

7. Animals in Grampians National Park

Links to Section 2

This resource sheet can be used as pre-visit information and for park specific application of activities in Section 2 of this Parks Victoria education resource kit, in particular:

Parks and Science

25. Animal antics.

26. A forest feast.

27. Rufous Bristlebird investigation (adapt to Grampians species).

32. Observing ecological communities.

A great variety of wildlife occurs in the Grampians, representing a high percentage of the native animal species found in Victoria:

- 43% of Victoria's bird species,
- 34% of Victoria's mammal species,
- 34% of the State's amphibian species,
- 28% of Victoria's reptile species and
- 20% of Victoria's freshwater fish species.

Four mammals, four reptiles, three fish and eight bird species recorded in the park are considered to be rare, threatened or requiring careful monitoring.

Significant animal species in the park include Heath Mouse, Smokey Mouse, Squirrel Glider, and Peregrine Falcon. Brush-tailed Rock-wallaby occurred in the Grampians until recently and may be re-introduced in the future.

The tiny Smoky Mouse requires tall open forest and sub-alpine heathlands to survive. The Heath Mouse is found only in the Grampians and coastal heathlands in the south-west of Victoria. The Squirrel Glider is found in red gum woodlands in the north of the Park.

Mammals

Thirty-five different mammal species occur in the Park, including the popular koala. A total of five species of kangaroo and wallabies occur in the area, making it the richest macropod area in the State.

Open forest plant communities, where many of the mammal species are most likely to be seen, are especially important habitats for wallabies, kangaroos and bandicoots. Woodlands are important for possums and gliders which need tree hollows for shelter and breeding.

Heathlands are particularly important for small mammals such as the Heath Mouse and Pygmy-possum.



Birds

Grampians National Park is particularly rich in bird life with 200 species, that is forty-three per cent of species recorded in Victoria. The Park has a relatively large breeding population of the Peregrine Falcon, a rare bird worldwide.

The park's woodlands are especially important for many species. For example, lorikeets and honeyeaters feed seasonally on pollen, nectar and insects, parrots and cockatoos use tree hollows for breeding and shelter, while babblers and choughs forage on the ground. The heathlands are very important for small birds such as wrens, robins, fantails and whistlers.



Eastern Rosella © MT



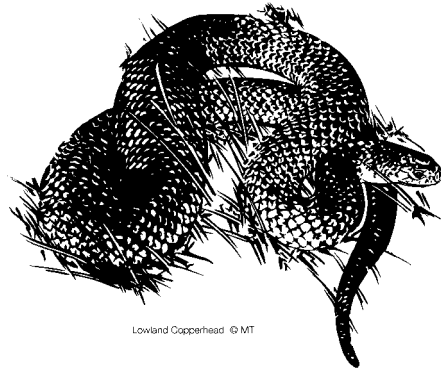
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo © MT

Introduced birds are blackbird, pigeon, skylark, sparrow, goldfinch and starling.

Reptiles

The reptile fauna of 28 species is particularly rich in the Grampians because of the area's diversity of habitats. The Water Skink is probably the most easily seen, along streams and basking on rocks. The Long-necked Tortoise also favours the wetland areas of the park.

Seven snake species live in the park including Copperhead, Eastern Tiger Snake, Red-bellied Black Snake and Eastern Brown Snake.



Lowland Copperhead © MT

Fish

Six species of native fish have been recorded in the park. Most of these are small fish which inhabit the streams of the area. A further six species of introduced fish, including the popular Rainbow and Brown Trout, occur in the park, particularly in the reservoirs.

Amphibians

Eleven species of frogs live in the park in permanent ponds and swamps, flowing streams and flooded areas. They are most audible during breeding time in winter and spring, especially at night and on cloudy, wet days.