

Sugar Glider Project

Nesting boxes for sugar gliders

Three years ago, after being told that there were signs of sugar gliders on his property, Jean-Pierre Favre built 3 nesting boxes and placed them high up on trees along Black Joe's creek, which runs past his property on Newington Road, Bywong. It took only a few weeks for sugar gliders to colonise one of the boxes.



In December 2000 he placed another box on a tree on the property of his neighbours, Guy and Morag Cotsell, about 300 metres away from his own boxes. Again, it only took a few weeks for gliders to settle in the box.

Natural Heritage Trust

Following his success, Jean-Pierre proposed to the Bywong Community Association that we should lodge an application to the Natural Heritage Trust of Australia for funding to build a 2km long corridor of sugar glider nesting boxes along Newington Road, complete with the planting of suitable trees to encourage these animals to settle and multiply along Newington Road. The Association supported the proposal and an application for \$5400 to build 40 boxes (approx. 2 per block along the road) was sent to the Natural Heritage Trust. The intention was to install these high up on trees and supply each resident with a number of suitable trees and shrubs to plant near the boxes to encourage gliders to settle there.

Building boxes starts in earnest

The application was approved and Jean-Pierre has built 52 boxes over a period of 3 weeks in August/September 2001.



About the boxes

Each box is made of an inner core of 18mm thick craftwood covered with 25mm of foam insulation and an outer skin of 15mm timber to provide an overall wall thickness of 60mm. The idea is to emulate the kind of insulation that hollows in old gum trees used to provide. Tree hollows suitable for sugar gliders take well over 100 years to form and most of these trees together with the habitat they formed have been removed from our area. What we're doing is to recreate the kind of conditions that existed before Captain Cook came to Australia.

If properly installed, and providing they don't get destroyed in a bushfire or the tree on which they are mounted falls over, the boxes should last for at least 50 years.