

Dispersing Flying-fox camps – what are the issues and where to next?



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Camp dispersal



Working definition:

Any action that attempts to remove or move all or part of the group of flying-foxes by either disturbing the animals or removing or modifying habitat.

Any edits?

Note: we are not focussing on relocations, which are a type of dispersal where the intended location of the dispersed bats is known or pre-selected.

Background

Camp dispersals have been occurring since Flying-foxes and fruit growers tried to occupy the same space!

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FLYING FOX SHOOTING PARTY AT GOSFORD.

A Gosford correspondent writes :—

"The life of a flying fox was not a happy one last Saturday, if he chanced to be a member of a camp at Erina, near Gosford, which was visited on that day by the third shooting party organised by the Gosford Agricultural Association this summer. At other times his life must be distinctly pleasant, as, after having escaped the heat of the day by peacefully sleeping it away in some dense, shady brush, he emerges in the cool of the evening for his meals on the best of the fruits that the grower has been cultivating. If this mischievous marauder has a humorous side to his thieving character, he must chuckle to himself as he enters an orchard whose owner is getting his well-earned sleep, at the practical joke he is perpetrating in his robbery, in commencing to eat in

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Background

Numerous camp managers in all states with FF are still investigating or are undertaking dispersals.

Includes:

- Relatively small camps (e.g. Colac – few 1000 GHFF, 2019)
- High profile camps ~20 years ago (e.g. Melb Bot Gardens, 2000-2003, 30,000 GHFF)
- High profile camps recently (270,000 FF at Batemans Bay, 2016)

And the list goes on.....

Reasons include massive increases in number of FF, new camps being established, aesthetic/cultural/recreational damage, etc

Objectives

Re-visit the issues and management of dispersals and

- 1) See if opinions have changed (or not)
- 2) Test to see how much of an issue dispersal remains
- 3) Gauge whether the issue of dispersals requires further co-ordination, input, discussion, leadership, governance, etc
- 4) As a collective, decide on next steps

Process

- 1) A series of up to 8 questions with discussion at tables, with (mostly) on-line polling / collection of your responses.
- 2) If you haven't already done so, launch your browser and head to DirectPoll here: <http://etc.ch/syhu>
- 3) Discuss some questions as a table, submit your individual response via the poll, and add comments to the worksheets on each table
- 4) No right or wrong answer, don't be swayed by your neighbour...
- 5) Wrap-up/summary with insights from the NSW review of relocations by Mathew Mo, NSW OEH
- 6) We have ~20 mins left, so lets get cracking!

The questions/statements

- 1) To what extent are camp dispersals justified?
- 2) What % of dispersals are successful?
- 3) Have dispersed camps ever formed a new camp where intended?
- 4) How far do dispersed camps typically move?
- 5) Flying-foxes can only be prevented from re-occupying the original camp by removing trees and shrubs
- 6) Dispersals are only effective when the proponent has lots of money and commitment
- 7) What are the biggest risks associated with dispersals?
- 8) How important is further discussion/assessment/guidance of dispersals?

Some questions poll only, others brainstorming then poll, comments welcome on all

Wrap up, next steps