

ONLINE SUBMISSION DETAILS

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Organisation	Individual
Postcode	
How do you think we should improve the FFG Act?	<p>Submission to the Review of the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act</p> <p>I am a member of both the Friends of Kurth Kiln, the Friends of Bunyip state Park [REDACTED] [REDACTED] During this time I have participated in a number of fauna and flora surveys in both Bunyip and Kurth Kiln Parks. I consider this experience has given me a valuable insight into both the past uses of the area and the ability to make some suggestions for the future.</p> <p>The large forest owls used to be relatively abundant and in balance with their food sources and nesting requirements. This balance has been lost as logging in late 19th and early 20th century has effected the availability of tall trees with suitable large nesting hollows. The large trees that were not good for saw logs are now falling over and new growth from logging has not matured enough to have large hollows. This scenario is also affecting nesting sites for the area's birds, possums and especially the Greater Gliders. The food source for these large owls is in jeopardy. A pair Powerful Owls require about 500 possums a year (mostly ringtails and greater Gliders) to sustain themselves and raise a family. This food needs to be relatively close to the nest site or the energy the owls need to expend to catch their prey and carry it back to the nest is greater than that which is available in the carcass. The problem here is that the ringtails' habitat (the mid story trees) has been greatly diminished due to prescribed burning. Add to this the millennium drought and the need of the then existing owls and the ringtail population in the area has crashed to the point where it cannot supply the needs of a healthy owl population. This is also affecting the Greater Gliders, which are now an EPBC listed species. Ringtail Possums are by no means an endangered species but in the bush areas where the large forest owls live they need to exist in sufficient abundance to provide food for these top predators. Land management practices in areas such as Bunyip and Kurth Kiln parks need to be revised to take this into account.</p> <p>Greater Gliders are particularly vulnerable to prescribed burns in zone 2 areas as these burns are scheduled to be done every ten years or less in any given area. They require nest hollows in large old trees, which are the ones most likely to collapse in any fire, and are difficult to protect as they mostly occur in rough terrain. Another problem is canopy scorch as greater gliders diet is mostly the fresh green eucalypt leaves of the outer canopy from which they also get their moisture. Prescribed burning often dries these leaves out and suitable foliage does not come back for many weeks and with a restricted range the gliders dehydrate and die of kidney failure. Greater effort needs to be taken to identify Greater Glider colonies and measures developed to ensure their survival in areas that it is deemed necessary to have prescribed burns</p> <p>In the past the relevant Government Departments have done valuable work in developing "Tolerable Fire Intervals" based on the requirements of flora but little is known about the requirements of the many birds, small animals and reptiles that live in the area. These too need to have minimum "Tolerable Fire Intervals" developed. This is particularly applicable to the arboreal fauna. The ill informed practices of the past have brought the Leadbeater's Possum to the edge of extinction. The effects of the imposition of an unnatural regularly imposed fire regime on all native fauna needs to have properly funded studies to insure we are not paving the road to extinction for other native fauna.</p>

The local council and presumably the State Government have regulations about land clearing as it applies to the various zonings and Trust for Nature properties. I know of a number of cases locally where these regulations are simply ignored and the fines paid, the property value increases due to the development and this far outweighs the cost of the fine. Rather than simply increasing the fines the Government could prevent any building permits being issued on such properties for say 50 years, as this would make the property virtually unsalable and impossible to use as security for a bank loan.


