

Forest Strategy Group Scheme

Public Summary of Monitoring Results

This report records the results of monitoring on each of the member properties. The monitoring considers the High Conservation Values present and the presence of other important values. This report is produced periodically as required.

Reporting Period: 1 July 2022 to 30 October 2024

5: Southern Exposure

- Location:** Jindivick, Victoria
- Forests present:** Native Forest.
- EVCs present:** Wet Forest, Damp Forest, Shrubby Foothill Forest.
- HCVs present:** HCV4; Critical Ecosystem Services; Forests occur in the catchment of the Tarrago Reservoir which is used for potable water.
- Other Values present:** Native forest ecosystems.

Monitoring Results:

A private ecological consulting firm (Wildlife Unlimited) was engaged to survey the ecological values of the property to improve the base knowledge of the property and guide future conservation and forest management planning and timber harvesting plans. The survey results were comprehensive and exceeded expectations.

Flora and fauna surveys conducted in November 2022 and January 2023 confirmed the presence of a number of threatened or endangered species. They detected Toothed Leionema (*Leionema bilobum* subsp. *serrulatum*), Tree Geebung (*Persoonia arborea*), Tubercule Burrowing Crayfish (*Engaeus tuberculatus*), Powerful Owl (*Ninox strenua*), Masked Owl (*Tyto novaehollandiae*), Greater Glider (*Petauroides volans*), Yellow-Bellied Glider (*Petaurus australis*) and Gang-gang Cockatoo (*Callocephalon fimbriatum*). They identified unmapped vegetation, Riparian Thicket EVC 59, and potential Smoky Mouse habitat.

Flora and fauna surveys conducted at between April and May 2023 confirmed the presence of a number of threatened or endangered species. Four species of frogs, 31 species of birds, 14 mammal species, two reptile and 27 species of plants and mosses were identified. Significant species detected include Gang Gang Cockatoo (*Callocephalon fimbriatum*), White Footed Dunnart (*Sminthopsis leucopus*), Powerful Owl (*Ninox strenua*), Greater Glider (*Petauroides volans*), and Yellow-bellied Glider (*Petaurus australis*). They mapped the patch of Paperbark dominated vegetation and compiled a species list. Wildlife Unlimited concluded that this property contains high conservation areas including waterways and mature forests supporting large populations of arboreal mammals. Conservation maintenance in the form of weed, deer and feral cat management are required to maintain the high conservation values present here.

The results of the surveys will be included in the next revision of the Forest Management Plan and used to prepare a new Property Vegetation Plan as required by the Shire of Baw.

During September 2024 camera traps were located in planned coupes in the wetter forest types in order to detect the presence of Leadbeater’s Possum. None were detected. Large numbers of Sugar Gliders were detected along with Sooty Owl, Feathertail glider, and Yellow Bellied Glider. Sugar Gliders and Leadbeater’s Possum occupy a similar ecological niche so it likely that presence would be dominated by one over the other.

Value	Strategy	Results
Fauna Species	Limit harvesting to low value areas. Protect all habitat trees. Limit harvesting by extent and duration.	Survey Report.
Yellow Bellied Glider feed trees.	Protect all occurrences	To be monitored
Special Vegetation Types	Add to conservation areas.	Survey Report.
Water quality	Observe water quality in Crystal Creek	Good quality flows observed.

Strategy Effectiveness:

The current strategy is to gather more information about the values present. The survey has identified significant values that warrant further investigation, mapping and inclusion in the Forest Management Plan and Property Vegetation Plan.

It is noted that EDNA has been conducted through water sampling and results are awaited. The intent of the sampling was to confirm the vertebrate species on site and extend knowledge beyond observations.

Future strategies will focus on protecting the values identified. The Property Vegetation Plan requires that all future coupes be identified. This plan will consider the results of the survey.

8: Mia Mia

- Location:** Lismore, Victoria
- Forests present:** Windbreak plantations, Sugar Gum.
- EVCs present:** Nil. Formerly: Plains Grassland.
- HCVs present:** Nil.
- Other Values present:** Arboreal habitat.

Monitoring Results:

The plantations support two raptor nests that have been retained in habitat patches. The Whistling Kite nest has been continuously occupied since 2013 and at least 8 fledglings have been produced. The second nest was observed in 2023 with a fledgling present. The nesting pair are either Brown Goshawk or Collared Sparrow Hawk. The nest is very small and may not be used again. The Whistling Kites have been observed using their nest in October 2024.

Thirty seven bird species have been observed in the 8.6 hectares of plantations. There are a number of species present when the trees are flowering. Harvesting will be scheduled after the youngest stand has started flowering to ensure continuing access to this resource for the birds.

Three habitat patches and 35 single hollow bearing trees have been retained and protected.

The remaining mature stand was monitored for the presence of mammals using camera traps with 4 types of attractants (sardines, oats, peanut butter and bird seed). Only 2 species were detected, Black Rat and House Mouse. They were most interested in the peanut butter and bird seed. Camera traps have previously detected a fox.

