



Living with wildlife

# FLYING FOXES.

Flying foxes are **essential for Australian biodiversity.**

Faced with the threat of climate change and loss of habitat to human development, **we need to protect them more than ever.**

Two of Australia's thirteen species of flying fox — the Grey-headed flying fox and the Little Red flying fox — are found in our area. They are vital to our local ecology.

The Grey-headed flying fox is considered at risk of extinction. It is categorised as threatened under Victoria's Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988. The survival of the Grey-headed flying fox is vital for cross pollination and seed dispersal of native plant species.

Flying foxes are becoming more common in residential areas as more of their natural habitat is being cleared for development. Urban areas with their diversity in garden plants and hardwoods provide a year-round food source, attracting increasing numbers of flying foxes into our communities.

Flying foxes are the main pollinator for native hardwood forests and rainforests. They pollinate as they feed, dispersing seeds as they move throughout the forest.

A single flying fox can disperse up to 60,000 seeds in one night.

Through this role, flying foxes provide habitat for other species of flora and fauna.



I'm planting trees.  
What are you doing for the environment?



Flying foxes are nocturnal and typically roost by hanging upside down during the day

## DIET

Grey-headed flying foxes feed on fruit, nectar, pollen, leaves and bark. The Little Red flying foxes specialise in nectar and pollen from eucalypts and paperbarks.

When eating leaves and fruit the flying foxes chew the food thoroughly, suck out the juice and spit out the fibrous remnant. Evidence of this remnant is a sign that fruit bats are feeding in the area.

Flying foxes navigate by sight and locate food by a combination of sight and smell.

## NETTING

FLYING FOXES ARE DYING AT AN ALARMING RATE AS GARDENERS TRY TO PROTECT THEIR PRODUCE DURING FRUIT SEASON.

Unsafe netting captures and kills thousands of flying foxes each year. Strangulation and dehydration are common. This can mean lactating females are left unable to return to their hungry babies back in the colony.

**Test if netting is safe by attempting to poke your finger through it. Any netting you can't poke your finger through is safe for flying foxes and other native wildlife.**

Always be sure to tie the netting securely around the tree trunk so wildlife does not climb up and get caught.

For more information about netting, visit [wildlifefriendlyfencing.com](http://wildlifefriendlyfencing.com)



## WHEN FLYING FOXES ARE YOUR NEIGHBOURS

Flying foxes congregate in groups numbering in the thousands. They are highly social and their evening chatter can be extremely noisy.

Their loud chatter can disrupt sleeping residents and cause dogs to bark during the night. The camp can generate a strong, unpleasant odour.

Fortunately for their human neighbours, flying foxes rarely stay in one location for more than a couple of weeks. Australians travel long distances to experience biodiversity. Flying foxes bring it to you!



For wildlife emergencies call our  
**24 hour hotline on 0412 433 727**

[www.awarewildlife.org.au](http://www.awarewildlife.org.au)