



GALAH
CACATUA ROSEICAPILLA



EASTERN ROSELLA
PLATYERCUS EXIMIUS



GREY-HEADED FLYING-FOX
PTEROPUS POLIOCEPHALUS



COMMON BRUSH-TAIL POSSUM
TRICHOSURUS VULPECULA



POWERFUL OWL
NINOX STRENUA

On the Wing

Dawn to Dusk



SWIFT PARROT
LATHAMUS DISCOLOR



RED WATTLEBIRD
ANTHOCHAERA CARUNCULATA



SUGAR GLIDER
PETAURUS BREVICEPS



TAWNY FROGMOUTH
PODARGUS STRIGOIDES

Banyule's Native FAUNA



EASTERN TIGER SNAKE
NOTECHIS SCUTATUS



JUMPING SPIDER
SALTICIDAE SPP.



EASTERN BLUE-TONGUE LIZARD
TILIQUA SCINCOIDES



PURPLE SWAMPHEN
PORPHYRIO PORPHYRIO



RAKALI
HYDROMYS CHRYSOGASTER

In the Undergrowth

Waterways & Wetlands



ELTJAM COPPER
PARALUCIA PYRODISCUS



WANDERING PERCHER
DIPLACODES BIMACULATA



SPOTTED MARSH FROG
LIMNODONASTES TASMANIENSIS



BURROWING CRAYFISH
ENGAEUS SPP.



PLATYPUS
ORNITHORHYNCHUS ANATINUS



Banyule
CITY COUNCIL

Banyule's Native FAUNA

Introduction

The City of Banyule is home to a wide range of native animals from the tiny Eltham Copper Butterfly to the Eastern Grey Kangaroo. This amazing diversity is largely due to the indigenous vegetation in bushland reserves and wildlife corridors that provides habitat for local wildlife. When you're walking along the Yarra/Plenty River you may see some noisy flocks of Swift Parrots (Lathamus discolor) hanging upside down in trees. Or at night you may see a Sugar Glider (Petaurus breviceps) parachuting from tree to tree. There are many indigenous mammals, birds, invertebrates and reptiles that live in Banyule but there are also introduced animals that are found in Banyule, which can have devastating impacts on our indigenous fauna. For example, foxes and cats will happily make a meal out of many of our indigenous furry or feathery friends. Sadly some native species are no longer found in Banyule, such as the beautiful Brush-tail Phascogale (Phascogale tapoatafa). Due to habitat loss and predation from foxes and cats, this marsupial is now endangered.

Many people ask, 'How can I help our native wildlife?' In fact, there are a lot of simple things that will greatly help the native animals of Banyule. Our abundant parklands, rivers and creeks, all provide food and shelter for wildlife and a corridor to travel in and out of Banyule. Backyards can also provide valuable habitat and a stepping-stone for native wildlife to travel between corridors.

The purpose of this poster is to highlight some of the amazing animals that can be found in our municipality. For a full list of species recorded in Banyule please contact Banyule's Wildlife Corridor Program Officer on 9490 4222.



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Birds

Banyule is home to over two hundred species of native birds, some are endangered and others are very common. Some common urban birds that are found in parks and gardens include the Noisy Miner, Australian Magpie and the Red Wattle bird. Some birds, like Kingfishers, are shy and avoid urban areas so are seen less often.

Australia's largest owl, the Powerful Owl (Ninox strenua) is listed as threatened in Victoria. The Powerful Owl breeds in tree hollows along the Yarra River corridor where large hollow bearing trees are still found. This owl has bright yellow eyes, prominent eyebrows and feathered legs with large sharp yellow talons. The call "woo-hoo" can be heard across the suburbs as the owls search for their preferred prey; possums. Powerful Owls can sometimes be seen sleeping during the day with a possum in their talons presumably saving it for breakfast.

The Swift Parrot (Lathamus discolor), the world's fastest parrot, is a visitor to Banyule. It feeds on gum tree nectar and psyllids on its migration north from Tasmania each autumn. It is vital that the Yellow Gums it relies on for food on its journey are protected to ensure the survival of this endangered species.

The Mistletoe bird (Dicaeum hirundinaceum) is also found in Banyule, feeding mainly on berries of the parasitic Mistletoe plant. The bird digests the berry, excreting the sticky seeds onto branches, often having to wipe its bum on a branch to dislodge the seeds. The seeds then germinate quickly with roots penetrating the bark of the host plant.



Frogs



There are 12 species of frogs native to Banyule. Going to sleep to the sound of a frog orchestra used to be common in Melbourne, but today our frogs are under stress and in decline. A number of frog species throughout Victoria are endangered due to habitat loss.

The Growling Grass Frog (Litoria raniformis) used to be found in Banyule but no longer. They are bright emerald green to dull olive green with brown and or gold blotches on a warty back. The call is a growl of about one second, repeated every few seconds - "crawark-crawark-crok-crok". With habitat improvements hopefully this threatened species can once again be heard in our neighbourhoods.

