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Land for Wildlife:
www.depi.vic.gov.au/environment-and-wildlife

Trust for Nature: www.trustfornature.org.au

North East Catchment Management Authority:
www.necma.vic.gov.au

Landcare: www.landcareonline.com.au

Indigo Shire Council:
www.indigoshire.vic.gov.au/biodiversity

Reference: DSE unpublished 2012 Habitat Protection Mechanisms: Options for local government, A Pilot project with Indigo Shire DRAFT report September 2012 DSE, Wodonga Photos: DSE

Large cover image by: Jerry Alexander. Small images by: Lindy Lumsden & Glen Johnson

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Woodland Fauna Habitat – How you can help

Woodland Fauna Habitat

How you can help



Mary Titcumb, DEPI

Our National Parks, reserves, State Forests and other public land does not provide enough habitat for our threatened wildlife. To be able to maintain current populations, existing suitable habitat on private land needs to be maintained and protected.

To maintain a sustainable population, suitable habitat on private land needs to be maintained and protected. Habitat enhancement such as revegetation should be undertaken to connect patches and enhance poor quality habitat.



Mary Titcumb, DEPI

Three threatened fauna species; Barking Owl (*Ninox connivens connivens*), Brush-tailed Phascogale (*Phascogale tapoatafa*) and Squirrel Glider (*Petaurus norfolcensis*) are considered 'flagship species' for other woodland and open forest dependent wildlife, and their presence is an indicator of general habitat condition. These species have core populations on private land within Indigo Shire and rely on habitat connectivity in the fragmented landscapes of the Shire, particularly between Chiltern and Beechworth.

The habitat requirements of these three species are considered broad enough to capture a diverse range of fauna which are dependent on woodlands and open forests that exist in Indigo Shire.



Jerry Alexander, DEPI

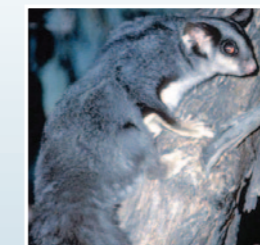
Barking Owl (*Ninox connivens connivens*)
FFG Act listed and Endangered in Victoria. Barking Owls feed on a variety of prey, including rabbits, various rodents, diurnal birds, arboreal mammals, bats and large insects during summer.



Jerry Alexander, DEPI

Brush-tailed Phascogale (*Phascogale tapoatafa*)
FFG Act listed and Vulnerable in Victoria. Phascogales feed on a range of small vertebrates, large insects, spiders and centipedes, usually taken from tree trunks or the ground and fallen timber.

Squirrel Glider (*Petaurus norfolcensis*)
FFG Act listed and Endangered in Victoria. Squirrel Gliders feed exclusively on nectar and other saps and insects obtained principally by gleaning from the trunks and foliage of eucalypts and wattles.



P Robertson



Mary Titcumb, DEPI

Hollow Trees

- Live hollow-bearing trees are favoured as nest sites for Barking Owls as well as den and nest sites for Squirrel Gliders and Phascogales
- Dead hollow-bearing trees are nest sites
- Barking Owls prey on arboreal mammals who also rely on tree hollows
- A variety of hollow sizes are required, for Phascogales and Squirrel Gliders (10-40 different sites per year for Phascogales)
- Small entrance holes < 50mm are preferred for Squirrel Gliders



Glen Johnson, DEPI



Viridans



Mary Titcumb, DEPI

Larger Trees

- Phascogales and Squirrel Gliders prefer trees with > 25cm diameter trunks for foraging
- Flowering is more prolific and reliable in larger trees, providing a greater source of nectar

Private Land and Roadsides

- Private land and patches of habitat on roadsides are critical as they often have large, hollow-bearing trees

Understorey

- Tall to medium wattle trees are an important winter food source for Squirrel Gliders as they are high in protein



Matthew Looby DEPI

Higher productivity soils

- Create more abundant insect and plant resources



Fallen timber

- Logs on the ground are important for foraging places for Phascogales

Connected vegetation

- Dry open forest / woodland, with a sparse ground cover of herbs, grasses and shrubs or leaf litter are ideal
- Minimal gaps between trees to facilitate movement of arboreal mammals

Large home ranges

- Barking Owls need between 500 and 2300ha of territory that includes areas of farmland, scattered trees and remnant patches.
- Phascogale female home ranges are between 30-60ha and do not overlap, male home ranges are 100ha and do overlap
- Squirrel Gliders need 6-17ha and forage up to 1.3km, overlapping home ranges.



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- Loss of large-hollow bearing trees
- Removal of dead, standing trees and stags
- Decline of prey species such as arboreal mammals and hollow-nesting birds
- Degradation of remnant vegetation, especially the removal of understorey and large old trees
- Removal of fallen timber for firewood reduces habitat for insect prey)
- Habitat loss and fragmentation (increased gaps and genetic isolation of populations)



Daniel Pendavingh, DEPI



Mary Titcumb, DEPI

- Uncontrolled domestic stock grazing of woodland areas reduces regeneration, leading to eventual loss of tree cover and simplification of vegetation structure including loss of Wattle and native grass understorey



Jerry Alexander, DEPI

- Cats and foxes predation on woodland fauna
- Barbed-wire fences can entangle Squirrel Gliders



How you can help

- Retain all large trees and standing dead trees
- Retain and enhance suitable habitat (including reintroducing missing native shrub species, especially wattles which are an important foraging source)
- Link habitat by revegetating gaps and enhance degraded habitat patches
- Fencing remnant vegetation to manage stock grazing (thereby protecting, enhancing and expanding habitat)
- Install and maintain nest boxes



Image by Glen Johnson, DEPI



Mary Titcumb, DEPI



Unmanaged grazing



Managed grazing
Images by Daniel Pendavingh, DEPI

- Establish separate plots to source firewood
- Undertake sustainable firewood collection
- Use barb-wire-free fences (or at least not on top rung)
- Practice responsible cat management
- Covenant your property to ensure permanent protection
- Join Landcare groups and "Friends of" groups
- Control pest animals
- Undertake weed control to remove potential refuge sites for exotic species