



## Protecting Biodiversity on Your Property

### What is biodiversity?

Biodiversity is short for biological diversity, and includes all plants, animals, microorganisms and the ecosystems that support them.

### So why is biodiversity so important?

All life, including humans, depends on healthy and functioning ecosystems to provide:

- a stable climate that ecosystems, and in particular plants, help to maintain clean air, clean water and healthy soils
- protection from devastating and costly land degradation, such as salinity
- natural pest control and pollination for agricultural crops
- food, medicines, timber and recreation

### What are the main threats to biodiversity in this area?

- climate change
- clearing and habitat fragmentation
- over grazing by domestic, pest or introduced animals
- weeds
- inappropriate fire regimes
- loss of hollow bearing trees
- loss of wetland habitats

### What can you do to protect and enhance biodiversity on your property?

As a group landowners are a powerful force in shaping the future of biodiversity in the local landscape. Individually each landowner also has the opportunity to contribute in some way. Actions include:

- Avoid or minimise the clearing of native vegetation
- Fence remnant vegetation to protect from grazing by livestock
- Expand or improve the quality of existing remnant vegetation through planting indigenous plants
- Control feral pest such as cats, rabbits and foxes
- Ensure that domestic pets, such as cats and dogs, do not kill or injure wildlife
- Control weeds that invade bushland, such as blackberry, broom and gorse
- Leave fallen logs, large dead standing trees and rocky areas as they provide habitat for native animals





## **The Wombat State Forest and Wombat Forestcare**

**The Wombat State Forest** straddles the Great Dividing Range from Woodend to Daylesford. It is the largest area of forest in the region, covering an area of approximately 56,000 hectares.

Despite a history of intense exploitation from logging, mining and firewood collection, the Wombat Forest provides critical habitat for a wide variety of native fauna and flora, including a number of rare or threatened species.

Threatened animals that occur in the Wombat Forest include Brush-tailed Phascogale, Powerful Owl, Masked Owl, Bibron's Toadlet, Growling Grass Frog and Spot-tailed Quoll.

Threatened native plants that occur in the Wombat Forest include Brooker's Gum, Black Gum, Yarra Gum, Wombat Bush-pea, Wiry Bossiaea, Creeping Grevillea, Dwarf Boronia, Basalt Pepperpress and Satinwood.

A diversity of vegetation types exist within the Wombat Forest, ranging from wetter forests through to drier heathy forests.

The Wombat Forest is also very important as a water catchment area, with the headwaters of five major river systems contained in the forest.

**Wombat Forestcare** is a community group that is dedicated to protecting and enhancing the ecological health of the Wombat State Forest and surrounding areas.

Wombat Forestcare engages in a range of activities. These have a strong focus on community education and involvement, and include undertaking flora and fauna surveys, forest regeneration activities and seed collection days. Wombat Forestcare also regularly holds picnics and bushwalks for people who love being in, and learning about the bush.

Wombat Forestcare is also committed to working with the State Government and the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) to improve the management of the forest, and ensure that its biodiversity values are protected into the future.

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