



THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

ANU Summer Stagwatching 2013

The Australian National University Summer Stagwatching program has now commenced. Friends of Leadbeater's Possum would like to invite our members to come along and experience the magical **Victorian Central Highlands Forest** as it is going to sleep...or in the case of our nocturnal forest dwelling wildlife...as it wakes up and comes to life!

Volunteers are needed to assist Professor David Lindenmayer and his researchers from the Australian National University (ANU) in monitoring wildlife activity around key Stag Trees that are situated throughout their study area in the giant **Mountain Ash** forests. By volunteering you will assist the ANU team in gathering important data for Australia's longest running forest monitoring program the "**Victorian Central Highlands Management Study**".

Participants in stagwatching will enjoy a rare opportunity to experience the forest and its nocturnal wildlife. These spectacular forests are dominated by three eucalypt species: **Mountain Ash** *Eucalyptus regnans*, **Alpine Ash** *Eucalyptus delegatensis* and **Shining Gum** *Eucalyptus nitens*. These three species characteristically develop hollows as they age, providing vital nesting sites for Victoria's arboreal species of mammals and birds.

What might you hear and see in the forest at night?

This is truly an experience you need to witness first hand. The sound of chorusing birds as the sun goes down, shortly followed by the sounds of the nocturnal forest animals as they stir and emerge from their burrows, hollows, dens and roosts preparing to set off on their nightly activities. These tall Mountain Ash forests support a diversity of nocturnal wildlife species which you may encounter, see or hear on the night... Greater Gliders, Yellow-bellied Gliders, Sugar Gliders, Feathertail Gliders, Ringtail Possums, Mountain Brushtail Possums, Eastern Pygmy Possums, Wombats, Wallabies, Antechinus, Sooty Owls, Powerful Owls, Nightjars, Australian Owlet-Nightjars, Tawny Frogmouths and possibly the almost elusive - the critically endangered Victorian Faunal Emblem **Leadbeater's Possum** *Gymnobelideus leadbeateri*.

WANT TO BE INVOLVED?

Casual Weeknights

If you are interested in participating in the casual weeknight stagwatching please forward your email address expressing your interest to Lachie McBurney Lachie_mcb@hotmail.com. Lachie will email details out to everyone on the list at the start of each week, detailing which nights stagwatching will be on.

Stagwatching Week

In addition to casual weeknights Professor Lindenmayer and his research team is conducting a "Stagwatch Week" running from the Monday 25th February – Friday 1st March 2013. They need as many volunteers as possible for the week, so if you are interested in being involved please forward an email to Lachie McBurney lachie_mcb@hotmail.com. Please type "**Expression of Interest in Stagwatching Week**" in the subject line - this will make it easier for Lachie to differentiate between the two events. Thank you.





MEETING POINTS

Meeting points for stagwatching are **Healesville Coles Car Park** (River Street End) Melway's Ref 270 C12 or **Yarra Junction Safeway Car Park** Melways Ref 288 E8. **Meeting Time** will be confirmed closer to the event. Carpooling in 4WD vehicles will take place from the meeting points out to the site. If anyone has a 4WD that they are prepared to use off road at night you may ask Lachie if you can follow the group in your vehicle.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Volunteers for these events are required to walk in and out of dense vegetation and/or burnt forest sites, sit under a large stag tree for up to an hour as the sun sets, then walk back out of the bush after dark. Your observations of any wildlife activities heard and/or seen in/on/or around your stag tree will be recorded by the ANU ecologist on the night. All training and instructions are provided on the night.

WHAT YOU NEED TO BRING

- ✓ Warm clothing – long sleeve top, long pants and thick socks (these will keep you warm and provide protection from scratching vegetation and biting insects).
- ✓ Sturdy footwear, preferably boots.
- ✓ A waterproof jacket in case of rain or light drizzle.
- ✓ A beanie and gloves for added warmth.
- ✓ A torch either hand held or a head torch (or both).
- ✓ Insect repellent is recommended.
- ✓ Something to sit on in the bush a chair/blanket/rug/foam mat.
- ✓ Water and snacks

ENQUIRIES

Rachael Cochrane
Friends of Leadbeater's Possum Inc.
Mobile: 0409 703 447
Email: wombat.rach@hotmail.com

Lachie McBurney – Senior Research Officer
Australian National University
Mobile: 0401 124 929
Email: lachie_mcb@hotmail.com

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Please notify Lachie McBurney on 0401 124 929 if you are late or can't attend on the night.

Stagwatching will be cancelled on **Total Fire Ban Days** or on days of **High Wind** or **Heavy Rain**. Please ensure you have provided us with your best contact details so you can be notified if the event has been cancelled.

For more information on volunteering or other ways to assist the ongoing survival of Victoria's critically endangered Faunal Emblem visit www.leadbeaters.org.au or email info@leadbeaters.org.au

