



## PLEASE REMEMBER

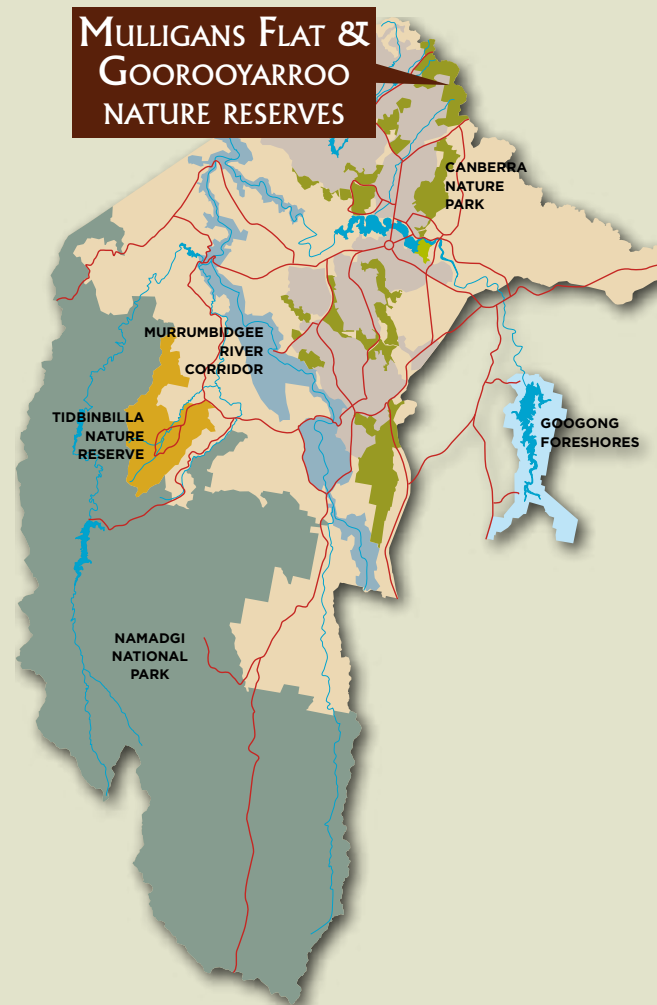
- **Play your part and close the gate behind you.**
- **Report any breaches of the fence to Canberra Connect 13 22 81.**
- **Domestic pets are prohibited in the Sanctuary and surrounding nature reserves.**
- **Baits laid for foxes and cats may be toxic to pets. Contact your local vet for treatment.**
- Abide by cat containment laws in nearby suburbs.
- In an emergency, know the nearest exit. Walk in any direction to the Sanctuary fence and look for arrows to the nearest gate.
- The removal of, or interference with, material from the Sanctuary including rocks, fallen timber, living plants or other habitat elements is strictly prohibited.
- The Sanctuary may be closed during Total Fire Bans and during some management operations.

Canberra Connect: 13 22 81  
TAMS Website: [www.tams.act.gov.au](http://www.tams.act.gov.au)

Photo credits: H. Fallow, A. Manning, D. Watts

## FURTHER INFORMATION

Mulligans Flat Nature Reserve is best accessed from the suburb of Forde via the Woodland Gate off Amy Ackman Street and the Yellow Box Gate off Francis Forde Boulevard and Eric Wright Street. Goorooyaroo Nature Reserve can be accessed from carparks on Horse Park Drive as well as from Mulligans Flat Nature Reserve.



# MULLIGANS FLAT & GOOROOPYARRO

## NATURE RESERVES

# WELCOME TO MULLIGANS FLAT AND GOOROoyARROO NATURE RESERVES

Mulligans Flat and Gorooyarroo Nature Reserves are part of Canberra Nature Park, a series of over 30 reserves throughout suburban ACT. Canberra Nature Park defines Canberra as the bush capital, providing opportunities for residents to enjoy nature literally on their doorstep. Treasures of national significance are conserved here including the largest most intact and contiguous area of Yellow Box—Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland in public ownership. Box-gum woodland is a critically endangered ecological community, having been cleared, modified and grazed since the 1820s across its original range. Although woodlands in this region were also grazed and frequently cleared to some extent, the now protected reserves still retain significant ecological values.



*Small mammals such as this Tasmanian Bettong, are the 'ecosystem engineers' of the woodlands dispersing seed and spore and aerating the soil.*

PHOTO: D. WATTS

Mulligans Flat and Gorooyarroo Nature Reserves contain a diverse mosaic of grassland, woodland and forest habitats, each supporting a characteristic collection of native plants and animals.



*Parrot Pea.*

The ridges support areas of dry forest where Scribbly Gum, Red Stringybark, Bundy and Brittle Gum grow close together. On the hill slopes below 1000 m, the Yellow Box—Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland grows on the deeper soils. Most of the treeless areas now in Mulligans Flat and Gorooyarroo Nature Reserves were created by the early farmers who cleared woodland areas forming 'secondary' grassland communities. Grasslands contain native tussock grasses interspersed with showy wildflowers.

## WOODLAND RESEARCH

The fact that so little is known about these iconic woodlands, was the impetus for an innovative research project that began here in 2004. A recent development is the establishment of the Mulligans Flat Woodland Sanctuary—485 hectares of Mulligans Flat Nature Reserve enclosed by a predator proof fence. This will allow the reintroduction of locally extinct native animals that are vulnerable to predation by foxes and cats.



