

**Submission  
No 452**

## **INQUIRY INTO ECOSYSTEM DECLINE IN VICTORIA**

**Organisation:** City of Darebin

**Date Received:** 28 August 2020

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS

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In reply please quote reference:

Ref: A5627347

The Committee Manager  
Standing Committee on Environment and Planning  
Parliament House, Spring Street  
EAST MELBOURNE VIC 3002

Dear Sir/Madam

**Re: Parliamentary Enquiry into Ecosystem Decline**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission to the Parliamentary Inquiry into Ecosystem Decline. Council has prepared this submission with the support of expert community members from the Darebin Nature Trust, and in consultation with the Darebin Creek Management Committee. We call upon the Victorian Government to strengthen the legislative and planning framework to protect and enhance Victoria's ecosystems.

Greater support and leadership is required from the Victorian Government to appropriately address ecosystem decline and work towards solutions to facilitate ecosystem and species protection, restoration and recovery in Victoria. Future ecosystem decline is a significant risk for economic development in Australia and Darebin by contributing to the climate emergency and biodiversity loss, and detrimental to social and cultural wellbeing. Biodiversity also has a critical inherent value and a value as part of providing ecosystem services.

There are economic development opportunities that could address ecosystem decline and create jobs – for example through significant new investment in land restoration and threatened species management programs, waterway enhancement, and sustainable design.

Local governments have a key role in working with communities to address ecosystem decline and biodiversity loss. Darebin takes this seriously and have recently accelerated tree planting across the City, introduced a tree protection local law and a cat curfew and integrated work to enhance habitat through our maintenance and capital works programs. In 2019, Darebin Council endorsed *'Breathing Space: Darebin's Open Space Strategy'* as a key component to addressing the climate emergency and to articulate of the importance of planning for biodiversity and increasing the conservation and improvement of habitat in Darebin.

However, local government cannot deliver the change that is required alone, and we are seeking that the State Government join us in addressing this challenge. It will take change to policy and operational management, as well as determined, persistent effort, but the benefits are significant and worth working for.

Please find attached our submission.

Yours sincerely

Councillor Susan Rennie  
Mayor

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to live

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**Darebin City Council:**

***Submission to the Victorian Parliamentary  
Inquiry into Ecosystem Decline***

***31 August 2020***

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## Executive Summary

Darebin City Council welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission to the Parliamentary Inquiry into Ecosystem Decline. Council has prepared this submission with the support of expert community members from the Darebin Nature Trust, and in consultation with the Darebin Creek Management Committee.

The Darebin Local Government Area is prone to typical threats found in an urban environment. These include over-development, spread of weeds, impacts of domestic and feral animals on native species, dumping of rubbish, behaviour of adjoining landowners, flooding events and extremes of weather. Biodiversity protection is crucial to mitigating these threats, which in turn benefits the survival of humanity.

Future ecosystem decline is anticipated to be a significant risk for economic development in Australia and Darebin by contributing to the climate emergency and biodiversity loss, and detrimental to social and cultural wellbeing.

It is recognised that local governments have a key role in working with communities to address ecosystem decline and biodiversity loss. However local government cannot deliver the change that is required alone.

This Submission outlines the need for greater support and leadership from the Victorian Government to appropriately address ecosystem decline and work towards solutions to facilitate ecosystem and species protection, restoration and recovery in Victoria.

In response to the terms of reference, Darebin Council recommends:

- that the Victorian Government strengthen the legislative and planning framework to protect and enhance Victoria's environment, biodiversity and ecosystems;
- that the Victorian Government show leadership in tackling biodiversity loss by recognising and responding to threats to biodiversity through logging activities, duck hunting and catastrophic bushfire events;
- that the Victorian Government recognise and remedy the weaknesses in threatened species legislation and fast track a review of the *Wildlife Act 1975*;
- that the Victorian Government expand and improve government programs and funding to protect and enhance Victoria's environment and ecosystems; and
- that recommendations to changes to environmental legislation are adopted and not watered down under the guise of 'post-Covid-19 economic recovery.'

Council believes that protecting Victoria's threatened species and communities within and beyond Darebin's boundaries is important to ensure that we have a local area rich in biodiversity, clean air, healthy waterways and arable land for food production. Massive declines in biodiversity and increased human contact with wildlife also increases the risk of creating conditions for pandemics, as seen on a global scale in 2020.

Council also acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people as the traditional owners and custodians of Darebin's land and waters, and all other traditional custodians across Victoria. We respect and recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities' values, living culture and practices. We strongly encourage the Inquiry to seek out and listen to traditional custodian knowledge, to inform its deliberations and recommendations.

Strengthening the protection of biodiversity and the environment at the state level will assist council and our community with mitigating the adverse impacts of biodiversity loss and ecosystem decline locally and will also contribute to environment protection across the state.

## Introduction

### City of Darebin

Darebin Council, in conjunction with the Darebin Nature Trust and Darebin Creek Management Committee welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission to the Parliamentary Inquiry into Ecosystem Decline.

We believe that protecting Victoria's threatened species and communities is important to ensure that we have a local area rich in biodiversity, clean air, healthy waterways and arable land for food production.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have maintained a strong physical and cultural presence in Darebin in the face of displacement, disenfranchisement and policies of assimilation. Darebin has a long-standing relationship with the Aboriginal community and is committed to continuing the journey towards reconciliation via protecting Darebin's natural and cultural heritage assets.

At the local government level, Council is committed to enhancing human health and wellbeing for current residents as well as preserving and enhancing our ecosystems for the benefit of future generations (of both wildlife and people). Tied in with this, Council is also committed to climate action and recognises that we are in a state of climate emergency. Unless we restore a safe climate at emergency speed, there will be dramatic and negative impacts on our community and around the world.

The Darebin Local Government Area (LGA) is prone to typical threats found in an urban environment. These include over-development, spread of weeds, impacts of domestic and feral animals on native species, dumping of rubbish, behaviour of adjoining landowners, flooding events and extremes of weather. The increased impacts of climate change are likely to impact an already fragile ecosystem. Strengthening the protection of biodiversity and the environment will assist council with mitigating the adverse impacts of anthropogenic and climatic change and will also contribute to environment protection across the wider area of Greater Melbourne.

### Purpose of Inquiry

This submission is in response to the *Parliamentary Inquiry into Ecosystem Decline in Victoria*, which was triggered by a motion from Dr Samantha Ratnam of The Greens, Member of the Legislative Council for the Northern Metro region. The inquiry will report on the extent of biodiversity loss and ecosystem decline and measures to restore habitats and populations of threatened and endangered species.

### Scope of this Submission

This submission responds to the inquiry by addressing the major sections of the Terms of Reference by:

1. Defining the problem, Biodiversity Loss, in terms of the five main drivers that leads to Ecosystem Decline and Collapse.
2. Assessing the Legislative Framework to protect the environment and Government programs designed to protect and restore ecosystems.
3. Discussing solutions to tackle drivers of Biodiversity Loss, and also to create jobs and to connect Indigenous Peoples with country.

