

Welcome to the Shoalhaven

Congratulations on deciding to live in the Shoalhaven. This beautiful area has a unique collection of animals and plants, some of which occur nowhere else in the world.

The Shoalhaven has over 140 threatened species of plants and animals. If you live close to bushland, you might have seen some of these animals and plants or even have them on your property. There are many things you can do to help native animals and plants to survive in and around an urban environment. This brochure provides information to help you provide habitat for native species, especially in newly developed areas.

How to reduce development impacts on native animals

Development of new areas is needed to provide housing and facilities for our growing population. This development impacts on native plants and animals that live in these areas. To reduce the impacts, when designing or building your house try the following:



- Identify areas of native vegetation that can be protected;
- Plan your house so that trees can safely be retained;
- Collect seed, cuttings, leaf litter, or logs from areas to be cleared and use in your garden;
- Design a fauna friendly garden.

Netting on fruit trees

Many home owners net their fruit trees to protect the crop from damage. Birds and flying foxes can be injured or killed in some types of netting. This can be avoided if you:

- Stretch knitted netting over a homemade frame;
- Never use thin nylon (monofilament) netting material;
- Never throw netting loosely over trees;
- Keep netting stretched taut and held away from the tree;
- Plant dwarf or multi-grafted type fruit trees that are easier to net;
- Regularly check netting to make sure no animals have been caught.



Fencing material

The types of fencing used on a property can hamper animal movement or physically harm animals that get caught on fencing, particularly barbed wire. There are a few things that can be done to prevent animal harm on fences:

- Use plain wire instead of barbed wire;
- Replace or remove barbed wire on existing fences;
- Make barbed wire fences more visible with tags;
- Design fences so that animals can still move through established paths;
- Cover barbs on existing fences with plastic hose.

In the garden

You can have an attractive, interesting garden that provides habitat for native animals. A good habitat garden can encourage a wide range of birds, reptiles, frogs, insects, micro bats and small mammals into your garden. The variety of wildlife that you get in your garden will depend on the habitats that you provide. A good way of keeping and attracting animals to your garden is to protect native plants that are there already, including trees, shrubs, grasses and leaf litter. To attract wildlife to your garden:



- Plant local native plants;
- Provide water for birds or a small frog pond;
- Provide nesting boxes for birds, micro bats or possums;
- Provide rocks and logs for lizards and frogs;
- Keep areas with natural leaf litter for lizards and other small animals.

The value of trees

Large trees take hundreds of years to grow, mature and form hollows and should therefore be retained whenever safe to do so. Mature gum trees are essential for native species, especially possums and gliders or birds such as parrots, all of which need hollows for shelter or to nest in. Large trees also help animals to move through an urban environment by providing places they can glide or fly between.

- Only plant large trees in appropriate areas;
- Keep trees where it is safe to do so;
- Landscape around large trees;
- Protect trees in public areas;
- Replace any trees that are removed with local species;
- Smaller trees can be used to support birds and wildlife.



Photo courtesy of WIRES

General

There are a few other things a householder can do to help retain native plants and animals in urban environments including:

- Join a Bushcare, Landcare or Coastcare Group;
- Support your local wildlife care agency such as NANA;
- Join the Australian Plants Society NSW
- Practice responsible pet ownership;
- Encourage your local school to have a native garden;
- Pass on the message.
- Choose non-invasive exotic plants;
- Purchase a good book on how to attract wildlife to your garden.



Responsible Pet Ownership

Without their owners even knowing, domestic pets can catch and kill native animals or prevent them from entering a residential backyard. It is possible to have both domestic pets and wildlife by doing the following:

- Keep dogs and/or cats in their yard;
- Build cat runs or modular pet parks for cats;
- Don't leave out extra food for pets because you might attract foxes or Indian myna birds.



