



Office of  
Environment  
& Heritage

# Annual Report

**Commercial Crop Damage by Flying-foxes:  
Licence Summary 2013–14 Fruit Growing Season**

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# Contents

- 1. Introduction .....1
- 2. Licensing Outcomes .....1

# 1. Introduction

The Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) has a policy in place for the protection of commercial fruit crop damage by flying-foxes.

This policy advocates full exclusion netting as the only reliable method for protecting fruit crops, but also makes provision for the issue of licences to commercial growers under s120 of the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974* to harm limited numbers of flying-foxes.

The policy applies to all three flying-fox species in NSW; the Grey-headed Flying-fox, Black Flying-fox and Little Red Flying-fox.

Grey-headed Flying-foxes were listed by both the NSW Scientific Committee and the Commonwealth Government as a threatened species in 2001. Additionally Black Flying-foxes and Little Red Flying-foxes are protected species in NSW.

Licences issued for flying fox species must be implemented in accordance with standard operating procedures to protect the welfare of these animals. These procedures were introduced during the 2009–10 season.

This report provides a summary of the licences issued for the 2013–14 season and includes the number of licences issued, the number of animals licensed to be harmed and those actually harmed, based on flying fox return sheets provided by licensees.

## 2. Licensing Outcomes

- Table 1 provides a summary of licences issued and the number of flying-foxes harmed during the 2013–14 season.
- Between September 2013 and February 2014, 33 licences were issued to commercial orchardists in NSW.
- The 33 licences, plus 10 variations to those licences, authorised the harm of 1448 Grey-headed Flying-foxes (GHFF)
- An additional 18 Black Flying-foxes and 110 Little Red Flying-foxes were also licensed to be harmed during the 2013–14 season.
- The majority of licences (15, or 45%), including variations to licences were issued by NPWS Valley Area. NPWS Areas in the Sydney Basin and surrounds accounted for 61% of all licences issued.
- The number of Grey-headed Flying-foxes reported harmed by licensees was 1082 animals. An additional 16 Black Flying-foxes and 15 Little Red Flying-foxes were reported harmed.
- Information available since the 2001–02 season indicates that the number of flying foxes reported as being harmed under licence has been consistently below the number of licences issued each year (see Figure 1).
- Figure 1 also shows that the percentage of Grey-headed Flying-foxes harmed compared to licenses issued was the highest since 2001 at 75%; the average being 55%

**Table 1: Summary of licensed numbers vs reported numbers of Grey-headed flying-foxes between 2013 -2014 (growing seasons).**

<b>NPWS Branch</b>	<b>NPWS Region</b>	<b>NPWS Area</b>	<b>Number of licences issued</b>	<b>Number of variations issued</b>	<b>Total number GHFF licensed to be harmed</b>	<b>Reported Number GHFF harmed</b>	<b>Number FFRS Returned (including variations)</b>
<b>Coastal</b>	North Coast	Macleay	3	0	18 (plus 18 BFF)	18 (plus 16 BFF)	3
	Central Coast Hunter Range	Hawkesbury North	6	1	200	214	5
	South Coast	Illawarra	1	0	20	20	1
<b>Metropolitan</b>	Metro North East	Valley	15	0	570	310	10
	Metro South West	Nattai	2	0	50	49	0
	Blue Mountains	Hawkesbury	3	9	590	471	12
<b>Western</b>	Northern Plains	Coonabarabran	1	0	(10 LRFF)	(6 LRFF)	1
	Western Rivers	Central West	2	0	(100 LRFF)	(9 LRFF)	2
<b>Totals</b>			<b>33</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1448 GHFF 18 BFF 110 LRFF</b>	<b>1082 GHFF 16 BFF 15 LRFF</b>	<b>34</b>

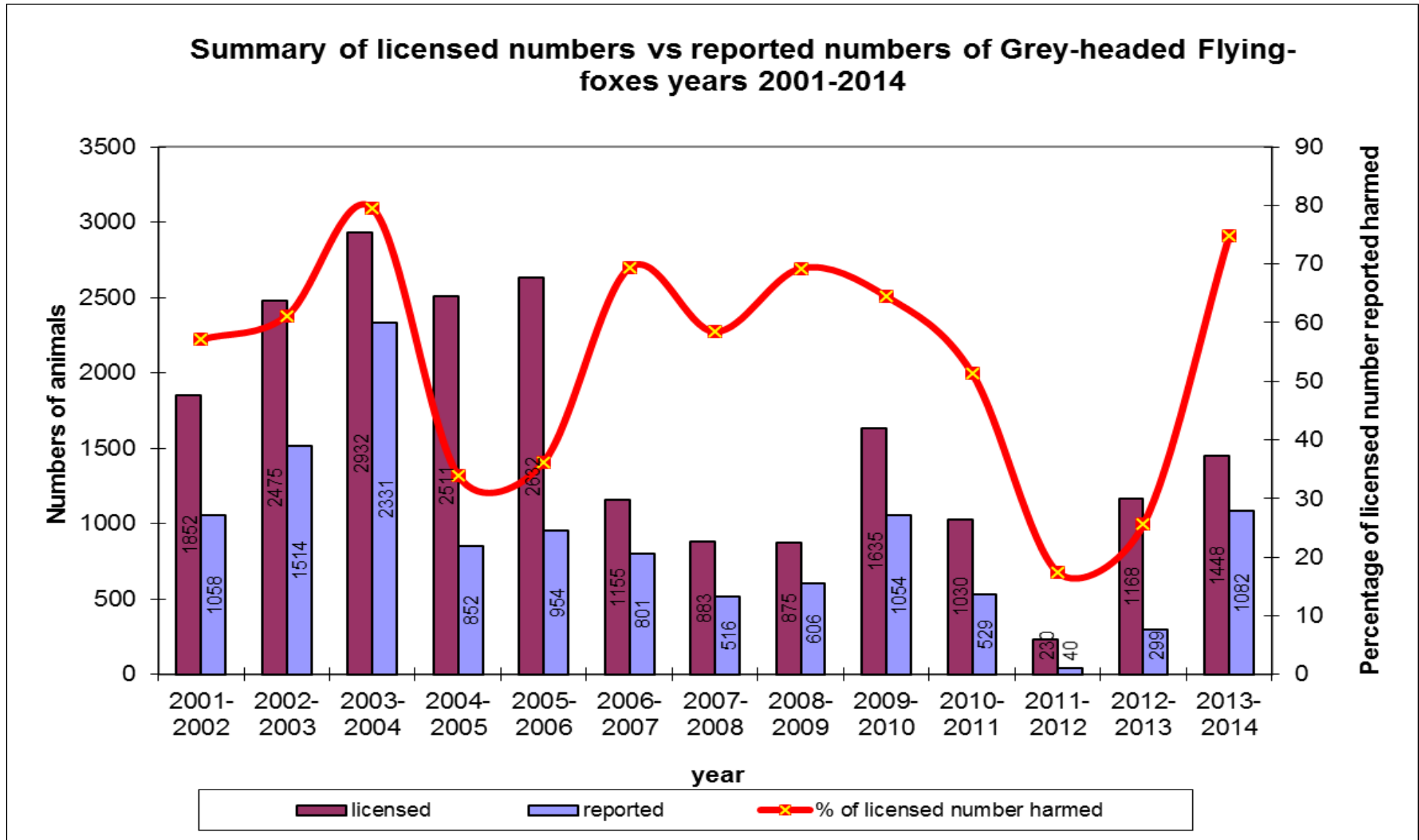


Figure 1: Summary of licensed numbers vs reported numbers of Grey Headed Flying-foxes years 2001-14