## The Problem: Biodiversity Loss and Ecosystem Decline in Victoria

The following section addresses the first item in the Terms of Reference:

***(a) the extent of the decline of Victoria's biodiversity and the likely impact on people, particularly First Peoples, and ecosystems, if more is not done to address this, including consideration of climate change impacts***

### What is Biodiversity?

Biodiversity is the variation in life on Earth and life is so much more than plants and animals, or "flora and fauna". Life on Earth is one large system, with plants, animals, fungi and micro-organisms interacting with one another and with physical factors, such as sun, water, soil, weather and geology; everything works together in a network creating ecosystems and biomes. This inter-connectedness is critical to planetary health and, consequently, to human health and wellbeing. Changes to any of these factors, physical or biological, alter the health and wellbeing of the system. These impacts and changes can occur in a small localised area or a broader regional area.

### What is the Biodiversity Emergency?

The world's biodiversity is under intense stress and pressure, causing a loss of biodiversity that has led to ecosystem decline and a global Biodiversity Emergency (IPBES 2019). Biodiversity Loss is driven by over-exploitation (logging), pollution, invasive species, habitat loss and climate damage, which are all influenced by human activity, in particular increased population, increased consumption of resources and reduced resource efficiency. The global Biodiversity Emergency is an existential crisis for all life on Earth.

### Worldwide Biodiversity Loss

The UN Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, (IPBES 2019) defined five major drivers of biodiversity loss:

- Climate damage
- Habitat loss
- Exploitation of Australian Wildlife
- Pollution
- Invasive species

Climate change is exacerbating biodiversity loss through land clearing and change in land practices. The increasing impact is multifaceted; economic, in terms of a reduction in ecological services and cultural in terms of connection to place. This is particularly significant for first nations people who have a continued spiritual connection to the land and waters.

### Australia's Biodiversity Loss

Australia has an appalling record of species loss which has been reported for more than two decades and has continued to worsen (Cresswell & Murphy 2017); globally, Australia is listed among seven nations responsible for 60% of the biodiversity loss between 1996 and 2008, which covers the first decade of the EPBC Act. The Biodiversity Emergency in Australia has triggered a Senate Inquiry into Faunal Extinction (Commonwealth of Australia 2019) to address Australia's disproportionate rate of biodiversity loss.



## The extent of biodiversity loss in Victoria:

Victoria has the highest number of threatened species by subregion in Australia.

The *State of the Environment Report* (Cresswell & Murphy 2017) showed that since European settlement there has been a progressive rate of native animal and plant extinction with Victoria losing 18 mammal species, 2 birds, 1 snake, 3 freshwater fish, 6 invertebrates and 51 plants. The report also found two-thirds of the state's indicators for land-based biodiversity were assessed as poor.

### Bushfire events

The recent catastrophic bushfires that occurred in Victoria have put significant strain on ecosystems, the economy and on public health.

In January 2020, a Notice of Motion was put forward to Darebin Council to highlight the urgent need for action to protect our water catchments. This Motion aligns with the City of Darebin's Declaration of Climate Emergency and was adopted by council at its February meeting, noting.

#### **That Council:**

1. *Notes that we are in a State of Climate Emergency that requires urgent action to mitigate the risks of the catastrophic fires we have seen across Australia from September 2019 to January 2020.*
2. *Notes that logged forests in the regeneration stage are more likely to burn at higher severity.*
3. *Notes that if a catastrophic fire burnt out the remainder of Melbourne's water supply catchments it could severely compromise water quantity, quality and cost for 5 million Melburnians.*
4. *Notes that the close proximity of the water catchments to Melbourne means that residents could be put at further risk of cardiac and respiratory illnesses due to smoke from fires.*
5. *Notes the recent Interim Injunction against logging of threatened species habitat in the Central Highlands following the devastating impact of fires in East Gippsland.*
6. *Notes the recent Victorian Government announcement to Immediately end logging of old growth forests will help protect the habitat of the Greater Glider, the Leadbeater's Possum and more than 35 other threatened species.*
7. *Writes to the Premier, calling for:*
  - a. *An immediate end to logging in Melbourne's water supply catchments with a view to mitigating these risks*
  - b. *A moratorium on all other native forest logging, including salvage logging operations in burnt forests, until the biodiversity impacts of this season's catastrophic fires have been assessed*
  - c. *In addition to the already announced \$120 million forestry plantation transition package, development of an additional regional public sector jobs transition plan for forestry workers to retrain and be employed in emergency services, paid firefighting roles and other roles within the state government's land management workforce.*
8. *Forwards a copy of this resolution to all local Upper and Lower House MPs, all councils in the Melbourne metropolitan area, the Municipal Association of Victoria and the Victorian Local Governance Association.*

A letter from the Mayor was sent to the Premier of Victoria, Municipals Association of Victoria, Victorian Local Governance Association, all councils in the greater Melbourne area and all local upper and lower house MPs to call for an immediate end



to logging in Melbourne’s water supply catchments and a moratorium on all logging with a view to mitigating these risks.

The forests of the central highlands are critical for Melbourne’s water supply. Severe bushfires in these water catchment areas could be catastrophic, with severe impacts for the residents of Melbourne. While the bushfires continued and communities remained on alert in much of the country, logging continued in the Victorian Central Highlands, with more logging planned in 2020. Stopping logging would provide immediate protection for threatened species, safeguard Melbourne’s water supply and reduce fire risk.

Darebin welcomes the recent announcement to phase out native forest logging by 2030, however given the catastrophic impact of recent fires on threatened species we call on the state government to bring this forward.

### Darebin’s Biodiversity Loss

The City of Darebin Local Government Area (LGA) is located in Victoria, in the northern suburbs of Melbourne. It falls mostly within the Victorian Volcanic Plains Bioregion, with a small portion to the northeast (encompassing La Trobe University and Gresswell Forest Nature Conservation Reserve) occurring within the Gippsland Plain Bioregion. The LGA is bound by two environmentally significant creek corridors; Darebin Creek to the east and Merri Creek to the west. The Yarra River corridor lies adjacent to the southern boundary of Darebin.

The northern area of Darebin is home to several major remnant vegetation patches of the critically endangered and nationally threatened Western Plains Grasslands ecosystem, of which less than 1% remains. Numerous threatened flora and fauna species have also been recorded within the Darebin LGA.

