

5. Wedderburn Conservation Management Network: Malleefowl Conservation Activities

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The Wedderburn Conservation Management Network is made up of community volunteers, landholders, Government agencies and non Government organisations working together to protect and restore public and private native vegetation patches and all the species within these patches. The group is primarily focussed on the preservation of the south-eastern most population of Malleefowl of which there are 4 known breeding pairs remaining in and around the Wychitella Nature Conservation Reserve. The group participates in a range of activities to conserve the Malleefowl population including mound line searches, collection of DNA material for analysis, revegetation works for habitat extension and improvement, vegetation structure and quality surveys and pest plant and animal works.

This season, the group set up two motion activated cameras on an active mound in the Wychitella NCR gathering footage 24 hours a day on all aspects of Malleefowl breeding. Images captured included breeding displays, mating, egg laying, chick emergence and visitors to the mound. Data was recorded on a range of activities including time of day and length of the activity, weather conditions, (wind, temperature, rainfall, humidity) and what the activity was. It is hoped this exercise will be repeated next season and extended to other active mounds in the area. The Wedderburn CMN hopes to produce an educational DVD using video footage and some of the 5000+ pictures taken during the monitoring period.