

Plight of the Gliders

The Squirrel Glider is a threatened species which means we should take precautions to ensure their future. Below are some of the problems they face:

- Loss and destruction of habitat including tree removal.
- Absence of wildlife corridors limits how far they can go for food and breeding.
- Not enough tree hollows to nest or shelter in. Trees take more than 100 years to form a hollow.
- Fire causing death or loss of food resources.
- Cat attacks (even well fed cats hunt).
- Entanglement in barbed wire fencing.

Learning to live together

For people and our wildlife to live together we need to to:

- Protect existing good habitat, keeping it free from weeds and rubbish dumping.
- Contain cats and dogs to prevent killing wildlife. Even well fed animals hunt. Other wildlife is still vulnerable in the daytime.
- Plant local Glider food plants, such as Acacia, Eucalypt and Banksia.
- Where possible, leave old dead trees with hollow branches as potential nesting places. Take a close look before lopping trees or limbs.
- Remove barb wire from fencing.
- Support your local Landcare group and help restore habitat and create wildlife corridors.
- Build and install a nestbox.
- If you encounter an injured Glider, wrap it in a towel and place in a box to keep it calm in a quiet dark place. Contact your nearest vet or wildlife carer.

Other information:

Shepparton Mooroopna Urban Landcare Group
Contact via **Goulburn Murray Landcare Network**
on p: **5821 3530** | e: gmln@iinet.net.au

RiverConnect

p: **5832 9714** | www.riverconnect.com.au

Pet ownership information

www.greatershepparton.com.au/animals-environment-and-waste/animals

If you find injured wildlife please contact:

Wildlife Victoria

p: **13000 94535**

This project was funded with the support of the
Victorian Government.



Gliders of Greater Shepparton

Sharing our environment | Ensuring our future

What is special about where we live?

We live in a riverine environment surrounded by towering River Red Gums, statuesque Box trees, a blue haze of Silver Wattles with unique and often secretive wildlife.

The Goulburn River is the longest river in Victoria, and is one of 18 declared Heritage Rivers in our state. The Sevens Creek and Broken River both flow into the Goulburn River within the Shepparton area. These waterways pass through our city and we are lucky to have the Lower Goulburn National Park starting at Reedy Swamp in the north end of town. Living and working near the river gives us beautiful surroundings but also a responsibility to respect and protect the natural environment and wildlife that we are so close to.

Squirrel Glider (*Petaurus norfolcensis*)

"We are so fortunate to have these little creatures in our region."

This marsupial (where young are carried in a pouch) is listed as a threatened species in Victoria, under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*.

The Squirrel Glider lives 4 to 6 years and can be identified by its grey fur, dark stripe running from between its eyes to its back, white belly, flat head with a squarish nose and bushy tail that is grey shading to black. It measures around 48 cm long of which over half belongs to the tail. Only active at night, they are agile masters of camouflage with large eyes for night vision.

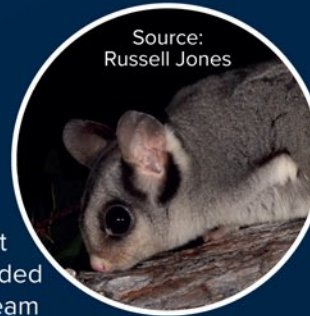


Source:
Museum Victoria/
Photographer:
David Paul

Sugar Glider (*Petaurus breviceps*)

Similar but smaller

The Sugar Glider is similar to the Squirrel Glider but is about 2/3rd of the size. It has a rounded head with pointy nose and cream belly. Its tail is narrower, less bushy and often has a white tip. It occupies the same habitat as the Squirrel Glider and is often recorded in the same area but uses smaller hollows and therefore have more available hollows. It is not listed as threatened.



Source:
Russell Jones

Feathertail Glider (*Acrobates pygmaeus*)

Measuring up to 8cm and weighing around 12g, the feathertail glider is the world's smallest gliding mammal. Its fur is greyish brown on the upper body and white on the underside.

The tail is about the same length as the head and body combined, with very short fur except for two distinctive rows of long, stiff hairs on either side, giving the tail the appearance of a feather.

Feathertail gliders are omnivorous, feeding on nectar, pollen, and arthropods. They are very social, and up to five may share a single nest, especially during the breeding season.

Night Flight of the Gliders

Gliding up to 50 m in a single bound amongst the tree tops, enabled by a special membrane between the front and back feet which spreads like a parachute when they leap from the highest of branches. Upon its descent it uses its soft bushy tail as a rudder to navigate tree trunks and branches.



Source:
Angela Bell

Home amongst the gum trees

Our dry Eucalypt forests and woodlands are the perfect habitat for the gliders to live in with big old gum trees which have hollows providing the perfect spots to nest and shelter in. These nest trees can be dead or alive, with hollows which have small entrances to stop predators from invading. A glider family has two to ten members and have up to two young per litter. More than one hollow is used per family in which they make a cosy nest of leaves.



Source:
Wendy D'Amore

What's for dinner?

Gliders need a mixed native shrub understorey including wattles for food all year round. Their favourite trees include River Red Gums, Grey Box, Silver Wattle, Golden Wattle and Silver Banksia.

Gliders use their sharp teeth to cut the bark off the tree to access the sap. This is high in sugars for a highly energetic lifestyle. Their diet includes:

- Flowers, pollen and nectar.
- Sap or resin from Acacias or Eucalypts.
- Honeydew.
- Insects including beetles and caterpillars.
- Bird eggs and chicks.



Source: Museum Victoria/Photographer:
David Paul