The *Darebin Heritage Study: Natural Heritage Plan* (Context 2011) identified 16 Ecological Vegetation Classes (EVCs) throughout the Darebin area. This also incorporates land outside of council’s jurisdiction (e.g. La Trobe University). These are presented in **Table 1** below:

**Table 1.** Ecological Vegetation Classes recorded in Darebin Local Government Area

Bioregion	EVC No.	Description
Gippsland Plain	55	Plains Grassy Woodland
Gippsland Plain	68	Creekline Grassy Woodland
Gippsland Plain	175	Grassy Woodland
Victorian Volcanic Plain	55 61	Plains Grassy Woodland
Victorian Volcanic Plain	68	Creekline Grassy Woodland
Victorian Volcanic Plain	132 61	Heavier-soils Plains Grassland
Victorian Volcanic Plain	132 62	Lighter-soils Plains Grassland
Victorian Volcanic Plain	175 61	Grassy Woodland
Victorian Volcanic Plain	641	Riparian Woodland
Victorian Volcanic Plain	649	Stony Knoll Shrubland
Victorian Volcanic Plain	653	Aquatic Herbland
Victorian Volcanic Plain	654	Creekline Tussock Grassland
Victorian Volcanic Plain	851	Stream Bank Shrubland
Victorian Volcanic Plain	851 61	Treed Stream Bank Shrubland
Victorian Volcanic Plain	895	Escarpment Shrubland
Victorian Volcanic Plain	895 61	Treed Escarpment Shrubland

The Heritage Study also identified several EPBC Act and FFG Act listed communities that have become severely depleted due to grazing, clearing, hunting, quarrying, pollution, and urban development (Context 2011).

**Table 2.** EPBC and FFG Act listed communities recorded in Darebin

Legislation	Description
EPBC Act	Grassy Eucalypt Woodland of the Victorian Volcanic Plain
EPBC Act	Natural Temperate Grassland of the Victorian Volcanic Plain
FFG Act	Western Basalt Plains (River Red Gum) Grassy Woodland (VVP 0055_61)
FFG Act	Western Basalt Plains Grassland Community (VVP 0649)
FFG Act	Western Basalt Plains Grassland Community (VVP 0654)
FFG Act	Western Basalt Plains Grassland Community (VVP 0132_61)
FFG Act	Western Basalt Plains Grassland Community (VVP 0132_62)

The NEROC Report classifies the following sites and surrounding areas as being of important Faunal Habitat Significance in the local area; ranging from medium-high significance (Beardsell 1997):

- Gresswell Forest – Strathallan Link-Hospitals (High)
- Bundoora Park (High)
- Merri Creek - Heidelberg Road to Normanby Avenue (Medium)
- McBryde Street-Central creek-Edwardes lake Park (Medium)
- Dougharty Road to Plenty Road (Medium)
- Darebin Parklands (Medium)
- La Trobe Campus Wildlife Reserves – Moat System (Medium)
- Bailey Billabong – Willsmere lagoon – Hays Paddock (Medium)

### Threats to Darebin Flora, Fauna and Ecological Communities

#### Gresswell Forest - Strathallan Link - Hospitals

Gresswell Forest contains one of the largest, least fragmented and most intact stands of alluvial plains grassy woodland remaining in inner Melbourne and provides an important site of conservation significance in the local area (Beardsell 1997). The Darebin Heritage Study (2011) identifies Strathallan Golf Course and Gresswell Habitat Link as areas of National Significance in terms of natural heritage throughout the Darebin LGA.

Strathallan Creek runs north-south through Gresswell Forest Nature Conservation Reserve and connects with a chain of ponds in the southwest corner of the Strathallan golf course. These connect with the La Trobe Wildlife Sanctuary and are home to species such as Common Froglet and Spotted Marsh Frog. Darebin’s wetlands also provide habitat for numerous species of waterfowl such as Pacific Black Duck, Australian Wood Duck, Little Pied Cormorant and Eurasian Coot.

Land within the La Trobe University precinct, including the La Trobe Wildlife Sanctuary, contains natural heritage areas of state and national significance, with land management subject to legislation including the *La Trobe University Act 2009*. The Sanctuary, in addition to the Gresswell Nature Conservation Reserves, comprises of Gresswell Hill, Gresswell Forest and Gresswell Habitat Link, provides variety of important natural heritage values for the region.

Wetlands are a prominent feature of parts of Darebin and provide important habitat and habitat linkages for a range of native flora and fauna species. The EPBC Act listed Dwarf Galaxias are known to occur within the wetlands associated with La Trobe Sanctuary and may potentially occur within the study site. Latham’s Snipe are significant in terms of being a Migratory listed species under the EPBC Act and have been recorded on numerous occasions at Strathallan Golf Course (DELWP 2020).

Beardsell (1997) recognised that further loss of habitat or fragmentation of stands of River Red Gum (e.g. if Strathallan were to be developed) would result in the depletion

of woodland fauna species at Bundoora Park. The *Darebin Natural Heritage Plan* (2011) also recognises that Strathallan Golf Course is an important large old tree site. Maintaining Strathallan Golf Course is essential to maintaining connectivity through the landscape. However the area is under threat of development, with the proposed rezoning and sale of the land for development (SSOSCC 2019).

### **Dumbarton Street Grasslands**

The Dumbarton Street Grassland in Reservoir is a parcel of land that was originally Plains Grassy Woodland, similar to nearby Bundoora Park. It was cleared in the 1800s or early 1900s for grazing of livestock but has not been used since the area around it was developed for housing in the 1960s.

The site contains endemic plants that are typical of the critically endangered grasslands of the Victoria Volcanic Plains (Context 2011; Biosis 2018; Richings 2018). The Darebin Natural Heritage Study (Context 2011) classified the site as containing EPBC Act listed Natural Temperate Grassland of the Victorian Volcanic Plain ecological community. The site is currently under threat of development, despite the presence of threatened species (*Dianella amoena*) and this EPBC Act listed ecological community.

In 2019, Darebin Council advocated for the protection of indigenous grasslands at the site and objected to the compulsory acquisition by the state government of a right of way previously owned by Council.

In its meeting on 14 October 2019, Darebin Council resolved the following:

***That Council:***

1. *Notes that the Minister for Planning has compulsorily acquired the formerly Council owned right-of-way/road that traverses the site located at 16-20 Dumbarton Street, Reservoir.*
2. *Notes that there are remnant grasslands on the site located at 16-20 Dumbarton Street Reservoir and that the site supports native grassland that comprises federal and state threatened ecological communities.*
3. *Reiterates its call to the Minister for Planning to retain and enhance the remnant grasslands located at 16–20 Dumbarton Street, Reservoir.*
4. *Notes that Council strongly supports more affordable, social and public housing and calls on the State Government to increase its efforts and investment in addressing affordable housing, and to ensure that housing provision is done in a way that also protects and enhances our natural heritage.*
5. *Reiterates its offer to work with the State Government to identify alternative sites with a similar social housing yield and better access to services for this housing project that are either in Council or State Government ownership.*

There has been strong community interest on this matter. Two community petitions have been started including one change.org petition to the local State Government MP Robin Scott which on 12 March 2020 had over 900 signatories, and one Parliament of Victoria e-petition which on 12 March 2020 had 125 signatories.

