

THANKS FOR BEING GOOD NEIGHBOURS TO OUR LITTLE AUSSIE BATTLERS

XXXX Council is thanking residents for their patience and tolerance over the flying-fox roosting season when more than XXXX known colonies flew in and set up camp in XXXX to 'breed and feed'.

Council's Environmental Officer XXX XXXX said communities were to be commended for leaving the endangered species alone to do their job while they were in the neighbourhood.

'We want to thank everyone who helped make these little creatures welcome,' he/she said.

'Most people are aware that these cute little flying-foxes are really doing it tough at the moment, which is why they are having to seek food and shelter so close to built-up areas.

'They really are amazing creatures and do an incredible job of propagating our forests – they play a critical role in pollinating and dispersing seeds in our bush and forests.'

The 'Little Aussie Battlers' campaign is an initiative of the Hunter Joint Organisation and the Councils of the Hunter and Central Coast Region created to boost understanding of the migratory habits of the flying-fox.

The campaign provides access to information on flying-fox species found locally, especially important for the grey-headed flying-fox, which is extremely susceptible to climatic changes and loss of habitat due to land clearing, and is now federally classed as 'Vulnerable to Extinction', with its national population declining by more than 30% in the past few years.

Despite their status as a protected native species, flying-foxes are rapidly losing their habitat to land clearing, and are susceptible to climatic changes – they can literally drop dead out of the trees if the temperature reaches more than 42 degrees – and the drought has exacerbated their plight.

It is believed there was a greater/smaller number of flying-foxes in the region than there were last year, with a number of large colonies reported in the XXXXXX LGA, mostly focused around the XXXX area.

'These are intelligent, social animals who live in large colonies made up of individuals and family groups, roost in trees during the day and set up their semi-permanent camps near food sources for birthing,' Mr/Ms XXXXX said. 'They work the night shift to leave their camps at dusk to feed in flowering or fruiting plants and trees, spreading these seeds up to a 50km stretch of land every night before heading back to camp to sleep through the day.

'Annually, they migrate to wherever their feed plants are flowering along the east coast, meaning local camp numbers fluctuate from season to season, year to year.

Council sincerely thanks communities and residents for their tolerance and neighbourly respect for the flying-fox.

For more information, visit <http://littleaussiebat.com.au>

Media: Council contact