

## Staying safe around flying-foxes

Like all wildlife, flying-foxes can be natural hosts to diseases that may be transmitted to humans.

Australian Bat Lyssavirus infection is a rare but serious disease. It is transmitted to people from infected bats through bites, scratches or contact with saliva to broken skin, the eyes, nose or mouth. Exposure to blood, urine or droppings is not known to transmit infection.

If you are bitten or scratched or exposed to bat saliva, wash the wound thoroughly, apply an antiseptic and get medical help immediately. Learn more at the [Better Health Channel](#).



If your pet has come in contact with a flying-fox, contact your local vet or call the Emergency Animal Disease Watch Hotline on 1800 675 888.

## Sick or Injured flying-foxes

Flying-foxes can be harmed in non-compliant fruit netting, or on barbed wire or powerlines.

Never touch or handle flying-foxes.

Always call a trained wildlife rescuer to assist. Find a local contact by calling 136 186 or scan the QR code to use the [Help for Injured Wildlife Tool](#).



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# Living with Wildlife

# Flying-foxes

## Australia's largest fruit bats, Grey-headed Flying-foxes help care for our forests

You may have spotted flying-foxes roosting in your local park, seen them fly out at dusk, or heard their unique calls as they feed in your backyard.

Grey-headed Flying-foxes eat nectar, pollen, blossoms and fruit from a wide range of native and exotic trees. They usually feed on native eucalypt flowers and often forage in our towns and cities.

Grey-headed Flying-foxes are long-distance travellers. They move around their range in eastern Australia to find food, and can travel over 100 km each night!

Known as 'night-time gardeners', flying-foxes have an important environmental role. They keep forests healthy by pollinating flowering trees and dispersing seeds over huge areas.

Grey-headed Flying-foxes can gather in large numbers in urban parks and gardens, especially during big flowering events in native forests. But they are actually a threatened species, mostly due to habitat destruction.



### Did you know?

**Female flying-foxes carry their young pups when they fly out at night.**

**Larger pups are left safe at the camp overnight, where their mothers find them again in the morning.**

### What can I do?

**Admire flying-foxes from a distance and try not to disturb them. Remember they are protected wildlife and penalties may apply.**

**Flying-foxes are vulnerable to extreme heat. Give them extra space on hot days.**

**For more information on flying-foxes and how to live with them, call 136 186 or visit [www.wildlife.vic.gov.au/flying-foxes](http://www.wildlife.vic.gov.au/flying-foxes).**

## Around the home and garden

Flying-foxes may visit your garden for a short time while trees are fruiting or flowering. You can:

- park cars undercover
- bring washing in at dusk to avoid droppings
- remove droppings regularly, avoiding direct contact. Wear a mask and gloves and wash hands afterwards
- keep pets and their food and water away from trees where flying-foxes are feeding or roosting.

## Protecting fruit trees

Flying-foxes may feed on fruit trees in your backyard, and can be harmed if fruit netting is used incorrectly.

Use wildlife-friendly netting to protect fruit. Wildlife-friendly mesh bags or nets can protect branches or bunches of fruit rather than the full tree.

Non-compliant netting is illegal in Victoria. Use the QR code to find out more.



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