Darebin Council has since been notified (via Ministerial letter dated 16 January 2020) that alternate sites are not being considered.

***Darebin calls on the Victorian Government is to halt their plans to develop this land for housing.*** Given that this land has never been disrupted by building developments and that many endemic species are present, this land should be protected and managed as a native grassland and wildlife reserve.



## Darebin's Creek Corridors

Darebin is home to several important creek lines that provide wildlife corridors and a focus for local parks and cycling and walking tracks. They are also very important Aboriginal Heritage sites. They include:

- Darebin Creek - a major tributary of the Yarra River that runs along the eastern boundary of the Darebin LGA
- Merri Creek – begins in Wallan, north of Melbourne begins in Wallan, runs along the western boundary of Darebin and joins the Yarra River at Dights Falls
- Edgars Creek - a minor tributary of Merri creek located between Reservoir and North Coburg
- Central Creek – a tributary of Merri Creek, located in Reservoir.

The health of Darebin's creek corridors has been poor following industrialisation and development around the creeks. Over the last 30 years council, not-for-profit organisations and community groups have worked to greatly improve the health of the creeks (DCMC 2020; MCMC 2020). The health and wellbeing of these systems is still greatly impacted by decisions and actions upstream in areas outside Darebin's borders, particularly within industrial and agricultural zones.

## Darebin's Flora and Fauna

Darebin is home to a diverse range of flora and fauna, with more than 400 flora and 200 fauna species being recorded in the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) online database, the Victorian Biodiversity Atlas (VBA {DELWP 2020}). Within these records, there are 76 threatened flora and fauna species recorded within the Darebin Local Government Area. This includes records of 47 species of fauna and 29 species of flora (DELWP 2020) – see Appendix I).

## Key Threatened Species

Some key threatened species that are found in Darebin are listed below:

- Darebin is known to support threatened species such as EPBC Act-listed Swift Parrots during their foraging season (SSOSCC 2017). The River Red Gums stretching east from Bundoora Park through La Trobe University and the former psychiatric hospital sites are an important late winter season feeding area for Swift Parrots before they depart south to their breeding grounds in Tasmania (Beardsell 1997).
- Growling Grass Frogs are an EPBC Act listed species known to occur in both Merri and Darebin Creek and associated waterbodies. These populations are under threats typical in an urban environment such as habitat loss, water pollution, predation by introduced species, chytrid fungus and potentially roadkill (DEWHA 2009).
- Matted Flax-lily is listed as Endangered under the EPBC Act and occurs in disjunct populations in Darebin and mostly occur along its creek lines. Current threats include clearing of habitat and weed invasion (DSE 2010).
- Dwarf Galaxias are an EPBC Act listed fish that is present in some of Darebin's waterways. These are located predominantly in La Trobe University's wildlife sanctuary as a captive population but have spread to other waterbodies in the area. These populations are under threat from the introduced Mosquitofish; an exotic pest introduced to Australia in the 1920s.

- River Red Gums are not listed as a threatened species in Australia or Victoria but are an iconic species of the Darebin landscape and were once more widespread than they are today. Further populations are at risk of removal due to proposed rezoning of existing land and residential development, further increasing decline of the species.
- Several other EPBC Act listed species have historically been observed in Darebin (**Appendix I**) but most have not been recorded for more than 30 years.

### Other Observed Threats in Darebin

Darebin's Parks and Open Space team were consulted for their on-ground knowledge and expertise of Darebin's open space, local biodiversity and waterway health. In summary, the team have observed the following threats within the Darebin LGA:

- Regular flash flooding events (increasing in frequency and intensity) are impacting revegetation, spreading weeds and causing erosion, and increase in litter inputs.
- Lack of fire implementation in urbanised environments / small remnant vegetation, which would reduce weed encroachment and stimulate indigenous regrowth.
- Increase in opportunistic/ generalist native bird species and feral birds in an environment with limited heterogeneity.
- The disappearance of a Bell Miner population from Merri Merri Park, Northcote.
- Emergence or further establishment of weed threats, including Araujia, Jerusalem Artichoke, Pampas Lily of the Valley, Madeira Vine, Cobblers Peg, Chilean Needle-grass.
- Increased sightings of Red Fox and feral cats within council boundaries.
- Spraying out of remnant grassland patches by Melbourne Water in an effort to streamline their slashing runs (e.g. around rocks and trees with remnant grassland species).

### The Law: Assessment of the Key Legislative Tools

The following section addresses the Terms of Reference relating to legislative processes and government programs developed to protect and restore Victorian ecosystems.

***(b) the adequacy of the legislative framework protecting Victoria's environment, including grasslands, forests and the marine and coastal environment, and native species***

#### Legislative Framework

The legislative framework is ineffectual, often lacking teeth. For instance, the recent auditor general's report on critically endangered grasslands illustrates a particular failing where intent has not been met (VAGO 2020). This holds particular relevance for Darebin through habitat connectivity with the Northern Grassy Woodlands.

## ***Environment Protection, Biodiversity and Conservation Act 1999***

In early 2020 the Australian government opened the *Environment Protection, Biodiversity and Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) for its 10-year statutory review. In summary, the findings of the interim review stated that “*Australia’s natural environment and iconic places are in an overall state of decline and are under increasing threat. The current environmental trajectory is unsustainable*’. The EPBC Act in its current form is ineffective and requires fundamental reform.

## ***The Wildlife Act 1975***

***Darebin welcomes the Environment Minister’s call for a review of the Wildlife Act 1975, which is well overdue and inefficient at protecting Victoria’s wildlife.***

The 2016-2018 poisoning of 406 Wedge-tailed Eagles plus other protected fauna by an East Gippsland farmer resulted in the offender being jailed for 14 days and fined \$2,500 for a contravention of Victoria’s *Wildlife Act 1975*. The court was told the maximum penalty for killing so many eagles was more than \$350,000 or six months’ jail, according to the ABC (2020).

This case demonstrated a significant failure in the way this Act is implemented, particularly with regard to providing a suitable deterrent and environmental remediation for biodiversity-related offences. Requirements to prevent impacts upon native wildlife under this Act should also be embedded in permit requirements under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

## ***Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988***

- Lack of protection for state threatened species on private land.
- No fungi are listed as threatened nationally under the EPBC Act. Three fungi are listed under the FFG Act, although this Act has very few implications on private land. Nine fungi are included in the Advisory List of Rare or Threatened Plants (DSE 2014)
- Recent changes to Victoria’s native vegetation removal controls removed the need for targeted surveys to be carried out for rare and threatened species. Only species listed under the Federal EPBC Act need to be actively targeted in surveys for development sites. As a result, far less information is now being gathered on rare and threatened species, particularly in areas where biodiversity and ecosystem impacts from development are greatest.

## **Victorian Duck Hunting**

***We call for a ban on Victorian recreational duck hunting to end this barbaric practice that puts populations of both target and non-target wetland bird species at risk.*** The aerial survey of wetland birds in eastern Australia (Porter et al. 2019) has recorded a significant decline in water birds over a period of almost 40 years. Most game species abundances were well below long term averages, with six out of eight species continuing to show significant long-term declines.

