

# Yellow-bellied Glider

## *Petaurus australis*



### Features and adaptations

- 1 Big eyes and ears to find their way in the dark
- 2 Call to family and friends over long distances using shrieks, growls and gurgles
- 3 Sharp claws and teeth for climbing trees and biting into bark
- 4 Special skin called a gliding membrane from wrists to ankles for gliding up to 150m
- 5 A shallow pouch where babies grow
- 6 Grey and yellow fur for camouflage in the treetops
- 7 Long bushy tail used to distract predators and to help balance

### Habitat

Yellow-bellied Gliders live in tall, wet forests across southern and eastern Victoria. These zippy marsupials shelter inside the hollows of old eucalypts. They are noisy neighbours and can be heard calling to each other in the dead of night. Each family group needs a lot of space in the treetops to spread out and find food. There aren't many connected patches of precious habitat like this left.



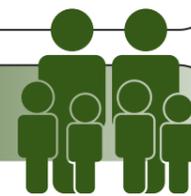
### Diet

These nocturnal marsupials glide from tree to tree in search of snacks. They are omnivores, which means they eat plants and animals. Yellow-bellied Gliders love sweet treats like nectar, honeydew and pollen. Their favourite sweet food is tree sap. They find sap by biting a V-shaped wedge into eucalypt trunks. Their protein comes from insects found up tree trunks and in the canopy.



### Life stages

Yellow-bellied Gliders love their families. They live in family groups of up to six animals. After breeding in spring, the mother grows babies in her pouch for about 100 days. When they leave the pouch, the babies live in a den for two or three months and both parents care for them. They mature after two years and find a mate. These gliders can live for six years.



### Threats

**ENDANGERED**

Logging and bushfires have destroyed many of the big, old trees with hollows that gliders feed and shelter in. These marsupials need to spread out to find mates, but there aren't many patches of connected wet forest with a mixture of eucalypt species of different ages left to provide gliders with food and a home. As climate change gets worse, bushfires will burn hotter, more often and out of season.

### Conservation

Protecting old trees and making sure healthy forests are connected is really important. It can take trees longer than 100 years to form hollows, so we need to protect aging forests from fire, development and logging. Victorian scientists are working together to make protection plans for animals that need connected forests to thrive. They are even trying new experiments, like gliding posts to help animals cross busy roads!

