

# SQUIRREL GLIDER LAMP PROJECT: SHINING A LIGHT ON BURRUMBUTTOCK LANDHOLDERS



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and Hailey Pitman  
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## *Creative Catchment Kids*

Creative Catchment Kids is an initiative of Wirraminna Environmental Education Centre. It aims to improve engagement between our funding partners and school students by providing opportunities for positive and authentic ventures that encourage students to develop creative solutions to agriculture and natural resource management issues.

**[www.wirraminna.org/creative-catchment-kids/](http://www.wirraminna.org/creative-catchment-kids/)**

## *Wirraminna Environmental Education Centre*

The Wirraminna Environmental Education Centre is located in Burrumbuttock, north of Albury in southern NSW. Since 1995, the centre, which is adjacent to Burrumbuttock Public School, has provided opportunities for discovery and learning about the natural environment, the ecology of the local woodlands and the beauty of native plants.

**[www.wirraminna.org](http://www.wirraminna.org)**

## *Enviro-Stories*

Enviro-Stories is an innovative literacy education program that inspires learning about natural resource and catchment management issues. Developed by PeeKdesigns, this program provides students with an opportunity to publish their own stories that have been written for other kids to support learning about their local area.

**[www.envirostories.com.au](http://www.envirostories.com.au)**

# SQUIRREL GLIDER LAMP PROJECT: SHINING A LIGHT ON BURRUMBUKTOCK LANDHOLDERS

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**Photography:** All images by Manifeasto  
Photography unless otherwise credited



In 2016, Burrumbuttock Public School students involved in the Creative Catchment Kids program chronicled the involvement of local landholders involved in the Squirrel Glider Local Area Management Plan (LAMP) project. Creative Catchment Kids and the Squirrel Glider LAMP project are supported by Murray Local Land Services through funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme. The LAMP project is a partnership between Petaurus Education Group, NSW Office of Environment and Heritage, West Hume Landcare and Greater Hume Shire.

Creative Catchment Kids is part of Enviro-Stories, a PeeKdesigns education program.



Local Land  
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# INTRODUCTION

The Squirrel Glider (*Petaurus norfolcensis*) belongs to the possum family, which has 26 species. They are commonly mistaken for the Sugar Glider. However Squirrel Gliders are smaller and the fur on their belly is greyish rather than white-cream. They grow to about 20cm in length, plus a 27cm fluffy black tipped tail. They have a gliding membrane which runs between their forepaw and ankle. They can glide up to one hundred metres, though distances of thirty metres are more typical.

Squirrel Gliders are found in Eastern Australia, and are listed as vulnerable on the New South Wales (NSW) *Threatened Species Conservation Act* (TSC Act). The LAMP project is helping this iconic native species in Burrumbuttock, NSW. LAMP is short for Local Area Management Plan. It is a map that shows what on-ground works need to be done in the area to ensure the viability of the local Squirrel Glider population.



Credit: Murray Local Land Services



The LAMP project is about landholders, community groups and government agencies working together to monitor and connect habitat for Squirrel Gliders.

Year six students (Darcy Norris, Ethan Hunt and Hailey Pitman) from Burrumbuttock Public School, interviewed local landholders about why they got involved with the LAMP project and what they are doing to help Squirrel Gliders. These landholders are all part of the Stoney Park area (within the red circle on the above map). In the future, further work to help Squirrel Gliders will be undertaken throughout a 10km radius of the town of Burrumbuttock.

This book celebrates landholder contributions to Squirrel Glider conservation in the Burrumbuttock area.

# ASHLEY AND KEN LINDNER

Ashley and Ken Lindner are mixed farmers, which means they grow crops and raise livestock.

## **Why do you think Squirrel Gliders are important?**

Squirrel Gliders are important because they are native to Australia. They are a part of the food chain and have a role to play in nature. They are also important because they eat the bugs off canola and other crops.

## **How do you feel about helping Squirrel Gliders?**

I feel very happy that I am helping conserve a native animal. I don't want them to become extinct. I didn't know a lot about Squirrel Gliders before joining the project, but now I know you need old trees and I also know how far they can glide and what they like to eat.

## **How does the LAMP project help Squirrel Gliders?**

The LAMP project tries to link up the habitat for Squirrel Gliders and to make long strips of trees to create safer areas. On our property we are planting trees to create corridors of trees.





One of the areas where tree corridors are being planted on the Lindner's property.



### **A SQUIRRELY FACT**

#### **How far can a Squirrel Glider glide?**

Typically 30-50 metres but they can glide up to 100 metres. To see footage of a gliding Squirrel Glider, go to:

[www.wirraminna.org/lamp-for-threatened-squirrel-glider/](http://www.wirraminna.org/lamp-for-threatened-squirrel-glider/)

# ROB WEIDNER

Rob Weidner is a beef cattle farmer.

## **Do you think paddock trees are important?**

Paddock trees are important to Squirrel Gliders so that they have shelter and food. I really like trees and have some paddock trees on my property.

## **Why are you involved in the LAMP project?**

It was so easy to be a part of the project – the contractors did the work and I got free, quality fencing. It is also a good feeling helping native animals by planting tree corridors.

