

**FAUNA SURVEY AND MANAGEMENT
PRESCRIPTIONS FOR MANN ROAD
BUSHLAND RESERVE**

MT ELIZA, NOVEMBER, 2003.

**For the Natural Systems Team of the
Mornington Peninsula Shire.**

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INTRODUCTION

Malcolm Legg from Mal's Environmental and Ecological Services was commissioned by the Conservation Officers of the Mornington Peninsula Shire to carry out an assessment of the fauna, their habitat and management throughout Mann Road Bushland Reserve, on the Mornington Peninsula, Victoria. The study was carried out between September, 2003 and November, 2003.

Humans have altered the habitat provided for fauna in most parts of the study area due to invasion by noxious and environmental weeds which have contributed to dieback of the indigenous vegetation (especially the overstorey and understorey). Clearing of the original vegetation for houses has also contributed to loss of habitat for local fauna.

SUMMARY

This report documents the significant taxa, their habitat and management prescriptions, along with a complete list of taxa recorded throughout Mann Road Bushland Reserve. Mann Road Bushland Reserve will now be mentioned as "the reserve" or "the study area" throughout this report.

The survey was conducted throughout the entire reserve. Taxa detected along the study area includes, one species of Decapod Crustacean, two species of fish, four species of Amphibians, five species of Reptiles (of which, one species is a tortoise, three species are lizards and one species is a snake), 42 species of Birds (of which four species are introduced) and fourteen species of Mammals (of which four species are introduced). The environs of the study area can be considered to be of Regional significance, with the taxa along the study area listed at local to regional levels. This is due to mass depletion of natural vegetation and fauna populations on the Mornington Peninsula and loss of some significant species. Significant taxa includes five species of high local significance, four species of regional significance and the remaining native species are of local significance based upon large-scale depletion of habitat and populations on the Peninsula.

Weeds, vermin and human disturbance are the greatest causes of local extinction of habitat and fauna populations on the Peninsula and within the environs of the study area. Ongoing weed control and eradication, along with regeneration of the original vegetation communities throughout the area, including carrying out controlled burns, is recommended as high priority. Introduced fauna can cause unnecessary pressure on remaining native fauna and should be eradicated or controlled.

STUDY AREA

The study area is approximately four hectares in size (Melways reference map number 101 J 10). The environs of the study area consist of weedy and natural bushland with severe infestations of weeds throughout some areas. The soils undulate towards the drainage lines; with the lowest point 42 meters above sea level (creek end) to the highest point 92 metres above sea level (western end). Geologically the soils comprise mainly of granite and were formed in the Eocene period of the Devonian era. The area has a maritime, temperate climate, with warm, moist summers and cool, wet winters with the wettest months May to October, with the driest months being January and February.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to thank Brent Hall for assistance with the fieldwork undertaken throughout the survey period.

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1.0 METHODOLOGY

1.1 Field Work

A fauna survey was carried out to determine species using the methods below. However results are not included in this report.

- Decapod Crustaceans and Fish were sampled using bait and opera house traps.
- Amphibians were identified by sight and identification of vocal calls.
- Reptiles were identified by sight, hand capture and were detected under rubbish and logs.
- Birds were identified by sight and their calls, and during spotlight walks.
- Mammals were identified by capture in Elliot traps, while conducting spotlight walks, analysing scats and diggings, and by sight.
- Microbats were detected using the Anabat II Bat Detector which records their echolocation calls and identifies the species on computer using specialized software.
- Spotlighting was carried out at nights during a range of weather conditions.

Taxa were identified using reference literature including Allen, Midgley & Allen (2002), Cogger (2000), Menkhorst (1996), Simpson and Day (1999) and Strahan (1998).

1.2 Limitations

The survey was conducted in spring when most species are present. However this report does not cover migratory species or breeding species that migrate or occur outside the survey time frame. More species are likely to be found over a longer survey period (over a year).

1.3 Data Storage

Listings of all taxa detected throughout the survey within the study area have been submitted to the Department of Sustainability and Environment, Heidelberg (Arthur Rylah Research Institute) and recorded on the Atlas of Victoria Wildlife for future reference.

1.4 Trapping Permit

All fauna trapping on the property was carried out LEGALLY under Research Permit number 10002429.

1.5 Defining Significant Habitats

The evaluation of habitat does not have any rigid guidelines. An area can have high habitat value for any or all of the following reasons:

- it is a representative or remnant community,
- it constitutes a wildlife corridor,
- it contains important breeding sites,
- it has unusual ecology or community structure,
- it has high species richness.

