

## Yellow Wattlebirds *Anthochaera paradoxa* may conserve energy through targeted aggression

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Aggression in honeyeaters is thought to be important in both their own social organisation and the homogenization/ composition of avian assemblages. Honeyeater agonistic behaviour is considered complex, but imperfectly understood. This study explored interspecific aggression by Yellow Wattlebirds, *Anthochaera paradoxa* at a flowering Coral Tree, *Erythrina variegata* which provided them with a rich nectar source. Yellow Wattlebirds responded to the presence of other birds in a targeted way. Their aggression was structured such that it resulted in effective defence of a rich nectar source while avoiding wasting energy by attacking only the largest groups of Silvereyes, *Zosterops lateralis* in the tree rather than many individuals independently; this nearly always resulted in clearing the tree of all the Silvereyes present. Yellow Wattlebirds did not attack non-nectarivorous species in the Coral Tree or nectarivorous species outside it.

**Keywords:** honeyeaters, agonistic behaviour, interspecific aggression, nectarivorous, flock flight initiation.