KOALA BEACH NEST HOLLOW MONITORING 2018

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Monitoring method

Two field sessions were undertaken to check hollows installed at Koala Beach. On October 24th a solitary technique using a 'Britestar' Pole Camera mounted on a 3.6m Rhino pole, enabled close inspection of 5 hollows, revealing a sugar glider in hollow #13. Three hollows were occupied by Honey bees, 3 were not found, and 9 were too high for inspection with this equipment.

A second session with Graeme Lloyd assisting with an extendable ladder enabled access to the remaining 9 hollows, inspected with the camera detached from the pole. Three missing hollows were found, one hollow was inaccessible (angled spout) and the 4 western glossy black-cockatoo hollows were checked with the pole camera, but were too high to enable inspection. A wood duck was seen at the entrance of one hollow.

Results are tabled below.

Discussion

The necessity to transport and to use an extendable ladder to access most hollows, and to undertake maintenance, is problematic. Given that all the fauna currently recorded will occupy & use hollows at much lower heights above the ground, it is arguable whether ongoing inspection & maintenance of the existing hollows is a safe and efficient use of resources.

Nest boxes installed at < 4m above ground are readily occupied by Sugar Gliders and Brown Antechinus at another study site. Owlet Nightjars, gliders and microchiropteran bats occupied nest boxes at Brunswick heads which were < 3m above ground (pers obs.).

The inspection options are: (a) two persons with a ladder, and (b) one person with a pole camera, if hollows are installed within reach of a standard (3.6m pole) nest box camera.

A possible alternative is to dedicate resources to a hollow/nest box project which is accessible from the ground.

Installed Hollow Check Koala Beach M = maintenance needed

No.	24/10/18	2/11/18	M
1	Not found	2 sugar gliders	
2	Two hollows: too high	Native bees in one, leaf nest in other	
3	Too high	Empty	
4	Empty	--	
5	Ants	--	
6	Empty	--	
7	Aperture too small for camera	Empty	
8	Too high	Sugar Glider	
9	Too high	Leaf nest	
10	Missing	Leaf nest, loose screw	M
11	Spider	--	
12	Missing	Chewed entrance, floor coming loose	M
13	Sugar Glider; photographed	--	
14	Angled spout, inaccessible for camera	--	
15	Too high	Ants	
16	Aperture blocked by bees	--	M?
17	Too high	floor coming loose	M
18	Too high	Empty	
19	Aperture blocked by bees	--	M?
20	Aperture blocked by bees	--	M?

NEST BOX CAMERA PHOTOS (incorrect date 2017 depicted; taken 2018)

(*i*) Leaf nest ? possible sugar glider

(*ii*) Sugar Glider

(*iii*) Sugar Gliders