

RESIDENTS URGED TO BE PATIENT DURING FLYING-FOX INFLUX

XXXXXXX Council is taking every step possible to ease the discomfort and distress being caused to residents by the large influx of flying-foxes into the area but urges people to exercise patience and tolerance by leaving them in peace to carry out their vital role in the survival of Australian forests.

It is believed more than XXXX flying-foxes have taken up residence in XXXX Park/Street.

Council is well aware of the frustration being experienced by those living in close proximity to the colony and understands the impact being felt by the community.

Unfortunately, Council is constrained with the action that can be taken because the majority of these flying-foxes are the grey-headed flying-fox which is a protected species under State and Federal law.

Flying-fox numbers are multiplying in the area because they are rapidly losing their habitat to land clearing, which is increasingly driving them to set up camps near or in towns in search of food and shelter during the breeding season. Additionally, they are extremely 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.

XXXXXXX Council Environmental Officer XXX XXXX said Council was doing everything possible to try and ease the impact of the flying-fox camps.

‘We are doing all we can to manage the situation according to our Flying-fox Camp Management Strategy which details what interventions we can undertake within the environmental protection laws set by the State and Federal governments,’ he/she said.

‘Council takes the distress this is causing residents seriously but the situation needs to be managed in a legally-supported way.

‘We urge residents who are being severely impacted to get in touch with us. There are some actions we can take that may assist residents manage the problem during this time.’

Meanwhile the community is reminded that flying-foxes are a protected species and any unauthorised attempt to disturb or kill them is illegal. Like all wild animals, flying-foxes carry some disease, but it is extremely rare for humans to be harmed in any way by their presence.

‘The Council sympathises with residents affected by large colonies of flying-foxes, but we urge people to be patient,’ Ms XXXXX said.

‘It’s a temporary situation that calls for some tolerance and understanding. Anyone with concerns or questions should contact us on XXXXXXXX’

Media: Council contact

BACKGROUND INFO

TIPS FOR LIVING WITH YOUR FLYING FOX NEIGHBOURS:

- Don't disturb them – they make more noise when stressed
- Do not directly handle a dead flying-fox – wear thick gloves, wrap it in a plastic bag and wash your hands
- Don't keep food and water for pets (particularly horses) under trees
- Cover your cars, washing and outdoor areas as droppings are pungent and corrosive
- Contact your local wildlife rescue group if you find an injured flying-fox
- Remove horses from paddocks where flying-foxes are roosting or feeding – RURAL COUNCILS ONLY

IN YOUR BACKYARD:

If you experience an individual or small group of flying-foxes feeding at night in your garden, this will likely occur until the tree has finished fruiting. If you do not want flying-foxes feeding in your backyard, remove the fruit manually or properly net the tree to make access for the flying-foxes difficult. There are simple, non-harmful deterrents which may be of assistance on your property, such as:

- Creating a visual/sound/smell barrier with fencing or hedges with plants that do not produce edible fruit or nectar-exuding flowers
- Planting a buffer of low vegetation such as shrubs, providing a screen between your yard and roosting /feeding trees
- Placing predator decoys (eg owls) or reflective/shiny deterrents (eg CDs or aluminium foil strips) on verandas or in trees
- Keeping food or habitat trees trimmed
- When landscaping, plant fruit or habitat trees away from your home (or don't use these plants at all).

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