

GLIDER  
POSTERS  
SPECIAL  
SEE PAGE 45

# Australian gliders

Closely related to possums, Australian gliders are small, nocturnal, agile, forest-dwelling marsupials (*petaurus*, the genus name for four of the species, means 'rope dancer').

A fur-covered membrane (patagonium) reaching from 'wrist' to ankle allows animals to glide between trees. All our gliders depend on forests and hollows and are threatened by land clearing.

**LEARN MORE**  
Queensland Glider Network:  
[www.wildlife.org.au](http://www.wildlife.org.au)  
Nestbox factsheets:  
[www.tvwc.org](http://www.tvwc.org)  
Lindenmayer, David:  
*Gliders of Australia, a natural history*, UNSW Press, 2002



Photo © Steve Parrish Publishing

## Feathertail glider (*Acrobates pygmaeus*)

Body: 6.5-8cm; tail: 7-8cm; weight: 10-14g. Long, wispy, feather-like tail.



QLD, NSW, VIC, to se SA in cool temperate and tropical open and closed eucalypt forests from the coast to inland river redgum forests.

### SOME ESSENTIALS

Feeds on pollen, nectar and invertebrates; needs a variety of nectar-producing plants for year-round food supply. Can adapt to nestboxes if natural hollows are in short supply. May use more than one hollow.

### DID YOU KNOW?

Up to 30 may live together in one nesting group, although smaller numbers are more common.

### LEND A HAND

Because of their small size, feathertails are particularly susceptible to cat predation. Keep your moggy in at night.



Photo © Martin Willis

## Mahogany glider (*Petaurus gracilis*)

Body: 22-26cm; tail: 30-38cm; weight: 260-410g.



Restricted to one strip of coastal woodland, 12x100km, between Ingham and Tully in north Queensland.

### SOME ESSENTIALS

Feeds on eucalypt and grass tree (*Xanthorrhoea johnsonii*) sap, lichens, gum and green ant nests. Lives alone or in pairs; uses two to nine hollows. Endangered (EPBC).

### DID YOU KNOW?

Will bite a hole below a grass tree flower stalk, let it ooze a jelly-like substance – highly toxic to other animals – and return the following night to consume it.

### LEND A HAND

Lobby the government for more habitat protection and enforced land clearing bans. Encourage and support projects which implement the mahogany glider recovery plan (currently pending final approval).



Photo © Michael Smedley/michaelmedley.com

## Yellow-bellied glider (*Petaurus australis*)

Body: 27-32cm; tail: 43-48cm; weight: 450-470g. Call: Short shriek to gurgling rattle.



QLD, NSW, VIC in wet sclerophyll and tall open forest trees.

### SOME ESSENTIALS

Feeds on eucalypt sap, nectar, pollen and invertebrates found under tree bark. Very large home ranges. Males associate with up to three females and their young; family groups use up to 13 hollows. Vulnerable (EPBC).

### DID YOU KNOW?

Loudest of all marsupials. They feed from 30 different eucalypt food trees, chewing V-shapes into trunks for sap flows. Other glider species feed from these slashes as well.

### LEND A HAND

Help preserve existing old forests and plant new ones by joining or creating a conservation group.



Photo © Chris Pollitt

## Squirrel glider (*Petaurus norfolcensis*)

Body: 18-23cm; tail: 22-30cm; weight: 190-300g. Call: deep gurgle. Resembles sugar glider.



QLD, NSW, VIC in dry sclerophyll forests, coastal eucalypt, banksia forests and woodlands along the Great Dividing Range.

### SOME ESSENTIALS

Feeds on wattle and eucalyptus sap, invertebrates, pollen, golden wattle seed, manna and nectar. Nests in social groups up to nine; may use more than one hollow. Once widespread; now common in only a few locations in their northern range.

### DID YOU KNOW?

Named in 1792 in the incorrect belief that the species originated on Norfolk Island. The mahogany glider was considered a squirrel glider and only confirmed as a separate species in 1993.

### LEND A HAND

Help create corridors or extend territory by installing nestboxes in regrowth or newly planted forests near core habitat areas.



Photo © Chris Pollitt

## Sugar glider (*Petaurus breviceps*)

Body: 16-21cm; tail: 15-20cm; weight: 90-160g. Call: 'yap yap'. Tail sometimes white-tipped.



All states (introduced to Tasmania) and Papua New Guinea.

### SOME ESSENTIALS

Feeds on eucalyptus sap, wattle tree gums, pollen, nectar, and lots of invertebrates, especially beetles and moths. Up to 12 in social living groups; uses up to five hollows.

### DID YOU KNOW?

Only Australian glider also found naturally in Papua New Guinea. Popular pet in the US, with over 50,000 estimated.

### LEND A HAND

Join the Queensland Glider Network, a hub for glider conservation, research and information exchange, and share your passion for gliders with others.



Photo © www.ataglance.com.au

## Greater glider (*Petauroides volans*)

Body: 35-45cm; tail: 46-60cm; weight: 900-1700g. Mostly silent. Very long fluffy tail.



QLD, NSW, VIC in wet sclerophyll eucalypt forests and tall woodlands along the Great Dividing Range.

### SOME ESSENTIALS

Feeds on eucalyptus leaves, preferably young leaves from ribbon gum and narrow-leaved peppermint, and also buds, flowers and mistletoe. Usually solitary, though mated pairs and offspring share a den in mating season. Uses up to 18 hollows.

### DID YOU KNOW?

Largest of all gliders. Easy to spotlight due to brilliant white-yellow eye shine. Very loyal to their territory and, therefore, extremely difficult to relocate.

### LEND A HAND

Remove barbed wire fences wherever possible – they are a major threat to gliders and other wildlife ([www.wildlifefriendlyfencing.com](http://www.wildlifefriendlyfencing.com)).