

# TWIN CREEKS CONSERVATION RESERVE

## FAUNA SURVEY OCTOBER 2021

### FRIENDS OF THE PORONGURUP RANGE



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**Survey dates:** October 29, 30, 31 and November 1, 2021. Starting time: 7am.

**Weather Conditions:** Cold spring days with rising night and day temperatures. Minimum from 1 - 8C, daytime rising to almost 20C. No rain at night, skies from fully overcast to clear blue. New moon on November 5. Opening traps was delayed by one day because of heavy rains so the survey was only for 4 days instead of our 'normal' 5 days.

**About the traps:** A total of 124 traps were opened on Thursday October 28. Unfortunately traplines 2, 7 and 8 they were inaccessible due to high ground water levels. Two cage traps were used near recent diggings in trapline area 4 and 5.

**Total hours:** 5 People were involved in the survey and a total of 70 hours spent during these 5 days.

#### **Findings:**

\*Vertebrates: We found one honey possum every day, one female, pregnant and three males of which one was caught two times. During the 4 days the day temperatures were getting higher and the soil dryer which resulted in finding more skinks and frogs later during the survey. No new species were encountered. The Black Gloved Wallaby has not been spotted during this survey, the last time was a year ago. Both cage traps stayed empty.

\*Invertebrates: On the first survey day, after the rains of the day before almost 500 earthworms were found and on the 4th day just about 20. As the survey progressed every morning we caught more spiders and beetles in the traps. The variety of critters found in the traps and the immediate bush is overwhelming, there are always new species and 'things'

we have never seen before which lead to shouts as: 'Holy Moly, look at this' when looking through the microscope. On iNaturalist there were many id discussions.

Surveying through pitfall traps is a lot of work and by now we are pretty sure what we will find in the traps. Surveying for invertebrates with a bug scoop however is easy and there are always new bugs to find. Bug scoping is also less stressful for the critters while being trapped in a pitfall for many hours can be very exhausting. So from now on we are thinking about using pitfall traps once a year and go 'bug scoping' 3 or 4 times in between.

The 'TCCR FAUNA COUNT OVERVIEW' sheet compares the results of this survey with surveys in the past.

**A big thank you** to the TEAM: Lucia Quearry, Garry Mulder, Loxley Fedec and Judith McKinnon and thank you Simon Judd, Amanda Keesing for the donation of a microscope, we love it! Images by Bo Janmaat



Burrowing ground beetle: Scaraphites, 25 mm long. These beetles live on and in the ground and are carnivorous. They are considered beneficial insects, effectively controlling many harmful pests.



We thought to have a 'Beutelius' moment when we found this specimen but it's a leaf-footed beetle: Agriopocoris froggatti or Wingless Coreid bug, a sap sucker on indigenous plants. 10mm.

A spider of the genus Rhomphaea, called stretched thief spider. These spiders use other spider's webs for their own use, often after killing the owner.





A Big-eyed-Bug of the genus *Stylogeocoris*. 4.5mm long. Not much information to be found about this bug. This species need a lot more studying.



A milky flower spider, *Zygometis xanthogaster*, from the crab spider family. Almost white with some markings on its back, here a light green cross.

A scorpion tailed spider *Arachnura higginsi*. A classic orb-weaver who builds large circular webs and catches prey during the night. These spiders can have long and slender extended abdomens.



An Aname of the family Wishbone spiders. The spider lays upside down and you can very well see the 4 book lungs (the 4 white spots on the abdomen's underside) that makes it a Myglamorph spider. They live in a burrow up to about 50cm in the ground.



A Featherleg Bug with 'Abba boots'. An unusual bug, small and living mostly on the ground feeding on ants. They have a special gland to attract and paralyse them. *Ptilocnemus distinctus*

A flat spider living under bark and rocks. This one is missing some legs. Not much known about this Family Trochanteriidae





A red velvet mite. We often find them but this time they were all hairy and much bigger than at previous surveys, 4mm.  
Superfamily Trombidoidea

One of the honey possums after feeding, back where it belongs. For the first time we found a female that was pregnant.



Australian Green Mantis. *Orthodera ministralis*. These mantids live in green vegetation, just sitting there and catching what passes by, mainly eating insects.

Genus *Diphucephala*, A Green Scarab Beetle often found in the flowers of flowering plants. Mostly metallic green with sometimes red and gold added.



*Ecnolagria aeneoviolaceae*, Tribe Lagriini.  
Looks like a weevil but it's a Long Jointed Bark beetle (it does not have a 'weevil snout') Interesting looking beetles, slow moving and non-carnivorous, often metallic coloured. We found many of them.



A beetle of the genus *Gonocephalum*, a true darkling beetle. A beetle living mostly on the ground living off decaying material, leaves, dead insects, and fungi. Many had fallen in the pitfall traps.