



SHIRE OF ASHBURTON

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MEDIA RELEASE

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Suspected poisoning of Little Corellas

An increasing number of *Little Corellas* have been found dead in the 'Area W' vicinity of Tom Price. The cause of death is currently unknown. It was thought to be heat exhaustion but suspicions are now turning toward other environmental factors. Some suggest it is deliberate poisoning with over thirty carcasses found near the Minha Oval since November 2011. The matter has been reported to the Department of Environment and Conservation who are currently investigating the situation.

Little corellas are native to the Pilbara region and are classified as protected species, unlike the eastern long-billed corella which were introduced to WA and are not found in the Pilbara. It is believed the population increase of little corellas in the region is largely due to the establishment of water and an abundance of food and waste at local refuge sites.

Due to the sheer scale of numbers causing damage to local infrastructure, the little corellas have been declared as pests to agriculture. "We can assure you that the Shire of Ashburton has nothing to do with birds being poisoned," says Senior Ranger Morgwn Jones. "We have been granted a destruction license by the DEC to use culling methods to deal with the population of corellas in the region, but poisoning the birds is illegal and puts other wildlife at risk".

The Shire of Ashburton plan to work with the DEC in finding a long-term management plan but in the meantime it is advised not to touch any dead birds and to report any sightings to the Shire.

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