1.6 Habitat Values

Habitat consists of Woodland and a Riparian Creek. Within the habitat dieback of trees and the understorey has resulted from severe weed invasion. Areas where weeds are absent a grassy understorey with some logs make up the available habitat for terrestrial fauna. Some old growth hollows are present within the remaining eucalypts which form homes for some hollow dependant fauna. However the number of healthy eucalypts is low. The Riparian area is severely infested with weeds and very few taxa are present. Most of the creek is shaded by weeds.

2.0 DEFINING SIGNIFICANT SPECIES.

Taxa in the study area were classed according to their local, to regional significance. As lists of regionally and locally significant fauna aren't available from relevant government authorities, significant taxa were assessed by the author and from using previous records.

KEY

Signif Significant/status of species is designated by:

N National

S State

R Regional

HL High Local

NRE Threatened Vertebrate in Victoria-2000 (NRE 2000)

FFG *Flora and Fauna Guaranteed Act 1988*

ActPI Action Plan approved by environmental Australia

EPBC *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*

TR International Treaties, C=China and J=Japan.

Cen critically endangered

End endangered

Vul vulnerable

LR lower risk-near threatened

DD data deficient

Ls Listed

Un Uncommon

MC Moderately Common

LC Locally Common

C Common

Lim Limited

Table 1: Significant taxa found within Mann Road Bushland Reserve during this survey.

Common Name	Scientific Name	Signif.	NRE.	FFG.	ActPI	EPBC	TR
Fish							
Spotted Galaxias	<i>Galaxias truttaceu</i>	R	Un				
Reptiles							
Lowland Copperhead	<i>Austrelaps superbus</i>	HL	C				
Birds							
Common Bronzewing	<i>Phaps chalcoptera</i>	HL	C				
Musk Lorikeet	<i>Glossopsitta concinna</i>	HL	C				
Eastern Yellow Robin	<i>Eopsaltria australis</i>	HL	C				
Mammals							
Echidna	<i>Tachyglossus aculeatus</i>	R	C				
Koala							
Sugar Glider	<i>Petaurus breviceps</i>	R	C				
Other microbat species within the reserve.	<i>Chalinolobus, Nyctophilus & Vespadelus sps.</i>	HL	LC				
Swamp Rat	<i>Rattus lutreolus</i>	R	C				

Table 2: Significant Taxa of Mann Road Bushland Reserve along with their habitat requirements and management actions.

Species	Habitat Requirements	Management Actions
Spotted Galaxias	Usually found in still or gently-flowing waters at low elevations close to the sea where it dwells under stones, within sediment and reeds or wood debris, feeding on aquatic invertebrates, mostly insect larvae. This fish is migratory at some stage of its life and can't pass most man-made. Is only common where native vegetation still persists along the banks of the creek.	Continue to monitor the health of the creek to ensure it stays in a healthy way. Look into taking away any man-made barriers along the creek to ensure the movement of other fish species. Revegetate and fence off any degraded parts of the creek.
Musk Lorikeet	Migrates in late summer/autumn to the Peninsula where it feeds on flowering Eucalyptus species. Prefers exotic Eucalyptus species where it feeds on the blossoms. If breeding occurs, tree hollows are sought after.	Encourage regrowth of dieback areas and protect remaining stands of old-growth Eucalypts.
Common Bronzewing	Feeds on the ground in the open or in the wooded area, mainly on seeds. Nests in trees where nest is made of sticks and twigs.	Encourage regrowth of die-back areas and protect remnant stands of Eucalyptus species. Control introduced plants and predators such as foxes and cats.
Eastern Yellow Robin	Prefers the wooded areas and thickets throughout the reserve. Feeds on the ground and perches sideways on tree trunks. Known to nest in pittosporums.	Only remove pittosporum in the non-breeding season. Make sure no nests are in pittosporums prior to removal, as birds frequent the same nest site each year.
Short-beaked Echidna	Is solitary and occupies a range of habitats that have year-round supply of ants and termites. Needs hollow logs on ground to nest within and for food.	Do not remove fallen limbs or dead trees including exotic dead trees. Retain ground cover and remove threatening weeds such as pittosporum. Control access by dogs and foxes into the bush areas throughout.
Koala	Feeds on Manna Gum leaves along the creek and is solitary in nature only having contact to mate.	Maintain Manna Gums along the creek free of weed species, especially pittosporums. Control dogs and foxes along the creek.
Sugar Glider	Requires old-growth tree hollows in Eucalypts in which to form dens and a social group of up to twelve individuals, also a well-developed component of the larger wattles such as Blackwoods and Black Wattles which they feed on.	Monitor populations and protect known nest trees, retain and restore mature woodland from pittosporum. Provide artificial nest boxes in areas shown to have low density of natural hollows.
Other microbat species occurring on the property, <i>Chalinolobus</i> , <i>Nyctophilus</i> & <i>Vespadelus</i> sps.	Utilise tree hollows and loose bark as roost sites. Feeds on insects at night.	Retain and restore mature wooded habitat and remove pittosporum. Implement a bat-box program using a variety of designs. Investigate methods shown to promote the formation of tree hollows.
Swamp Rat	Prefers areas of dense cover eg low-lying vegetation. Feeds on rhizomes and excavates runways and burrows. After fire, habitat is not usually suitable for several years.	Protect areas that have intact habitat. Ensure any revegetation areas include essential understorey plants such as grasses, sedges and other important understorey plants. Control introduced predators especially foxes and cats.

