

Friends of Leadbeaters Possum Stag Watching Field Trips Summer 09-10

Want to have an amazing experience quietly enjoying the magic sights and sounds of Victoria's tall forests going to sleep.....or waking up in the case of our nocturnal animals? Want to be a part of one of Australia's longest running forest monitoring programs?

Volunteers are needed to help observe wildlife activity around key stag trees: the big old, dead or dying trees with hollows. You will be required to walk in and out of dense forest or burnt forest and sit under a stag for approximately 1 hour as the sun goes down. Your observations of any wildlife activity that you hear or see will then be recorded.

All training and observations that might be expected will be provided on the evening at the site.

The Australian National University (ANU) is undertaking volunteer based nocturnal fauna monitoring trips as part of its Long Term Monitoring Program. The program has been running since the late 1980's, and focuses on the ecology of the Mountain Ash forests of the Central Highlands of Victoria. The key component of the monitoring program is the nocturnal fauna surveys. This provides invaluable information on population trends, occurrence, abundance, distribution and ecology of the gliders and possums of the mountain ash forests, with a focus on Leadbeater's Possum.

Without volunteer numbers, the surveys would simply not happen! On some sites there are over thirty 60m tall Mountain Ash trees to watch! Your help would be greatly appreciated to assist with stag watching at a number of sites throughout the tall forests of Victoria in areas such as Toolangi, Marysville, Mt Margaret, Powelltown and the O'Shannessy, Armstrong, Upper Yarra & Maroondah water catchments. We will be covering old growth sites, young stands with older remnant stags, burnt and unburnt areas. Each evening may also be an opportunity to spotlight after stag watching.

Car pooling will leave from the Coles carpark in Healesville (River St end) at 6.30pm sharp on the evenings listed in the below table. Or arrange an alternative meeting place if this suits better. ANU have aimed to be out most Thursday and Friday nights between now and March 2010, with some weekend trips to be confirmed closer to the date, and targeted to the school holidays.

Thursdays	Fridays	Saturdays
10.12.09	11.12.09	N/A
17.12.09	18.12.09	N/A
07.01.10	08.01.10	N/A
14.01.10	15.01.10	16.01.10
21.01.10	22.01.10	23.01.10
28.01.10	29.01.10	30.01.10
04.02.10	05.02.10	N/A
11.02.10	12.02.10	N/A
18.02.10	19.02.10	N/A
25.02.10	26.02.10	N/A
04.03.10	05.03.10	N/A
11.03.10 (TBC)	12.03.10	N/A
18.03.10 (TBC)	19.03.10 (TBC)	N/A



Site locations will be confirmed once we know volunteer numbers for each night as there are sites with varying number of stags to be watched therefore volunteer numbers will dictate which sites will get visited. Sites may vary from 1 volunteer to 30 or so volunteers.

As there are large numbers of stags that need to be monitored over the summer if you have a group of 2 car loads or more volunteers you can book out one of the nights scheduled or select another night of the week if this suits your group better, just get in touch with us. What a great way to get a group of volunteers together for a fun activity, maybe you can organise a group from your work, school, friends and/or family to enjoy a different evening out!

What you may see or hear:

- Nightly bird chorus as birds retire for the day
- Owls and other night birds
- Mammals; Leadbeater's, Greater Gliders, Yellow-bellied Gliders, Feathertail Gliders, Brushtails, Bobucks, Sugar Gliders, Ringtails, Antechinus.

What to bring:

- Clothing for warm and cold (or wet) weather and to protect against scratching from thick vegetation
- Sturdy boots
- Torch or headlamp to walk out of stag watching site
- Insect repellent or other clothing to help protect against mosquitoes
- Something to sit on (best view by lying back on the ground)
- Water and/or snacks

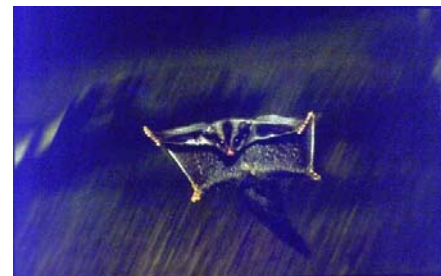


RSVP with your date of interest and details to:

Emma Campbell - Volunteer Field Work Coordinator
M: 0428 908 024 (no message bank, please text if I don't answer)
H: 5962 6174 (can leave a message on answering machine)
E: emsterkate@hotmail.com

Or

Lachie McBurney – Senior Research Officer, A.N.U
M: 0401124929
E: lachie_mcb@hotmail.com



Note:

- Car pooling will be available. Some vehicles may be required to go into the forest and will need to be 4WD. Please advise of your location and willingness or availability to car pool, 2WD or 4WD.
- All volunteers must have the FLBP membership - including insurance cover. The website has more information on how you can become a member or update your membership to include fieldwork insurance. Please allow 2 weeks for FLBP to process your membership or insurance updates before you go into the field.

For more information on volunteering or other ways to assist the ongoing survival of Victoria's faunal emblem visit: www.leadbeaters.org.au

