What are their main threats?

- Loss and destruction of habitat
- Tree removal in urban areas
- Absence of wildlife corridors. Gliders can follow the different flowering of tree species and they are particularly vulnerable when trees are removed.
- Fires are potential cause of death and may also affect food resources
- Cat attacks are a major threat (recent Australian Museum specimens have all gliders killed by cats)
- Dog and Fox attacks
- Road casualties

Living with Squirrel Gliders- What you can do to help?

- Keep your cats and dogs in from dusk to late morning, as this is when Gliders are most active.
- Plant local Squirrel Glider food trees and shrubs, such as Banksias, Acacias, and Eucalypts and Corymbias.
- Leave old dead trees with hollow branches where possible as potential nesting places. Note: Dead Gum trees are protected in the Pittwater area. However, if they pose a threat erect a man-made nesting hollow.

- Take a close look before lopping dead trees or limbs, you may be destroying a Squirrel Glider’s home. If unsure, get a wildlife carer on-site to help.
- If you encounter an injured Glider wrap it in a towel and place in a box to keep it calm in a quiet dark place. It will be frightened. Contact your local wildlife carers WIRES on 8977 3333, or Sydney Wildlife on 9413 4300. If you find a dead Glider, please report it to Council and take a photo if possible.
- Participate in local bush regeneration groups to help restore Squirrel Glider habitat.

To find out more about:

- Creating wildlife friendly gardens
- nest boxes and cat-runs
- native animals dependent on hollow bearing trees
- wildlife corridors
- other threatened wildlife
- how to join a bushcare group
- Events page for upcoming events such as spotlighting and guided bushwalks

Please see council’s website http://www.pittwater.nsw.gov.au
Follow the links under: environment
SQUIRREL GLIDERS: ensuring their survival as part of Pittwater’s biodiversity

Status

The Squirrel Glider is a Vulnerable Species in New South Wales and listed as an ENDANGERED POPULATION on the Barrenjoey Peninsula under the Threatened Species Conservation Act (1995).

What do Squirrel Gliders look like?

The Squirrel Glider is a medium-sized marsupial, which is similar in appearance and gliding ability to its more common relative, the Sugar Glider (Petaurus breviceps). Squirrel Glider’s possess a distinct dark stripe running down between its eyes to its back. It has a soft and bushy tail, and its fur is blue-grey to brown-grey with a white belly. While its body may be around 20 cm in length, its tail can be even longer - an average of 27 cm!

What makes Squirrel Gliders Unique?

When you first spot one of these cute, bushy-tailed Gliders it may be tough to distinguish between the Squirrel and Sugar Gliders. Both occupy similar habitats, and are often recorded together, however, an adult Squirrel Glider is larger in size and has more distinct facial markings than those of the Sugar Glider.

The Squirrel Glider is highly agile and is an expert tree climber. It has a special membrane between its front and back legs which spreads like a parachute when it leaps from the highest branches. Their bushy tails work like a rudder to guide their descent and they can easily navigate thick tree trunks, branches and twigs. The Squirrel Glider can reach up to 50 metres in one single leap!

What do they eat?

Squirrel Gliders enjoy variety! They choose habitats with a diverse range of trees and shrubs that will flower, or provide nectar, across the seasons. It is believed that some Squirrel Gliders will travel long distances to get the variety they need in their diet.

In Pittwater, the following have been identified as important food sources for Squirrel Gliders on the Barrenjoey Peninsula:

- Winter flowering Coast Banksia (Banksia integrifolia)
- Autumn flowering Red Bloodwood (Corymbia gummifera)
- Spotted Gum (Corymbia maculata)
- Grey Ironbark (Eucalyptus paniculata)
- Summer flowering Old Man Banksia (Banksia serrata)
- Sydney Red Gum (Angophora costata)

Squirrel Gliders diet includes:

- Nectar
- Sap (to feed on sap, gliders will gouge and lick incisions on the trunks and main branches of eucalyptus, corymbia and angophora trees)
- Gum from acacia trees, and honeydew (sugary secretions of sap-sucking insects)
- They will also eat protein-rich foods such as beetles, caterpillars and pollen.

Where do they live?

Squirrel Gliders are strictly nocturnal and live in the trees of dry Eucalypt forest and woodlands. Squirrel gliders require trees which develop hollows for use as refuge and nesting sites. Hollows in dead and live trees are used, preferably with tight-fitting entrances to stop any large animals from entering.
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