## **Do you do anything else to help Squirrel Gliders?**

Squirrel Gliders are active at night. I chain my dog up overnight so it can't eat them.







*Shrubs will be direct seeded here.*



Credit: Kelly Coleman

**A SQUIRRELY FACT**

**What do Squirrel Gliders eat?**

Wattle gum (left), eucalypt sap, bugs, nectar, pollen, honey dew and manna, a white sweet substance that oozes from plants that have been attacked by insects.

# SUE SAUNDERS

Sue Saunders has a small property with some cattle.

## **How do you feel about helping Squirrel Gliders?**

It makes me feel good because we are making homes for a native animal that is threatened.

## **What are you doing on your property to help Squirrel Gliders?**

We are connecting habitat by planting trees in corridors and that gives protection to Squirrel Gliders. Once the trees have grown, the Squirrel Gliders can travel between habitats without going on the ground. This will help keep them safe from predators.

We also have some trees planted that are protected by tree guards. These will become future paddock trees for Squirrel Gliders moving between habitats.

## **What do you like about the LAMP project?**

It is a very easy program for a landholder to be involved in and it helps Squirrel Gliders. It has been good to learn more information about Squirrel Gliders too.





Site ready for planting.



Credit: Andrew Cooke

### **A SQUIRRELY FACT**

#### **What are the Squirrel Gliders predators?**

Introduced predators are foxes, cats and dogs. Native predators are owls and goannas.

# RICHARD AND JANNY MOLESWORTH

Richard and Janny Molesworth farm sheep and grow crops.

## **Have you seen a Squirrel Glider?**

Not yet but scientists have found one in the trees along our driveway.

## **What do you like about the LAMP project?**

The project is good because everyone is working together. We like helping animals and it's nice to know Squirrel Gliders are around. We didn't know much about Squirrel Gliders before this project but know lots more now. We have encouraged other people to get involved because the project is beneficial to Squirrel Gliders and the landholders.





Credit: Scott Fagg

### ***A SQUIRRELY FACT***

**Other than predators, what are some of the threats to Squirrel Gliders?**

Barbed wire fencing that Squirrel Gliders can get caught on, being run over by cars and trucks and lack of suitable habitat, including the loss of hollow-bearing trees.

# KEIRAN AND LOUISE KEENAN

Keiran and Louise Keenan farm cattle and goats.

## **Why do you think helping Squirrel Gliders is important?**

If you have habitat suitable for Squirrel Gliders you will be helping a whole range of other animals as well.

## **What do you do on your property to help Squirrel Gliders?**

We have planted trees and made nesting boxes for them to live in.

## **What did you like most about the LAMP project?**

The project is easy and no cost to the landholder. The organisations involved did the work and it's saving native animals. I'm happy about helping Squirrel Gliders and have a sense of pride. I can already see changes in the landscape even at this stage. I recommend other landholders get involved in this project as it will improve your farm by creating a wind break and it looks great.





Credit: Peter Merritt

### ***A SQUIRRELY FACT***

#### **Why are hollow-bearing trees important?**

Squirrel Gliders need hollow bearing trees to nest in. Old hollow bearing trees usually flower more and are more likely to have rotting wood and peeling bark where insects (Squirrel Glider food) can be found.

# SUE HOLDSWORTH

Sue Holdsworth has a stud Hereford farm.

## **Why do you think it is important to help Squirrel Gliders?**

It is important to help Squirrel Gliders because there are not a lot left so we want to increase the population. Otherwise they will die out, like so many other animals.

## **What does the LAMP project do to help Squirrel Gliders?**

The LAMP project provides funding to fence off areas, plant trees and connect trees planted in the past. It was easy for me to be involved in the project as I didn't have to do anything except provide the land. I was happy to help and wanted to fence off my dam anyway. I'm sure with all this help Squirrel Gliders will now multiply.







Credit: Mark Doyle

### ***A SQUIRRELY FACT***

#### **How can you spot a Squirrel Glider?**

A good way to spot a Squirrel Glider is by 'stagwatching'. This is where you sit quietly under a hollow-bearing tree or a stag (a standing dead tree) just before dusk and wait for Squirrel Gliders to emerge.

# RON HEALY

Ron Healy farms horses called Walers. This breed of horse were used in the Light Horse Brigade in World War One.

## **Do you have paddock trees on your property?**

I have about half a dozen paddock trees on my property. I haven't found any Squirrel Gliders yet but lots of birds use them.

## **What do you do on your property to help Squirrel Gliders?**

On my property we have planted trees and fenced them off to protect them from the horses. They will provide habitat so Squirrel Gliders can safely spread out. I feel great about helping Squirrel Gliders, I would do it for any native animal.

## **What would you tell another landholder thinking about being involved in the LAMP project?**

I strongly encourage other landholders to be involved. It improves the aesthetics and quality of land and increases property value.





*Connecting old trees with new ones.*



**A SQUIRRELY FACT**

**What can we do to help Squirrel Gliders?**

Plant trees, change fencing to plain wire, control pets, keep paddock trees and reduce fox numbers.

