



MAMMAL SURVEY GROUP OF VICTORIA INC. **SURVEY CAMP REPORT**

LOCATION/NAME: *CLYDESDALE (Central Victoria)* **DATE:** *03-04/10/2015*

WEATHER: Partly Cloudy to Sunny. Max High 20s and low mid teens overnight.

DESCRIPTION OF FOREST SURVEYED: The area surveyed was on private land located off the Daylesford Newstead Road in Clydesdale (VicRoads Map 59 C4).

The three properties: Higgins (480 acres), Browne's (30 acres), Trevor & Liz's (20 acres) located off the Hepburn-Newstead Road are all adjoining healthy Dry (Box) Forest. The main geological feature is the east-west ridge line running right through the Higgins/Trevor & Liz's properties. The ridge is leached sedimentary rock, with soils of very low fertility.

Some extensive gold mining diggings are still visible. The ridge was fairly well cleared in late 1800s for mine props, dredging, etc and to support the resident population (goldmining and farming).

More recent activity was primarily wood cutting for fence posts and firewood. There was minimal extensive clearing but targeted logging of larger trees and coppicing of others leading to an almost continuous canopy. Hence a shortage of very large old trees (and hollows), which has led to the installation of nest boxes in 2006 by the land owners and MSGV on the trunks of the larger remaining trees over all three properties.

Tree cover is fairly low open Grey Box & Red Box, Long-leave Box on ridge and Yellow Gum in gullies. Shrub and small shrubs are under represented due to high wallaby browsing. Good ground cover of grasses, herbs, orchids, lilies, etc. The areas of Grey and Red Box have in previous years been severely affected by an intense Cup Moth caterpillar infestation, which has stripped the canopy so severely that the survival of the trees was in jeopardy. This year was much improved. Long-leaved Box and Yellow Gum were unaffected.



CAMP COMMANDANT: Katherine Zonneville

PERSONNEL:

Nancy and Trevor McMurray
Andrew McCutcheon (Saturday only)
John Olden (Saturday only)
Anne and Ed Howell
Mary and Duncan Frost
Paul Sparks
Trevor Coon
Liz Ingham
Celia Browne (Sunday only)

Thankyou to Liz and Trevor, Celia, and Beth and Ric for their hospitality.

SURVEY REPORT

Ten remote-sensing cameras were deployed on the ridge just south of the campsite. A spotlighting survey was undertaken from camp, up the gully beyond the exclusion zone and dam with many Eastern Grey Kangaroos, Brush-tailed possums and unidentified microbats observed. Sugar gliders were also heard and observed during the night. All nest boxes on the three properties were checked with encouraging results. No cage traps and bat traps were set.

ALL RESULTS

Remote Cameras	10 set	Nil observations
Spotlighting	1hr and 26 minutes x 4 lights	18 Grey Kangaroos 5 Adult and 2 young Brush Tailed Possums 2 Sugar Gliders Numerous unidentified Microbats
Nest boxes – Liz and Trevor	7 checked	2 occupied Sugar Glider nests (1 adult 3 young in one and 2 adults in other) 1 occupied by Yellow Footed Antechinus (1 adult with young attached) 1 unoccupied Tuan nest 2 unoccupied Sugar Glider nests 1 with 3 very small bird eggs
Nest Boxes – Beth and Ric	16 checked	5 unoccupied Tuan nests 5 unoccupied Sugar Glider nests 1 Bee activity 5 empty
Nest boxes – Celia	13 checked	1 box with Sugar Gliders in residence (1 adult and 3 young) 4 unoccupied Sugar Glider nests 5 unoccupied Tuan nests 1 with 3 eggs 2 empty
Chance Sightings		5 Swamp Wallabies



Sugar Glider with young in nest box
Photo by Paul Sparks

Sugar Gliders (*Petaurus breviceps*) enjoy a diet of nectar, pollen, acacia gum and seeds, sap, and invertebrates. They breed in June-July and the young remain in the pouch for about 70 days before being moved into a family nest made of leaves for another 40-50 days.

Tuans or Brush-tailed Phascogales (*Phascogale tapoatafa*) are aggressive hunters and feed on insects and spiders, small vertebrates and will even hunt larger birds, however they are also very fond of nectar. They breed mid May to July with 6-8 young living in the pouch for 7 weeks until they are moved into a nest of bark strips, feathers and fur. (Van Dyck, S., & Strahan, R. (2008). *The Mammals of Australia*. Reed New Holland, Sydney).



