

ORGAN PIPES NATIONAL PARK

SUGAR GLIDER MONITORING

July 2014
(conducted 25th July)

Arriving at the car park, we were greeted by some keen volunteers! We were joined by 2 fellow 1st year Deakin students as well as Sam and her friends Becky and Sam and also Stephanie and Rowan.

We all walked down, whilst Terry drove the ute and gear. Just as we arrived at the bottom of the hill, we stopped to watch some Eastern Grey Kangaroos and the old swamp wallaby.



Happy little Kangarros



A very old, but happy Swamp wallaby

It's great to see the other animals that call the park home!

We eventually made our way to Main Flat, working our way around as one big team. Box 2 was first to be checked. Using the pole camera, we were delighted to see 2 gliders inside. There was also one of the males with a cloudy eye.



Box 2 with two gliders inside

After showing our new volunteers just how amazing the sugar gliders are, we continued on. It was great to see the next few boxes full of fresh nest material. This is a great indicator that the gliders are utilising their boxes.

SG1 was the next box in which we found some gliders. It was a little hard to determine exactly how many were in there, as once again the nest was covered over. SG3 was also quite covered over, but we were able to still see inside.... no gliders home!



Possibly 2 gliders inside SG1



SG3- an empty nest

There were 3 happy little gliders inside MF5. At first it was hard to see how many there were using solely the pole camera, so we had to bring in the ladder to have a better look.

Some of our nesting boxes are not suitable for the pole camera, so the ladder is helpful for checking inside the box. Every second month we have a working bee day where we repair and replace boxes, we are also using this time to adapt all the boxes so that we can use just the pole camera when checking them. We will be saving so much time when all the boxes are camera friendly and with the plan to expand our boxes around the park extra time is a must!



Sam, Sam and Becky checking MF5 with the pole camera

Moving along, the next few boxes were full of nest material, but SG6 had a nice little surprise in side. There was a sleeping Ringtail possum. This box had been previously propped open with a stick to deter ants and the possum has come along and taken advantage of an opened box!



SG6 – A very comfy ringtail

The remaining boxes along Main Flat were either empty or were full of nest material, so we packed up the ute and moved over to Red Gum Flat. We were met by another volunteer who has assisted us before, Roux.

It's great to see that RG5 still has fresh nest material in there. It took months before we saw evidence of gliders using this box. Moving along to RG6 we found another glider.



RG6 – Only one glider inside.....I promise.



The team using the camera to check RG6

As per usual, RG8 and RG9 were home to Brushtail possums. We have placed up some possum friendly boxes in the hopes that they will find them more appealing than our glider boxes. Hopefully they will shift homes soon.



RG9 – Brushtail possum



Terry explaining about Rosette Rock

After a short stop at Rosette Rock, we continued along checking RG10, RG11 and RG12.

Surprisingly RG10 had nest material inside which is great news for us as the box was only recently repaired and placed back up. RG11 was FULL of nest material, but there were no gliders inside.

Checking inside the last box was great as there were 2 sugar gliders in there. We spent some time at Tessellated pavement, and Terry also spoke about all the geology in this area of the park.



RG12 – there were 2 gliders in here

We packed up the ute once again with all our gear and made our way back to the pump shed. As we hadn't checked across the creek in a while, we decided to head over. Sam, Becky and Sam headed home, so it was Stephanie, Leif, Mitch, Roux, Terry, Rowan, Asha and I left to make our way across the creek.

Our newest box BW1 still had a glider inside. The nesting material was quite dense but we are sure that there was only one.



BW1 – we could just see a little pink nose!

We checked BW6 and Box 10, they both had nest material, but no gliders. Next was box 8. This box has nearly always had gliders in it since we repaired it and relocated it across the creek. Once again we were delighted to see 2 gliders inside.



A happy couple of gliders in Box 8

It was a great way to finish off our day. Thank you to all our volunteers, your help and dedication made our day run smoothly. We checked a total of 33 boxes and ended up seeing 13 sugar gliders, a couple more than this time last year.

~Kara, Asha & Terry~

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

Date - 25/07/14

Main Flat- left side of track from Pump shed

Box	Gliders	Comments	Action Required
2	2	Male with cloudy left eye, Nest material	-
MF6	-	Fresh nest material	-
3	-	Nest material	-
5	-	Nest material	-
SG1	2	Nest material	-
SG2	-	Nest material	-
6	-	Nest material	-
SG3	-	Nest material, covered over	-
MF5	3	Nest material	-
SG5	1	Lots of nest material	-
SG4	-	Empty	-
MF4	-	Nest material	-
MF2	-	Empty	-
MF1	-	Empty	-

Main Flat- Left side of track from Organ Pipes

Box	Gliders	Comments	Action Required
SG6	-	Ringtail Possum	-
MF3	-	Nest material	-
7	-	Empty	-
4	-	Bees	-
MF9	-	Nest Material	-

Black Wattle Flat- Across creek from pump shed

Box	Gliders	Comments	Action Required
BW1	1	Dense nest material	-
BW6	-	Old, nest material.	-
BW2	-	Empty	Replace
BW5	-	Removed	
8	2	Nest material	-
10	-	Nest material	Needs new bolt

Red Gum Flat

Box	Gliders	Comments	Action Required
11	-	Ants	Propped open
12	-	Nest material	-
RG5	-	Nest material	-
RG6	1	Covered nest	-
RG7	-	Empty	-
RG8	-	Brushtail possum	-
RG9	-	Brushtail possum	Lid needs repair, reposition box
RG10	-	Nest material	-
RG11	-	Nest material, full to top	-
RG12	2	Nest material	-

TOTAL GLIDERS = **13**

TOTAL BOXES CHECKED = **33**

NEXT MONTHS CHECK : To be advised!



Time out by Rosette Rock!

(From left: Kara, Rowan, Asha, Roux, Stephanie, Mitch, Leif, Terry, Sam, Sam and Becky)