



FLYING-FOXES

Nature's night-time gardeners.



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Flying-foxes are unique animals which **help grow our forests** by spreading pollen and seeds.

Flying-foxes are bats or more accurately 'mega-bats' (big bats).

They are also referred to as fruit bats but their diet is mainly nectar, pollen and rainforest fruits.





FLYING-FOXES vs MICRO-BATS



Flying-foxes use their great eyesight to fly at night unlike the smaller, insect-eating bats or 'micro-bats'. Micro-bats have small eyes and big ears which enable them to echolocate and track their prey such as mosquitoes, moths and beetles.

Micro-bats are important in the control of insect populations whereas mega-bats or flying-foxes are important in keeping our forests healthy.





FLYING-FOX WINGS



If you look carefully at a flying-fox's wings, when flying or dipping into the water for a drink, you can see the blood vessels in the wing membrane which keep the wing membrane supple and alive.

The flying-fox can wrap its wing around its body to protect it from cold and rain.

The mother also wraps her wings around her baby to keep it warm and safe.

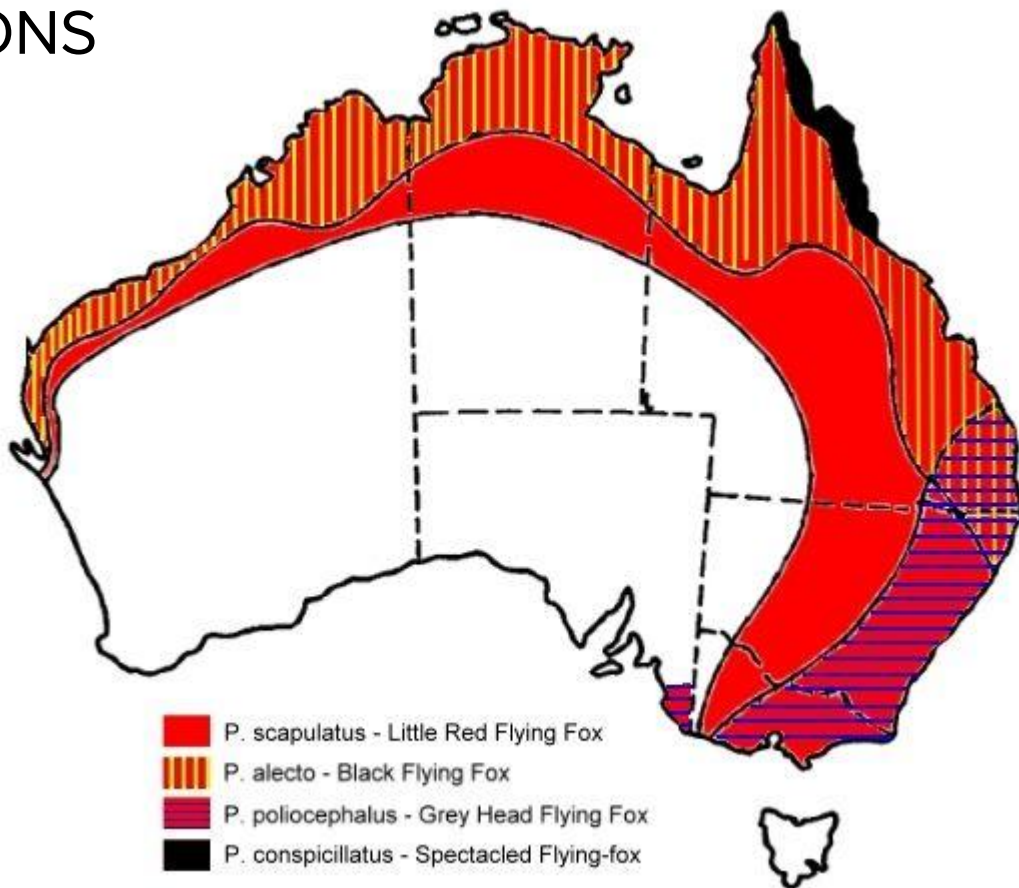




FLYING-FOX LOCATIONS

Flying-foxes are move up and down the Australian Eastern Seaboard spreading Eucalyptus tree pollen and rainforest seeds.

Flying-foxes are a '**keystone**' **species** which means that many other species of plants and animals rely on the flying-foxes' pollination and seed dispersal skills for their survival and wellbeing.





Help By Planting Native Trees

Planting **flowering and fruiting native trees** to provide homes and food for all Australian wildlife will also benefit our planet.



Trees absorb carbon dioxide from the air and planting more trees will ultimately reduce the high level of CO₂ in the atmosphere which is heating up the planet.



If every person planted trees for our wildlife and for a healthy environment, the whole Australian community would benefit.





FLYING-FOX RESCUE: Caught on Power Lines



Wildlife groups spend a lot of time each Spring and Summer looking after orphaned wildlife.

Flying-fox mothers carry their babies for 6 weeks when they fly out to feed at night. If they rest on power lines they can be electrocuted but the baby often survives.

If a passerby sees or hears the baby they can **call a Wildlife Rescue Group** that can arrange for the baby's rescue and care.





FLYING-FOX RESCUE: General Discovery

Flying-foxes that need help (particularly babies) are often found on or near the ground.

Never touch a bat yourself as there is a small risk (< 1%) that a flying-fox will be carrying a rabies-like virus. All wildlife rescuers are vaccinated and can handle flying-foxes without risk.

If someone is scratched or bitten by a flying-fox, it is very easy to have a rabies vaccine administered by a doctor and then they will be safe.





FLYING-FOX CARE: Baby Flying-foxes



Carers feed the young with a specialised bat milk, at least 4 to 5 times a day, just like a human baby.

As the baby flying-fox grows they learn to eat soft fruit and flap their wings to fly.

When they are a few months old, they begin to eat apple, pear, melon and grapes with a special high protein powder sprinkled on their chopped up fruit.





SPREAD THE WORD

We need to respect flying-foxes, and develop a kinder attitude toward this beautiful nocturnal animal.

The biggest mistake is to believe that they are mean creatures.

In reality they are social mammals which are **vitaly important to the health and diversity of forests** along the east coast of Australia.





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