

**Pre-Logging Report of Coupes 846-502-0003, 846-502-0010 and 846-502-0013
Orbost District**

Study location Between junction of Yalmy River and Little Yalmy River

Coupee Numbers 846-502-0003, 846-502-0010, 846-502-0013

Date 3 March 2009

Organisation Fauna and Flora Research Collective - East Gippsland

Permit No. 10004865 (File No: FF383119)

Motive of research To ascertain the ecological significance of specific areas currently proposed for logging.

Aim of study The aim of this study is to ascertain and verify if coupes 846-502-0003, 846-502-0010 and 846-502-0013 support rare or endangered fauna listed in the East Gippsland Forest Management Plan.

Table 1: Recorded species on 01-02/03/09

Common name	Scientific name
Long-Footed Potoroo	<i>Potorous longipes</i>
Sooty Owl	<i>Tyto tenebricosa</i>
Southern Boobook Owl	<i>Ninox novaehollandiae</i>
Greater Glider	<i>Petauroides volans</i>
Sugar Glider	<i>Petaurus breviceps</i>

Method of Study 1. Walking through the proposed coupes to observe tracks, habitat, and feeding and defecation signs of fauna.

2. The surveying of the key species with the aid of acoustic equipment and spotlights. The goal is to observe individual animals visually or identify them by their calls. The fieldwork is ideally performed on warm nights without rain on which greater activity can be recorded. Fieldwork should be commenced at dusk.

Poor conditions provide a greater false absence rate¹ in relation to good conditions that provide a lower false absence rate.

Date of study 1 - 2 March 2009

Surveyors of habitat Mr. P. Calle, Mr. A. Lincoln

Surveyors of nocturnal activity Mr. P. Calle, Mr. A. Lincoln

¹ ESTIMATING AND DEALING WITH DETECTABILITY IN OCCUPANCY SURVEYS FOR FOREST OWLS AND ARBOREAL MARSUPIALS: Journal of Wildlife Management 69(3):905-917. 2005 □doi: 10.2193/0022-541X(2005)069[0905:EADWDI]2.0.CO;2

Study locations

Between junction of Yalmy River and Little Yalmy River (see figures 1, 2 and 3.)

Figure 1:
Depicting coupe no:
846-502-0003

(Note: 846-502-0006
has previously been
clearfell logged)

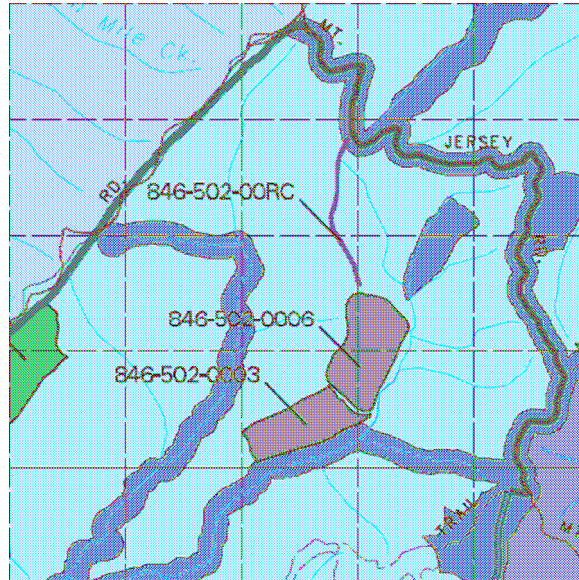


Figure 2:
Depicting coupe no:
846-502-0010 and
846-502-0013

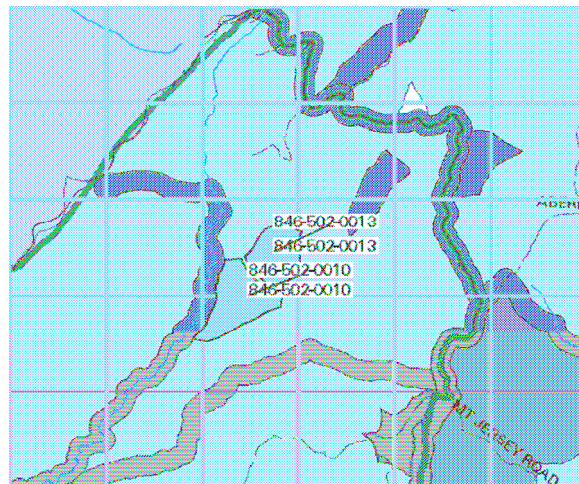
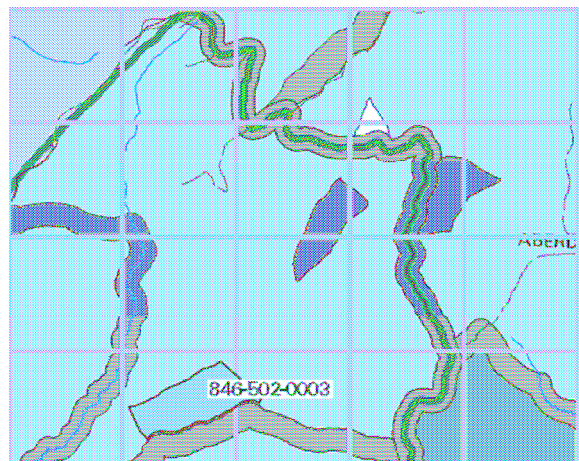


