

Since European settlement on the Mornington Peninsula, natural vegetation and ecosystems that our fauna depend upon have been significantly altered.

Today remnant native vegetation is restricted to 18% of the peninsula. Several native fauna species are now locally extinct. Remaining native fauna populations are threatened by habitat fragmentation and loss of shelter and food resources.

Council encourages everyone to support the Mornington Peninsula and Western Port Biosphere Reserve by recognising and protecting native vegetation and animal habitats.

Living with Native Animals

- Retain areas of natural habitat and be fire safe on and around your property.

- Protect and expand existing habitat on your land by replanting disturbed areas with locally native plants. This may be done to increase the size of an existing patch or to link isolated patches with vegetation cover.

- Keep introduced grazing animals out of native vegetation. Consider fencing native vegetation in grazed areas.

- Keep cats indoor at night. Keep dogs on your land or on a leash when outside your property. Contact the Shire offices for information on off-leash areas.

- Retain wetlands, swamps and watercourses. Control stock access to these areas.

- Do not dump garden waste, rubbish, soil or pond / fish tank contents into bushland or waterways. Contact the Shire regarding waste disposal.

- Take home unwanted fishing line, tackle and bait bags.

- Do not feed native wildlife as it is likely to be detrimental to their health and may cause altered behavior patterns and aggression.

- Obtain advice before relocating possums. Contact an accredited pest control operator.

NOCTURNAL
Active during the night

DIURNAL
Active during the day

ARBOREAL
Spends all or most of the time in trees

TERRESTRIAL
Spends all or most of the time on the ground

AQUATIC
Principally inhabits fresh water

A selection of INDIGENOUS FAUNA found in the Mornington Peninsula Shire

COASTAL DUNES AND CLIFFS

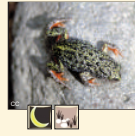
Coastal dunes and cliffs commonly occur along the ocean side of the peninsula with good examples at Gunnamatta and Cape Schanck.

Cliffs provide important shelter for certain fauna that would otherwise not be found on the peninsula.

Coastal dunes are sensitive to loss of vegetation and erosion.

Damage to these areas may be stopped by avoiding pedestrian, stock and vehicle access.

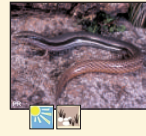
Dune animals readily dig for food and conceal eggs in the soft sandy soils.



Southern Toadlet
Pseudophryne semitorquata
Amphibian
Size to 3 cm
Diet various insects and spiders.
Shelters in damp areas under leaf litter. Make call in Autumn. Eggs are laid on land, the tadpoles hatching when flooding occurs.
WC



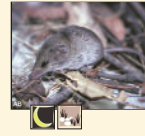
Common Blue-longeared Lizard
Tiliqua adelaidensis
Reptile (lizard)
Size to 50 cm
Diet various invertebrates, fungi, flowers, fruits and some dead animals.
Shelters in logs, existing burrows or under rocks. Active during warm nights.
MC



Bougainville's Skink
Lerista bougainvillei
Reptile (lizard)
Size to 15 cm
Diet mostly insects (their larvae) and spiders.
Prefers sandy soils and shelters under soil litter, fallen wood and rocks.
MU



Short-beaked Echidna
Tachyglossus aculeatus
Monotreme (egg laying mammal)
Size to 1 m
Diet ants and termites.
Prefers dryer environments where it can dig for food.
Shelters in logs or dense vegetation.
WC



White-footed Dunnart
Sminthopsis leucopus
Marsupial mammal
Size to 10 cm (minus tail)
Diet mostly invertebrates and some larvae.
Nests in or beneath fallen twigs or occasionally in a tree. Prefers areas of dense undergrowth.
MU



Common Ringtail Possum
Pseudocheirus peregrinus
Marsupial mammal
Size to 35 cm (minus tail)
Diet mostly leaves but also eats fruits and flowers.
Widespread. Rests in tree hollows or constructs a dry nest of shredded bark if hollows are sparse.
WA

Metallic Skink
Niveoscincus metallicus
Reptile (lizard)
Size to 2.5 cm
Diet insects and spiders.
Forages around rocks, leaf litter and plant tassels. Uses crevices in rotting wood for shelter.
WC



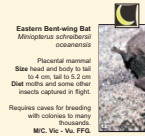
Common Scaly-foot
Pygopus scaber
Reptile (lizard)
Size to 37 cm
Diet mostly spiders, but also eats other invertebrates and fruits.
Climbs low vegetation when foraging for food. Spends much of the time on the ground in a variety of habitat types.
MC



Tree Dragon
Amphibolurus muricatus
Reptile (lizard)
Size to 37 cm
Diet various invertebrates, fruit and flowers.
Buries its eggs in sandy soils. Spends most of the time on the ground in a variety of habitat types.
MC



Eastern Beating-bat
Miniotropis acrobata
Placental mammal
Size head and body to tail 10.4 cm, tail to 2.2 cm
Diet moths and some other insects captured in flight.
Requires caves for hibernating with colonies to many thousands.
MC, Vic., Wa, PFG



