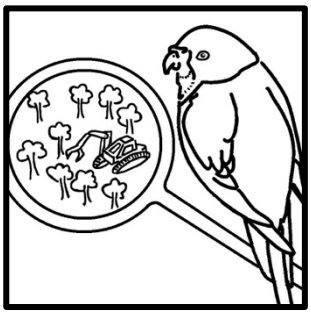
Forestry Watch Survey Report

Coupe Number: RU003B

Location: Russel River, Near Lonnavale

Date: 15/12/2019



Coupe Snapshot:

Size:	**90 ha**	**Year to be logged:**	**2019**
Percentage old-growth:	**78%**		
Natural Values:	Large percentage of old-growth, swift parrot and masked owl habitat, numerous hollow-bearing trees, high carbon storage capacity.		

Introduction:

Forestry Watch conducted a citizen science survey of coupe RU003B on the 15th of December 2019. This coupe was selected by the team due to its high percentage of old-growth and the potential for good quality habitat.

Vegetation:

RU003B is listed on TASVEG as 'wet *E. obliqua* forest' and 'wet *E. obliqua* forest over rainforest'. The Forestry Watch team also recorded *E. regnans*. In a large area of this coupe there is no evidence of past human disturbance, indicating old growth forest.

Survey findings:

- Nesting habitat for swift parrots
- High quality masked owl habitat
- Old growth forests, with high carbon storage potential
- High quality habitat for a variety of other non-threatened species
- High density of fallen trees providing habitat and stored carbon

Density of Large Habitat Trees:

Density of Large Habitat Trees >150cm diameter	Density of Medium Habitat Trees >100cm diameter
86 per ha	10 per ha

Survey Conclusion:

Our survey shows that the forests within this coupe contains excellent habitat. This is due to the presence of large old-growth trees, which contained numerous hollows. These large, old trees also store a significant amount of carbon and continue to absorb carbon over time. These large old-growth trees are also of very low economic value. Forestry Watch recommends that these forests are protected in order to protect wildlife and the large volume of stored carbon within this forest.

Previous findings:

A search of the Natural Values Atlas, a state government database which records threatened species information, has found the following threatened species to occur near the coupe:

- There are eight recorded swift parrot sightings within 10km of the coupe
- There is a recorded masked owl sighting 5km from the coupe
- Recorded observations of Tasmanian devils
- Recorded observations of spotted tail quoll

Threatened Species Information:

Swift parrot (Lathamus discolor), Critically Endangered (EPBC 1999)

The biggest threat to Swift Parrots is habitat destruction. Ideal nesting habitat is mature hollow bearing trees within 10 kilometres of flowering *Eucalyptus globulus* (Tasmanian Blue Gum) or *Eucalyptus ovata* (Black Gum). High quality nesting habitat for swift parrots is considered to have more than 15 trees over 100 cm diameter per hectare or 8 trees over 150cm.

Masked owl (Tyto novaehollandiae subsp. Castanops), Vulnerable (EPBC 1999)

The Tasmanian Masked owl is estimated to have only 500 breeding pairs remaining. Masked owls require large hollows only found in mature forests. The main threat to the masked owl is the clearing of nesting and foraging habitat. High quality masked owl habitat is considered to have more than eight trees over 150cm dbh per hectare.

Spotted tailed quoll (Dasyurus maculatus), Vulnerable (EPBC 1999)

The spotted tailed quoll requires large tracts of forest with potential den sites. Den sights and hollows required by prey are removed by intensive forestry practices, especially when logging is followed by burning, rendering the area unsuitable habitat.

Tasmanian Devil (Sarcophilus harrisii), Endangered (Threatened Species Act 1995)

The Tasmanian Devil have large ranges which span over several square kilometres. Old-growth forests provide important habitat for denning, which includes hollow logs and dense vegetation. Logging native forests can destroy dens or potential denning habitat.

Old growth and carbon storage

Old growth is defined as 'Ecologically mature forest where the effects of disturbances are now negligible'. Old-growth *Eucalypts regnans* forests are the most carbon dense forests in the world. Large, old trees still grow in width and draw down more carbon than younger trees. Logging of old growth followed by intensive harvesting cycles causes the release of carbon stored in forest soils in a process that continues centuries after initial logging.

If you would like more information about the methodology used in this survey, would like to use the data, or have any general questions, please contact us. If you would like to join one of our surveys, please send us an email or keep an eye out for events on our facebook page.

forestrywatch@gmail.com