



IMAGE CREDIT: M MOREY

While flying foxes are listed as endangered in Victoria, several microbat species are also listed as threatened or endangered. Both species play an important role in helping to maintain our biodiversity.

Microbats (Insectivorous Bats)

Microbats play a critical role in maintaining healthy ecosystems through natural pest control. A single microbat can consume hundreds to thousands of insects, including mosquitoes, moths, beetles, and agricultural pests, in a single night. This helps reduce

crop damage, limits the spread of insect-borne diseases, and decreases the need for chemical pesticides. Microbats also contribute to ecosystem balance by regulating insect populations and supporting biodiversity within forests, wetlands, and agricultural landscapes.

Threats to Microbats:

- Roaming cats and other domestic animals.
- Sticky glue traps (are illegal in Victoria).
- Use of harmful chemicals in areas where they feed on insects.

Opportunities to co-exist:

- Turn outside lights off at night or use sensor lights that only come on for a short amount of time.
- Keep cats contained so micro bats can feed safely at nighttime.
- Remove any sticky glue traps and use a wildlife friendly method of pest control.

Flying Foxes (Fruit Bats)

Flying foxes are considered keystone pollinators and seed dispersers in Australian ecosystems. They travel long distances while feeding on nectar, pollen, fruits, and blossoms, facilitating the pollination of native trees such as eucalypts, melaleucas, and banksias. Through seed dispersal, flying foxes promote forest regeneration, enhance genetic diversity among plant populations, and support the recovery of degraded landscapes. Their ecological services are essential for maintaining healthy forests, sustaining wildlife habitats, and supporting ecosystem resilience to climate change.

Threats to Flying Foxes:

- Roaming cats, foxes and other domestic animals.
- Barbed wire fences.
- Fruit netting with holes too large they get caught in them.

Opportunities to co-exist:

- Change barbed wire fence top strand to a barbless style.
- Update fruit nets to ensure the aperture of the hole is less than 5mm.
- Avoid leaving nets on fruit trees for extended timeframes.



Overall Ecological Significance

Together, microbats and flying foxes provide invaluable ecosystem services by controlling pests, pollinating plants, dispersing seeds, and supporting biodiversity conservation. Their activities contribute to healthy forests, productive agricultural systems, and resilient natural environments, making them vital components of Australia's ecological heritage.