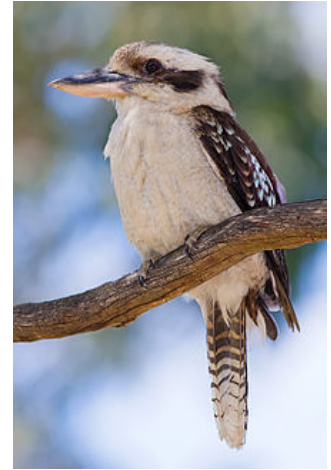




**LAUGHING
KOOKABURRA**
CORACIIFORMES
Family: Alcedinidae
Genus: *Dacelo*
Species: *novaeguineae*



Range: native to eastern Australia; introduced to southwest Australia and Tasmania
Habitat: Woods, temperate forest, scrub, often far from water
Niche: Arboreal, carnivorous, diurnal
Wild diet: Lizards, snakes up to 50 cm in length, crabs, large insects and small rodents
Zoo diet:
Life Span: (Wild) 15 years
(Captivity) 20 years
Sexual dimorphism: F slightly larger than M. and have less blue to rump than the M.
Location in SF Zoo: Behind California Conservation Corridor

APPEARANCE & PHYSICAL ADAPTATIONS:

This largest of kingfishers has dark upper plumage and white under parts. Wings are spotted with white while the tail is reddish with black bands. There is a dark band passing through the eye along the sides of the head. The large bill is broad and flattened with a dark upper mandible and a lighter lower mandible. The 3-4 inch bill is hooked at the tip. They have short legs, a stout body and feet that are flat with the middle and outer toes fused together (syndactyl).

Weight: 6.9-16.4 oz

Length: 16 - 18 inches

They will reduce their basal metabolic rate significantly at night to conserve energy. The birds display huddle behavior while roosting to stay warm as they roost communally at night.

STATUS & CONSERVATION

They are subject to habitat destruction and fragmentation as they need forest areas for finding food and nesting. They are listed on the IUCN Red List as Least Concern as it has an extremely large range.

COMMUNICATION AND OTHER BEHAVIOR

Their territorial call is a loud chorus of screams and chuckles hence the name “Laughing Jackass”. As most calls are made at dawn, these calls resemble human laughter earning them another title “the bushman’s clock”.

Most hunting takes place from a perch above the ground then return to perch to kill the prey by smacking it against the perch. When on the ground they hop instead of walk. This species is sedentary and occupies the same territory throughout the year.

COURTSHIP AND YOUNG

There is little to no courtship displays. They breed in nuclear family groups with a monogamous pair assisted by up to six helper-birds. These helpers assist in defending the territory and feeding the young and may stay with their parents for up to 4-years. Female helpers often leave their group during the first year to join another group. Males typically leave later after about 2 seasons. Nests are usually burrows inside of termite mounds. Kookaburra chicks display significant aggression from the moment they hatch.

Incubation: 20-22 days	Sexual Maturity: 12 mos
# of eggs: 2 – 3 eggs	Fledging: 40 days

MISCELLANEOUS

This is a non-migratory bird. Kookaburras play an integral role in the ecosystem by controlling small animal populations.

Sources:

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