Sugar Glider with young
Photos by Andrew McCutcheon



Tuan nest with feathers

INDIVIDUAL NEST BOX RESULTS

* indicates a new box installed during the current survey

Nest Box#	Location	Date Checked & Result
Nesting Boxes on Beth & Ric's Block		Checked by MSGV 3 -10 -2015
1	Nth side of track, 50metres from fence line T & L.	Empty
2	Nth side of track, 70metres from fence line T & L., 20m Nth of Box #1	Tuan nest material and old scat. Nil animals observed
3	Along ridge Track (Sth side), 100west of intersection	Active Tuan nest with dead bird parts, Tawny Frogmouth feathers. Nil animals observed
4	Along ridge Track, (Sth side) 90m west of intersection	Empty
5	Along ridge Track, (Sth side) 100m east of intersection	Active Tuan nest full of leaves and feathers. Nil animals observed
6	Along ridge Track *	*
7	Saddle on ridge track, (Nth side)	Empty
8	Saddle on ridge track (Sth side)	Tuan nest material but not used recently
9	Saddle on ridge track (Nth side - 50m down gully) *	*
10	Saddle on ridge track (Nth side - 100m down gully)	Sugar Glider nest possibly used recently. Nil animals observed
11	In gully - Sheoak Ridge	Recent Sugar Glider nest. Hole enlarged. Nil animals observed
12	In gully - Sheoak Ridge	Empty
13A	100m south of Mulberry Tree	Well-formed Sugar Glider nest. Hole enlarged. Nil animals observed.
13B	20 metres North West of 13A *	*
13C	30 metres South East of 13A *	*
14A	100m west of Mulberry Tree - near Xmas Reef mine	Tuan nest. Box 1/2 full leaves, bark, scat and fresh moss
14B	5 metres South of 14A *	*
15	Gully - Nth of Dam. (100m Nth, east side of gully) *	*
16A	Gully - Nth of Dam. (120m Nth, west side of gully)	Empty
16B	10 metres North of 16A *	*
17	Gully - Nth of Dam. (200m Nth, 30m east of gully)	Bees nest. Box replaced on South side of gully
18	Gully - Nth of Dam. (top of gully)	Sugar Glider nest. Hole enlarged. Nil animals observed
19	100m west of T & L boundary, Near track to Seed orchard	Sugar Glider nest. Nil animals observed

Nest Box#	Location	Date Checked & Result
Nesting Boxes on Celia Browne's Property		
1		Sugar Gliders observed. 1 adult and 3 young
2		Leaves
3		Empty with spider webs
4		Round leafy nest
5		
6		Tuan nest with chewed bark. Nil animals observed
7		Sugar Glider nest. Nil animals observed
8		3 eggs
9		Tuan nest. Nil animals observed
10	In exclusion zone	Tuan nest. Tuan scat on lid and leaves and bark inside. Nil animals observed
11		Sugar Glider nest. 1/2 full of leaves. Nil animals observed
New since prev survey		Hole much enlarged by Cockatoo. Empty
New since prev survey		Tuan nest with lots of feathers and leaves. Nil animals observed
New since prev survey		Tuan nest with scat, feathers and leaves. Nil animals observed
Nesting Boxes on Trevor & Liz's Place		
1	L side of walking track up hill from house	Tuan nest. Nil animals observed
2	R side of walking track up hill from house	3 very small birds eggs
3	L side track further from house	Sugar Gliders observed. 1 adult and 3 young
4	Top of watercourse	Yellow-footed antechinus observed. 1 adult with young attached
5	Original box near exclusion plot	Sugar Gliders observed. 2 adults
6	Far Corner	Recent Sugar Glider nest. Nil animals observed
7	Below composting toilet	Sugar Glider nest. Nil animals observed



