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Australia Zoo
Home of The Crocodile Hunter

Amazing Animals
Fact sheets

Native Parrots

Around 300 species of the parrot family have been recorded throughout the world, extending from the tropics to the subtropical and colder parts of the Southern Hemisphere. 56 species are found in Australia, and only five of these are found elsewhere in the world. The parrot family includes cockatoos, lorikeets, rosellas, ringnecks and budgerigars.

Sulphur-crested Cockatoo

The Sulphur-crested Cockatoo is probably Australia's best known parrot. These birds are often kept as pets, as they are extremely intelligent and are very good at learning to talk. Be warned though - they can be very loud, mischievous and live for more than 70 years! If you don't have the time to spend with these wonderful birds, they are not the pet for you.

Habitat

Widely distributed through most types of open timbered country throughout northern, eastern and southwestern mainland.

Diet

Mid-morning the cockatoos usually feed on seeds on the ground, then during the hottest part of the day they sit in trees near the feeding area, stripping the leaves and bark. In the afternoon they feed again and then fly back to their roosting trees for the night. Each day they return to feed in the same area until the food supply is exhausted. They eat the seeds of grasses and herbaceous plants, grains, bulbous roots, berries, nuts and leaf buds.

Breeding

Sulphur-crested Cockatoos nest in hollow limbs or holes high up in Eucalypts near water. They breed between August and January in the South and March to September in the North

Australia Zoo Sulphur-crested Cockatoo profiles

Occa

Occa is a Sulphur-crested Cockatoo. He is in his late thirties, which is actually still rather young for a Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, as they can live up to 80 years of age and sometimes even past 100. The average cockatoo has the learning capability of about a one- to two year old child, and they can learn and remember many phrases. Occa can do many impersonations, like a rooster crowing, a dog barking and even a kettle whistling. (We are still practising "CRIKEY!").
He's very intelligent and even surprises us sometimes with what he comes out with. He often asks us if we want a drink of water or a cup of coffee, but one day he said, "Occa wants a can of coke". Occa is such a great mate, and always has his keepers laughing.

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