

CONTRIBUTION OF INTRODUCED FRUITS TO THE WINTER DIET OF PIED CURRAWONGS IN ARMIDALE, NEW SOUTH WALES

DAVID A. BASS

Department of Geography and Planning, University of New England, Armidale, NSW 2351
Present address: Centre for Coastal Management, Faculty of Resource Science and Management,
Southern Cross University, P.O. Box 157, Lismore, NSW 2480

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Pied Currawong abundance was surveyed in 1988, 1989 and 1990 in Armidale, New South Wales. Pied Currawongs congregated each April and dispersed in the following September. This pattern is consistent with other studies in south eastern Australia and is best explained in terms of a combination of dietary shifts and breeding pressure. The seed dispersal role of Pied Currawongs was assessed in 1989 by collection of regurgitated pellets containing seeds of ornamental plants. Seeds of 22 species of introduced plants were dispersed by Pied Currawongs. *Ligustrum* and *Pyracantha* were the most common genera dispersed by Pied Currawongs. These plants and others such as *Pistacia chinensis* will continue to be dispersed by Pied Currawongs and invade bushland. This may possibly increase numbers of Pied Currawongs, increase nestling predation rates on small birds, and promote invasion by introduced fleshy fruiting plants.