

# Major Mitchell's Cockatoo

*Cacatua leadbeateri*



These distinctive Cockatoos are found in Semi-arid to Arid Shrubland with tree-lined watercourses, where nest hollows tend to be located; also found in Woodlands throughout inland Australia.

Families join a large nomadic flock during the summer and spend autumn and winter wandering over 300km<sup>2</sup>. Flocks may number several hundred birds, and contain breeding and non-breeding birds. Pairs begin to visit their nesting territories in August, but return to forage with the flock.

Formation of large flocks in autumn and winter renders them particularly susceptible to poisoning or trapping. Although such flocks appear large, they represent all ages from a very large area, so that the small proportion of new birds to the flock may be obscured and therefore the number of birds affected by poisoning and trapping may be larger than it appears.

The male has a dark brown eye while the female develops a red eye when she is around 2 years old. The Major Mitchell's Cockatoo is very scarce in collections in South Africa, and we are hoping our pair will breed to boost the genetic diversity of these special birds in local collections.



**Lifespan:** 45 Years

**Weight:** 360 - 480 g

**Size:** 35 cm

**Breeding Season:** August - October

**Incubation Period:** 23 - 24 Days

**Number of Chicks:** 2 - 5

**Diet:** Grain, seeds and Insect larvae

**Problems They Face:** Habitat destruction, poisoning, persecution by farmers.

**Conservation Status:** Not globally Threatened - CITES App. 2.