

2 April 2011

Hi All,

We are certainly having our fair share of rain this year. Monday night the rain gauge overflowed at 300mm collected during the night after 6pm.

Cassowary Dad 1 turned up Thursday morning, he normally stays on the top of the range. I filled the feed stations at 6am and all was quiet but soon after, about ½ hour, drumming, honking, and rushing sounds came from the forest. I had gone into the vegetable garden to shift the covers [and talk to my vegetables] and Dad 1, with chicks following strode purposely up to the van which is in a shed behind the veg garden and he started pecking at the rear vision mirror. Fortunately I had the camera in my pocket.



Just then 'Big Sis' came into the feed station and was chased. Dad 1 found the food and he ate the lot, giving some to the chicks I assume. He then remained in the area the whole day and I was unable to refill the feed station.

It is quite amazing to watch the different behaviour of the older chicks with Dad 4, so independent and out in front and constantly sounding low whistles, when the younger chicks [about six weeks] of Dad 1 follow, ever so quietly, behind and never take their eyes off their father.

'Little Runt' has not returned and on Friday I saw him at the top of the range. I hope he finds a feed. Dad 4 is staying near the Western feed station but 'Big Sis' is claiming her territory and staying put.



Coquette Point's White Breasted Sea Eagles have been flying together. Sometimes they descend so low over the nursery that I see and feel a shadow. I have not been able to get into the vantage point where I can see their nest, behind the mangrove zone in a large melaleuca, but by the look of them flying in unison I think that nest reconstruction has been accomplished and the serious job of egg-laying is next on the agenda.

The black cockatoos are still feeding on terminalia fruit. Certainly there is no fruit left on my trees but they must be finding something to eat. Sounding and behaving more like sea birds, a flock of about 30 birds search the coast-line each day from Ella Bay to Mourliyan Harbour. At night they often settle down in the forest on the ocean side of the Moresby Range National Park.

In this week's Innisfail Advocate the Chamber of Commerce has a comment piece. They are lobbying again to have the mouth of the Johnstone River dredged. They do not say who will pay. Nor do they discuss the environmental issues. They are acting like agents for Metricon rather than a body representing local, small business. The next meeting is on the 19th April.

Cheers Yvonne C.