

## DIET OF BREEDING WEDGE-TAILED EAGLES *Aquila audax* IN SOUTH-CENTRAL QUEENSLAND

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The diet of the Wedge-tailed Eagle *Aquila audax* was studied in south-central Queensland, an area of low rabbit density, by means of prey remains ( $n = 795$  prey animals) and pellets (total 2.26 kg) from 13 active nests at five sites (four sheep stations, one national park) over one breeding season. Nine clutches were all of two eggs, and a mean of 1.2 fledglings was raised per attempt. By biomass, the eagles' diet was dominated by macropods, especially in the national park, with few rabbits taken among a range of mammals, birds and lizards (total 28 species). Prey composition varied geographically with habitat and land use, and seasonally. However, despite variation in density, lamb formed a similar (though minor) proportion of the diet across sites. Remains (orts mostly post-cranial) represented 29 percent of estimated dietary intake, whereas pellets were found to represent only 6.1 percent of intake.<sup>2</sup>