sive areas with a historic and continued use for stock grazing (Gibson et al. 2008; Cheal et al. 2010), so a population decline is estimated here to be 20–29% in 3 generations (71 years).

Ecology
Inhabits arid and semi-arid woodlands dominated by Mulga *Acacia aneura*, mallee and box eucalypts, Slender Cypress Pine *Callitris gracilis* or Belah *Casuarina cristata*. Often nests in hollows in Cypress Pines >80 and preferably 130–140 years old (Gibson et al. 2008). The main requirements of the species are trees with suitable nesting hollows and fresh surface water (Higgins 1999). In contrast to other cockatoos, pairs of Major Mitchell Cockatoos will generally not nest close to one another: breeding pairs of the western subspecies *L. l. mollis* occupy nests that are at least 1 km apart, and have densities of about 1 pair per 30 km² (Saunders et al. 1985; Rowley and Chapman 1991), though, in Vic, inter-nest distances are shorter (mean 444 m, minimum 50 m, with nests possibly more clumped because nest hollows are so restricted (Department of Sustainability and Environment 2008). They are scarce in fragmented landscapes, tending to travel along vegetated corridors to feeding sites (Department of Sustainability and Environment 2008). They feed on seeds of a wide variety of native shrubs and trees, especially cypress pines, and also some insect larvae and seeds of some agricultural crops and weeds (Higgins 1999). A generation time of 23.7 years (BirdLife International 2011) is derived from an age at first breeding of 4.3 years (extrapolated from *Cacatua* spp.) and a maximum longevity in the wild of 43.1 years, extrapolated from known oldest bird in captivity; 77 years.

Threats
The continued loss of hollow-bearing trees and the increasing competition for nest hollows with Galahs, which are increasing in semi-cleared agricultural landscapes, are serious immediate threats. The cockatoos also face competition for hollows with feral European Honey Bees *Apis mellifera*. Nest box trials conducted in Victoria (Hurley 2009) have so far attracted Galahs and Barn Owls *Tyto alba*.
but not Major Mitchell’s Cockatoos (Hurley 2011). New hollows, however, are not being formed at a rate necessary to replace old ones because regeneration of the favoured hollow-bearing tree, Cypress Pine, is being prevented by grazing by stock, feral herbivores, such as European Rabbit Oryctolagus cuniculus and feral goats Capra hircus, and inflated populations of kangaroos Macropus spp. (Department of Sustainability and Environment 2008).

**Conservation objectives**

1. A population known to be stable
2. A successful recruitment event of *Callitris* pines within the species’ range

**Information required**

1. Trends in population size
2. Definitive evidence that nest hollow availability is limiting population size
3. A nest box design that is used in the wild by Major Mitchell Cockatoos
4. Factors influencing *Callitris* pine regeneration and survival

**Management actions required**

1. Test effectiveness of Galah control
2. Design and trial an appropriate nest box
3. Where appropriate control nesting Galahs
4. Manage total grazing pressure in rangelands and protected areas by controlling stock, rabbits, feral goats and kangaroos
5. Manage fires to minimise loss of hollow-bearing trees, particularly known nest sites

**Bibliography**


**Comments received from**

Victor Hurley, Damon Oliver