Common Name/*Scientific name:*    **Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike/*Coracina novaehollandiae***

In flight, the Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike appears rather lazy, as it gives a few flaps of its wings, then glides with them by its side for a second or two; during this glide, the bird loses elevation until it flaps again, giving the flight its characteristic undulating pattern. Black-faced Cuckoo-shrikes sometimes form mobile flocks of dozens of birds, each flying in this manner but not synchronised with the other birds. Foraging Black-faced Cuckoo-shrikes may hover in the wind, plucking invertebrates from the foliage of trees and shrubs without alighting.



Black-faced Cuckooshrike & juvenile

Mary Hynes

**Description:** Black-faced Cuckoo-shrikes have a black face and throat, blue-grey back, wings and tail, and white underparts. They are slender, attractive birds. They have a curious habit of shuffling their wings upon landing, a practice that gave rise to the name "Shufflewing", which is often used for this species. This shuffling is also carried out by most other species in this family. Young birds resemble the adults, except the black facial mask is reduced to an eye stripe.

**Where seen in the gardens**: The Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike is found in almost any wooded habitat, with the exception of rainforests, so you could expect to see them in most areas of the gardens except the densely forested areas along the creeks.

**Feeding & Behaviour in the gardens:** Black-faced Cuckoo-shrikes feed on insects and other invertebrates. These may be caught in the air, taken from foliage or caught on the ground. In addition to insects, some fruits and seeds are also eaten.

**Nesting**: Black-faced Cuckoo-shrikes may mate with the same partner each year, and may use the same territories year after year. The nest is remarkably small for the size of the bird. It is a shallow saucer of sticks and bark, bound together with cobwebs. Both partners construct the nest and care for the young birds.

**Similar Species in the gardens:** The Cicada bird is similar to the Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike but does not have the black face.