The Striped Marsh Frog (Limnodynastes peronei) can happily adapt to a backyard pond and or urban wetland. They are golden-brown with dark brown or black stripes running down their back. This frog has an unusual call, it is a one-note "tock" or "poc", which can sound similar to a hens "cluck". This frog makes a bubble raft for their eggs, so they can float in safety and after hatching, the tadpoles can drop into the water.

The Common Froglet (Crinia signifera) is a small frog and as its name suggests, it is widespread and common in inner urban areas. It can be known as the Clinking Froglet, as its call is a series of three to five short-pulsed calls, repeated in a long series of "crick crick crick crick". It is one of the first frogs to colonize backyard ponds.

Reptiles

Banyule provides habitat for over twenty native reptile species including snakes, lizards and tortoises. All of the snakes are highly venomous and are very dangerous if threatened but they play an important role in the ecosystem controlling rats and mice.

The Tiger Snake (Notechis scutatus) lives mostly near rivers or waterways and its diet consists of frogs and rodents. Snakes like lizards, provide food for many of our birds such as the Laughing Kookaburra (Dacelo novaeguineae).

The Blue-tongue Lizard (Tiliqua scincoides) is a gardener's best friend, as they love to eat snails. The Blue-tongue Lizard's defense against a threat is to open their mouth wide and flash their bright blue tongue, but don't be scared because it is just a bluff.

The Marbled Gecko (Phyllodactylus marmoratus) is threatened in Melbourne. It is a small thick tailed lizard with large finger and toe pads, which spread out to grasp slippery and soft surfaces. It does not have moveable eyelids, so it has to use its tongue to clean its eyes. These geckos mainly eat insects but have been known to eat anything that will fit in their mouth.



Mammals

There are 22 mammal species that call Banyule home. Most common and easily spotted are the Ringtail (Pseudocheirus peregrinus) and Brushtail (Trichosurus vulpecula) Possums. These mammals have adapted well to urbanization feeding on garden plants as well as bushland plants.

The Sugar Glider (Petaurus breviceps) is not as common as the possums and is much smaller weighing 110 grams as a full grown adult. This marsupial gets its name from their sweet nectar and sap diet and their impressive ability to glide through the air. Sugar Gliders use wing-like membranes to glide from tree to tree to avoid coming to the ground where they would make easy prey for cats and foxes.

The iconic Platypus (Ornithorhynchus anatinus) is an egg laying mammal, a monotreme. Well adapted to aquatic life it has a body like an otter, webbed feet for swimming and a soft bill for detecting invertebrate prey in murky water. Males are equipped with a venomous spur on their back leg used for territorial disputes. These shy mammals are often spotted in the Yarra River near the confluence with the Plenty. They are at risk from entanglement in rubbish so it is vital that people dispose of rubbish wisely to protect these fascinating mammals.

The Grey-headed Flying-fox (Pteropus poliocephalus) has happily made a home in Melbourne and can often be seen flying across the night sky. They are very important for the dispersal of seeds and pollen. This species is also known as Fruit Bats because of their diet. When they descend in large numbers on a fruiting or flowering tree they can be noisy and smelly but their visits are generally short lived and provide an opportunity to view them close up.

The Water Rat or Rakali (Hydromys chrysogaster) is a native rat that keeps to rivers and creeks and does not venture into houses or rubbish bins. Rakali are designed for swimming with webbed feet and waterproof fur and feed on fish, frogs, reptiles, insects and crustaceans. Their long white tipped tail is used like a rudder when swimming or diving for food and is a useful identifying feature if you happen to spot them in a local reserve.

Invertebrates

There are countless different invertebrates in Banyule. Invertebrates are a very important part of the ecosystem providing pollination, source of food for other animals and decomposition of dead plants and animals.

The Eltham Copper Butterfly (Paralucia pyrodiscus lucida) is a threatened species found in parts of Banyule such as Greenhills. Its lifecycle is fascinating but makes it difficult to manage. The butterfly relies on guidance and protection of its larvae by Notoncus Ants to find their food plant, the Sweet Bursaria. Larvae feed during the night and are chaperoned back into the ants' nest where they are safe during the day. In return the ants feed on sugary secretions the larvae produces.

Dragonflies are commonly found around water bodies, they are skillful fliers reaching speeds of up to 50km/h. Only the adults fly, the juvenile dragonfly is born in aquatic vegetation and will spend its early days in water, often called a mud-eye.

The Burrowing Crayfish (Engaeus spp.) is a small freshwater crayfish, mostly under 10cm. It spends most of its time in underground burrows and builds a chimney-shaped entrance with soil.



Fish

There are 9 indigenous species of fish native to Banyule.

