

SUGAR GLIDER FACTSHEET

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*New Montmorency Station entrance.
Artist impression only, subject to change.*

Sugar gliders (*Petaurus breviceps*) are small, possum-like nocturnal marsupials found in south-eastern Australia. Sugar gliders are a tree-living species with membranes called *patagia* extending from their forelegs to hindlegs. When their limbs are outstretched, they can parachute and glide from tree to tree, as far as 25 metres.

Sugar gliders live in woodland and open forest environments dominated by eucalyptus trees. Gliders measure 24–30 centimetres from nose to tail, weigh an average of 128 grams and live for nine years on average in the wild.

Helping sugar gliders in the Hurstbridge Line Duplication project area

Landscape Workshop Group

The Hurstbridge Line Duplication project team recently met with representatives from local interest groups to discuss sugar glider habitat connectivity and identify opportunities. The project team will use findings from those conversations to guide them on ways to help promote sugar glider connectivity in the project area.



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A sugar glider nest box in Montmorency.

Building nest boxes for local gliders

The project team is planning to work with local community groups to build nest boxes, with local kindergarten kids to paint them.

Diet

Sugar gliders are omnivorous and eat a wide range of foods including eucalyptus and acacia tree sap, nectar, pollen, insects and sometimes lizards and small birds.

Behaviour

Sugar gliders glide as a means of reaching food and evading predators, and hunt nightly in tree canopies. Sugar gliders nest within tree hollows, which they regularly prepare with fresh eucalyptus leaves shaped into a cup.

They also have a unique skill called 'torpor', where they slow their breathing and reduce their body temperature for up to weeks at a time. In torpor, the gliders wrap themselves into a ball as their body temperature drops, which helps them to

save energy and stay alive through colder months when less food is available.

Common sugar glider calls include a 'yip-yip!' sound when alerting of nearby danger and growl to defend their territories. They make chattering sounds when communicating with each other inside their nests.

About the Hurstbridge Line Duplication

The second stage of the Hurstbridge Line Duplication will deliver further improvements, including more train services, less crowding on peak trains and better connections to public transport in Melbourne's north east.

Works include building new modern stations at Greensborough and Montmorency, and duplicating the rail track between Greensborough and Montmorency and between Diamond Creek and Wattle Glen, to allow more trains to run more often.

This factsheet has been put together with the help from the following sources of information.



References

bushheritage.org.au/species/gliders

mrsc.vic.gov.au/files/assets/public/live-amp-work/environment/sugar-glider-fact-sheet.pdf

Endo, H; Yokokawa, K; Kurohmaru, M; Hiyashi, Y (1998). "Functional anatomy of gliding membrane muscles in the sugar glider (Petaurus breviceps)". Annals of Anatomy. 180 (1): 93-96

CONTACT US

contact@levelcrossings.vic.gov.au
1800 105 105
Level Crossing Removal Project
GPO Box 2392, Melbourne VIC 3001

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