

Large Forest Owls Project

Winter 2020 Newsletter

The Project

The Large Forest Owls Project was established in 2019 to connect and work with landholders across the Richmond-Clarence Lowlands to support three Vulnerable owl species: the Barking Owl (*Ninox connivens*), Masked Owl (*Tyto novaehollandiae*) and the Powerful Owl (*Ninox strenua*).



Welcome to the Large Forest Owls Project Newsletter

This newsletter is a way for everyone involved in the Large Forest Owls Project to stay in touch, keep up to date and hear about the project's milestones and achievements.

What have you been doing? If you'd like to feature your conservation efforts or a resource in our next newsletter contact the Large Forest Owls Project Coordinator, Pete Knock, at: pknock@nature.org.au

Updates

As we all know it has been a challenging six months with the extreme dry and fires affecting the majority of our property owners in degrees of intensity throughout spring and then heavy rainfall / flood conditions in summer.

The Project Coordinator Pete Knock has deployed the 8 song meter acoustic recorders that were lost to fire as well as the



ones removed prior to the fire front. Due to the fires data was lost from 3 units, from November through to Mid-January, before it was safe to access the sites again.

As most landholders have experienced that was only the beginning of the issues. Access has been very difficult post fire too, with many sites inaccessible due flooding, with soft soils and a large number of fallen trees across access trails. Since then, operations have also been slowed by the recent COVID-19 lockdowns, with the two workshops planned for delivery moved online, see below for details and to register.

The project's other ecologist, Dave Milledge, has also been doing plot work, assessing the impacts of the fires on hollow-bearing trees, a critical resource to arboreal mammals and other fauna that need hollows for shelter and breeding. All this and more will be discussed in the workshop series below.

Nest Box Program

In February, the Nature Conservation Council launched a crowd funded project to raise money for nest boxes for fire-affected wildlife. Thanks to many generous donations we have purchased an initial 150 boxes from Hollow Log Homes and have been busy climbing trees placing boxes on our participating landholder properties. All the aspects of the project thus far will be discussed in the workshop/video series.



Workshops

Community engagement and landholder support is a crucial part of protecting threatened species. As such, we ran the project launch in April last year and were planning to run two landholder workshops this coming autumn/winter. We were set to release the email invite when the lockdown of Coronavirus conditions started to bite and we had to scrap any group gatherings. Rather than abandon the events, we decided to turn the workshop presentations into a series of video resources to put online. We have been beavering away producing this video series over the last month and will be hosting an online forum on the 25th June where the team can discuss all aspects of the projects and answer any questions. We would like to encourage all property owners to participate.



Date: 25th June, 2020, 12-1:30pm

Where: Online

Registration: https://fop_online_workshop.eventbrite.com.au

Topics: Impacts of the recent fires on the landscape, results of acoustic monitoring, the nest box project, how to install and monitor nest boxes on your property, and what landholders can do to help.

Watch an introduction and trailer for the video series here: <https://vimeo.com/423936749>



All pictures were taken in the Large Forest Owls Project area

[Project Website](#)

Resources

- Learn strategies for managing land after a fire by downloading the Hotspots Fire Project fact sheet "*Managing Land Post-Fire*", <http://hotspotsfireproject.org.au/download/managing-land-post-fire.pdf>
- Download the Hotspots Fire Project's fact sheet '*Protecting Our Hollows*', which explains why hollows are a valuable resource and what you can do to help protect them: <http://hotspotsfireproject.org.au/fact-sheets>
- Information on the Song Meter equipment we are using for this project: https://www.wildlifeacoustics.com/products/song-meter-sm4?gclid=CjwKCAjwk93rBRBLEiwAcMapUXHa2UToYtg5Cl7x43pgxVBp70M6WNQzcg0HjLIHe-rllnCLI4p5GBoCw-UQAvD_BwE
- Learn about our project partner, the Hotspots Fire Project, at: <http://hotspotsfireproject.org.au/>

Invite your friends and neighbours to join the project!

[Expression of Interest Form](#)

Contacts

Pete Knock, Large Forest Owls Project Coordinator: 6649 0981 or 0457 091 988 or pknock@nature.org.au

Kevin Taylor, Large Forest Owls Ecologist: 6655 6539 or 0428 509 651 or ktaylor@nature.org.au

Kate McShea, NCC Healthy Ecosystems Program Coordinator: (02) 9516 0359 or kmcshea@nature.org.au

Project Partners



Nature Conservation Council
The voice for nature in NSW



NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE



SAVING OUR SPECIES



HOTSPOTS FIRE PROJECT

We would also like to acknowledge the Northern Rivers Fire and Biodiversity Consortium and Minyurnai Indigenous Protected Area for their continued involvement with this project.

This project has been supported by the New South Wales Government's Saving our Species program through the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment.