

## *Eolophus roseicapillus* (Vieillot 1817)

### Galah

**Description:** general plumage dark pink; forehead, crown, lores and nape whitish-pink; back, wings and tail grey; lower abdomen, vent area, secondary-coverts, rump and upper tail-coverts whitish-grey; periphthalmic ring rose-red; iris dark brown; feet grey; bill horn-coloured.

Female as male, but iris red.

Immatures with duller plumage; iris in both sexes brown; periophthalmic ring grey tinged with pink.

**Length:** 35 cm (13.5 ins).

**Origin:** eastern, central and northern Australia; some off-shore islands; introduced to Tasmania.



### [2. \*Eolophus r. assimilis\* Mathews 1912](#)

#### Western Galah

**Description:** as roseicapillus, but generally with paler plumage; crown slightly pinker; periophthalmic ring grey. Female with same characteristics as nominate type.

**Length:** 35 cm (13.5 ins).

**Origin:** western South Australia.

**Note:** Formerly described subspecies *Eolophus r. kuhli* no longer recognised.

**Habitat:** originally woodland and grassland with trees in semi-arid zone; today all open country including cultivated areas and mountain regions; also settled in parks, gardens and towns.

**Status:** common, even numerous in localities; probably on increase and settling new areas.

**Habits:** sedentary; pairs gather in loose groups, but seldom further than 10 km (6 miles) from nesting tree; young and non-breeding adults nomadic; occasionally forms enormous flocks, often with other cockatoo species; not approachable when feeding with Sulphur-crested Cockatoos (*Cacatua galerita*); when feeding one bird acts as sentinel; entire flock flies off if disturbed; more approachable if flock only Galahs; flies at dawn from roosting tree to drink before foraging; feeds on ground; rests in tall trees during hot midday hours; chews at bark and occasionally seriously damages trees; drinks again before nightfall before returning to roosting trees; sedentary pairs overnight in or near nest; flight fairly swift with rhythmic wing-beats; can fly at speeds of up to 60 km (38 miles) per hour; flight accompanied by continuous screeching; call high-pitched metallic, disyllabic screech.

**Natural diet:** grass seeds, herbaceous plants, grain (especially wheat and oats), fruits, berries, nuts, roots, shoots,

flowers, buds, insects and their larvae; often causes enormous damage to grain and sunflower crops.

**Aviculture:** noisy, very hardy parrot; hard chewer; provide regular supply of fresh branches with leaves; regular worming also essential as bird enjoys being on ground.

**Accommodation:** aviary 6 x 1 x 2 m (18 x 3 x 6 ft); metal construction necessary; protect from frost in winter; inside area with outside flight ideal; thick-walled, hardwood roosting box 40 x 40 x 90 cm (16 x 16 x 36 ins) or tree stump.

**Diet:** sunflower, pumpkin seed, small seed mix (safflower, millet, hemp, oats, wheat), pine and other nuts; milky-stage maize; plenty of fruit and vegetables, especially apple and peas; greenfood; small quantities of stone-fruit; sprouted seed; scatter some seed on ground.