- The Victorian Game Authority process for obtaining a license is flawed - weak criteria for obtaining a permit. Only 14 questions are required to be answered on test to receive a permit
- Failure to enforce hunting laws leads to shooting of non-target species (ABC 2018)
- Two target game species (Australasian Shoveler and Hardhead) are listed as Vulnerable on the Advisory list of threatened vertebrate fauna (DSE 2013)

- The use of lead shot in cartridges for the hunting of waterfowl has been listed as a potentially threatening process in Schedule 3 of *the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*.
- Cumulative pressure on survival of native waterfowl from recent droughts/ fires. In Gippsland, ash sediment from the recent catastrophic bushfires washed into many wetlands, altering the ecosystem.

### Regional Forestry Agreements

Logging practices under Regional Forest Agreements (RFA) have been poorly implemented with inadequate ecological surveys being undertaken to detect protected species or communities and hence determine buffers for logging. In addition, with the anticipated increased frequency and severity of bushfire with our changing climate, the broad exemption for emergency bushfire works without any consideration to threatened species exposes Australia to an increased risk of further species extinctions.

Logging operations in Victoria are exempt from the EPBC Act under the terms of the RFA despite being one of the key drivers of biodiversity loss. The recent Federal Court judgement against VicForests for breaches of its conservation regulations highlighted the need for this exemption to be addressed (FCA 2020). As referenced in the judgement the precautionary principle needs to be applied in regard to threatened species habitat. And found that “Not only do VicForests’ forestry operations damage or destroy existing habitat critical to the survival of the two species [Greater Glider and Leadbeater’s Possum], they also prevent new areas developing into such habitat in the future.”

***Darebin calls for an immediate end to logging in Melbourne’s water supply catchments and a moratorium on all logging with a view to mitigating these risks.***

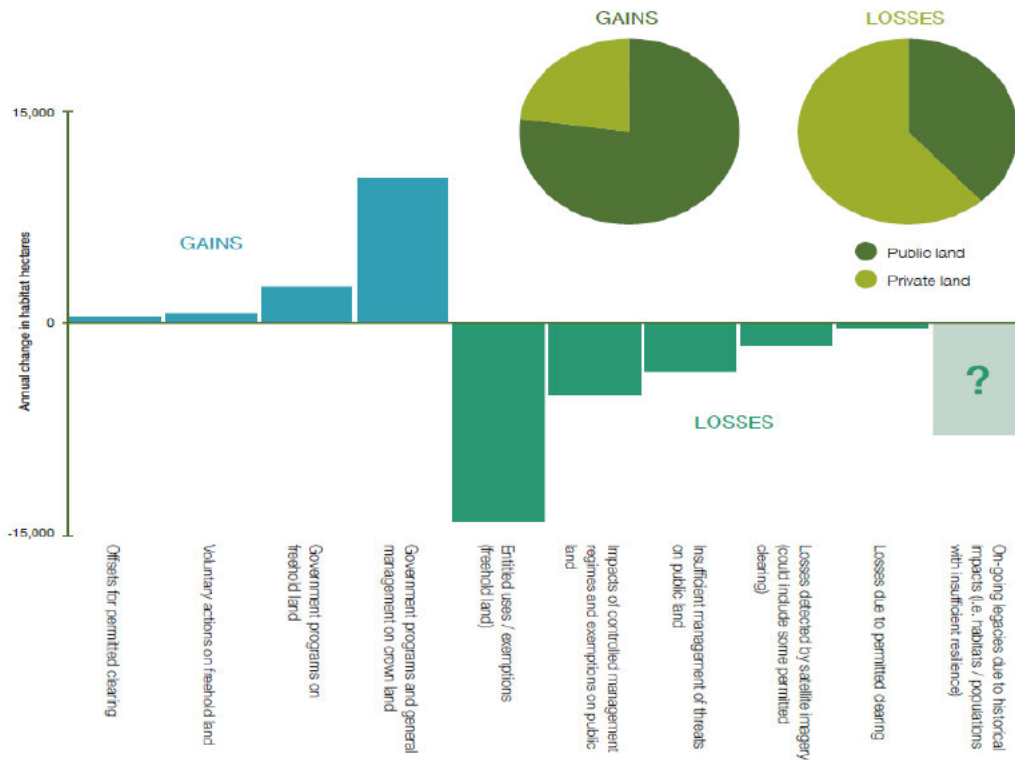
### The Problem with Offsetting Habitat Removal

Figure 1 below was presented in the Victorian Government’s Draft Biodiversity Strategy (DELWP 2016) and demonstrates the scale of habitat decline in Victoria. Its output is summarised below:

- The majority of habitat decline is on private land (which also has the highest percentage of threatened vegetation communities)
- The majority of ‘gains’ is occurring on public land (the majority of vegetation is ‘least concern’ see graph below)
- The highest amount of losses in native vegetation is in ***entitled uses/exemptions*** under Acts like the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*
- Losses due to permitted clearing (i.e offsets) make up the smallest amount of losses and gains in native vegetation in Victoria.
- The majority of losses in native vegetation in Victoria is the ***permanent removal of vegetation*** however the gains are predominantly ***management gains*** i.e. we are permanently losing vegetation and instead of replacing that with permanent protection or revegetation, the ‘gains’ being generated are temporary management gains - controlling for threats such as pest plants and animals. This means that the area of species habitat is going to continue to decline unless there is a fundamental change in the way that we account for losses and gains within the system.



Figure 2: Estimates of relative changes per year of native vegetation in Victoria (from Native Vegetation net gain accounting – see Chapter 8 ‘Better, smarter management of our biodiversity’ for further discussion)<sup>5</sup>



5. The gains described in Figure 2 are primarily gains under management not necessarily through permanent protection.

**Figure 1.** Estimates of relative change per year of native vegetation in Victoria (source: Figure 2 –Draft Biodiversity Strategy (DELWP 2016))

As specified in the draft biodiversity strategy “*The decline in habitats is occurring on both private and public land but, as shown in Figure 2, is significantly more pronounced on private land. When combined with the impact that legacy clearing has had in terms of creating fragmented and isolated landscapes, it becomes clear that solutions need to focus on the whole of the landscape and not just our parks and reserves.*”

The aim of the *Planning & Environment Act 1987* “*is to ensure that there is no net loss to biodiversity as a result of the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation.*”

However it is clear from Figure 1 that even the goal of no net loss cannot be achieved given the amount of clearing that is happening under permitted uses and exemptions under the Act.

***As a minimum, all clearing should be offset under the Guidelines for the removal, destruction and lopping of native vegetation (DELWP 2017a) with the aim to have a net gain (rather than no net loss) in biodiversity to compensate for all the historical habitat loss that has occurred.***

In addition, many of the exemptions apply to public land management and government agencies. The Government is arguably one of the biggest land clearers in the state.

