



Fourth Crossing Wildlife factsheet



Greater Glider

scientific name
" *Petauroides volans* "
flying Petarus-like (animal)



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other names
Greater Flying Phalanger, Dusky Glider,
Greater Glider-possum and Squirrel



<https://mol.org/species/>

Description.

Head and body length 350-450mm. Tail length 450-600mm. Weight: 900-1700 grams. Variety of colours - dark grey, cream, mottled cream, grey or dusky brown above. Whitish below. Long, fluffy tail. Short snout with small nose. Very large, fluffy ears. Tail is not prehensile.

The Greater Glider can be found along the east coast of Australia. There are two subspecies - *Petauroides volans volans* which can be found south of the Tropic of Capricorn in Queensland, through NSW and into Victoria. *Petauroides volans minor* is located north of the Tropic of Capricorn. The Greater Glider is the largest of the gliding possums and like the Koala has a diet that consists almost exclusively on eucalypt leaves. It can be found in a variety of eucalypt dominated habitats, ranging from low, open forests on the coast to tall forests in the ranges and low woodlands westward of the Great Dividing Range. Strictly nocturnal and essentially solitary, it rests during the day in tree hollows, known as dreys, and ventures out after dark to browse amongst eucalypt foliage. It is an agile climber and can grip tightly to tree branches with its forepaws that have two toes opposing the other three. The gliding membrane, known as a patagium, extends from the elbow to the ankle and allows the glider to glide up to 100 metres. During a glide it can also turn as much as 90 degrees. As it reaches its target the glider directs its flight upward so that it loses speed and lands with all four feet on a tree trunk. On the ground the glider moves in a clumsy gait and is known to fall prey to foxes, feral cats and dogs. The Powerful Owl is a known predator on adults. Unlike the Yellow-bellied Glider, of which it sometimes is confused with, the Greater Glider is usually silent. Greater Gliders occupy individual home ranges with no overlap between males, although females ranges do overlap with others, including males and females. At the onset of breeding season, which is from March to June, males and females share a den with the male leaving as the joey emerges from the pouch. Females have two teats but only one young is born. Joeys leave the pouch between three and four months of age but continue to stay with their mother for another three months. The joey is sometimes carried by the mother as a back rider or stays in the nest as the mother forages. Juveniles become independent at around nine months, although sexual maturity and breeding does not occur until the second year of life.

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