Value	Strategy	Results
Bird Species	Protect most trees with hollows. Protect scattered wattles and understorey plants. Wait for young stands to flower before next harvest.	Additional bird species recorded. Kite nest occupied and fledglings produced.
Mammals	Undertake further monitoring to attempt to detect native species	Three introduced species detected
Arboreal Species	Undertake further monitoring using a spotlight survey to detect which species are using the retained hollows.	Hollows are used by Corellas and Galahs.
Tree Growth	Regularly measure the permanent growth plot.	The 2024 measurement was first after the thinning. Reasonable growth rates are measured.

Strategy Effectiveness:

The current strategy is to gather more information about the species present.

9: Home Farm

Location: Derrinallum, Victoria

Forests present: Windbreak plantations, various species; Wetland

EVCs present: Plains Sedgy Wetland, Plains Grassland

HCVs present: Nil.

Other Values present: Arboreal and Wetland habitats.

Monitoring Results:

There was a pair of broilgas observed nesting in the wetland along with Black Swans in 2023. All plantations are to be used for conservation purposes. The wetland is completely dry in October 2024 with no wetland birds present. The lake bed is now grazed by Kangaroos.

Value	Strategy	Results
Wetland Bird Species	Monitor the breeding of birds on the wetland	Brolgas not detected at last visit.

Strategy Effectiveness:

The current strategy is to gather more information about the species present.

10: Naringal

- Location:** Wallinduc, Victoria
- Forests present:** Windbreak plantations, Sugar Gum and mixed shrub species
- EVCs present:** Nil, Formerly: Plains Grassland, Grassy Woodland, Riparian Woodland, Plains Grassy Woodland.
- HCVs present:** Nil.
- Other Values present:** Adjacent to rare vegetation.

Monitoring Results:

Spiney Rice-flower and White Sunray are known to occur adjacent to the plantations on the grassland road verges. They plants are unlikely to survive in the plantations.

Value	Strategy	Results
Rare Species	Detect and record any occurrences	None detected.

Strategy Effectiveness:

The current strategy is to gather more information about the species present.

20: Lancefield Tree Farm

- Location:** Lancefield, Victoria
- Forests present:** Timber plantations; Agroforestry plantations.
- EVCs present:** Nil. Formerly: Damp Sands Herb-rich Woodland, Valley Grassy Forest/Woodland
- HCVs present:** Nil.
- Other Values present:** Arboreal habitat.

Monitoring Results:

The plantations are surveyed for bird species by Birdlife Australia seasonally, four times a year. The plantations are of interest as an example of regenerating forests from previous farmland. The survey is to detect birds discovering new habitat. The results show that there

is seasonal variation in the number of birds present which fluctuates from 47 to 124 birds observed.

The number of species present is also monitored. The number of species present rose from 28 to 56 in 2023.

The property is occupied by a sizable mob of Eastern Grey Kangaroos and native vegetation is present in spite of the previous grazing history. Other native mammals recorded include wombat, echidna and brush-tailed phascogale. Further plant species surveys detected 9 additional native plant species.

Value	Strategy	Results
Bird Species	Monitor numbers	40 species of birds detected.
Indigenous Species	Monitor numbers	44 different indigenous species detected

Strategy Effectiveness:

The current strategy is to gather more information about the species present.

Additional vegetation surveys are planned.

21: Mt Horsfall

Location: Loch Valley, Victoria

Forests present: Native Forest.

EVCs present: Wet Forest, Damp Forest.

HCVs present: Nil.

Other Values present: Native forest ecosystems.

Monitoring Results:

A private ecological consulting firm (Wildlife Unlimited) was engaged to survey of ecological values of the property to improve the base knowledge of ecological values and to prepare the Property Vegetation Plan for the previous owners.

This survey identified that the previous harvesting had removed all of the pre 1939 trees and that there were very few hollow bearing trees present. They failed to identify any habitat suitable for Leadbeater's Possum, although they are common in the surrounding State Forest. They found no Greater Gliders or Powerful Owls.

Value	Strategy	Results
Regenerating Forest	Do stocking surveys to determine the level of regeneration.	Not due yet.
Tree Geebung	Identify and protect large individuals.	Specimens recorded in Timber Harvesting Plans

Strategy Effectiveness:

The current strategy is to gather more information about the values present and immediately protect them where appropriate from the planned harvesting.

23: Crystal Creek

Location: Jindivick, Victoria

Forests present: Native Forest.

EVCs present: Wet Forest, Damp Forest, Shrubby Foothill Forest.

HCVs present: HCV4; Critical Ecosystem Services; Forests occur in the catchment of the Tarrago Reservoir which is used for potable water.

Other Values present: Native forest ecosystems.

Monitoring Results:

This property is immediately adjacent to Southern Exposure and was recently sold into separate ownership. It has been monitored as a single site up till now.

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