Long-nosed Bandicoot
Perameles nasuta
Marsupial mammal
Size to 42 cm (minus tail)
Diet seeds and roots, also fungi and invertebrates.
Digs holes in search of food. Shelters in hollows or burrows.
RU



Agile Antechinus
Antechinus agilis
Marsupial mammal
Size to 11 cm (minus tail)
Diet mostly larger invertebrates and some small vertebrates.
Readily climbs trees in search of food. Shelters in hollows of fallen wood or in trees.
MC

SWAMPS AND WETLANDS

Wetlands and swamps are a component of most broader habitat types and characteristically contain grass-like sedges and rushes, as well as many other plants. Generally there are few trees. Other variations include areas with **Tree-reef (Mafafakal) thickets**.

Swamps have been considered wasteland in the past and as a consequence, were drained for development. Today **wetland swamps are considered essential for protecting biodiversity.**

They are negatively affected by an accumulation of nutrients and other pollutants from the surrounding landscape.

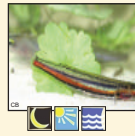
Swamps often dry out during periods of low rainfall but are replenished seasonally. Lower water levels in dryer periods reduce the impact on native fauna from exotic predators such as Carp.

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Dearf Galaxias
Galaxiella pusilla
Fish
Size to 3 cm
Diet a range of small invertebrates and plant material.
Occupies swampy areas, relying on surface vegetation in which to lay eggs.
MC, Vic., Wa, PFG, Nat., Va



Spotted Marsh Frog
Limnodynastes dorsalis
Amphibian
Size to 7 cm
Diet insects and some other invertebrates.
Found near permanent or seasonal water bodies. Requires still or slow moving water for breeding.
WC



Southern Bullfrog
Limnodynastes dorsalis
Amphibian
Size to 7 cm
Diet various invertebrates.
Burmung species. Mostly found around streams and ponds.
WC



Glossy Grass Skink
Pseudomolis australis
Reptile (lizard)
Size to 15.5 cm
Diet mostly insects and spiders. Some crustaceans.
Requires dense vegetation to forage in a number of habitat types containing wetlands.
RU, Vic., Va



Lowland Copperhead
Amphibolurus apertus
Reptile (snake)
Size to 150 cm
Diet mostly lizards and frogs but also other species, small mammals and bats.
Prefers low, cool environments. Shelters under wood, rocks and plant tassels, or in logs and discarded burrows.
WC



Swampy Rat
Rattus lutrologus
Placental mammal
Size to 20 cm (minus tail)
Diet roots and leaves of sedges, also grasses, large invertebrates and seeds.
Prefers vegetation dominated by sedges (Cyperaceae), in which it forms paths, nesting in logs or vegetation.
WC



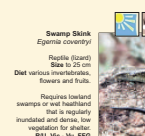
Common Froglet
Crinia agilis
Amphibian
Size to 3 cm
Diet mostly insects but also other invertebrates.
Inhabits streams and ponds in a number of habitat types.
WA



Growing Grass Frog
Litoria aurea
Amphibian
Size to 8 cm
Diet other frogs.
Requires permanent wetland areas in a range of habitat types. Shelters during the day under fallen wood and other objects on the ground.
MC, Vic., Wa, PFG, Nat., Va



Common Long-necked Turtle
Chelonia longicollis
Reptile (tortoise)
Size to 25 cm (shell)
Diet fish, invertebrates and tadpoles including some dead animals.
Inhabits swamps, ponds and slow moving streams. May travel over land in search of water.
WC



Swamp Skink
Egernia countryi
Reptile (lizard)
Size to 25 cm
Diet various invertebrates, flowers and fruits.
Requires shallow swamps and headlands that is regularly inundated and dense, low vegetation for shelter.
RU, Vic., Wa, PFG



Gould's Wattled Bat
Chalinorhina gouldi
Placental mammal
Size head and body to tail 25 cm, tail to 5 cm
Diet mostly moths but also other insects captured in flight, around vegetation and above water.
Requires hollows in large, living, old-growth trees.
LL



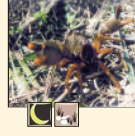
Black Wallaby
Macropus bicolor
Marsupial mammal
Size to 85 cm (minus tail)
Diet shrubs, ferns, large grasses and other herbs.
Requires dense vegetation for shelter during the day. May group during the night to feed otherwise solitary.
State of Victoria

RIPARIAN ZONES

Riparian zones comprise the area of vegetation immediately adjoining the waters edge. They are home to a large range of native fauna that rely on variation in habitat which riparian zones provide.

Riparian zones are negatively affected by:

- changes to stream flow by retaining or redirecting water.
- removal of vegetation.
- trampling of the riparian zone, especially by stock.
- pollution of water.
- unnatural erosion of streambanks or catchment areas and subsequent stream siltation.
- placement of in-stream barriers that restrict the movement of wildlife.
- removal of in-stream habitat structures such as tree branches.
- channeling of waterways.