3.0 MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTIONS FOR MANN ROAD BUSHLAND RESERVE.

3.1 Management requirements for significant taxa in Table Two.

In order to maintain the significant taxa within the reserve the managers need to adopt the management requirements set out in Table two of section two in this report.

- * Adopt and enforce the management prescriptions require for significant taxa from table two.

3.2 Management of Weeds.

Large outbreaks of potentially threatening weeds exist throughout the reserve with the most severe outbreak being along the creek. The creek is being smothered by weeds such as Arum Lily and Pittosporum lacking in diverse understorey with no or little sunlight penetrating. The area at the bottom of the creek has ivy growing up some trunks and should be dealt with before they set seed. Most of these weeds are potentially habitat changing species and the eradication of canopy hugging species such as Sweet Pittosporum can open up the area for new weeds to take over if they aren't dealt with immediately. Control and eradication of the weeds are recommended as high priority and should only be carried out in the non-bird breeding season (usually January to July).

- * Spray Arum Lily with a broad-leaf herbicide. Do not spray during flow periods and over Swamp Rat colonies, hand weed.
- * Kill or remove pittosporum and other woody weeds outside the bird breeding season. Replace with prickly shrubs.
- # Remove Ivy at the bottom of the reserve before it gets out of hand.

3.3 Introduced Birds

Contractors can locate Starling and Indian Myna breeding hollows and GPS them and which can be dealt with by a vermin contractor. Contractors should be taught what a Blackbird and Turtle Dove nest looks like so they can humanly destroy them as they come across them. Noisy Minors have taken over and now chase small birds away. This has resulted in a loss of small bird populations through out the reserve. Control of these birds is recommended as high priority.

- * Locate introduced bird nests and destroy, and eradicate or control population numbers.

3.4 Foxes

Contractors need to find dens within the reserve, GPS them so they can be dealt with by vermin contractors each year.

- * Locate fox dens and destroy them.

3.5 Nesting boxes and ground logs

Nesting boxes need to be erected throughout some parts of the reserve, especially in the areas lacking natural hollows and the die-back areas. This will attract hollow-dependent fauna, particularly Sugar Gliders, various microbat species and several bird species. The nearby Primary School could become involved in making the boxes and monitoring them once they are up in the trees. Tree trunks and fallen logs need to be retained on the ground, especially during and after controlled burns in order to enhance the habitat for terrestrial taxa.

- * Erect nesting boxes for arboreal taxa in areas lacking natural hollows. Involve the nearby Primary School.

3.6 Controlled Burns

Mosaic style controlled burns can be carried out in the reserve over a period of years. During these burns ground logs and standing dead trees need to be preserved and prevented from burning otherwise available habitat for terrestrial fauna (reptiles and other small taxa) will be lost. Also terrestrial fauna, such as small

reptiles easily falls prey to predators especially birds (Kookaburras, Butcherbirds, Magpies etc); after a fire has been through if no ground logs to hide in or under are present. These mosaic style burns will help to enhance habitat quality and increase diversity in flora and fauna species.

- * Carry out mosaic control burns. Retain dead logs during this process.

3.7 Future Survey Work

A proper detailed survey over a year needs to be conducted within the reserve in the near future.

- * Carry out a year long fauna survey within the reserve.