Discourage direct feeding

Direct feeding can attract nuisance species and promote disease transmission between native birds. If you want to encourage birds into your garden try to:

- Plant a garden that includes a variety of different native flowering plants to provide nectar for honeyeaters, eg small-flowered Grevilleas, Correas, Melaleucas and Bottlebrushes;
- Plant native berry-producing species such as Lilly Pillies;
- Plant large cone bearing native species such as Hakeas and Banksias;
- Retain deep leaf litter in the garden for birds to forage in;
- A supply of fresh clean water is the best way to encourage birds into your garden.



Sharing your

Space



Shoalhaven City Council – (02) 4429 3111
NANA – 0418 427 214
Voiceless – www.voiceless.org.au

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Needs of Different Animals

Different animal groups have different habitat needs. The following section includes tips on what you can do to encourage different types of animals into your garden.

Further tips:

<http://www.floraforfauna.com.au>

http://birdsaustralia.com.au/infosheets/05_nestboxes.pdf

Birds

- Plant a variety of native plants that attract different birds;
- Provide shelter in your garden such as low and high shrubs or plants with prickly or dense foliage;
- Provide a water source for birds, shallow bowls are best for small birds;
- Provide nest boxes to attract hollow-nesting species;
- Keep household pets away from native birds.



Butterflies, moths and bees

- Plant a variety of native species that produce nectar and pollen to attract insects such as Brachycomes, Eucalypts, Leptospermum, Westringia;
- Non-native plants can also attract native bees and butterflies, eg Salvia, lavender.
- Provide a very shallow water dish for butterflies;
- Provide rocks in warm places for butterflies to sun themselves;
- Consider planting known butterfly feed plants such as citrus, cissus or swan plants;
- Control caterpillars only when necessary, mature plants will often tolerate a small amount of chewing;
- Minimise pesticide use in the garden;
- Avoid using electronic bug zappers.



Possums

- Consider providing nest boxes;
- Protect mature trees, especially Eucalypts or those with hollows;
- Consider providing a neighbourhood "possum" highway to link trees in your local area with strong rope;
- Relocate possums in roofs to another area of your property in a nest box;



Lizards

- Provide raised rocks or concrete paths for lizards to sun bake;
- Provide cover such as rocks, logs and deep leaf litter for lizards to shelter;
- Avoid using snail bait;
- Keep cats and dogs away from areas for reptiles.



Bats

- Small insectivorous bats may roost in appropriately sized nest boxes;
- Provide resources to encourage insects;
- Large mature native trees can attract flying foxes, eg turpentines.

Frogs and fish

- Build a frog pond with plants and grasses around the edge for frogs to lay their eggs in;
- Provide a bog-garden for frogs with marsh plants such as grasses, mosses, reeds and other water tolerant plants;
- A damp depression with native grasses and ground covers and clumping plants can be a good place for frogs to shelter;
- Provide rocks, sticks and patches of deep leaf litter as shelter sites.



Unwanted Pest Animals

Sometimes unwanted species can be found in your backyard. Birds such as Indian Myna's, Starlings, sparrows or animals such as rats or foxes can be a nuisance in your yard. You can discourage these species by:

- Growing lots of native plants;
- Having smaller areas of lawn;
- Don't feed birds or leave out excess dog and cat food;
- Cover compost bins;
- Remove exotic bird species, such as Indian Mynas from nest boxes or roofs;

Further Tips

Discourage direct feeding

http://www.epa.qld.gov.au/nature_conservation/wildlife/native_animals/living_with_wildlife/feeding_native_animals/

<http://www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/threatened/publications/tap/beak-feather/pubs/beak-feather-tap.pdf>

<http://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/npws.nsf/Content/Key+threatening+processes+by+doctype>

Join your local Australian Plants Society (NSW) group for information on planting appropriate native plants www.austplants-nsw.org.au or phone 02 4443 5080.

Netting on fruit trees

<http://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/npws.nsf/Content/Netting+of+garden+fruit+trees++guidelines+to+protect+wildlife>

http://www.epa.qld.gov.au/nature_conservation/wildlife/native_animals/living_with_wildlife/flyingfoxes/netting_fruit_trees/

Fencing material

<http://www.wildlifefriendlyfencing.com/>

General

<http://www.weeds.org.au/>