

# Grey-headed Flying Fox

## *Pteropus poliocephalus*

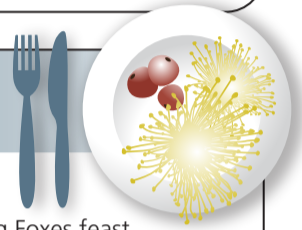


### Habitat



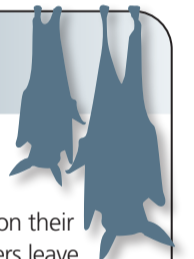
Grey-headed Flying Foxes live in colonies near rivers and wetlands. Water helps control the temperature in the colony. During the day they hang upside down in tall trees, wrapped in their wings. Urban parks are important because they provide shelter and lots of food. When it gets too cold, most megabats migrate north to other urban parks.

### Diet



Each night, Grey-headed Flying Foxes feast on pollen, nectar and fruit. They use their rough tongues to help peel fruit and remove the seeds. We call these nocturnal megabats flying gardeners because they help to pollinate plants while eating. Sometimes, when there aren't enough native blossoms, they munch in urban fruit and vegetable gardens.

### Life stages



These mammals live in colonies. Females have one baby at a time and carry them on their chest for a month. At dinner time, mothers leave their babies together in a daycare tree. Young start to fly after 3 months. Flying Foxes are very clean but smelly. The strong smell helps them find a mate and locate their babies. They live for up to 15 years.

### Threats

**VULNERABLE**

Grey-headed Flying Foxes are vulnerable to habitat loss, disturbance, climate change and fruit netting. As our cities and suburbs grow larger, there is less food and shelter available for the megabats. During nighttime feasts, they can become tangled in garden netting. When conditions are very hot and dry, the megabats can get heat stress.

### Conservation



Grey-headed Flying Foxes are a keystone species. This means that they shape their ecosystems. They help our local parks to grow and flourish by spreading seeds and pollinating plants. This also provides food for other animals in the ecosystem. Rangers and friends care for the megabats by protecting their homes in urban parks and educating park visitors.

## Features and adaptations

- 1 Big eyes and ears to find their way in the dark
- 2 Strong sense of smell to find their babies, friends and food
- 3 Communicate with each other using more than 20 calls
- 4 Fertilise our forests with seeds in their droppings
- 5 Pollinate plants while feeding on nectar
- 6 Large wings to travel for food and migrate north for winter
- 7 Hang upside down by strong feet and claws saves muscle energy

