

DIET AND BREEDING BIOLOGY OF THE WEDGE-TAILED EAGLE *Aquila audax* AT THREE NESTS IN NORTH-EASTERN NEW SOUTH WALES

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The diet and breeding biology of the Wedge-tailed Eagle *Aquila audax* were studied by observation and collection of prey remains and pellets at three active nests in the Richmond Valley in north-eastern New South Wales, during July to November 1997. The nests successfully fledged one young each after estimated incubation and nestling periods of 40–47 days and 75–85 days respectively. The diet consisted of 29 species of vertebrates: 27 per cent birds, 50 per cent mammals and 23 per cent reptiles by number, including a variety of native mammals but few rabbits in this region of high biodiversity and generally low rabbit numbers. Hunting behaviour, parental roles and nestling growth are described.