Report finds Carnaby?s declining

Title A report released by BirdLife Australia (BirdLife Partner) and the Department of Environment and Conservation shows that the numbers of Carnaby?s Black-Cockatoos decreased in the Perth Region in the last year. BirdLife Australia?s WA Program Manager, Cheryl Gole, said ?From 2010 to 2011, we?ve seen a 37% decrease in the number of Carnaby?s Black-Cockatoos counted at night roosts in the Swan Region, an area which includes Perth.? Statistical modelling based on the 2011 Great Cocky Count has shown that the population of Carnaby?s Black-Cockatoo in the Swan Region was between 5,000 and 8,600 birds. A year earlier it was estimated that the population was 8,000 to 10,000. The Great Cocky Count reported smaller flock sizes at night roosts, with no roosts having more than 500 birds. ?What we?ve seen in 2011 is a shift towards the birds roosting in smaller groups as opposed to larger groups, what this means and whether we are seeing the start of a trend, we don?t yet know.?? WA?s Swan Region is the core feeding habitat during winter for northern and western populations of Carnaby?s Black-Cockatoo. Habitat clearance and fragmentation is the biggest threat to this cockatoo. ?While vegetation clearance has slowed down in the wheatbelt where most Carnaby?s Cockatoo breed, clearance within the metropolitan area is increasing?, said Cheryl Gole. ?Recent population forecasts for the Perth and Peel region indicate that there will be a larger population than previously predicted by2026. This is going to further increase the need for housing and land and increase the pressure on cockatoo habitat. We believe all habitat used by the cockatoos that remains in the Perth and Peel region is needed for the survival of the birds. We need to strike a balance, and act decisively and quickly to conserve what we have left.? Ms. Gole said that we do not know why the numbers of Carnaby?s Cockatoos have dropped in the Swan Region and why flock sizes appear to be smaller. BirdLife Australia is appealing to the public to provide more information on where the birds are roosting at night and to participate in the 2012 Great Cocky Count to help build a better idea of the total number of Carnaby?s Black-Cockatoos remaining in the south-west. More reports on night roosts outside the Perth area are urgently needed. The 2012 Great Cocky Count is happening for an hour at sunset on Sunday 15 April. BirdLife Australia is appealing for members of the public to take part or report cockatoo night roosts. Contact Tamara Kabat to take part greatcockycount@birdlife.org.au. The report and a brief summary are available on the BirdLife Australia website. http://www.birdlife.org.au/media/report-finds-carnabys-black-cockatoo-numbers-decline/