***The Government needs to take a lead role in demonstrating that they are avoiding, minimising and as a last resort offsetting any removal of vegetation for Government projects or works.*** They also need to ensure adequate funding to bodies responsible for managing the natural environment and supporting landowners

to manage their land to ensure that the gains are realised – e.g. DELWP, Parks Vic, Trust for Nature.

**(c) the adequacy and effectiveness of government programs and funding protecting and restoring Victoria’s ecosystems**

**Government Programs and Funding to protect and restore ecosystems**

Threatened species programs – often funding programs provide short term benefit to threatened species. Once a program budget ends, an organisation with limited funds can find it difficult to continue momentum within the program.

Currently there is lack of adequate investment for real change. For example, The Biodiversity response fund is singularly focussed on control of pests and does not address actions for positive change, through the reinstatement of habitat.

There is significant opportunity and need for government to build capability, harness citizen science and move beyond traditional methods of monitoring and reporting.

**The Solution: tackle the Drivers of Biodiversity Loss**

**(d) legislative, policy, program, governance and funding solutions to facilitate ecosystem and species protection, restoration and recovery in Victoria, in the context of climate change impacts**

**Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999**

- The interim report from the review of the EPBC Act showed that Australia’s environment is in an unsustainable state of decline. Massive declines in biodiversity and increased human contact with wildlife increases the risk of dangerous viruses like Covid-19 spilling over from animals to humans (Vidal 2020). Therefore, urgent action is required to protect and enhance biodiversity to increase resilience against future pandemics.
- **We recommend that the changes recommended in the interim review to reverse ecosystem decline are adopted by the federal government and are not watered down under the guise of ‘post-Covid economic recovery’.**

**Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988**

- **Ensure that mandatory action statements are established for all threatened species within legislative timeframes, maintained in force and kept up to date for all listed species.** This will ensure that decisions affecting species and ecological communities are consistent with approved action statements and ecological advice.
- **Darebin Council welcomes and is committed to the new section 4B of the Act, all public authorities must now “give proper consideration to” the objectives of the Act, as well as Victoria’s Biodiversity Strategy, Action Statements and other determinations or plans under the Act.**

**Wildlife Act 1975**

A proposed review of the *Wildlife Act 1975* is welcome, and the community should have a say during this process. Recommendations to strengthen the protection of Victorian wildlife are:

- Stronger penalties for those guilty of offences under The Act

- Stronger protection for threatened species (e.g. remove threatened species from hunting/ culling lists)
- Stronger penalties for the removal of habitat under The Act
- Strengthen and enforce permit systems used to manage wildlife.

## Mitigating Habitat Loss and Damage

### Victorian Actions

- Immediate halt to logging remnant native forests - which are habitat for native wildlife
- Protect remnant grasslands - even small reserves by strengthening biodiversity regulations in the planning scheme
- Stop land clearing and destroying grasslands for animal agriculture
- Protect and restore Ramsar listed wetlands and the resident waterbirds
- Permanently Ban Duck Shooting – focus on the development of eco-tourism and promote culture/behaviour change through environmental advocacy and education programs.
- Develop, support and encourage biodiversity-sensitive agriculture; Invest in research & development to expand this industry, e.g. Regenerative Farming, Permaculture
- Encourage and support more sustainable agricultural practices.

***The state government should develop and implement legislative changes in health, planning, business and agriculture to create a fairer and more resilient food system for both Australian farmers and consumers.***

### Tax Incentives

- Tax incentives for private landholders to retain and restore native habitat and improve on farm productivity through regenerative agriculture.

### Offsetting System

- Offsetting to be used sparingly and only when there is no other option (supported by Federal Parliamentary Inquiry into environmental Offsets - Recommendation 4; and EPBC Act environmental offsets policy)
- Solution: Planning requirements: stronger regulations required that prohibit building on sites with biodiversity value

### Education and Advocacy

- Connecting people with nature provides holistic benefits for people and the environment. ***Building community's experience and appreciation of Victoria's flora and fauna fosters community advocacy for the protection and restoration of biodiversity.*** For individuals and community engaged with their local environment, it has enormous benefits for mental and physical wellbeing.

### Respect for Australian Wildlife and Nature

Exploitation, disregard & disrespect for Australian Wildlife and Nature is still an issue in Australia. ***Strengthen laws that protect Australian wildlife by ensuring all obligations under the EPBC Act and FFG Act are met.***

## Local Solutions for Darebin

### Funding and Resources

- Increased human resources in land management of native vegetation areas for restoration throughout Darebin. Including resources for research, monitoring, mapping and other supporting activities as well as on-ground support.

### Land Acquisition to support biodiversity conservation

- Reducing red tape for the acquisition of land, especially areas to expand creek corridor reserves, or patches remnant vegetation on private land. This must be tied to funds for management of the newly acquired land.

### Invasive Species

- Darebin's commitment to local laws that allow Darebin Council to compel people to control invasive weeds of significance such as blackberry on private land (especially adjoining native vegetation areas), or effective enforcement of state / federal laws to achieve the same outcome.

### ***(e) opportunities to restore Victoria's environment while upholding First Peoples' connection to country, and increasing and diversifying employment opportunities in Victoria***

- The Biodiversity 2037 strategy has a goal of 200,000 hectares of restored area (DELWP 2017b), but there are no measures in place to meet this target. A government fund to heal country and people could provide labour intensive employment that improves habitat, sequesters carbon and builds environmental and social resilience.
- Priority conservation and land management contracts for Traditional Owners and Indigenous groups and projects. For Darebin, this means building partnerships with the Wurundjeri Narrap team working on healing Country.

### ***(f) any other related matters.***

## Darebin's Commitment to Protecting Biodiversity

### Darebin Council Plan 2017-2021

Darebin Council's Plan 2017-2021 detailed the commitment to protecting the environment to reduce the impacts of climate change and have three Key Performance Indicators to achieve this goal. These are focused on an energy and water efficient city and reduction of waste, an increase of sustainable transport through safer streets for walking and cycling, and advocacy for public transport, and expand and improve our network of open and green spaces, parks and natural environments to provide the lungs for our city and reduce the impacts of climate change.

## Local Policy

### Key Policy - *Breathing Space – The Darebin Open Space Strategy 2019*

Darebin's Open Space strategy 2019 builds on the previous Open Space Strategy: 2007–2017, is driven by the overarching theme of responding to the climate emergency. It does this via three key directions: meeting community open space

needs, Rewilding Darebin: improving biodiversity and – Creating a Green Streets Network.

