



## Regent Honeyeater Project

The Regent Honeyeater project aims to:

- increase the population of several threatened species in the Lurg Hills particularly the Regent Honeyeater, Grey Crowned Babbler, Squirrel Glider and Brush-tailed Phascogale;
- protect and restore all significant remnants of Box/Ironbark habitat in the project area;
- boost ecosystem resilience in the face of climate change, through an active revegetation program and creating strategic habitat links;
- initiate educational opportunities for landholders, schools, universities and community volunteer groups, aiming to develop awareness, understanding, skills and commitment to threatened species habitat restoration; and
- encourage biological research projects, to quantify the flora and fauna benefits of the restoration work.



### Project snapshot

The Regent Honeyeater Project was established to improve the landscape and environment of the Lurg Hills near Benalla and provide a more secure future for a number of threatened bird and animal species.

Over the past 18 years, the project has:

- engaged with more than 140 landholders, 38 schools, plus community volunteers, university students, bushwalking clubs, cycling clubs, scouts, churches and other groups from the city (more than 28,000 volunteers in total);
- restored nearly 1400 hectares of habitat planted more than 525,000 seedlings planted on 490 sites;
- built 240 km of fencing; and
- placed 400 nesting boxes in trees.

Results include:

- a 250 per cent increase in the population of endangered Grey Crowned Babblers;
- Squirrel Gliders are living and breeding in 75 per cent of the nest boxes, and moving safely through planted corridors; and
- from only two sightings of dead specimens a decade ago, increasing numbers of Brush-tailed Phascogales have been recorded nesting in boxes.



Project co-ordinator Ray Thomas said activities aimed to address the ecological issues at their root causes.

“Specific actions include fencing and enlarging existing habitat; planting on highly productive sites to give high nectar flows; pruning heavy mistletoe infestations to save old growth trees; increasing plant diversity to improve habitat structure and restore ecological balances in the long term; and improving habitat connectivity at both the local and landscape level,” he said.

“Most of the habitat is on private land or roadsides, so we work primarily with landholders and local government.

“More than 98 per cent of the plants put in the ground are propagated in our own nursery with the help of thousands of volunteers, using seed we harvest from indigenous, and often, rare plants.”

The results of all this work are reaping rewards.

“Threatened woodland birds are moving into our planted areas and aggressive birds like Noisy Miners are losing ground to the shyer birds in the dense shelter we are providing,” Mr Thomas said.

For more information about the project, contact Regent Honeyeater Project Co-ordinator Ray Thomas on [ray@regenthoneyeater.org.au](mailto:ray@regenthoneyeater.org.au)



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