Common Galaxias (Galaxias maculatus) small and slender carnivorous fish, are rare in Banyule. They swim downstream to brackish water to spawn and a large number of the adults die shortly after spawning. The female produces up to 13,500 eggs.

The River Blackfish (Gadopsis marmoratus) is also rare in Banyule, and is impacted by the increase of sedimentation in Rivers. The eggs are normally deposited in hollow logs and the male protects the eggs and keeps them free from silt and waste.

The Shortfin Eel (Anguilla australis) is a common resident of Banyule's waterways and wetland habitats. Did you know that the mature adult Shortfin Eel migrate from fresh water to the sea to spawn their eggs? The mature females can grow to one metre in length and have been found to contain more than three million eggs. If you think you see a snake swimming in the river or creek it may actually be a Shortfin eel, so no need to be alarmed.



Unwelcome in Banyule

Introduced animals have devastating impacts on our native wildlife, competing with indigenous fauna for food, shelter and nesting sites.

Foxes (Canis vulpes) hunt and kill many native reptiles, mammals and birds. They also carry diseases such as the skin disease mange, which can be transferred to pets or native animals. Urban areas have more foxes than rural areas because they have adapted well to living around people. If you want to help our native wildlife, ensure that you are not feeding the fox problem. It is simple: don't leave your pet food out, secure your compost bins and make sure your chickens are locked up so they're not an easy meal for a hungry fox.

The Common Myna bird's (Acridotheres tristis) worst crime is that it aggressively competes with our native wildlife for nesting hollows. It is known for destroying parrots eggs and chicks and is capable of evicting even large birds such as Kookaburras. Many people are asking, "How can I help?" An important step is to discourage them from your garden by reducing lawn space and planting more indigenous shrubs. Remove myna nests from gutters, downpipes, eaves, natural tree hollows and nesting boxes and ensure they are not feeding on pet food.

Feral Cats (Felis catus) and domestic cats can have terrible impacts on our native furry and feathery friends. It is estimated that cats can kill 10 animals per night. Being a responsible pet owner is very important for fauna conservation.

Rabbits (Oryctolagus cuniculus) can significantly impact our indigenous fauna, as they eat large amounts of native vegetation and cause erosion through burrowing. Rabbits are one of the most destructive pest species in Australia and are very unwelcome in Banyule. If you have rabbits on your property, please contact the Council for help to implement a rabbit control program.

Wildlife Corridors

Wildlife corridors are used as a 'green freeway', a safe path for animals to travel through the Banyule area. Your backyard can also be a valuable stepping stone for our local fauna friends. Our abundant parklands, utility corridors (railways and high voltage power lines), rivers and creeks all provide important natural habitat for wildlife. These wildlife corridors are an excellent place to see native animals.



Banyule's Wildlife Corridors - areas of continuous vegetation that provide significant local native habitat and corridors for the movement of wildlife.

Living with Wildlife

There are many opportunities in your own backyard to help improve habitat for native wildlife such as planting indigenous plants, ensuring pet food is not left outside for foxes or cats, and/or installing a nest box for your resident possum or feathery friend. Many of our local animal species depend on tree hollows for nesting, but in urban areas they are a scarce resource. A great way to help wildlife is by installing a nesting box in your backyard and establishing a habitat garden.

Ways to make your backyard wildlife friendly:

- Plant some indigenous plants
- Remove weeds
- Provide a water source
- Establish a frog bog
- Plant dense and prickly shrubs for cover
- Plant groundcovers such as tussock grasses
- Make a lizard lounge with logs, rocks and leaf litter scattered throughout your garden
- Plant butterfly attracting plants
- Plant canopy trees where you have the room
- Ensure your pets are kept inside at night
- Ensure foxes and other pests cannot access pet food
- Avoid using herbicides near ponds or drains
- Tolerate possum and bat feeding behavior when they visit
- Install nesting boxes

Contact Banyule's Wildlife Corridor Program Officer on 9490 4222 for more information.

Information

For more information on:

How to establish a frog bog

Visit:
<http://www.latrobe.edu.au/wildlife/nursery/frog-bog>
or email: www.latrobe.edu.au/wildlife

Visit:
Amphibian Research Centre
<http://frogs.org.au/>
or email: arc@frogs.org.au

Nesting boxes

Visit:
<http://www.latrobe.edu.au/wildlife/nursery/nestboxes>
or email: nestboxes@latrobe.edu.au

Indigenous Plant Nurseries

Visit:
The La Trobe University Indigenous Plant Nursery
<http://www.latrobe.edu.au/wildlife/nursery/flora>
or email: plants@latrobe.edu.au

Visit:
Victorian Indigenous Nurseries Cooperative (VINC)
www.vinc.net.au,
or ph: 94821710

Visit:
Bulleen Art and Garden www.baag.com.au,
or ph: 9850 5155