Other strategies that contribute to Darebin's commitment to ecosystem protection are as follows:

- Natural Heritage Strategy 2015-2025
- Integrated Weed Management Strategy 2019-2023
- Urban Forest Strategy 2013
- Urban Food Production Strategy 2014-2018
- Watershed: Towards a Water Sensitive Darebin Whole of Water Cycle Management Strategy 2015-2025
- Greenstreets Streetscape Strategy 2012-2020

## Advocacy and Engagement

### Darebin Nature Trust

The Council Plan 2017-21 set a specific goal to create an advisory committee, the Darebin Nature Trust. The Trust works with Council, community groups, other governments, authorities, private sector and other organisations ensure that green space provision parallels Darebin's growth and achieves best practice outcomes for our environment and growing community by improving Darebin's open space provision, protecting and enhancing local biodiversity.

### Biodiversity Officer

The Darebin Nature Trust recognised the need to address the plight of biodiversity in Darebin and campaigned for the engagement of a Biodiversity Officer with expertise to work with the Environment Team, Parks and Open Space to halt the decline in species loss and habitat reduction from the increasing intensification of development in Darebin.

## Programs

### Rewilding Darebin

The Rewilding Darebin project is led by the Parks and Open Space Team and is one of three key directions of *Breathing Space: The Darebin Open Space Strategy* (2019), alongside meeting community open space needs and creating a green streets network. Improving the quantity and quality of native vegetation through the Rewilding Darebin project creates more habitat for Darebin's local wildlife as well as better connections between patches of indigenous vegetation so that our wildlife can move freely and safely in healthy, native habitats.

The Rewilding Darebin project has also involved 39 redeployed Darebin Council staff who were displaced during the Covid-19 crisis. Together with Darebin's Bushland Management Team they have planted approximately 27,000 trees, grasses and groundcovers throughout Darebin's parks and reserves. The redeployment program has seen the rewilding project greatly accelerated, as well as keeping people employed, providing business to 13 individual nurseries and contributing to enriched biodiversity in our open spaces. This demonstrates Darebin's commitment to biodiversity action as a Covid-19 recovery action.

### Biodiversity Management Plan

A key objective of the *Open Space Strategy* (2019) is to develop and implement a Biodiversity Management Plan (BMP) for Darebin. The BMP aims to identify priority areas for protecting significant vegetation, restoring habitat corridors and determine ways to connect pockets of native vegetation across Darebin.



## Gardens for Wildlife

The Darebin Gardens for Wildlife pilot program recently launched, and is a partnership between Council, Darebin Nature Trust and community members to engage residents in creating habitat gardens for local wildlife. The free program will offer a garden visit and assessment to residents from trained volunteer garden guides. They will provide encouragement and guidance on how to provide habitat for wildlife through gardening on private property, schools and businesses, regardless of its size.

## Stakeholders

Darebin Council is committed to maintaining and strengthening its relationships with Darebin citizens, communities, organisations and agencies in order to achieve best possible environmental outcomes.

- Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung People of the Kulin Nation; the Traditional Owners of this land
- Not-for-Profits: Darebin Creek Management Committee (DCMC; est. 2001), Merri Creek Management Committee (MCMC; Est 1989) Darebin Parklands Association
- Community Groups: Friends of Darebin Creek (est. 1995), Friends of Merri Creek (est. 1988), Friends of Edgars Creek (est. 2010), Newlands Friends of the Forests (est. 2015).
- Darebin Nature Trust Advisory Committee
- Darebin's community actively supports biodiversity and the environment through advocacy and action.
- Friends of Darebin Creek (est. 1995), Friends of Merri Creek (est. 1988), Friends of Edgars Creek (est. 2010);
- Wild Darebin (local community group)

## Conclusion

The Victorian Legislative Assembly Environment and Planning Committee's 'Inquiry into Ecosystem Decline' is a welcomed opportunity for Darebin to advocate for stronger action from the Victorian Government to protect Victoria's biodiversity.

Failure to address biodiversity loss, ecosystem decline, and the extinction crisis will have detrimental outcomes for the economy, humanity, habitat and biodiversity. The overwhelming body of scientific evidence conclusively points to this and scientists have consistently warned that time is running out to act.

It is recognised that local governments have a key role in working with communities and other local stakeholders to mitigate impacts to biodiversity and the environment. Local governments have local knowledge and experience, understanding of community needs and vulnerabilities, and have a key role in shaping our urban landscapes and responding to emergencies. However local government cannot deliver the change that is required alone.

The Submission outlines the need for greater support and leadership from the Victorian Government to appropriately address ecosystem decline and work towards solutions to facilitate ecosystem and species protection, restoration and recovery in Victoria. Future ecosystem decline is anticipated to be a significant risk for economic development in Australia, and Darebin by contributing to the climate emergency and biodiversity loss, and detrimental to social and cultural wellbeing.

***Darebin Council recommends that the Victorian Government urgently strengthens the legislative and planning framework to protect and enhance Victoria's environment and ecosystems and strengthen the protection of biodiversity.***

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## Appendix I

## Threatened flora and fauna species recorded in Darebin Local Government Area (DELWP 2020)

Scientific Name	Common Name	Victorian Advisory List	FFG Act 1988	EPBC Act 1999	Count of Sightings	Last Record
<b>Threatened Species</b>						
<b>Fauna</b>						
<i>Hirundapus caudacutus</i>	White-throated Needletail	Vulnerable	Listed	Vulnerable	8	25/01/2019
<i>Pedionomus torquatus</i>	Plains-wanderer	Critically endangered	Listed	Critically Endangered	1	1/09/1972
<i>Anthochaera phrygia</i>	Regent Honeyeater	Critically endangered	Listed	Critically Endangered	7	16/01/2001
<i>Lathamus discolor</i>	Swift Parrot	Endangered	Listed	Critically Endangered	76	7/04/2019
<i>Macquaria australasica</i>	Macquarie Perch	Endangered	Listed	Endangered	3	1/01/1970
<i>Botaurus poiciloptilus</i>	Australasian Bittern	Endangered	Listed	Endangered	3	20/12/1986
<i>Galaxiella pusilla</i>	Dwarf Galaxias	Endangered	Listed	Vulnerable	5	9/10/2010
<i>Litoria raniformis</i>	Growling Grass Frog	Endangered	Listed	Vulnerable	21	21/01/2019
<i>Pteropus poliocephalus</i>	Grey-headed Flying-fox	Vulnerable	Listed	Vulnerable	10	31/03/2018
<i>Synoicus chinensis</i>	King Quail	Endangered	Listed		1	1/01/1970
<i>Burhinus grallarius</i>	Bush Stone-curlew	Endangered	Listed		3	14/01/2001
<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	Little Egret	Endangered	Listed		4	4/03/1991
<i>Ardea intermedia plumifera</i>	Plumed Egret	Endangered	Listed		35	14/03/2019
<i>Ixobrychus dubius</i>	Australian Little Bittern	Endangered	Listed		6	1/02/2003
<i>Stictonetta naevosa</i>	Freckled Duck	Endangered	Listed		1	14/04/2019
<i>Oxyura australis</i>	Blue-billed Duck	Endangered	Listed		14	12/11/2018
<i>Ninox connivens</i>	Barking Owl	Endangered	Listed		16	23/10/2001
<i>Tyto novaehollandiae</i>	Masked Owl	Endangered	Listed		2	8/11/2001
<i>Pseudophryne bibronii</i>	Brown Toadlet	Endangered	Listed		1	10/05/1987
<i>Geopelia cuneata</i>	Diamond Dove	Near threatened	Listed		1	21/03/2001
<i>Anseranas semipalmata</i>	Magpie Goose	Near threatened	Listed		1	8/01/2007

