

# THE SOUTHERN CASSOWARY LIFE CYCLE

Adult male and female cassowaries stay with each other over three or more days before they mate (May to November). The female lays 3-5 large pale-green eggs in a flat dish of leaves, grass and sticks on the forest floor made by the male.



The female leaves the male who sits on the eggs for about 50 days. The female may then mate with other males and lay more eggs. The male may also mate with other females.



## DID YOU KNOW

Cassowaries are related to the emu, ostrich, rhea and kiwi. One cassowary egg weighs the same as about 10 chicken eggs.



The cassowary is known as one of the world's most dangerous birds.



At the beginning of the new mating season (June-October) the father chases the young away. They become adults when they are 2-3 years old and can mate. The females grow a taller casque, have brighter colours and are larger than the males. Cassowaries live alone and can survive to be 40 years old.



The newly hatched chicks are cream and striped black. The male cares for them for 8-18 months. The chicks have pale brown heads, small wattles and no helmet (casque). They can walk and feed themselves hours after hatching. At 3-6 months their stripes fade, and they become a dull brown colour. At 6-9 months old, the skin around their necks begins to colour.

