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Arun Books, Orewa, New Zealand.

Sulphur-crested cockatoo: pp 205-206.



SULPHUR-CRESTED COCKATOO

Family Cacatuidae

Species *Cacatua galerita*

Common name Sulphur-crested Cockatoo

Status Introduced from cage-bird escapes although it may have been added to over the years by windblown stragglers from Australia from where it originates

Abundance Common in selected areas

Size 500 mm (cf sparrow 145 mm, Kaka 450 mm)

Habitat Found in native forest remnants, exotic plantations and especially in eucalypt trees.

Worldwide range In Australia it is extremely common being found in eastern and northern states. It is also found in Papua New Guinea and eastern Indonesia. In New Zealand it has never built up large populations but numbers are growing in some localities.

New Zealand range The main North Island populations are found in small groups in areas to the west from Awakino in the south to Muriwai Beach in the north. Other populations exist near Miranda, Hunterville and Waikanae. The South Island range is limited to populations near Christchurch and south of Dunedin. Generally, though, this is not an easy species to locate. It is found more by chance.

Description

Crest and behind eye Yellow. **Upperparts and underparts** White. **Bill and feet** Greyish-black. **Eye** Brown with a blue eye-ring.

Conspicuous feature

- A large white parrot with a sulphur-coloured crest.

Conspicuous characteristics

- In the breeding season regularly seen in pair.
- Out of breeding season seen in large and mobile flocks which are often noisy.

Call Harsh and raucous screeches.

Nest A hole high up in a tree, usually with 2 white eggs.

Feeding habits It feeds and roosts in tall trees by day, and congregates in them over-night. From time to time it will feed on the ground with some sentry birds posted around in taller vegetation.

Where to find – North Island

South Auckland – Onewhero near Tuakau on Nolan Road, Brien Road, Matakītiki Road and Baker Road.

South Auckland – Miranda, Whakatiwai Bay and in the Mangatangi Road area. Often visits the land around the Miranda Trust centre and that around the “Stilt Ponds”. P. 302.

Waikato – Waingaro district west of Ngaruawahia.

Waikato – Horsham Downs to Te Kowhai near Hamilton where it seeks out eucalypt trees.

Manawatu – East of Hunterville at the headwaters of the Rangitikei River, and west of Hunterville towards the headwaters of the Turakina River near Turakina Valley Road.

Wellington – Waikanae near the cemetery in Ngarara Road. P. 339.

Where to find – South Island

Christchurch – Greendale south of Christchurch.

Canterbury – Little River area on Highway 75, the road to Akaroa, and Prices Valley Road near the northern end of Lake Ellesmere and near Lake Forsyth. P. 351.

Southland – Owaka and into the Catlins district in areas of eucalypts and open pasture. P. 362.