Scientific Name	Common Name	Victorian Advisory List	FFG Act 1988	EPBC Act 1999	Count of Sightings	Last Record
<i>Stagonopleura guttata</i>	Diamond Firetail	Near threatened	Listed		2	2/02/2001
<i>Hygrobia australasiae</i>	squeak beetle	Vulnerable	Listed		1	28/04/1925
<i>Porzana pusilla</i>	Baillon's Crake	Vulnerable	Listed		14	20/11/2018
<i>Accipiter novaehollandiae</i>	Grey Goshawk	Vulnerable	Listed		16	29/07/2018
<i>Falco subniger</i>	Black Falcon	Vulnerable	Listed		8	18/02/2018
<i>Ninox strenua</i>	Powerful Owl	Vulnerable	Listed		10	6/05/2019
<i>Lophochroa leadbeateri</i>	Major Mitchell's Cockatoo	Vulnerable	Listed		4	12/04/2008
<i>Chelodina longicollis</i>	Eastern Snake-necked Turtle	Data deficient			34	21/09/2017
<i>Macquaria ambigua</i>	Golden Perch	Near threatened			1	18/11/2004
<i>Dromaius novaehollandiae</i>	Emu	Near threatened			123	18/07/2019
<i>Phalacrocorax varius</i>	Pied Cormorant	Near threatened			21	28/01/2019
<i>Chlidonias hybrida</i>	Whiskered Tern	Near threatened			3	20/12/1986
<i>Gallinago hardwickii</i>	Latham's Snipe	Near threatened			13	11/02/2019
<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>	Glossy Ibis	Near threatened			2	17/05/2002
<i>Platalea regia</i>	Royal Spoonbill	Near threatened			24	7/04/2019
<i>Nycticorax caledonicus</i>	Nankeen Night-Heron	Near threatened			145	28/07/2019
<i>Ceyx azureus</i>	Azure Kingfisher	Near threatened			6	16/05/2002
<i>Chrysococcyx osculans</i>	Black-eared Cuckoo	Near threatened			3	20/12/1986
<i>Myotis macropus</i>	Southern Myotis	Near threatened			1	18/01/1993
<i>Larus pacificus</i>	Pacific Gull	Near threatened			3	15/03/2002
<i>Ornithorhynchus anatinus</i>	Platypus	Nominated			2	23/07/1956
<i>Emydura macquarii</i>	Murray River Turtle	Vulnerable			3	14/02/2013
<i>Spatula rhynchotis</i>	Australasian Shoveler	Vulnerable			7	4/04/2019
<i>Aythya australis</i>	Hardhead	Vulnerable			401	29/07/2019
<i>Biziura lobata</i>	Musk Duck	Vulnerable			4	5/12/2019
<i>Pseudemoia pagenstecheri</i>	Tussock Skink	Vulnerable			1	1/12/1976

Scientific Name	Common Name	Victorian Advisory List	FFG Act 1988	EPBC Act 1999	Count of Sightings	Last Record
<b>Flora</b>						
<i>Glycine latrobeana</i>	Clover Glycine	Vulnerable	Listed	Vulnerable	2	01/01/1853
<i>Dianella amoena</i>	Matted Flax-lily	Endangered	Listed	Endangered	164	17/01/2011
<i>Eucalyptus leucoxylon subsp. megalocarpa</i>	Large-fruit Yellow-gum	Endangered	Listed		1	1/09/2010
<i>Cullen tenax</i>	Tough Scurf-pea	Endangered	Listed		1	01/02/1853
<i>Botrychium australe</i>	Austral Moonwort	Vulnerable	Listed		2	01/01/1858
<i>Ardea alba</i>	Great Egret	Vulnerable	Listed		50	7/09/2003
<i>Eucalyptus X studleyensis</i>	Studley Park Gum	Endangered			6	1/09/2004
<i>Desmodium varians</i>	Slender Tick-trefoil	Poorly known			1	01/01/1853
<i>Poa labillardierei var. (Volcanic Plains)</i>	Basalt Tussock-grass	Poorly known			3	8/12/2010
<i>Sclerolaena muricata var. muricata</i>	Black Roly-poly	Poorly known			1	1/12/1986
<i>Convolvulus angustissimus subsp. omnigracilis</i>	Slender Bindweed	Poorly known			6	17/01/2011
<i>Picris barbarorum</i>	Plains Picris	Presumed extinct			2	24/10/2011
<i>Callitriche umbonata</i>	Winged Water-starwort	Rare			4	01/10/1852
<i>Eucalyptus yarraensis</i>	Yarra Gum	Rare			1	1/05/1984
<i>Acacia howittii</i>	Sticky Wattle	Rare			1	9/08/2002
<i>Melaleuca armillaris subsp. armillaris</i>	Giant Honey-myrtle	Rare			4	3/03/2011
<i>Prostanthera nivea var. nivea</i>	Snowy Mint-bush	Rare			2	1/01/2010
<i>Rhagodia parabolica</i>	Fragrant Saltbush	Rare			2	17/01/2011
<i>Goodia medicaginea</i>	Western Golden-tip	Rare			1	12/09/2002
<i>Nicotiana suaveolens</i>	Austral Tobacco	Rare			1	16/01/1885
<i>Tripogonella loliiformis</i>	Rye Beetle-grass	Rare			12	30/06/2010
<i>Eucalyptus sideroxylon subsp. sideroxylon</i>	Mugga	Rare			2	17/01/2011
<i>Plagiochasma rupestre</i>	Cliff Waxwort	Rare			1	02/09/1896
<i>Senecio glomeratus subsp. longifructus</i>	Annual Fireweed	Rare			2	10/01/2011
<i>Grevillea rosmarinifolia</i>	Rosemary Grevillea	Rare			4	21/07/2010

Scientific Name	Common Name	Victorian Advisory List	FFG Act 1988	EPBC Act 1999	Count of Sightings	Last Record
<i>Eucalyptus leucoxylon subsp. connata</i>	Melbourne Yellow-gum	Vulnerable			1	12/09/1998
<i>Corymbia maculata</i>	Spotted Gum	Vulnerable			7	1/12/2011
<i>Utricularia gibba</i>	Floating Bladderwort	Vulnerable			2	31/03/2005
<i>Geranium solanderi var. solanderi s.s.</i>	Austral Crane's-bill	Vulnerable			1	3/11/2010