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Significance/status of species:

N National
 S State
 R Regional
 HL High Local
 L Local
 * Introduced

Type of record:

h Heard
 s Seen
 I Incidental (scats, feathers etc.)
 t Trapped/handheld
 b bat detector
 B Breeding residential bird

APPENDIX 1: DECAPOD CRUSTACEANS RECORDED IN MANN ROAD BUSHLAND RESERVE NOVEMBER, 2003.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Conservation status within the Reserve.	Type of record
DECAPOD CRUSTACEANS			
<i>Engaeus sp.</i>	Burrowing Cray	Uncommon	Ls

APPENDIX 2: FISH RECORDED IN KACKERABOITE CREEK IN MANN ROAD BUSHLAND RESERVE NOVEMBER, 2003.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Conservation status within the Reserve.	Type of record
<i>Anguilla australis</i>	Short-finned Eel	Uncommon	Lt
<i>Galaxias truttaceus</i>	Spotted Galaxias	Uncommon	Rt

APPENDIX 3: AMPHIBIANS RECORDED IN MANN ROAD BUSHLAND RESERVE NOVEMBER, 2003.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Conservation status within the Reserve.	Type of record
<i>Crinia signifera</i>	Common Froglet	Common	Lhs
<i>Limnodynastes dumerilii insularis</i>	Southern Bullfrog	Common	Lhs
<i>Litoria ewingii</i>	Southern Brown Tree Frog	Common	Lhs
<i>Litoria verreauxii verreauxii</i>	Verreaux's Tree Frog	Uncommon	Lhs

APPENDIX 4: REPTILES RECORDED IN MANN ROAD BUSHLAND RESERVE NOVEMBER, 2003.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Conservation status within Mann Road Reserve.	Type of record
TORTOISES			
<i>Chelodina longicollis</i>	Common Long-necked Tortoise	Uncommon	Ls
LIZARDS			
<i>Lampropholis guichenoti</i>	Garden Skink	Common	Lst
<i>Saproscincus mustelinus</i>	Weasel Skink	Common	Lst
<i>Tiliqua nigrohutea</i>	Blotched Blue-tongue Lizard	Common	Lst
SNAKES			
<i>Austrelaps superbus</i>	Lowland Copperhead	Uncommon	HLs

**APPENDIX 5: WETLAND BIRDS RECORDED IN MANN ROAD BUSHLAND RESERVE
NOVEMBER, 2003.**

Scientific Name	Common Name	Conservation status within the Reserve.	Type record of
<i>Anas supercilios</i>	Pacific Black Duck	Uncommon	LsB
<i>Chenonetta jubata</i>	Australian Wood Duck	Uncommon	LsB
<i>Threskiornis molucca</i>	Australian White Ibis	Common	Ls
<i>Threskiornis spinicollis</i>	Straw-necked Ibis	Common	Ls
<i>Vanellus miles</i> race <i>novaehollandiae</i>	Masked Lapwing	Uncommon	Lhs

