



Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo
length 60 cm

Eastern Rosella
length 30 cm

Tawny Frogmouth
length 44 cm

Red Wattlebird
length 35 cm

Grey Butcherbird
length 30 cm

Pied Currawong
length 45 cm

Spotted Dove
length 30 cm
(Introduced Species)

Laughing Kookaburra
length 45 cm

Sulphur-crested Cockatoo
length 50 cm

Crimson Rosella
length 35 cm

Red-browed Finch
length 12 cm

Rainbow Lorikeet
length 30 cm

House Sparrow
length 15 cm
(Introduced Species)

Noisy Miner
length 25 cm

Common Blackbird
length 27 cm
(Introduced Species)

Willie Wagtail
length 20 cm

backyard birds OF VICTORIA



White-plumed Honeyeater
length 16 cm

Eastern Spinebill
length 15 cm

Yellow-rumped Thornbill
length 11 cm

Silvereye
length 12 cm

New Holland Honeyeater
length 20 cm

Superb Fairy-wren
(female and male)
length 14 cm

Common (Indian) Myna
length 25 cm
(Introduced Species)

Maggie-lark (Pee-wee)
length 25 cm

Australian Magpie
length 40 cm

Galah
length 35 cm

For inquiries about birds and domestic gardens, contact:

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Birds in Your Garden

How to bring back the little ones...

Australia-wide, populations of many of our small bird species are declining. Once common birds such as finches, fairy-wrens, silveryeyes and small honeyeaters, are becoming rare or, in some places are no longer being seen at all. There are many reasons for this, but the biggest is the loss of places for them to live (habitat) and successfully raise their families.

This situation exists in both rural farmlands and in built up urban areas; from big cities to rural townships. That means that we can all contribute towards saving our small birds irrespective of where we live or how big our gardens are. We just need to do things a little differently.

Small changes for a big difference . . .

Garden design and structure:

Simple open gardens provide little shelter or food for birds. We need to plant:

- dense shrubs close together so they form protective thickets.
- shrubs that provide a range of foods: nectar, seeds, fruit and habitat for insects.
- local plants that provide what the birds in our local areas need.
- below trees, creating a dense protective understory.
- less grass for mowing, but rather use native grasses that can seed and only need cutting occasionally.

We should:

- avoid using chemical sprays or applying chemical fertilizers.
- use lawn clippings and leaf litter on garden beds as mulch.

Providing water:

Birds need fresh water but they are vulnerable when they are drinking or bathing and need to feel safe.

We should:

- place birdbaths beyond the reach of cats, and in dappled shade.
- grow plants close to birdbaths so birds can perch and observe the area first.
- replace the water and clean the water container regularly.
- ask a neighbour to add water when we're away, so the birds don't lose their water supply.

Provision of supplementary food:

It is much healthier for birds to glean natural food from our gardens than to be fed directly by people. However, many people really enjoy the contact they have with birds that they provide food for. If you want to provide extra food for birds make sure that:

- the feeding area is kept really clean.
- you don't feed meat-eating birds – encourage the small birds that are declining, not their predators.
- only provide good quality natural foods, e.g. finch seed rather than bread.

Be a responsible pet owner:

Keep your cat inside or within an outside enclosure. This is safer for the cat as well as other wildlife

- De-sexing prevents unwanted kittens.
- Deter other cats from entering your yard by spraying them with water.

To find out more about the birds in your area, creating gardens and habitat for birds at home, in school grounds or any open spaces, or undertaking bird surveys in your own garden or local area, see the Birds in Backyards website www.birdsinbackyards.net

Photo credits: Bob Ravich (Red-browed Finch), Wojciech Dabrowka & Kevin Vang /Bird Explorers (Grey Butcherbird, White-plumed Honeyeater, Laughing Kookaburra, New Holland Honeyeater, Eastern Spinebill, Superb Fairy-wrens, Eastern Rosella, Tawny Frogmouth), Michael Seyfort/Australian Museum (Silvereye), Richard Major/ Australian Museum (Pied Currawong, Australian Magpie, Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, Galah, Crimson Rosella, Rainbow Lorikeet, Red Wattlebird, Noisy Miner, Magpie-lark, Willie Wagtail, Common Myna), Akos Luminitzer (Spotted Dove), Greg Gowing/Australian Museum (Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo)

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