

A ROBIN COURTSHIP: OCTOBER 2012



Friday 26 October late in the afternoon, Patsy and Graeme from Ecoworks caught a female robin at the Gaddums' farm at Matawai. They were unable to catch her mate. When they put her into the aviary in Longbush, she seemed very stressed. 'Dog Gully Guy' (a male robin who lives in the bush nearby) flew close to the aviary, singing his heart out.

First thing **Saturday morning** Patsy went to the aviary. The female robin had calmed right down and ate 15 mealworms. Dog gully Guy was hanging around, singing loudly.

On **Sunday morning** she ate 18 mealworms, while Dog Gully Guy was hanging around the aviary. He also had a feed of mealworms. Hopefully these two will pair up.

On **Monday morning** while Patsy was feeding her, Dog Gully Guy flew in. He was picking up meal worms, holding them in his mouth and flying to a nearby tree, where he perched singing, trying to get her to follow him.

Tuesday 30 was release day. When the Ecoworks team arrived in the morning, Dog Gully Guy was sitting on a tree right next to the aviary. When Patsy fed him a few mealworms, he held 3 of these in his mouth and started to sing, so Patsy gave the female robin 7 mealworms to keep her energy up for the release.

When they opened the aviary door, Dog Gully Guy was still up in the tree. The female robin seemed happy in the aviary, and needed some encouragement to leave it. When she hopped out, she perched on a low branch right beside Patsy, and was fed more mealworms. He came in closer and sang away, still holding mealworms stacked in his beak, like a kebab.

After a while the two birds flew up to a slightly higher branch together. He hopped along the branch and gave her a mealworm.

Then all hell broke loose and he started to chase her and became quite aggressive. This seemed to be at a mating ritual. She flew off, and arrived back 5 minutes later to collect some more mealworms. He was singing close by.

This is looking promising! Fingers crossed....

Friday Nov 2 When Patsy went out to check the robins, she found them just north of the aviary. She threw down a few meal worms and they began feeding together. It looks as though they have teamed up, and Dog Gully Guy has found a mate at last.