

# **SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE ECOLOGY OF THE RAINBOW LORIKEET *Trichoglossus haematodus* IN OATLEY, SOUTH SYDNEY**

R. D. WATERHOUSE

4/1-5 Ada Street, Oatley, New South Wales 2223

*Received: 12 December, 1995*

The Rainbow Lorikeet was a familiar bird during the early days of settlement of Sydney. It became less common by the 1920s, but is now common again throughout Sydney.

A weekly survey conducted during 1993 and 1994 in Oatley, along the Georges River in southern Sydney established that the birds feed, roost and breed in the area.

Major sources of food varied according to season but pollen and nectar was taken from a mix of native and exotic species. The introduced Coral Tree provide a major and reliable source of food, especially during the winter months and while the birds were breeding. Fruit of the Small-leaved Fig was the only major fruit observed to be taken. Sunflower and other seeds were provided by local residents and were an additional source of food for the birds.

Rainbow Lorikeets also seem to compete successfully for breeding hollows with other suburban bird species, including native and introduced species such as Southern Boobook, Sulphur-crested Cockatoos, Eastern Rosellas, Galahs, Dollarbirds, Common Mynahs. Suitable nesting hollows were found in Blackbutts and Rusty Gums growing in some small local bushland reserves.