

# Sugar Glider Monitoring

**April 25<sup>th</sup> 2012**

By Kara & Asha

We met up at the park at 11am with clouds overhead. This month we had two volunteers from Melbourne University, Nicola and Erin join us. So there were five of us keen to check some boxes, even in the wet weather! Terry has purchased a new ladder which meant we were able to split up into two teams, proving to be much quicker.



**The Team posing at Rosette Rock  
(Terry, Erin, Asha, Nicola & Kara)**

Starting off on the Main Flat, we checked box 2 first. It was empty and therefore removed to have its lid repaired. It will go back up next month.

Asha, Erin and Nicola moved on to MF6. In the last three months MF6 has been home to a resident rat, but this month we were very surprised and pleased to see that a glider has taken it over.

**MF6's newest resident.**



It was great to see the new boxes that Robert purchased last year are continuing to be used. SG1 and SG2 both had gliders in them this month. We also noticed in particular a change in their nest material, perhaps due to the cooler weather. More leaves are being used and nests are becoming covered over presumably to keep the gliders

warmer.



**SG1- A covered over glider nest with a very warm glider  
hiding beneath.**

We were once again excited to see the mother and young ringtail possums doing well in box 8. We are starting to see boxes that are unusable to gliders being taken over by ringtails. We are trying to repair or

replace as many as possible, but are choosing to leave few of the oldest un-repairable boxes for the ringtails.



**Box 8 – Mother and young ringtails**

Once again MF4 was home to a family of gliders. It is great to see them there every month.



**MF4 - A family cosy in their box**

Bees are continuing to be a problem. SG6 and Box 7 were both sprayed last month, but the spray appears to have had no effect. SG6 was teeming again with bees this month. Both MF3 and MF9 have had bees removed and were cleaned out, repaired and placed back up this month. We are trying different methods to deter bees including carpet on lids and plastic lined boxes. It's only a trial and may prove to not deter bees at all. However, so far, so good.



**Terry putting up the newly repaired  
and bee free MF3.**

After checking Main Flat we headed across the creek, gumboots on feet and ladder in hand.



**The creek was relatively easy to cross despite recent rain.**

Erin discovered a box that we hadn't seen before (BW2) and we were keen to check it for gliders. Unfortunately it was home to yet another bee colony and was too well developed to be approached. The other boxes across the creek all had nest material in them, including box 10. But we have yet to see a glider in any of the boxes on the Black Wattle site.



**Erin proud of her discovery of BW2**

We have a total of 4 boxes known to us on the Black Wattle site, so we believe that there may be a few more yet to be discovered. Gliders are possibly using them. Nicola was keen to climb the ladder to check BW5 and to her surprise one very awake Brushtail possum was there to greet her. He quickly made an escape out of the box.





**Nicola, enjoying her day glider checking**

We have decided not to place any new boxes over the creek on the Black Wattle site until we see some gliders. There is definite activity, we have seen fresh nest material in boxes, however we are still not seeing any gliders. We do believe that there may be some undiscovered nest boxes and maybe some old hollows in trees that are grabbing the gliders attention.

After checking across the creek, the five of us headed over to Red Gum Flat. An interesting discovery in box 11 was bones from a skeleton of a sugar glider which was removed for closer observation. This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> sighting of dead gliders inside a box.



**Glider bones in box 11**



**Erin, Nicola and Asha watching as Terry attaches a new box**

We were also delighted to see the family of gliders in RG8 again this month. We are in the process of obtaining new boxes to place up on the Red Gum Flat site.



***RG8 – home to a family of 5 gliders ( possibly 6)***

The day was concluded by Terry showing our newest volunteers some Organ Pipes history; a 2 million year old basalt above a 400 million year old Silurian mudstone with a thin contact zone separating them. Amazing!

Thank you very much again to Terry and a big thank you to Erin and Nicola for their efforts on the day especially in the wet weather! Anyone who is interested in coming along to one of our glider checks is more than welcome. See date at the bottom of this report for next month's check!

**Sugar Gliders (*Petaurus breviceps*)**  
***Organ Pipes National Park***  
***Date -25 April 2012***

<b>Box</b>	<b>Glider s</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Action Required</b>
2		Removed for repairs	Repair
MF7		To be replaced	New Box
MF6	<b>1</b>		Lid needs repair
3		1 ringtail	none
5			none
SG1	<b>1</b>		none
SG2	<b>1</b>		none
6		Fresh nest	none

		material	
SG3			none
8		3 ringtails	
MF5			none
SG5		Fresh nest material	none
SG4		1 ringtail, glider nest material	none
MF4	<b>4</b>		Lid needs re-hinging
SG6		Bees	Spray
MF3		Replaced	none
7		Bees, lid knocked off	replaced
4		Bees	Needs to be sprayed
MF9		replaced	none
BW 6		nest material	none
BW 2		Bees	Needs replacing
BW 5		1 brushtail possum	New lid
10		Nest material	none
11		Nest material, glider bones	none
RG6			Needs replacing
RG8	<b>5</b>	Lid damaged	None at present
RG9		3 Ringtail Possums	

RG1 0		Old nest material	
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**Total boxes checked – 26**

**Total Gliders - 12**



**- Next Month's Check -**

**Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> May**