**APPENDIX 6: WOODLAND BIRDS RECORDED IN MANN ROAD BUSHLAND RESERVE
NOVEMBER, 2003.**

Scientific Name	Common name	Conservation status within the Reserve.	Type record
<i>Accipiter fasciatus</i> race <i>faciatus</i>	Brown Goshawk	Uncommon	LsB
* <i>Streptopelia chinensis</i> race <i>chinensis</i>	Spotted Turtle-Dove	Common	sB
<i>Phaps chalcoptera</i>	Common Bronzewing	Uncommon	HLhsB
<i>Eolophus roseicapillus</i> race <i>albiceps</i>	Galah	Uncommon	LhsB
<i>Cacatua galerita</i> race <i>galerita</i>	Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	Uncommon	Lhs
<i>Trichoglossus haematodus</i> race <i>moluccanus</i>	Rainbow Lorikeet	Common	LhsB
<i>Glossopsitta concinna</i> race <i>concinna</i>	Musk Lorikeet	Uncommon	HLhsB
<i>Platycercus elegans</i> race <i>elegans</i>	Crimson Rosella	Common	LsB
<i>Platycercus eximius</i> race <i>eximius</i>	Eastern Rosella	Common	LsB
<i>Cuculus flabelliformis</i>	Fan-tailed Cuckoo	Uncommon	LhsB
<i>Chalcites basal</i>	Horsefield's Bronze Cuckoo	Uncommon	LhsB
<i>Ninox novaeseelandiae</i> race <i>boobook</i>	Southern Boobook	Rare	Lh
<i>Podargus strigoides</i> race <i>strigoides</i>	Tawny Frogmouth	Rare	LsB
<i>Dacelo novaeguineae</i> race <i>novaeguineae</i>	Laughing Kookaburra	Common	LhsB
<i>Malurus cyaneus</i> race <i>cyanochlamys</i>	Superb Fairy-wren	Rare	LsB
<i>Pardalotus punctatus</i> race <i>punctatus</i>	Spotted Pardalote	Common	LhsB
<i>Sericornis frontalis</i> race <i>harterti</i>	White-browed Scrubwren	Common	LsB
<i>Acanthiza pusilla</i> race <i>pusilla</i>	Brown Thornbill	Common	LsB
<i>Anthochaera carunculata</i> race <i>carunculata</i>	Red Wattlebird	Common	LsB
<i>Anthochaera chrysoptera</i> race <i>chrysoptera</i>	Little Wattlebird	Uncommon	LsB
<i>Manorina melanocephala</i> race <i>melanocephala</i>	Noisy Miner	Common	LsB
<i>Melithreptus lunatus</i> race <i>lunatus</i>	White-naped Honeyeater	Uncommon	LsB
<i>Phylidonyris novaehollandiae</i> race <i>novaehollandiae</i>	New Holland Honeyeater	Common to Uncommon	LhsB
<i>Achanthorhynchus tenuirostris</i> race <i>tenuirostris</i>	Eastern Spinebill	Uncommon	LhsB
<i>Eopsaltria australis</i> race <i>australis</i>	Eastern Yellow Robin	Uncommon	HLhsB
<i>Colluricincla harmonica</i> race <i>harmonica</i>	Grey Shrike-thrush	Uncommon	LhsB
<i>Pachycephala pectoralis</i> race <i>youngi</i>	Golden Whistler	Uncommon	LhsB
<i>Pachycephala rufiventris</i> race <i>rufiventris</i>	Rufous Whistler	Uncommon	LhsB
<i>Rhipidura fuliginosa</i> race <i>alisteri</i>	Grey Fantail	Common	LhsB
<i>Grallina cyanoleuca</i> race <i>cyanoleuca</i>	Magpie-lark	Uncommon	LsB
<i>Cracticus torquatus</i> race <i>torquatus</i>	Grey Butcherbird	Common	LsB
<i>Gymnorhina tibicen</i> race <i>leuconota</i>	Australian Magpie	Common	LsB
<i>Corvus coronoides</i> race <i>coronoides</i>	Australian Raven	Common	LsB
<i>Zosterops lateralis</i> race <i>westernensis</i>	Silvereye	Common	LsB
* <i>Turdus merula</i> race <i>merula</i>	Common Blackbird	Common	sB
* <i>Sturnus vulgaris</i> race <i>vulgaris</i>	Common Starling	Abundant	sB
* <i>Acridotheres tristis</i> race <i>tristis</i>	Common Myna	Common	sB
*Denotes introduced species			

**APPENDIX 7: MAMMALS RECORDED IN MANN ROAD BUSHLAND RESERVE
NOVEMBER, 2003**

Scientific Name	Common Name	Conservation status within the Reserve.	Type of record
MONOTREMES			
<i>Tachyglossus aculeatus aculeatus</i>	Short-beaked Echidna	Common	Rsi
MARSUPIALS			
<i>Phascolarctos cinereus ssp. Victor</i>	Koala	Rare	Rhs
<i>Trichosurus vulpecula ssp. Vulpecula</i>	Common Brushtail Possum	Uncommon	Lhs
<i>Petaurus breviceps</i>	Sugar Glider	Uncommon/rare	Rhs
<i>Pseudocheirus peregrinus ssp. Cooki</i>	Common Ringtail Possum	Common	Lhs
PLACENTAL MAMMALS			
<i>Nyctophilus geoffroyi</i>	Lesser Long-eared Bat	Uncommon	HLb
<i>Chalinolobus gouldii</i>	Gould's Wattled Bat	Common	HLb
<i>Vespadelus darlingtoni</i>	Large Forest Bat	Uncommon	HLb
<i>Vespadelus vulturinus</i>	Little Forest Bat	Common	HLb
RODENTS			
<i>Rattus lutreolus ssp. Lutreolus</i>	Swamp Rat	Common	Rti
INTRODUCED MAMMALS			
* <i>Mus musculus</i>	House Mouse	Common	t
* <i>Rattus rattus</i>	Black Rat	Rare	t
* <i>Vulpes vulpes</i>	Red Fox	Uncommon	si
* <i>Felis catus</i>	Feral Cat	Uncommon	si
*Denotes introduced species			