

AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR OF RED WATTLEBIRDS *Anthochaera carunculata* AND NOISY FRIARBIRDS *Philemon corniculatus*

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The aggressive behaviour of Red Wattlebirds and Noisy Friarbirds was quantified in a 240 ha remnant of eucalypt woodland near Armidale, New South Wales, from 1990 to 1992. Wattlebirds spent 1.8 per cent and Friarbirds 1.7 per cent of their time in aggressive activities. Wattlebirds chased from 1.2 to 3.7 and Friarbirds 0.5 to 1.8 birds per hour from the vicinity of their nests with young. Higher aggression rates were shown away from the nest in the 1991 breeding season (7.7 and 6.5 chases per hour, figures for Wattlebirds first) and at a heavily flowering *Grevillea robusta* tree on the University of New England campus (6.1 and 17.7 chases per hour, for Wattlebird and Friarbird respectively).

Aggression is not indiscriminate, but is principally aimed at potential competitors and predators. The most frequent victims of aggression were conspecifics (24% in Wattlebirds, 37% in Friarbirds), other large honeyeaters (32%, 10%), potential nest predators (14%, 22%) and small honeyeaters (12%, 14%). Small insectivores were only occasionally chased. The impact of these large honeyeaters on other birds may be small in large woodland remnants, though it could be more significant in small or degraded patches.