

Common Name/Scientific name: Sulphur-crested Cockatoo/ *Cacatua galerita*

The raucous screech of the Sulphur-crested Cockatoo can be heard in many parts of eastern and northern Australia. A flock of hundreds of snow-white birds with pale-yellow crests can be a spectacular sight when seen in the distance, but up close their calls can be deafening. Being a gregarious species, these cockatoos usually spend much time in flocks, foraging together on the ground (often with a few perched in nearby trees keeping a lookout for any sign of danger) or roosting together in trees.



Description: The Sulphur-crested Cockatoo is a large white parrot. It has a dark grey-black bill, a distinctive sulphur-yellow crest and a yellow wash on the underside of the wings. Sexes are similar, although the female can be separated at close range by its red-brown eye (darker brown in the male). This is a noisy and conspicuous cockatoo, both at rest and in flight. Young Sulphur-crested Cockatoos resemble the adults.

Where seen in the gardens: Sulphur-crested Cockatoos are found in a variety of timbered habitats and are common around human settlements. The birds stay in the same area all year round. We don't see them feeding in large flocks in the gardens, we do see a few at times, mainly on the grassy lawns and scratching about in the mulch in developed garden beds and open forest. They also can be seen perching in nearby trees.

Feeding & Behaviour in the gardens: The Sulphur-crested Cockatoo's normal diet consists of berries, seeds, nuts and roots. They also may take handouts from humans. Feeding normally takes place in small to large groups, with one or more members of the group watching for danger from a nearby perch. When not feeding, birds will bite off smaller branches and leaves from trees, which may help to keep the bill trimmed and from growing too large.

Nesting: The eggs are laid in a suitable tree hollow. Both birds incubate and care for the chicks. The chicks remain with the parents all year round and family groups will stay together indefinitely. However as most of the gardens and adjoining reserves is regrowth forest less than 60 years old, few trees have suitable hollows.

Similar Species in the gardens: The Sulphur-crested Cockatoo is similar in appearance to the Little Corella, which is smaller, and lacks the prominent yellow crest. Little Corellas are seen around the Sunshine Coast, but sightings are rarely recorded at the gardens.