Burrowing Cray
Euastacus sp.
Crustacean
Size to 35 cm
Diet various, mostly plant material and some meat.
Specialists in burrowing, adapted to swimming. Flashes surface, but most of its life down around the water table.
MC



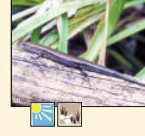
Spotted Galaxias
Galaxias truttae
Fish
Size to 20 cm
Diet mostly insects, other fish, some crustaceans and tadpoles.
Prefers slow flowing waterways where increased winter flows allow access to vegetation on inundated banks to lay eggs.
RU



Common Galaxias
Galaxias maculatus
Fish
Size to 20 cm
Diet mostly insects and tadpoles.
Moves into estuaries to spawn, relying on a high tide in order to lay eggs amidst inundated vegetation.
MC



Short-finned Eel
Anguilla australis
Fish
Size to 150 cm
Diet live or dead amphibia, fish (and other vertebrates) and various invertebrates.
Adults migrate to the Coral Sea near New Caledonia to spawn. Young return to inland streams to live most of their life. Can move over land.
MC



Delicate Skink
Lampropholis delicata
Reptile (lizard)
Size to 15.5 cm
Diet mostly insects (including tree larvae) and spiders.
Shelters under rocks, logs, in leaf litter and soil cracks. Forages in low vegetation and leaf litter.
MC



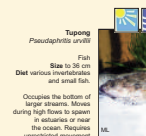
Koala
Phascolarctos ornatus
Marsupial mammal
Size to 82 cm
Diet leaves of some Eucalyptus.
Due to a limited diet, it consequently has a rather choice of habitat. Certain riparian eucalypts are favoured for food.
RU



Freshwater Cray
Euastacus sp.
Crustacean
Size to 35 cm
Diet various, mostly plant material and some meat.
Inhabits rivers, lakes, dams, streams and swamps where fringing tallies place on the bottom.
MC



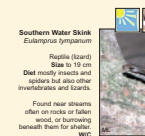
Southern Pygmy Peech
Nannoperca australis
Fish
Size to 7 cm
Diet various invertebrates, especially insect larvae.
Prefers slow flowing streams with abundant aquatic plants. Life cycle includes drifting from water to the bottom.
MC



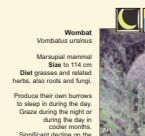
Tupong Pseudogobius
Pseudogobius olivaceus
Fish
Size to 10 cm
Diet various invertebrates and small fish.
Occupies the bottom of larger streams. Moves during high flows to spawn in situations or near the ocean. Requires unimpeded movement upstream for survival.
MC



Southern Brown Tree Frog
Litoria caerulea
Amphibian
Size to 8 cm
Diet mostly insects and spiders.
Requires open woodland vegetation and still water in which to lay eggs. Remarkable climber often venturing some distance from water.
WC



Southern Water Skink
Eulamprotes lymantrax
Reptile (lizard)
Size to 19 cm
Diet mostly insects and spiders but also other invertebrates and larvae.
Found near streams often on rocks or fallen wood, or burrowing beneath them for shelter.
WC



Wombat
Vombatulus ursinus
Marsupial mammal
Size to 114 cm
Diet grasses, other related herbs, also roots and fungi.
Produces their own burrows to sleep in during the day. Graze during the night or during the day in cooler months. Significant decline on the Mornington Peninsula.
MC

Want more information?

Mornington Peninsula Shire
Customer Service Centre
1300 850 600
www.mornpen.vic.gov.au

What to do with injured wildlife

- Contact your local veterinarian - injured wildlife may be treated by a vet in an emergency.
- Wildlife Victoria - a voluntary care service for injured or orphaned native wildlife. Ph. 13 000 94535
- Wildlife Help on the Mornington Peninsula (WHOMP) tel 17 260 857

Useful websites

- Australian Museum <http://australianmuseum.net.au/mammals>
- BirdLife Australia www.birdlife.org.au Ph. 9347 0757
- Department of Environment and Primary Industries www.dep.vic.gov.au Ph. 730 180
- Department of the Environment www.environment.gov.au/australiaindex.html
- Field Naturalists Club of Victoria <http://www.fcnc.org.au> Ph. 9377 9893
- Melbourne Water www.melbwater.com.au Ph. 131 722
- Mornington Peninsula and Western Port Biosphere Reserve www.biosphere.org.au/australia.htm Ph. 6070 2167
- Museum Victoria www.museumvictoria.com.au Ph. 131 102
- Parks Victoria www.parks.vic.gov.au Ph. 131 963
- R.S.P.C.A www.rspca.org.au Ph. 9224 2222
- Trust for Nature www.trustfornature.org.au Ph. 8631 5888
- The Victorian Frog Group Inc. <http://frogsgroup.org.au> Ph. 9742 3764

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