

The Greater Glider

Petauroides volans



National Environmental Science Program

Appearance

Australia's largest glider, head & body 35-45cm, long fluffy tail: 45-60cm. Distinct large fluffy round ears, with variable fur colour: black, mottled grey, to pure white. Gliding membrane (patagium) from elbows to feet

Behaviour

Strictly arboreal, spending all their time in the canopy. Being nocturnal, they den (sleep) in tree hollows during the day, emerging at night to eat. As folivores (only eating leaves), they have a slow metabolism and small home ranges and tend to stay close to den trees.

Diet

Feeds exclusively on leaves and buds of Eucalypts. Important feed trees in South-East Queensland are:

Gum-Topped Box (*Eucalyptus moluccana*),
Spotted gum (*Corymbia citriodora*),
Blue gum (*Eucalyptus tereticornis*).

Habitat

Eucalypt forests. Dependent on large hollows in hollow bearing trees, generally >50cm trunk diameter. Large enough hollows can take up to 250 years to form.



Reproduction

Generally solitary, when breeding occurs March - June, they may pair up and den together. Living for roughly 15 years, breeding may not occur every year, with females giving birth to a maximum of one joey per year. Low reproductive rate can inhibit recovery of populations.

Predation

Greater Gliders are an important food source for large owls, such as the Powerful Owl. Quolls, feral cats and Dingoes have also been reported to prey on Greater Gliders.