*2000 tonnes of large dead wood placed in scattered or clumped arrangements in the Sanctuary & Gorooyarroo Nature Reserve are being studied.*

## WHY A FENCE?

The fence is one way of removing the threats posed by feral predators and herbivores. Researchers are studying the effects of removing foxes and cats on native animals as well as investigating the effects of reintroducing locally extinct native species on the woodland ecosystem.

In addition to the fence, another obvious feature of the Sanctuary is 2000 tonnes of large dead logs distributed in patterns that are similar to fallen trees. Plants, animals and the immediate environment adjacent to the logs are being studied.



*Underground truffles are being studied in the Sanctuary. They are eaten by native animals and so the spores are spread.*

## WHO IS INVOLVED?

The woodland restoration research project is a joint partnership between the ACT Government, the Australian National University and CSIRO. Other researchers are also participating.

## GETTING INVOLVED

You can get involved in this exciting project. A Friends of Mulligans Park Care group provides opportunities for local residents to be involved and kept up-to-date with information sessions and interpretive activities. Meetings of the 'Bush on the Boundary' reference group, allow government and non-government stakeholders to consider future developments in the Sanctuary.

For further information, call Canberra Connect 13 22 81.

Imagine a woodland before European settlement! No foxes or cats, no stock, hares or rabbits and no weeds! An abundance of native mammals and birds. Our vision for the Mulligans Flat Woodland Sanctuary is to recover some of the fascinating features of woodlands, and return native animals that have not been seen in over 100 years. Join us on this restoration journey.

# MULLIGANS FLAT & GOOROOPYARRO

## NATURE RESERVES

### Restoring OUR WOODLANDS

The Mulligans Flat Woodland Sanctuary is part of the vision to restore the rich variety and abundance of woodland habitats and native wildlife that were present here before European settlement. A very significant feature of the Sanctuary is the absence of feral predators and herbivores. As research informs our understanding of woodland ecosystems, reintroduction programs are planned for animals known to have occurred in the Canberra region, especially 'keystone' species that have a disproportionately large restorative effect on their environment. The first release of a species that has recently disappeared from Mulligans Flat Nature Reserve was the Brown Treecreeper in 2010.

### Learning IN AN OUTDOOR LABORATORY

As well as investigating the effects of removing feral predators and herbivores from the Sanctuary and reintroducing locally extinct native animals, the project is also studying the effects of adding 2000 tonnes of large dead wood to simulate fallen trees, the impact of excluding grazing animals (including kangaroos) and the influence of fire on vegetation.

In this large 'outdoor laboratory', everyone from school children, university students, scientists, landholders, land managers and the local community will gain new insights into restoration, conservation and management of box-gum woodlands—a major step forward for one of Australia's most threatened ecological communities.

Educational programs and ecologically sustainable ecotourism opportunities will allow ACT residents and interstate and overseas visitors to experience for themselves a typical Australian box-gum grassy woodland habitat and its wildlife as it recovers from the impacts of farming and clearing. And it's all on the doorstep of the National Capital.

### Inspiring OTHERS FOR THE FUTURE

The Mulligans Flat Woodland Sanctuary is uniquely placed to inspire future generations of Australians as they experience its environments. We aim to provide a glimpse of the past as a reference point for enhancing our natural landscapes into the future.

We hope that visitors to the Sanctuary will be inspired to return and continue observing and learning about the woodland restoration project as it evolves. Sanctuary staff and researchers conduct interpretive activities and regular information sessions.

The Mulligans Flat Woodland Sanctuary has been inspired and assisted by established sanctuaries interstate and overseas. Plans are underway to improve similar habitats on suitable land beyond the fence so that in time the threat from feral pests will be so low that animals may safely be released from the security of the Sanctuary. Perhaps one day there will be no need for the fences. We hope so.

The partnerships forged to create the Sanctuary welcome support to maintain this ambitious and very exciting project. We hope to encourage interested members of the local community to take an active role in the Sanctuary's programs and invite enquiries. For further information please contact Canberra Connect: 13 22 81



### RECREATION

Visitors have many opportunities to enjoy Mulligans Flat and Goorooyarroo Nature Reserves. Gates into the Sanctuary allow easy access to walkers, joggers and cyclists. However, in order to protect the critically endangered box—gum grassy woodland and reintroduction programs animals, cycling is only allowed on management trails. Please play your part and shut the gate behind you and keep to the trails provided. Pets are not allowed. Your cooperation is appreciated.

**Mulligans Circuit 12 km return, 3 hrs walking (Moderate)**  
Meander through forest, woodland and grassy glades for an excellent overview of Mulligans Flat.

**Mulligans Flat Bird Walk 6 km return, 2 hrs walking (Easy)**  
An enjoyable walk through box—gum grassy woodland with patches of forest. Many birds can be observed at the dams. A self-guide brochure is available on-site for this walk.

**North Mulligans Circuit 5.5 km return, 2 hrs walking (Moderate)**  
This circuit provides sweeping views of Gungahlin and New South Wales. Kangaroo Grass dominates the lower slopes while steeper slopes support Red Stringybark Forest.

**Goorooyarroo Track 11 km return, 2.5 hrs walking (Moderate)**  
Pass through box—gum grassy woodland. Side trips from this track include: The Dams Valley, Old Joe Hill, Dunnarts Flat via McKeahnies Track and Gooro Hill.  
The Goorooyarroo Track ends at the Mulligans Flat boundary so return the way you came in. Cycling is ONLY allowed on the management trail, but walking the side-tracks is an ideal way to explore Goorooyarroo Nature Reserve.

