

## Wally Kerkhof's Carnaby's Black cockatoo artificial nesting log construction guide

### 11) Location location location

- Where you locate your log is vitally important (breeding areas only ie Salmon Gum/Wandoo areas)
- Each log should ideally be placed 5.5m above the ground
- Locate log with entrance hole facing NE, SE or E. NEVER W or N (rains) or S (cold winds)
- Locate log in known breeding area. Logs can be placed near to each other (approx. 10m apart)



Pole amongst Wandoo



Chained in a Wandoo

### 12) Erecting

- If on a pole, a base for the pole will need to be dug and cemented with collar pole (new idea using blue metal also). Attach log to main pole before lifting. A crane will be needed to lift log into position. 2-3 people needed.
- If chaining directly into tree use rope and pulley system to hoist log into tree. Need 3 people to help.



Crane lifting pole into place



Chaining into a tree

### 12) Repairs and monitoring

- Logs can last for 30 years
- Possible repairs can include cracking and rusted tek screws
- You can monitor whether a nest is occupied by making a few taps on the pole, or making a bit of noise. Hen will climb up and poke her head out to see.
- To monitor progress on an egg/chick, use a ladder or cherry picker to reach log. Carefully use camera to obtain image of inside of log
- If log occupied by non Carnaby, wait until dark then bang pole/log furiously until occupant leaves



Monitoring with the Shire



2015 twins



30 yr old log just repaired

# Wally Kerkhof's

## Carnaby's Black Cockatoo artificial nesting log construction guide



This is Wally Kerkhof's guide to constructing nesting logs for Carnaby's Black Cockatoos from fallen trees. Wally has spent over 30 years designing and constructing these artificial logs for placement in the Carnaby breeding areas of Moora and Mogumber. With the shortage of suitable natural nesting trees, this work has been essential in helping to recover the endangered Carnaby's Black Cockatoo population. Since 1983, 50 of these logs have been erected in Moora with around 80 chicks born every year from the artificial logs and natural hollows.

This booklet is for guidance only. Please adhere to good OH&S procedures when lifting heavy items, and using power and manual tools

### 1) Find suitable tree

- Salmon Gum and Wandoo work best
- Preferably not green wood (shrinkage), fallen tree better
- Minimum diameter approx. 440mm (result in 300mm hollow)
- Use solid wood, no termites (white ants), burls or weaknesses



Old fallen trees are best

### 2) Cut tree into nesting logs

- Length of nest should be a minimum of 900mm and maximum of 1200mm. This is dependant on diameter of trunk ie wider trunk, heavier nest !
- Raise tree from ground to get a clean cut with chainsaw
- Clean out centre of trunk (white ant mud and pith) before chainsawing to prevent blunting chain



Cutting up individual logs from trunk

### 3) Prepare to burn out middle

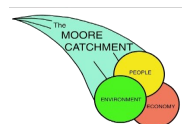
- Install air vents underneath log to ensure fire can draw. Vents = box tube 100mm square and 150mm long. Place in opposing position located under the thickest part of trunk
- Pack very wet clay around top of log to prevent fire escaping down side. Width of clay = 70mm
- Put kindling inside log and set alight



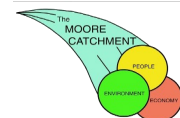
Air vent installed



Wet clay around the top is important



This guide has been designed by Moore Catchment Council and funded through the Australian Government's National Landcare Program. This is a guide only and MCC hopes sensible health and safety procedures are carried out through all stages. Further information about this project or Carnaby's nesting log construction can be obtained from Moore Catchment Council 08 9653 1355 or [www.moorecatchment.org.au](http://www.moorecatchment.org.au) All photos by R Walmsley and W Kerkhof



4) Burn log

- Complete burn time will be approx. 8 hrs. 1cm per hr approx.
- Watch out for fire nibble around the vents. Remedy by trowelling on wet clay to stop nibble.
- Fire should burn evenly. If uneven, then move vents to under thicker areas, or chip charcoal out to help fire along



Burning a log takes time

+ 5hrs

5) Extinguish fire and clean log

- When log has approx. 70mm rim left, extinguish fire with water. WATCH OUT FOR SCALDING HOT STEAM !!
- When cold, chip charcoal from around edge inside to clean up hole using a shovel



Extinguishing the fire with a hose



Cleaning log with a shovel

6) Prepare and install bottom plate

- Find 3mm aluminium plate. Example: old unused road signs (ask your local Shire)
- Draw around log on plate with marker. Cut to size using disc cutter or nibbler (drill). Smooth edge of rough metal.
- Remove any jagged edges on log base. Affix to log using 60mm tek screws. Each screw roughly 70mm apart



Aluminium plates make ideal bases



Cutting lid with a disc cutter



Affixing base to log

7) Decide how you will mount your log

- On a pole independent from trees, or chain attached to a tree
- Pole - advantages: protects from possums, white ants, fires and unruly children. Lasts longer
- disadvantages: more expensive, more time consuming
- Chain - advantages: cheaper, quicker
- disadvantages: potential to last less plus risks of possums, white ants, fire and unruly children
- Wally recommends mounting on a pole as preferred method (on a plate or hanging on chain from pole).



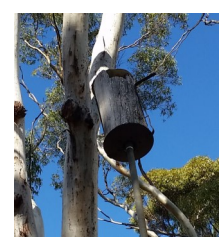
Log chained to pole



Log chained to tree



Log mounted on plate and attached to pole - Wally's preference



8) Make the entrance, hang chain and install a lid

- Cut entrance hole with chainsaw. 150mm square
- A chain needs to be installed to hang on pole or hang in tree. Install 2 bolts and 2 x D shackles. Affix 1m x 2.5cm chain.
- Install lid. Follow instructions for making bottom plate but screws can be double apart (less weight bearing)
- Ensure the lid is snug and edges are smooth (prevent injury)



Chainsawing entrance



Entrance hole



Smoothing off lid edge

9) Final touches

- Does the log need a perch? If natural one present then no need. Make one from a pipe.
- Fill base of log with nesting medium. Black and Gold potting mix is ideal (minimal fertiliser content). Tree pith is ok. Tree mulch is ok. NO sawdust (too dry) or straw/leaves (too dry)



Perch installed for access



Best nesting medium