



SAVING OUR SPECIES

Long-nosed potoroo

Potorous tridactylus

Vulnerable

The adult long-nosed potoroo weighs up to 1.6 kg and has a head and body length of about 36 cm and a tail length between 20 - 26 cm. Its fur is greyish-brown at the top of its body and light grey below.

The long-nosed potoroo is found on the south-eastern coast of Australia, from Queensland to eastern Victoria and Tasmania, including some Bass Strait islands.

In NSW they are generally restricted to coastal heaths and forests east of the Great Dividing Range, where there is an annual rainfall exceeding 760 mm.

Essential habitat for the long-nosed potoroo is a dense understorey including grass-trees, sedges, ferns, heath or low shrubs of tea trees.

Mainly nocturnal, the long-nosed potoroo can hide during the day in thick vegetation, however during winter, it may forage during daylight hours.

The long-nosed potoroo is an omnivore that eats fungi, roots, tubers, insects and their larvae and other soft-bodied animals in the soil. They often dig small holes in the ground in a similar way to bandicoots.

In the words of Charles Darwin, the long-nosed potoroo is “an animal, as big as a rabbit, but with the figure of a kangaroo”.

Long-nosed potoroos are one of Australia’s original truffle hunters. The fruit-bodies of these hypogeous (underground-fruiting) fungi are a large component of their diet.

Support local action and help save the long-nosed potoroo



A track through long-nosed potoroo habitat. The track edge shows how thick long-nosed potoroo habitat can be. Photo: Andrew Claridge/OEH



Typical Long-nosed potoroo habitat, behind the beaches and low foothills of the coast, looking south to Baycliff in Ben Boyd National Park. Photo: Andrew Claridge/OEH

The local community on the far south coast of New South Wales has worked with the South East Local Land Services and the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) to monitor potoroos in the Tanja area using infra-red cameras. The potoroos are attracted to the camera site by a feed station filled with peanut butter and black truffle oil.

Another monitoring project undertaken by OEH, in collaboration with the University of NSW, measured the impact of a decade-long fox-baiting program in Ben Boyd National Park, compared with the coastal wilderness of Nadgee Nature Reserve, where there has been no long-term fox baiting.

The photographic monitoring has revealed that more than ten years of sustained fox baiting has helped create the conditions in which native animal populations are able to thrive.

Residents living on or near potoroo country have also taken part in a targeted fox control program. Fox numbers are monitored using sand pads placed on tracks and checked for foot prints.

If you live in an area where potoroos occur, there are a number of things you can do to help protect them. These include retaining the understorey in areas of bushland, recreating areas of dense habitat, particularly in gullies, managing foxes, and preventing dogs and cats from roaming and keeping them inside at night.

Landowners also help to protect the long-nosed potoroo by maintaining passages of vegetation connectivity between habitat patches and managing the land to prevent large hot fires.

The NSW Government's Biodiversity Conservation Trust encourages and supports landholders to conserve and manage biodiversity on private land. You can find out more here: www.bct.nsw.gov.au

If you are interested in raising awareness and inspiring your community to help protect and save the long-nosed potoroo and other threatened species, you can find out more about volunteering and research projects related to threatened species here:

<http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/topics/animals-and-plants/threatened-species/help-save-our-threatened-species>

Saving our Species is a NSW Government flagship program targeting on-ground action to secure threatened plants and animals from extinction. The program aims to increase the number of species that can survive securely in the wild.

Saving our Species can only succeed if we work together. We need your support to ensure that today's actions help to secure the future of NSW's threatened species.

To find out more about threatened species in NSW and the Saving our Species program: www.environment.nsw.gov.au/SOS