



## **MAMMAL SURVEY GROUP OF VICTORIA INC.**

### **SURVEY CAMP REPORT**

**LOCATION/NAME** *'Iveridge', Coldstream* **DATES** *11-12 October 2014*

**WEATHER:** 11 Oct was fine with no wind, temp 21 °C. 12 Oct early mist, ENE moderate wind, some cloud, mostly fine, 29 °C. Evening was mild with 8°C minimum temperature.

**DESCRIPTION OF HABITAT SURVEYED.** Include brief physical and botanical description, Modifying factors (fire, logging, grazing) geology if known, and any significant faunal or floristic observations.

The site surveyed is a private property "Iveridge" owned by Kate Foster. It is located in Coldstream along the Yarra River 2 km north of the Maroondah Highway, and about 3 km southwest of Healesville (Melway Directory, Map 277 - E4/F4).

"Iveridge" is 120ha (300 acres) in area consisting of a large river flat beside the Yarra River backed by low hills. About 30% of the property has been cleared for cattle grazing and the remainder is covered by natural vegetation, including almost 50% of the river flat, which is unusual in the Yarra Valley where this highly sort after low lying land was cleared for farming to take advantage of the fertile soils. A large portion of the river flat has been fenced off with financial assistance from Melbourne Water to protect the area from grazing. It was within this area where the mammal survey was concentrated.



**River flat habitat**

The hillsides were once cleared, but the natural vegetation has been allowed to recover resulting in much of the property being covered by a dense regrowth of Burgan under which there is very little floristic diversity. This in turn does not support much in the way of animal life, a reason for concentrating the survey effort to the diverse river flat.

Over the area surveyed the dominant trees are tall 50 metre Manna Gums – *Eucalyptus Viminalis* with a middle storey mostly consisting of Blackwood – *Acacia melanoxylon*, Silver Wattle – *Acacia Dealbata* and Cherry Ballart – *Exocarpos cupressiformis*. Understory consisted of a range of shrubs including Tree Violet – *Hymenanthera dentate*, Tea-tree – *Leptospermum sp*, Bracken, Lomandra, various sedges and a range of grasses. Much of the ground cover consisted of exotic grasses and environmental weeds.

Although there has been little rainfall prior to this mammal survey, the area was very green with plenty of spring growth in the vegetation

### Survey Report

A total of 56 species were recorded during the survey; this consisted of 10 + mammals, 42 birds and 4 frogs. It was 10+ mammals as there were likely to be more than one species of bat detected while spotlighting.

No cage traps and bat traps were set.

Seventeen motion sensing cameras were deployed, 16 owned by MSGV and one belonging to survey participants, making up a total of 17 camera nights over a single night on 11 October. Six cameras captured images, one was set off by an unidentified animal very close to the camera, possibly a brushtail possum, and one was triggered but with no animal in the image and nine cameras were not triggered. Images and video clips were captured of three mammal species; a single Sugar Glider, three Common Wombats and three Black Wallabies. Birds photographed by these cameras during the day include 3 Superb Fairy-wrens and a single Common Blackbird.



**A Black Wallaby and Common Wombat captured by the same Reconyx HC600 camera (R4)**

Spotlighting for one hour and 20 mins with three lights, a total of 3.6 spot hours on the evening of 11 October revealed 4 Common Brushtail Possums, 1 Sugar Glider, 1 Black Wallaby, 1 Red Fox, 1 Rabbit, 1 immature Sambar and numerous unidentified bats. Not counting the bats the total of number of animals seen was 9, a spotting rate of 2.5 animals per hour.

Incidental sightings during the day include 1 Echidna, 2 Platypus, 2 Common Wombats, 1 Black Wallaby, 2 Rabbits and 1 Sambar. There were numerous fresh diggings throughout the property suspected to be Echidna. Signs of mammals detected were Common Wombat holes, deer foot prints and scats from Wombats, Wallabies and Red Fox.





A Sugar Glider taken from a video clip by a Maginon camera

List of Mammals Recorded During the Survey		Method Used to find species				
Species	Code	Trap	Remote Camera	Spot light	Incidental Sighting	Signs
<b>Short-beaked Echidna</b> <i>Tachyglossus aculeatus</i>	W1003				S	diggings
<b>Platypus</b> <i>Ornithorhynchus anatinus</i>	S1001				S	
<b>Common Wombat</b> <i>Vombatus ursinus</i>	K1165				S	Burrow Scats
<b>Common Brushtail Possum</b> <i>Trichosurus vulpecula</i>	K1113			S		
<b>Sugar Glider</b> <i>Petaurus breviceps</i>	E1138			S		
<b>Black Wallaby</b> <i>Wallabia bicolor</i>	E1242			S	S	Scats
<b>Bats</b> - Unidentified				S		
<b>Red Fox</b> <i>Vulpes vulpes</i>	A1532			S		Scats
<b>European Rabbit</b> <i>Oryctolagus cuniculus</i>	M1510			S	S	
<b>Sambar</b> <i>Cervus unicolor</i>	G1527			S	S	Foot prints

S – Seen      H – Heard

42 species of birds were recorded; the most notable being a pair of Wedge-tailed Eagles nesting on the property with one eaglet on the nest, a Sacred Kingfisher constantly calling on the first day and an Olive-backed Oriole briefly heard calling. Also large regurgitated owl pellets, most likely from a Powerful Owl were found beneath a medium sized Blackwood.

### Other Fauna Species (Reptiles & Amphibians) Observed

Frogs heard include Southern Tree Frogs *Litoria ewingii*, a small number of Peron's Tree Frogs *Litoria peronii*, Spotted Marsh Frogs *Limnodynastes tasmaniensis* and numerous Common Froglets *Crinia signifera* in a dam.

### Notable Findings and Observations

Two Sugar Gliders were recorded, one seen on a Black Wattle while spotlighting and the other by a motion sensing camera attached to a small tree to obtain a view of the trunk of a large Manna Gum *Eucalyptus viminalis* nearby on which a bait of peanut butter and treacle was spread about two metres above the ground.

No small terrestrial mammals such as Bush Rats and Antechinus were found, the possible reason being there are lots of Red Foxes in the area, one of which was seen while spotlighting. Later discussions with the land owner have confirmed this, as she has seen many foxes throughout the property.



**A Superb Fairy-wren and one of two Common Wombats captured by a Reconnyx HC600 camera (R3)**



**It was found that images of two Common Wombats were captured by Reconnyx camera (R3), as the one on the left was free of mange and the other on the right had mange over the hind quarters.**



**Echidna diggings**



**The single Echidna seen near the camp site**



**Wedge-tailed Eagle nest with eaglet**



**Owl pellets, most likely from a Powerful Owl**



## LOCATION MAP:



## TRAPPING AND SPOTLIGHTING MAP :



CAMP COMMANDANT: Andrew McCutcheon

CAMP HOST: Kate Foster

PERSONNEL Andrew McCutcheon and Faye Chapman  
Chris and Jenny Wilson

Kathy Zonneville  
Tony Sheaffe and Susi Weber

Andrew McCutcheon – Mammal Survey Group of Victoria Inc.  
WSIEAC Approval 22.11