

**Common Name/Scientific name Pied Currawong/*Strepera graculina***

Once a regular winter visitor to lowland areas, Pied Currawongs are increasingly remaining at lower elevations areas throughout the year. Assisted by extra of food in the form of scraps and the berries of exotic plants, they have become permanent guests in the lowlands. They are now seen around the gardens most of the year.



**Description:** The Pied Currawong is a large (up to 480mm in length), mostly black bird, with a bright yellow eye. Small patches of white are confined to the under tail, the tips and bases of the tail feathers and a small patch towards the tip of each wing (visible in flight). The bill is large and black and the legs are dark grey-black. Both sexes are similar, although the female may sometimes be greyer on the underparts. Young Pied Currawongs are duller and browner than the adults.

**Where seen in the gardens:** The Pied Currawong prefers forests and woodlands, but in the gardens is often seen on the ground and flying over open areas as well.

**Feeding and Behaviour in the gardens:** Pied Currawongs feed on a variety of foods including small lizards, insects, caterpillars and berries. They also take a large number of small and young birds, especially around open areas where suitable cover is scarce. Larger prey, up to the size of a young possum, are also taken, and birds will occasionally hunt as a group.

**Nesting:** Nest is a bowl of sticks, lined with grasses and other soft material. The material is gathered by both sexes, but the female builds the nest, which is placed in a high tree fork, up to 20 m above the ground. The female incubates the eggs, and the male feeds her. The male also supplies food to the female for the first week after the chicks hatch and she feeds the chicks.

**Similar Species:** Australian Magpie, *Gymnorhina tibicen*, has a grey and black bill and a red-brown eye and also has large areas of white on the body.