

Willie Wagtail

Rhipidura leucophrys

Noongar Whadjuk: djidi-djidi



Photo: Robert Audcent

A small boisterous black and white bird with long, often cocked, black tail, seen darting around on the ground or in trees in search of flying insects. They use shock tactics to startle insects into flight and capture them on the wing.

Willie wagtails are fearless in defending their ground during the breeding season, attacking magpies, ravens, humans and dogs.

Their exquisite nests are made up of interwoven spider webs. The birds are noisy with a chitit-chitit sound. A more melodious sound can be heard on moonlit nights in the breeding season – sometimes all night.

(Text: Dr Dan Carter)