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Diet and breeding of White-bellied Sea-Eagles *Haliaeetus leucogaster* in subtropical river habitats in the Northern Territory, Australia

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Diet and breeding of White-bellied Sea-Eagles *Haliaeetus leucogaster* were studied at two sites in the subtropical Northern Territory of Australia over seven years: at Mary River (20 territories), characterised by a permanently high water level; and the Alligator Rivers at Kapalga (20 territories), characterised by high wet-season and low dry-season water levels. Overall diet comprised aquatic reptiles (45%), fish (28%), birds (24%) and mammals (3%). Relatively more fish and snakes were taken at Mary River and relatively more turtles and birds at Kapalga. Nests were significantly closer at Mary River (mean 0.9 km apart) than at Kapalga (mean 6.5 km apart). Most eggs were laid from May to August and most nestlings were fl edged from August to October. Significantly more Sea-Eagle pairs successfully bred annually at Mary River (mean 7.7 pairs) than at Kapalga (mean 4.1 pairs), and significantly more young were fledged annually at Mary River (mean 9.3) than at Kapalga (mean 4.6). Mortality included eggs that failed to hatch, facultative fratricide in downy nestlings, and death of nestlings from avian pox, fratricide and accidents. Downy nestling mortality was significantly greater at Kapalga (mean 3.3/year) than at Mary River (mean 1.1/year). Sea-Eagle breeding habitats in the Northern Territory are under increasing threat from urban and tourism developments. This threat needs to be addressed through a process of management plans and public awareness programs about the ecological role of White-bellied Sea-Eagles.