

# ORGAN PIPES NATIONAL PARK

## SUGAR GLIDER MONITORING

**August 2013**  
**(conducted 23<sup>rd</sup> August)**

There were a couple of showers for our nest box check this month, but overall the weather held out for us again. We had Lucy, Rowan and Aidan to help us out, which was fantastic as we had a lot to do and carry!

We used the new pole camera to check the nest boxes again, and recorded which boxes will need to be modified to allow for the camera. The pole camera is working very well, although it will take a little while to adapt all of the boxes to suit its design. The videos we can record with it look fantastic; keep a look out on the new Organ Pipes National Park Facebook page for them.



***Lucy using the monitor attached to the pole camera to see inside a nest box***



***Picture of Box 2 taken with the pole camera***

Terry came up with a clever idea for adapting our boxes for the new pole camera. We are trying it out on RG11. Due to the design of the box, which has an alcove at the entry, the camera cannot see into the box unless we go up the ladder to unlatch the lid. The experimental design involves drilling an extra hole higher up on the box which the camera can enter. The hole is covered by a piece of plastic which keeps out draughts, but can be pushed aside by the camera.



***RG11 adapted for the pole camera***

We also took down all of the boxes which are in need of repair and Terry is going to fix them up so that the gliders can keep enjoying them.

We are looking at repositioning some of our boxes to face south-east, so that they will stay cooler during summer. We suspect that overheating may be what caused some glider deaths in boxes last summer, so we are going to try and reposition the boxes before the weather heats up too much.

Our team expert in GIS and GPS, Rowan, recorded the direction and location of all of the boxes we checked.



***Rowan recording nest box direction and location with a GPS***

Unfortunately we didn't find many gliders in boxes this month. We noticed a similar drop in numbers late winter last year. It was followed by a sharp rise in numbers with the breeding season.

So, hopefully we can expect some baby sugar gliders soon!



***3 Sugar gliders in SG2***



***4 Sugar gliders in SG6, including a male with a cloudy right eye***

The gliders that we saw in SG6 are the first ever too been seen in this box since Robert Bender placed it up 2 years ago. It used to be full of bees and after a lot of persistence to get rid of them; it is great to finally see the box being used by gliders.

There were still lots of boxes with nest material, which is a good indicator that the sugar gliders are using them on other days. The nest material in RG12 was too covered over to be sure if there were gliders inside or not, so we are hopeful that there were some gliders present there.



***RG12 contained covered over nest material***

As for other species using the nest boxes, we had three with ants, two with resident Brushtail possums and one with a Ringtail possum nest. We discovered a nest in RG11 consisting of both eucalypt and acacia leaves, but we're unable to say for certain who it belongs to.



***Ringtail possum nest***



***Brushtail possum in RG9***

We also spotted a pair of Crimson rosellas on Main Flat investigating Box 5. They were very curious, one keeping guard and the other looking into the box. It tried to get in, but didn't quite fit in the entrance hole!



***SG1 propped open to deter ants***



***Crimson rosella checking out Box 5***

Disappointingly, the creek was too high for us to cross this time. Hopefully next time we will be able to get across and check our boxes on Black Wattle Flat.

While we were checking boxes and having lunch on Red Gum Flat, we spotted some Dusky Woodswallows and a Swamp wallaby. We also spotted some goats on the opposite hill.



***Swamp wallaby watching us walk past***



***Swamp wallaby licking his elbow***

Thank you to Lucy, Rowan and Aidan for all your help, and thank you to Terry for adapting RG12 and repairing the broken nest boxes.

Our next check will hopefully include more tree planting, putting up the repaired boxes, changing the orientation of boxes and hopefully checking the nest boxes on Black Wattle Flat. We will send out the dates closer to the time and we would love to see anybody there who can make it.

Thanks for reading!

~ Asha, Terry and Kara~

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## Sugar Gliders (*Petaurus breviceps*) Organ Pipes National Park

Date - 23/08/13

### Main Flat- left side of track from Pump shed

Box	Gliders	Comments	Action Required
2	-	Fresh nest material	-
MF6	-	Nest material	Removed
3	-	Nest material	-
5	-	Nest material	-
SG1	-	Ants, some glider fur	Propped open with stick
SG2	<b>3</b>	Nest material	-
6	-	Nest material	-
SG3	-	Old nest material	-
8	-	Old nest material, ants	removed
MF5	-	Nest material, ants	-
SG5	-	Fresh nest material	-
SG4	-	Empty	-
MF4	-	Nest material	-

### Main Flat- Left side of track from Organ Pipes

Box	Gliders	Comments	Action Required
<b>SG6</b>	<b>4</b>	Male with cloudy right eye	-
<b>MF3</b>	-	Nest material	-
<b>7</b>	-	Empty, ants	Propped open
<b>4</b>	-	Bees	-
<b>MF9</b>	-	Nest material	-

### Black Wattle Flat- Across creek from pump shed

Box	Gliders	Comments	Action Required
<b>BW6</b>	-	N/A	-
<b>BW2</b>	-	N/A	-
<b>BW5</b>	-	N/A	-
<b>10</b>	-	N/A	-

## Red Gum Flat

Box	Gliders	Comments	Action Required
11	-	Ringtail nest and scats	Needs to be repaired
12	-	Nest material	-
RG5	-	Empty	-
RG6	-	Empty	-
RG7	-	Nest material	-
RG8	-	Brushtail possum	-
RG9	-	Brushtail possum	-
RG10	-	Empty	-
RG11	-	Acacia and eucalypt nest	-
RG12	-	Covered over nest	-

TOTAL GLIDERS = 7

TOTAL BOXES CHECKED = 28

NEXT MONTHS CHECK : To be advised!



*The Team at Rosette Rock- (from left) Kara, Rowan, Terry, Asha, Lucy and Aidan.*