Yellow-footed Antechinus

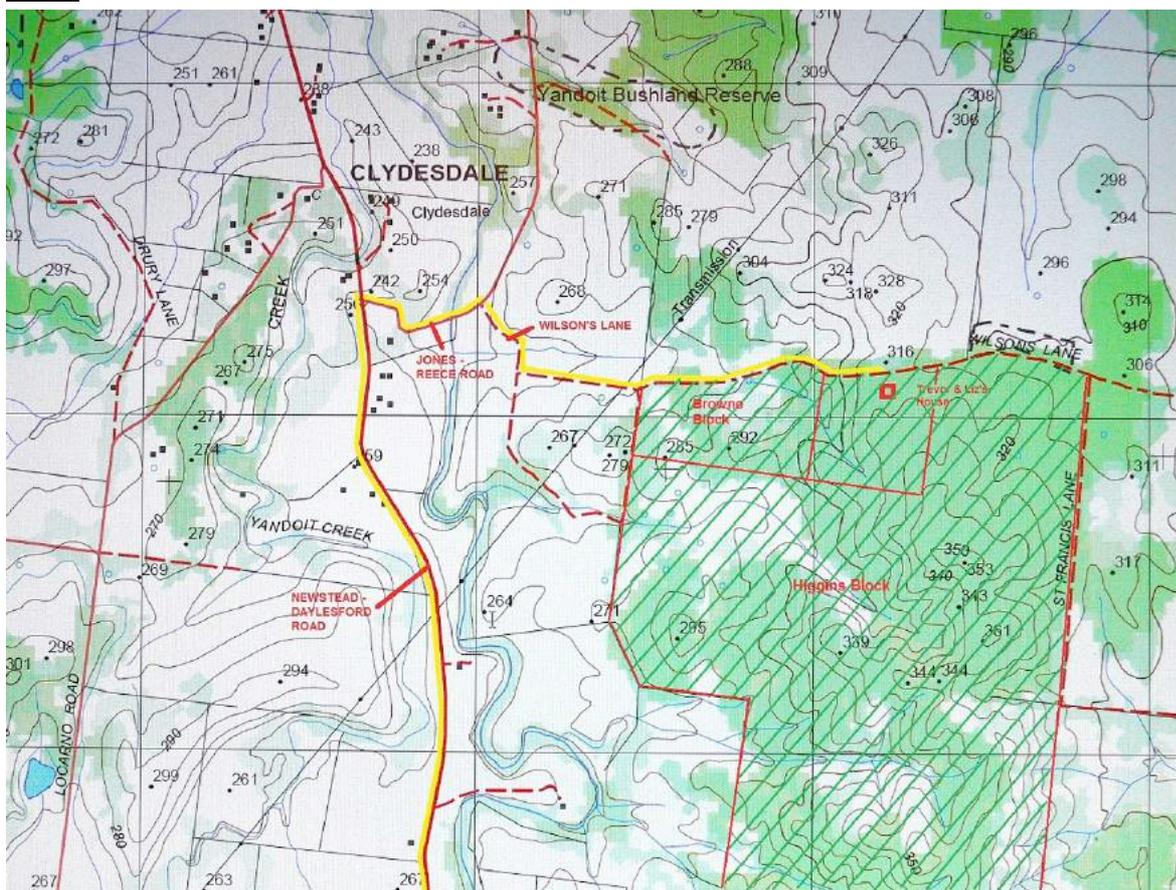
Photo by Andrew McCutcheon who is also pictured checking a nest box. Photo by Nancy McMurray



Flexible-necked cameras on long poles were used to provide images inside nest boxes. These images were transmitted to a receiver being monitored by members on the ground

Photo by Andrew McCutcheon

MAP



Campsite was located on the Higgins' block

BIRDS RECORDED: (H = heard) Total: 21

Australian Magpie, Black-Faced Cuckoo-Shrike, Brown Thornbill, Buff Rumped Thornbill, Common Bronzewing (H), Crimson Rosella, Grey Shrike Thrush, Little Corella, Little Raven, Long-Billed Corella, Mistletoebird, Red Wattlebird, Rufous Whistler, Spotted Pardalote, Superb Fairywren, Straw-necked Ibis, Striated Pardalote, Tawny Frogmouth (feathers only), White-Naped Honeyeater, White-Throated Treecreeper, White-Winged Chough.

OTHER ANIMALS RECORDED:

Numerous Wolf Spiders after dark, 1 Pobblebonk (*Limnodynastes dumerilii*)
Many Eastern Sign Bearing Froglets (*Crinia parinsignifera*) heard and 1 observed.



Eastern Sign Bearing Froglet
Photo by Ed Howell