

The Pilliga Forest Fauna Survey

Assist AWC with our first annual ecological health survey

The Pilliga National Park (Gilgai section) and the Pilliga State Conservation Area (“the Pilliga project area”) are managed under an historic partnership agreement between the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service and the Australian Wildlife Conservancy (AWC). The Pilliga project area covers 35,000ha at the northern, more productive section of the vast Pilliga forests. The forests are dominated by White Cypress Pine as well as a number of eucalypt species, supporting many native plants and animals which have disappeared from the surrounding landscape. Iconic species include the Koala and Barking Owl.

AWC plans to reintroduce at least six species of threatened mammals to a large feral predator-free fenced area in the Pilliga, including the Western Quoll, Western Barred Bandicoot, Bilby, Brush-tailed Bettong, Bridled Nail-tail Wallaby and Plains Mouse. Most of these species have not been found in NSW national parks for over a century.

Volunteers are sought to assist ecology staff with our first annual ecological health monitoring survey. A standard pitfall and Elliott trap array will be set up at sites around the forest in an effort to sample small mammals and reptiles. Works will occur over a five-day rotation, with sites set-up on day one and then deconstructed and moved on day five. Day two of each rotation will be relatively short (entailing morning and afternoon checks of each site), giving volunteers time to relax in the middle of the day, whilst day four will involve preparation of the sites for the next rotation (pre-digging trenches for drift-fence construction). After each five-day rotation volunteers will have a two-day break before commencing the next round. No previous experience is required – however, please note *Inherent Role Requirements* below.

The survey will take place over a 26-day period from **23 April - 19 May 2017** (weather dependent) and will be broken into four blocks. Volunteers need to arrive the day before each block of field work commences and it is preferable that volunteers commit to the full 26-day period to allow for consistency of skill in teams. Significant rain may prevent work until roads dry out, which may delay and/or extend the survey.

Inherent requirements of the role:

The work is repetitive and **physically demanding** (walking several kilometers, digging, hammering, carrying gear and equipment) and often in extreme conditions. Team spirit and a **moderate to high level of fitness is required**. All volunteers should carefully consider the fitness requirements, conditions and remoteness of the volunteering activity and seek any appropriate medical advice before deciding whether to apply. If you have any questions or concerns, please discuss them with the AWC before making your application.

Basic camping facilities will be provided at a caravan park in Narrabri, however volunteers are required to bring their own tent and sleeping gear. Transport to and from the Pilliga Forest will be provided and AWC will provide a weekly contribution towards food and living expenses.

This is a fantastic opportunity to get involved at grass-roots level with this exciting project and develop a long-term relationship with AWC in the Pilliga.

Registering your interest:

Please contact **Viyanna Leo, Wildlife Ecologist (NSW National Parks Partnership)**
Viyanna.leo@australianwildlife.org for more information about this opportunity.

To be considered for a place, please register through our online portal:

<http://support.australianwildlife.org/volunteering-opportunities>

Once registered, you will see a list of all currently available volunteering opportunities. Please select “**Pilliga Biodiversity Survey**” and follow the steps to register your interest.

Please note: volunteer opportunities with AWC are limited and may require a specific skill set. For this reason, registering does not guarantee placement. We will contact you when you have been successfully matched to a volunteering opportunity.

We thank you for your interest in and support of Australian Wildlife Conservancy.