

How many nest boxes are in Victoria?

In 2018 DELWP's ARI identified nearly 10,000 nest boxes

Nest boxes are widely used to improve habitat for native hollow-dependent fauna.

Hundreds of volunteer hours and significant investment by government and other agencies support this activity.

ARI asked those involved in nest box programs for information on:

- How many boxes they have installed, and where?
- Why the nest boxes were installed?
- Which species are being targeted?
- Which species are using the nest boxes?
- Monitoring and maintenance
- Data storage and analysis

We discovered:

- 81 individuals and groups reported on nest boxes, 65% are checked at least annually
- Nest boxes are being used by at least 33 mammal and bird species across the landscape
- There is lots of potential for making better use of nest box monitoring



Who replied?

Nest box information was collated from 81 individuals/groups, representing 98 programs/projects. We know this represents only some of the nest box programs in Victoria.

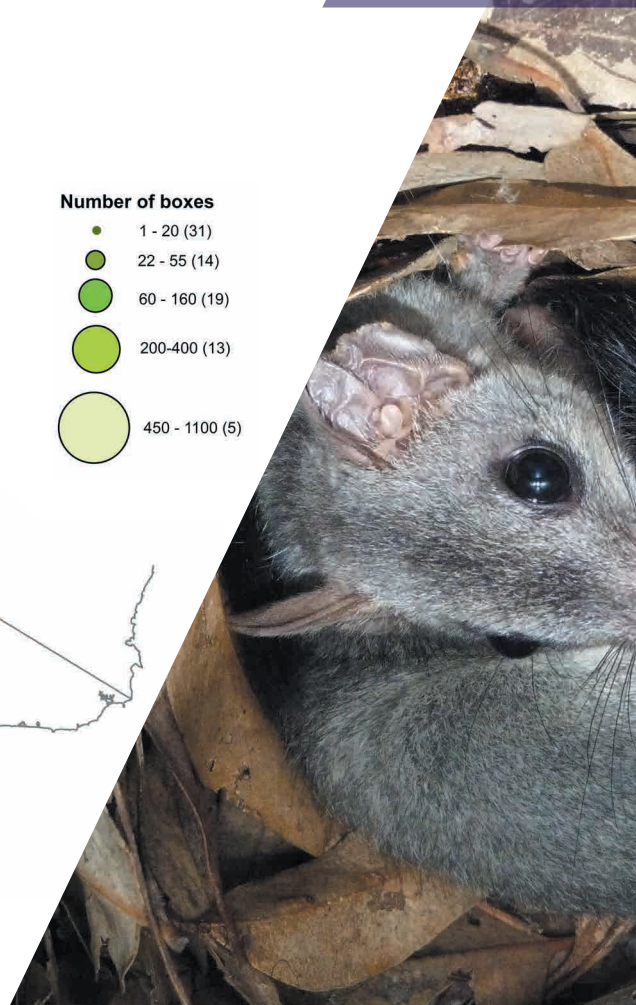
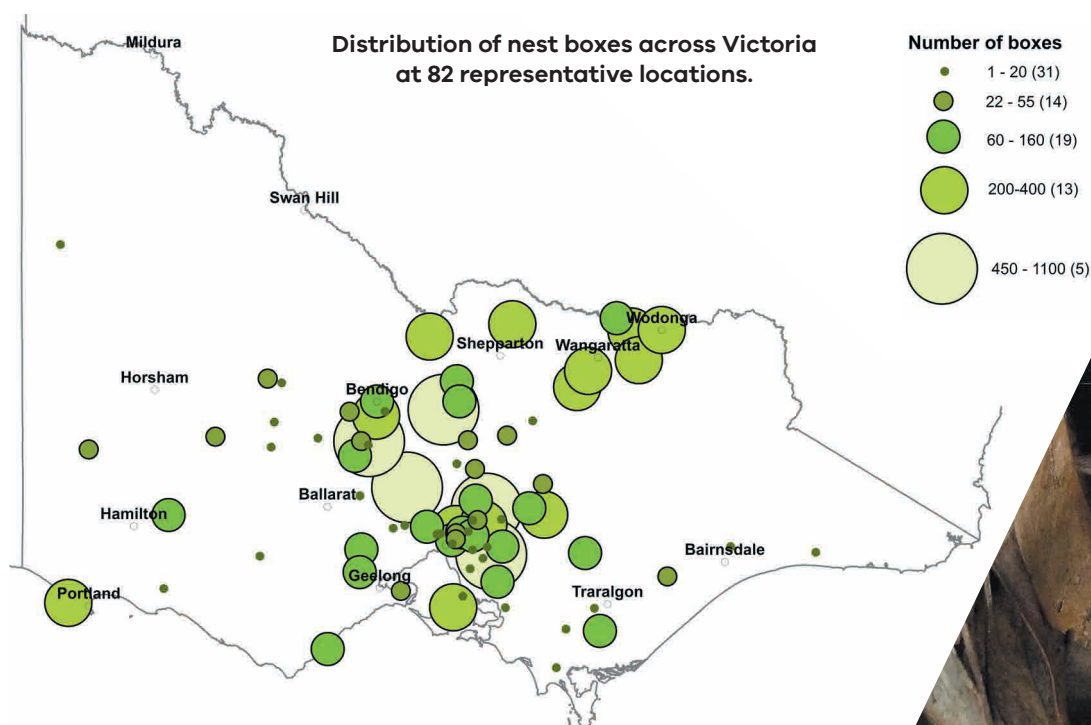
Sources of nest box information, the number of nest boxes for each individual/group, and the range of nest boxes per individual/group. See back page for full list of participants.

