

## Managing the Grey-headed Flying Fox as a threatened species in NSW

Peggy Eby and Daniel Lunney (Eds), 2002.  
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ONCE again the Royal Zoological Society of NSW has collated a set of informative papers on a controversial wildlife management topic: how to manage the Grey-headed Flying-fox *Pteropus poliocephalus* as a threatened species in New South Wales. The management of this migratory species poses a complex set of problems to government, conservation agencies, and the horticultural industry given a recent decision to upgrade this species from "protected" to "threatened".

The book is a collection of 33 refereed manuscripts, and many are followed by a question and answer section which reflects the discussion of the talk. The editors make it clear that although opinions were allowed, conclusions had to be backed up by a "reasonable information base". This process for handling papers is a strength of this book, particularly as it allows for evidence-based management to become recognized as a clear criterion in the reporting of information.

The main outcome of this workshop is that management of the Grey-headed Flying-fox must

focus on habitat conservation and enhancement. The main issues discussed include: strategies to reduce damage to crops; economic and social consequences of managing Grey-headed Flying-fox; biology, including the role of the Grey-headed Flying-fox as a vector for infectious diseases; community perceptions; and managing colonies in urban reserves. The book concludes with a series of recommendations for the recovery of the species in New South Wales with the aim of removing it from the Schedule of Threatened Species. It would have made referencing easier if the papers were organized into themes, however, this does not detract from the content of the book.

Yet again one of the key messages which this forum is screaming to its audience (and in particular, to government) is the need to resource basic research into the biology of this species, its habitat use, and into strategies that may avert their impact on orchards. Without a funding base, management remains stagnant.

This book is well priced for the content it holds, and is recommended to two main user groups: those specifically interested in the Grey-headed Flying-fox, and those interested in a case study of a native species that interacts directly and indirectly with humans. I commend the organizers of this workshop for publishing the outcomes of this meeting.

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