

Victoria's flying-fox species

Despite often roosting in large numbers in metropolitan areas, the Grey-headed Flying-fox is a threatened species in Victoria.

Known for their fly-outs at sunset, you may find flying foxes visiting your backyard, orchards and nearby parks to feed on tasty

There are two flying-fox species found in Victoria: the Grey-headed Flying-fox and the Little Red Flying-fox. Little red flying foxes are semi-permanent residents along the north of Victoria, while Grey-headed flying foxes migrate along the east coast of Australia following food resources.

The Grey-headed Flying-fox is the largest member of the flying-fox family and is the only species permanent to southern Victoria. Colony numbers fluctuate with the seasons and there are usually more flying-foxes in summer and fewer in winter.

Flying-foxes are ecologically important, playing a major role in the regeneration of native forests by pollinating trees and dispersing seeds as they move between trees and forests. A single flying-fox can disperse up to 60,000 seeds in one night!

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



Tips for living with flying-foxes

- Enjoy their presence. They are a natural part of the landscape and an important part of the ecology.
- If you chose to net your fruit trees to protect them from birds and flying-foxes, please use wildlife-safe netting. Flying-foxes and other animals are easily entangled in netting with holes larger than 5mm x 5mm and it is the leading cause of death and injuries for flying-foxes in urban areas. See the DELWP Fruit tree netting and wildlife fact sheets for more information.
- Flying-foxes can also get caught on barbed wire. If you have fences including barbed wire on your property, consider painting it a light colour or taping on plastic bags to make it more visible.
- Please do not approach flying-foxes or attempt to touch them yourself. A small percentage of flying-foxes carry Australian Bat Lyssavirus, which is similar to rabies. If you are concerned about the welfare of flying-foxes in your area, contact a local wildlife carer who is trained to handle bats.
- If you find a lifeless flying-fox, do not touch it. Instead check if the animal is dead by gently turning it over with a shovel. If the animal is dead, use the shovel to place it in a plastic bag and double bag it for disposal in accordance with your local government by-laws. Make sure you use gloves. If you are unsure if the animal is dead, contact a local wildlife rescue organisation for assistance.

For more information call 136 186
or go to wildlife.vic.gov.au

For wildlife rescue, call your local wildlife
rescue organisation

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