| Type of group | Number of groups | Number of nest boxes | Number of nest boxes per group |
|---|------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------|
| Conservation Management Network | 3 | 1689 | 39-1100 |
| Friends of, Naturalist, Environment group | 11 | 1103 | 6-300 |
| Landcare group/network | 21 | 2893 | 6-600 |
| Other interest groups | 8 | 1455 | 7-450 |
| City/Shire Council | 7 | 924 | 10-495 |
| Government organisation | 5 | 835 | 6-624 |
| University | 2 | 380 | 50-330 |
| Company/business | 2 | 286 | 116-170 |
| Private individual | 22 | 421 | 1-64 |
| Total | 81 | 9986 | 1-1100 |

Why were nest boxes installed?

- as a response to a lack of tree hollows
- to contribute to habitat connectivity
- to support particular (especially threatened) species, or wildlife in general
- for community engagement and as an educational tool
- as a species monitoring tool

Where are the nest boxes?



94% of programs have checked their nest boxes at least once.

55% of programs check annually or more often (covering 65% of nest boxes)

What was found in the nest boxes?

33 native mammal and bird species, plus unspecified fauna
76 programs (78%) recorded a target animal

Native and non-native mammals and birds found in nest boxes, listed by the number of programs (P)

| Mammals - native | P | Birds - native | P |
|--|----|--|----|
| Sugar Glider | 51 | Rosella (Crimson, Eastern) | 20 |
| Brushtail possum (Common, Mountain) | 34 | Australian Owlet-nightjar | 18 |
| Brush-tailed Phascogale* | 28 | Duck (Wood, Chestnut Teal, teal ¹ , Pacific Black ¹) | 13 |
| Common Ringtail Possum | 27 | Laughing Kookaburra | 10 |
| Antechinus (Agile, Yellow-footed) | 19 | Treecreeper (White-throated) | 8 |
| Microbats (unspecified) | 17 | Galah | 5 |
| Squirrel Glider* | 11 | Lorikeet (Rainbow, Musk ¹ , Scaly-breasted ¹) | 5 |
| Leadbeater's Possum* | 4 | Birds (unspecified) | 4 |
| Possums (unspecified) | 4 | Parrot (Red-rumped ¹ , Turquoise ^{*1}) | 4 |
| Feathertail Glider | 3 | Striated Pardalote | 2 |
| Native rat ¹ and mouse ¹ (unspecified) | 2 | Eastern Barn Owl ¹ , Southern Boobook ¹ , Welcome Swallow ¹ , Australian Magpie ¹ , Long-billed Corella ¹ , Sulphur-crested Cockatoo ¹ , Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo ^{*1} , Major Mitchell's Cockatoo ^{*1} | 8 |
| Mammals - non-native | | Birds - non-native | |
| Black Rat, House Mouse ¹ | 6 | Common Myna | 6 |
| Insects - non-native | | Common Starling, Common Blackbird ¹ , sparrow ¹ | 6 |
| European Honey Bee | 33 | | |

