

# FORAGING BEHAVIOUR OF HOODED ROBINS *Melanodryas cucullata* IN THE NORTHERN TABLELANDS OF NEW SOUTH WALES

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*Received: 12 July 2002*

Hooded Robins foraged mainly by pouncing or gleaning on the ground for invertebrates, with an increase in gleaning in winter. Less frequently they hawked for flying insects and gleaned or snatched prey from bark, both of which were more common in summer and autumn. Although branches were the most frequent perches from which foraging was initiated, Robins also foraged from trunks, stumps and logs and an array of artificial structures. Perches were typically close to the ground, though hawking, gleaning and snatching were usually carried out 3–8 metres above the ground. Foraging rates were more rapid in winter, partly due to the increase in ground-feeding, which employs more rapid foraging techniques, but also because the absolute foraging rates while ground gleaning and pouncing increased. The sexes did not differ in their foraging behaviour and there were only minor differences among study sites. Comparisons with other studies revealed that Hooded Robins forage in a similar way to the Eastern Yellow Robin *Eopsaltria australis*, though the latter occupies open forest rather than woodland. The smaller Scarlet *Petroica multicolor*, Flame *P. phoenicea* and Red-capped *P. goodenovii* Robins also forage in a similar way to Hooded Robins, especially in winter, when they forage more on the ground.