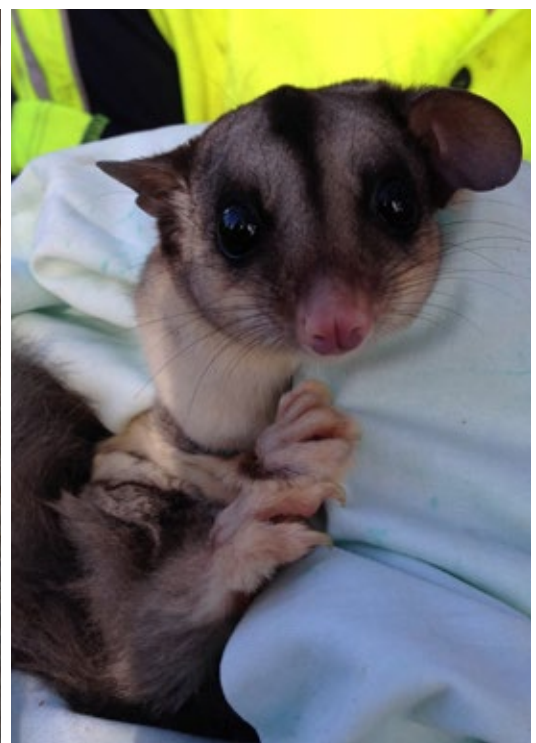
# OTHER LANDHOLDERS INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT

We interviewed landholders from 7 of the 15 properties involved in the LAMP project from the Stoney Park area. We would like to thank the landholders below that are helping Squirrel Gliders as well.

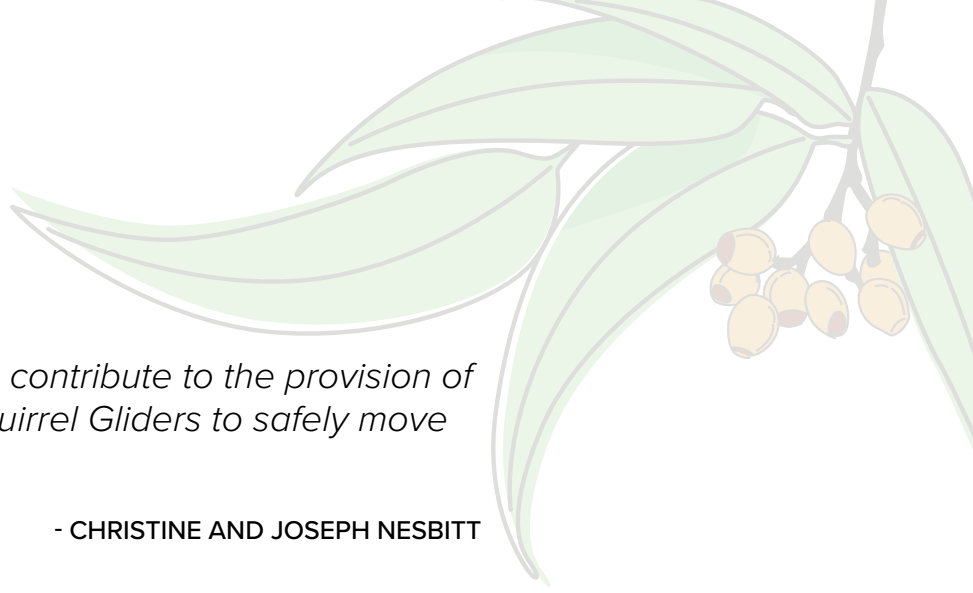
- Christine and Joseph Nesbitt
- Christopher and Jocelyn Beale
- David and Janice Hanckel
- Derek and Deborah Kotzur
- Denise Horn
- Reinhard and Tania Schwarz
- Gordon Mosinski
- Terry Smith

*“The LAMP project helps improve habitat at less cost to the landholder, both in money and time. The fencing was excellent, enhancing the protection of habitat.”*

- TERRY SMITH



Credit: Owen Dunlop (Above), Peter Merritt (L), Stacey Bell (R)



*“We enjoy being able to contribute to the provision of suitable corridors for Squirrel Gliders to safely move through the area.”*

- CHRISTINE AND JOSEPH NESBITT

*“We are involved in the project to ensure Squirrel Gliders are around for our Grandkids and theirs to see.”*

- CHRISTOPHER AND JOCELYN BEALE

*“We are happy to be helping create a sustainable population of Squirrel Gliders and provide a home for them.”*

- REINHARD AND TANIA SCHWARZ

*“It is important to help Squirrel Gliders as they are part of our native animal population and if we lose them we will lose something unique to Australia and the world at large.”*

- GORDON MOSINSKI



Scientists involved with the project have captured and released Squirrel Gliders as part of the monitoring program. Credit: Office of Environment and Heritage

Thanks to the landholders for letting us interview you. You are doing a great job helping Squirrel Gliders.

From Darcy, Ethan and Hailey







Ethan Hunt, Darcy Norris and Hailey Pitman  
2016 Year 6, Burrumbuttock Public School

## Congratulations!

Wirraminna Environmental Education Centre and  
the Creative Catchment Kids Program won the  
National 2016 Yates Junior Landcare Team Award.

