



Managing Biodiversity in Victoria's Native Forests

Fauna Conservation

An important part of sustainably managing Victoria's forests is ensuring the protection of biological diversity, including threatened species and their habitat (see VicForests Factsheet *Protecting Victoria's Flora and Fauna* for more information).

There is a comprehensive legislative framework governing sustainable timber harvesting in Victoria that defines which areas are suitable for harvesting.

Well over half of Victoria's forests are protected under the Comprehensive and Adequate Reserve System (CAR). This reserve system is based on a landscape approach to biodiversity management, ensuring that flora and fauna across a wide range of ecosystems are represented and conserved.

In addition, all areas outside of National Park and reserve are covered by site level, species specific prescriptions that must be applied when harvesting operations take place. These include:

- Protection of buffer zones along rivers, creeks and other important environmental features
- Retention of habitat trees to help protect fauna and seed trees to facilitate forest regeneration
- Protection of vegetation communities such as rainforest, streamside vegetation, mixed species forest and threatened species habitat

These prescriptions provide habitat for fauna in addition to the CAR system, and result in approximately 30% of additional planned harvest areas being excluded from harvesting.





Pre-harvest Surveys

Areas of forest available for harvesting are surveyed pre-harvest if they are deemed likely to contain rare or threatened species.

Where pre-harvest surveys identify threatened species, the appropriate prescriptions for the species are implemented to ensure adequate protection.

The Survey Process

The presence or absence of threatened species is determined using appropriate surveys that are conducted and assessed by a range of biodiversity experts, including VicForests' Biodiversity Planner.

Surveys are conducted using survey methods tailored for detection of specific species. Standard techniques include:

- Spotlight searching for animals in trees at night – for the detection of possums and gliders
- Call playback, where animal calls are played to ascertain if individuals of the same species respond – for the detection of owls and frogs
- Motion sensing cameras, where attractants are set up and the camera is triggered by animal motion – for the detection of ground mammals and birds
- River and creek searches – for the detection of crayfish and frogs

On-going Biodiversity Management

Pre-harvest surveys are carried out in addition to surveys of regrowth areas. Both contribute to the knowledge of threatened species distribution patterns and habitat requirements. This survey work undertaken by VicForests contributes to the conservation and review of areas reserved for biodiversity protection in Victoria.

Case Study: VicForests use of Motion Cameras

VicForests' Biodiversity staff have installed motion detecting cameras to record images of animals that have returned to harvested areas following regeneration. Early results show that cameras placed in regeneration greater than two years old, have taken images of the following species:

Long-footed Potoroo (*Potorous longipes*)

Long-nose Bandicoot (*Perameles nastula*)

Lyrebirds (*Menura novaehollandiae*)

Antechinus (*Antechinus.sp*)

Goannas (*Varanus.sp*)

Wallabies (*Macropus.sp*)

Images taken by these cameras are included below.



Lyrebird



Long-footed Potoroo



Long-nose Bandicoot