

**Common Name/Scientific name** Grey Butcherbird/*Cracticus torquatus*



**Description:** Adult - black crown and face and a grey back, with a thin white collar. The wings are grey, with large areas of white and the underparts are white. The grey and black bill is large, with a small hook at the tip of the upper bill. The eye is dark brown and the legs and feet are dark grey. Both sexes are similar in plumage, but the females are slightly smaller than the males. Young Grey Butcherbirds resemble adults, but have black areas replaced with olive-brown and a buff wash on the white areas. The bill is completely dark grey and often lacks an obvious hook.

**Behaviour in the gardens:** Many grey butcherbirds view gardens visitors as a source of food, and will swoop by to grab a sausage or biscuit from a visitor's hand, mouth or picnic setting. Please do not feed them, it encourages their aggression!

**Where seen in the gardens:** Wooded bushland areas and open areas with nearby remnant vegetation (ie most gardens areas); often near the cafe and picnic tables.

**Feeding:** Grey Butcherbirds are aggressive predators. They prey on small animals, including birds, lizards and insects, as well as some fruits and seeds. Uneaten food may be stored in the fork of a branch or impaled. Grey Butcherbirds sit on an open perch searching for prey which, once sighted, they pounce on. Most mobile prey is caught on the ground, though small birds and insects may be caught in flight.

**Nesting:** The Grey Butcherbird's nest is bowl-shaped, and is made of sticks and twigs, lined with grasses and other soft fibres. It is normally located within 10 m of the ground. The eggs are incubated by the female and the young birds are fed by both parents.

**Similar Species:** Pied Butcherbird, *C. nigrogularis*, is larger and boldly marked in black and white.