areas.
- Noosa is one of two biosphere reserves in Queensland with neighbouring Great Sandy Biosphere Reserve.
- The second biosphere reserve in Queensland is Great Sandy Biosphere Reserve.
- Both local biospheres have a close working and planning relationship.

An aerial photograph of the Noosa Biosphere Reserve coastline, showing a mix of green vegetation, sandy beaches, and turquoise water. Several small boats are visible in the water. A large, semi-transparent green circle is overlaid on the bottom left of the image, containing text.

*Noosa Biosphere is home to 3,023 wildlife species, including 10 iconic species of which the Glossy Black-Cockatoo is one.*

The Noosa Biosphere Reserve Foundation is a not-for-profit organisation established by the Noosa Shire Council to identify and action 'Big Ideas' aligned with the aims of the UNESCO Man and Biosphere Program and global Sustainable Development Goals.

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