

In her comprehensive and carefully crafted book, Gisela Kaplan demonstrates how intelligent and emotional Australian birds can be. She describes complex behaviours such as grieving, deception, problem solving and the use of tools. Many Australian birds cooperate and defend each other, and exceptional ones go fishing by throwing breadcrumbs in the water, extract poisonous parts from prey and use tools to crack open eggshells and mussels. Kaplan brings together evidence of many such cognitive abilities, suggesting plausible reasons for their appearance in Australian birds.

Bird Minds is the first attempt to shine a critical and scientific light on the cognitive behaviour of Australian land birds. In this fascinating book, the author also presents recent changes in our understanding of the avian brain and links these to life histories and longevity.

Following on from Kaplan's highly regarded books on the Australian Magpie and the Tawny Frogmouth, as well as two earlier titles on birds, *Bird Minds* contends that the unique and often difficult conditions of Australia's environment have been crucial for the evolution of unusual complexities in avian cognition and behaviour.



Gisela Kaplan is a Professor at the University of New England and an Honorary Professor at the Queensland Brain Institute. She is the author of over 250 research articles and 21 books and has conducted groundbreaking research into vocal learning, communication and cognition in birds and other vertebrates. She holds two PhDs and an honorary DSc for her contributions to the life sciences. In addition to extensive research on birds in the wild, for the past two decades she has also raised and rehabilitated many orphaned or injured native birds.



ISSN 1761-4863 0016 1



5 761486 300161

NATURE/WILDLIFE