

Wanted!

Have you seen a Squirrel Glider?



Squirrel Gliders

The Squirrel Glider (*Petaurus norfolcensis*) is a mid-sized gliding possum, weighing between 190 and 300 g, with a head-to-tail length of approximately 50 cm. It has greyish (blue-brown) upper body fur and a white-cream belly, a dark stripe which starts near the nose and finishes at the mid-back, and a wide bushy tail. The gliding membrane of the Squirrel Glider runs between the forepaw and the ankle. Squirrel Gliders can be mistaken for Sugar Gliders (*Petaurus breviceps*) which occur in similar areas. However, Sugar Gliders are smaller, with a less bushy tail and have greyish, rather than white-cream, belly fur.

Squirrel Gliders are considered vulnerable in NSW however; the Wagga Wagga local government area (LGA) population is considered endangered. The local population is small and isolated. Habitat fragmentation has contributed to their decline in the Riverina region. Large gaps between trees and patches of vegetation affect the movement of gliders across the landscape, interrupting their breeding and feeding activities. When squirrel glider habitat is in poor condition they are at greater risk of predation. While squirrel gliders have natural predators in owls and goannas, introduced predators such as foxes and feral cats can have a devastating impact.

Where do they live?

Within the Riverina region, gliders prefer open forests and woodlands especially box-ironbark and riparian woodlands. They live in tree hollows, generally in eucalyptus and create cup-shaped, leaf-lined nests in tree hollows (dens). They sleep in these hollows during the day and emerge at night to hunt for food. Squirrel Gliders can have numerous den sites and can use up to 19 trees within one area.

Key habitat requirements for Squirrel Gliders include:

- abundant tree hollows (for refuge and nesting)
- multiple eucalypt species such as Ironbark, Yellow Box and White Box
- flowering understory
- trees less than 50 m apart.



What are the threats?

- Loss and fragmentation of habitat.
- Loss of hollow bearing trees.
- Loss of shrubby flowering understorey food resources.
- Predation by cats and foxes.
- Barbed wire can entangle gliders and damage their gliding membranes.
- Changes in habitat due to climate change – fire, drought.



How can you help?

You can help support Squirrel Gliders and their habitat by:

- retaining existing vegetation on your property, especially hollow-bearing trees
- retain paddock trees on your property - they act as great stop-over points between vegetation
- revegetate with a mixture of native overstorey and shrub understorey species to allow for hollow-bearing and feed options in the future
- install Squirrel Glider specific nest boxes if you don't have hollow-bearing trees.



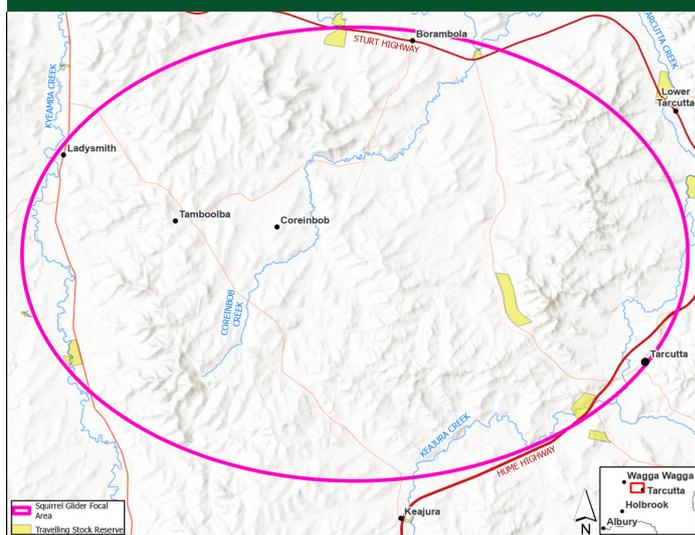
What are the next steps?

Riverina Local Land Services is implementing a project to secure the viability of the Squirrel Glider population in the Wagga Wagga area, following a Local Area Management Plan (LAMP) process.

We are keen to hear from landholders who:

- have seen Squirrel Gliders in the local area
- have areas of potential habitat, including hollow-bearing trees and remnant areas with understorey
- are interested in undertaking activities to improve habitat for the Squirrel Glider
- are happy for population surveys to be undertaken on their property by ecologists from CSU.

Project area



For more information

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