Figure 3:
Depicting boundary
changes to coupe no:
846-502-0003



1. Results of walking observation survey

A series of pre-planned walking routes were determined then walked.

Significant findings are recorded below.

Finding 1.

Skeleton discovered of Long Footed Potoroo (*Potorous longipes*). The skull of this finding was photographed and collected for confirmation. Larger photographs of this finding (thumbnail images below) are included in Appendix A.

Notes:

The skeletal specimen was estimated to be quite fresh, possibly up to two weeks old, as it was collected in good condition. A further five bones were left on site.

Location:

Skeleton found in coupe no. 846-502-0003.

GPS co-ordinates; 43.204/70.253



Skull of the Long Footed Potoroo found in coupe 846-502-0003 (photo: P. Calle)

Finding 2.

In all three coupes included in the study area many diggings of varying shapes and sizes, possibly of the Long-Footed Potoroo detailed above, were found.

2. Results of nocturnal survey

During the nocturnal survey on the 1st of March between 10:40 p.m. and 12:30 a.m. the following was recorded:

Table 2: Recorded species

Time of record	Common name	Observation method	Remarks
10:40pm	Sooty Owl Call	Auditory	SE
10:45pm	Southern Boobook owl	Auditory	NW
10:47pm	Sooty Owl call back played		
10:47pm	Sooty Owl	Auditory	Response to Call-back - E
10:47pm	Sugar Glider	Auditory	Response to Call-back - Alarming
10:50pm	2 x Mountain Brushtail Possum	Visual/Auditory	On Ground - W
11:10pm	Powerful Owl call back played		
11:10pm	Sugar Glider	Auditory	Response from 2 different directions - NE and NW
11:25pm	Powerful Owl call back played		
11:25pm	Sugar Glider	Auditory	NE
11:25pm	Southern Boobook owl	Auditory	Attack/Nest Defence Call - within 100m SE
11:32pm	Sooty Owl	Auditory	Distant NE
11:50pm	Southern Boobook owl	Auditory	Attack/Nest Defence Call
12:05pm	Greater Glider	Visual	W
12:10pm	Sooty Owl	Auditory	NE

Note: Spotlighting and call-backs were undertaken only within coupe no. 846-502-0003 and only along the dry ridge line from a previously cut track. Walking through the vegetation at night was deemed not possible on account of thick ground vegetation. Access was thus also not possible within the wetter gullies where the presence of bigger trees containing nesting hollows were more abundant.

Conclusions

1. Long Footed Potoroo Finding

The discovery of the Long Footed Potoroo in this area is extremely significant. To the knowledge of Fauna and Flora Research Collective - East Gippsland, there are no previous discoveries of this species close to the specific area, and consequently no reserves or special protection zones for the species nearby.

Fauna and Flora Research Collective - East Gippsland have recently been surveying in approximately 14 locations for this species with limited success. The method of research has consisted principally of hair-tubing, with a successful result in only one other location (Brown Mountain), reinforcing the impression that this species is very rare in this area.

2. Nocturnal Spotlighting

Our spotlighting survey of arboreal mammals resulted in limited success. We believe that this was related to the fact that we were restricted to the dry ridge where the presence of larger trees was very limited. Towards the gullies of these areas more suitable habitat for these species were available.

Recommendations As the FFGA Action Statement for the Long-footed Potoroo requires protection for this species, we recommend that plans for logging in these three coupes be placed on hold immediately. The significance of this find should warrant these three coupes be placed within a new Special Protection Zone.

Further logging and roading into this area would have negative impacts on this endangered species.

Authors:

Mr. P. Calle

Mr. A. Lincoln

APPENDIX A



Skull of the Long Footed Potoroo found in coupe 846-502-0003 (photo: P. Calle)