

Brush-tailed Phascogale Project Update



School talk

On the 23rd February I attended [Wyndham Central College](#), along with a few taxidermy specimens as props. I was giving a talk to students who will be involved in making the nest boxes. This took place in a room which is destined to become an environmental education room for the school, a project which has been championed by the teacher Allan Bernardi.



Photo: Allan Bernardi

More talk

During March I gave a presentation at the Glideways forum in Seymour on the phascogale project. This was organised by the [Central Victorian Biolinks Alliance](#) and was attended by many conservation and Landcare groups from central and north-eastern Victoria, as well as councils, Parks Vic and DELWP. Hopefully this initial get together will develop into a collaborative network for groups interested in helping our threatened gliders, possums and phascogales. I'll post a link to the forum proceedings when they become available.



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Nest boxes

All of the materials needed for nest box construction have been acquired. I've been making up a couple of test boxes using two materials, marine ply and expanded PVC (Celuka or PVC foam board). This has also allowed me to produce detailed panel cutting and assembly instructions for the school to use.

The schools will be making the nest boxes early in Term 2. Placing the nest boxes in the park will have to wait until after the fire season is declared over for the district.



Photo: Colin Cook



Photo: Colin Cook

One aim of the project is to monitor the nest boxes for occupancy.

To do this, we have acquired a [nest box inspection camera](#) which will allow us to take photos or videos inside the nest box without having to climb ladders. Less work for us and less invasion of the animals sleeping in the boxes. I've also been working on a mounting arm so that a camera trap can be set up to monitor the nest box entrance. I'll also be developing a set up to have a camera inside the nest box and we'll see which approach gives the best results for long term monitoring.

Website

As part of the plan to develop a collaborative network of groups and agencies involved with Brush-tailed Phascogales and nest boxes in general, we've set up a [team page](#) on the SWIFFT website for the project. Eventually we aim to have downloads and links for all things phascogale, as well as information on nest box construction and installation and regular updates on sightings.

Colin Cook

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