* listed as threatened in Victoria
¹ recorded by one program only

Some challenges identified:

- Lack of time and resources for monitoring and recording data, coordinating volunteers and landholders
- Uncertainty about what details to monitor
- Reaching boxes - reluctance to use ladders/needling to engage an arborist
- Dealing with feral bee infestations
- Difficulty submitting data



Further information

More detail on this project and its results will be included in an upcoming report, please see our website www.ari.vic.gov.au

Two **facts sheets** on nest boxes are also available on our website:

[Use of nest boxes - general guide](#)

[Learning from nest boxes - monitoring and storing data](#)

Acknowledgements

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The following groups contributed nest box information used in this project (individuals are listed by location):

Conservation Management Network: Broken Boosey Conservation Management Network, Kara Kara Conservation Management Network, Whroo Goldfields Conservation Management Network; **Friends of, Naturalist, Environment group:** Friends of Brisbane Ranges, Friends of Chiltern Mt Pilot National Park, Friends of Glenfern Valley Bushlands, Friends of Morwell National Park, Friends of Organ Pipes National Park, Friends of Wilson Reserve, Friends of Yarramie Reserve; Bendigo Field Naturalists Club, Field Naturalists Club Victoria; Melton Environment Group, Montmorency Biodiversity Group; **Landcare group/network:** Basalt to Bay Landcare Network, Bellarine Landcare Group, Christmas Hills Landcare Group, Hughes Creek Catchment Collaborative, Mid-Loddon Sub Catchment Management Network, Monbulk Landcare Group, Moorabool Catchment Landcare Group, Northern Bendigo Landcare Group, Pinkerton Landcare & Environment Group, Rutherglen Landcare Group, Smiths Gully Landcare Group, Snowy West Landcare Group, Strath Creek Landcare Group, Strathallan Family Landcare Group, Tarragal Landcare Group, Toomuc Landcare Group, Upper Goulburn Landcare Network, Watson Creek Catchment (Landcare) Group, Westernport Swamp Landcare Group, Wodonga Urban Landcare Network, Wye Weed Warriors (Wye to Wongarra Landcare Group); **Other interest groups:** Connecting Country Inc., Darebin Creek Management Committee Inc., Guide Dogs Victoria, Mammal Survey Group of Victoria Inc., Mount Elephant Community of Management Inc., Regent Honeyeater Project, Seymour Bushland Park Committee of Management, Trust for Nature; **City/Shire Council:** City of Greater Dandenong, Indigo Shire Council, Knox City Council, Macedon Ranges Shire Council, Moonee Valley City Council, Mornington Peninsula Shire Council, South Gippsland Shire Council; **Government organisation:** Barwon Water, DELWP (later Mallee Woodpeckers), Parks Victoria, Red-tailed Black Cockatoo Recovery Team, Zoos Victoria; **University:** La Trobe Wildlife Sanctuary, Southern Cross University; **Company/business:** Dunkeld Pastoral Company, Themeda Rural; **Private individuals:** Bailieston, Broadford, Campbell's Creek, Chum Creek, Clifton Creek, Cottles Bridge, Emu Creek, Fish Creek, Kalorama, Muckleford, Nowhere Creek, Parwan, Smiths Gully, St Arnaud, Steiglitz, Stratford, Strath Creek, Strathbogie, Upwey, Warrandyte.

Photo credits: Basalt to Bay Landcare Network (nest box), Jess Lawton (installing boxes), Melton Environment Group (painted nest box), Eileen Collins (Brush-tailed Phascogale), Peter Menkhorst (Rainbow Lorikeet), Friends of Glenfern Valley Bushlands (bees in box), Basalt to Bay Landcare Network (nest box), Jess Lawton (Sugar Glider).

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