



The Vertebrate Fauna of the Nattai and Bargo Reserves

Project funded under the Central Directorate Parks and Wildlife Division
Biodiversity Survey Priorities Program

Conservation Programs and Planning
Branch, Metropolitan
Environmental Protection and Regulation Division
Department of Environment and Conservation (NSW)
August 2004

Department of
Environment and
Conservation (NSW)

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Department of Environment and Conservation

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

CADU (Central) Manager

Julie Ravallion

CADU (Central) Bioregional Data Group Coordinator

Daniel Connolly

CADU (Central) Fauna Surveys Coordinator

Kylie Madden

CADU (Central) GIS, Data Management and Database Coordinator

Peter Ewin

Report Writing and Map Production

Daniel Connolly

Field Surveyors

Biodiversity Priorities Survey Team

Elizabeth Magarey

Peter Ekert

David O'Connor

Arthur White

SCA/SASM Fauna Team

Helen Achurch

Daniel Connolly

Nick Corkish

Alex Dudley

Peter Ewin

Kylie Madden

Michael Todd

Narawan Williams

Suzette Rodoreda

CRA Team 1997-1998

Debbie Andrew

Rebecca Drury

Dick Turner

Arthur White

Field Volunteers

Katie Oxenham

Sally McEwan

Jaqueline Coughlan

Ruth Allen

Hair and Scat Analysis

Barbara Triggs

Bat Call Analysis

Narawan Williams

Michael Pennay

Data Entry

Suzette Rodoreda

Elizabeth Magarey

Rebecca Allport

Logistics and Survey Planning

Helen Achurch

Elizabeth Magarey

Special thanks to:

Staff of the Nattai Office for support during the surveys

Private Land holders who allowed access to their land

This report should be referenced as follows:

DEC (2004) "*The Vertebrate Fauna of the Nattai and Bargo Reserves.*" Unpublished report funded by the Central Directorate Parks and Wildlife Division Biodiversity Survey Priorities Program by NSW Department of Environment and Conservation, Conservation Assessment and Data Unit Conservation Programs and Planning Branch; Metropolitan, Environment Protection and Regulation Division.

All photographs are held by DEC. To obtain a copy please contact the Bioregional Data Group Coordinator, DEC Hurstville

Cover Photos

Feature Photo (Daniel Connolly)

White-striped Freetail-bat (Michael Todd), Rock

Plate-Heath Mallee (Daniel Connolly)

Black Crevice-skink (David O'Connor)

Tall Moist Blue Gum Forest (Daniel Connolly)

Rainforest (Daniel Connolly)

Short-beaked Echidna (D. O'Connor)

Grey Gum (Daniel Connolly)

Red-crowned Toadlet (Dave Hunter)

ISBN 1 74122 117 X

OVERVIEW

The Nattai and Bargo Reserves study area covers over 80000 hectares of a prominent sandstone tableland dissected by dramatic gorges and valleys. The study area includes Nattai National Park, Nattai State Conservation Area, Bargo State Conservation Area (and recent extensions) and the Bargo River crown lands. It encompasses a diverse array of vegetation communities and animal habitats. There have been 195 systematic fauna surveys completed within the study area sampling diurnal and nocturnal birds, reptiles, frogs, arboreal and ground mammals and bats. This has been supplemented by many hours searching and recording fauna during field traverses and targeted habitat searches. These surveys have established that Nattai National Park has the third highest number of vertebrate fauna species of all NPWS reserves in the greater Sydney region.

This report collates and summarises documented information known on the terrestrial vertebrate fauna of the area and presents the results of extensive surveys completed over the last few years. Most recently work completed under the Central Directorate Biodiversity Survey Priorities Program has ensured that the range of habitats present in the reserve have been sampled. These surveys augment a significant amount of fauna survey effort within the adjoining Warragamba and Metropolitan Special Areas. This work will map regional trends in fauna distribution across the southern Sydney region.

The Nattai and Bargo Reserves contain fauna species and assemblages that are typical of the sandstone plateaux of the Sydney region. There are subtle indications that the fauna found in the drier and cooler climates of the Nattai Tableland are more closely aligned to the Lower Blue Mountains than they are to the Woronora Plateau. However, the unique factor of the Nattai Reserves is the broad rainshadow valley adjoining the Wollondilly River that supports groups of species that are not found in sandstone habitats. The species of this valley are more typical of the fauna found on the NSW western slopes. The bird assemblages found are of particularly high conservation value, with eight threatened bird species recorded. These are the Regent and Black-chinned Honeyeaters, Diamond Firetail, Turquoise and Swift Parrots, Hooded Robin, Speckled Warbler and Brown Treecreeper.

In addition the surveys have:

- Identified a previously unknown population of Brush-tailed Rock-wallabies in the Bullio portion of Nattai NP.
- Located a previously unknown population of Koalas within and adjoining southern Nattai NP near High Range.
- Identified that a total of 286 species are known to occur within the study area, with 187 birds, 34 reptiles, fourteen frogs, seventeen bats, seven arboreal mammals and 27 ground mammals recorded.
- Documented that Nattai NP features at least 279 vertebrate fauna species and Bargo SCA 110.
- Noted the persistence of Dingo and Emu populations within the Burraborang Valley.
- Recorded two threatened frog species the Red-crowned Toadlet and Giant Burrowing Frog in the reserves for the first time.
- Observed good numbers of several threatened species including the Yellow-bellied Glider, Powerful Owl, Glossy Black-cockatoo, Sooty Owl, Eastern Bent-wing Bat and Large-eared Pied Bat. Other threatened species recorded include Masked Owl, Eastern Freetail Bat, Large-footed Myotis and Spotted-tailed Quoll.
- Concluded that a number of threatened species are highly likely to occur on the basis that records have been confirmed from adjoining areas and that suitable habitat is present in the reserves. These include the Broad-headed Snake, Rosenberg's Goanna, Barking Owl, Eastern Pygmy-possum, Squirrel Glider and Grey-headed Flying-fox.
- Recorded eleven species of introduced mammal with Rabbits, Pigs and Foxes the most regularly reported, and six species of introduced bird, with the Common Starling being the most prevalent.

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