



## Swift Parrot Habitat and the Forestry Tasmania Three Year Wood Production Plan

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**Briefing Paper:**

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Production Plan**

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The Wilderness Society has 40,000 members and 350,000 supporters across Australia, and was founded in Tasmania in 1976. The Wilderness Society has advocated for the protection of Tasmania's forests for four decades.

## **Introduction**

The endangered swift parrot (*Lathamus discolor*) is a highly visible species, both in its colourful plumage, and in its burgeoning public profile. It is well known for its vulnerability to extinction, with the voracious appetite of the predatory Sugar glider and logging in critical forest areas making its summer breeding ground in Tasmania increasingly inhospitable.

Millions of dollars, countless hours of expert and volunteer work, large legal bills, and lengthening column inches have been expended on the fate of the swift parrot.

This interest has been paralleled by an increasing desire from the forestry sector and Government to improve public and consumer confidence in the Tasmanian forestry industry. It is increasingly clear that a central part of this rebranding - the marketing of Tasmanian timber products as a world-leading premium product - is tied to the fate of the Swift parrot and other native animals.

This paper seeks to address one substantial influence on the future of the swift parrot – the maintenance of habitat in Tasmania’s state forests that is critical for the species’ survival. It should be noted that this is not to diminish the importance of other conservation efforts, such as safeguarding from Sugar glider predation, habitat restoration, or the protection of habitat across tenures up and down the east coast of Australia.

The following analysis seeks to quantify important swift parrot habitat across the production forestry landscape, particularly in relation to the 2015 to 2018 Forestry Tasmania three year wood production plan. The paper also considers how protections could be applied to ensure the swift parrot will survive as a unique part of Australia’s natural heritage. A set of recommendations in support of this objective are provided in the conclusion.

## **Swift parrot – on the brink of extinction**

A growing body of scientific evidence shows that the endangered swift parrot is at a cross roads. Proactive and aggressive action can keep this stunning migratory species safe. Conversely, a failure to act now means the thin lifeline holding this species up will be severed forever.

The swift parrot faces two main threats – the newly discovered threat of being eaten by introduced sugar gilders in the Tasmanian forests where they breed; and ongoing loss of forest habitat that contains the flowering gums and tree hollows that are crucial for successful breeding.<sup>1</sup>

While habitat destruction is an issue across the swift parrot’s migratory range in the south-east of Australia, the problem is particularly acute in southern Tasmania where it migrates to breed annually. While habitat clearing on private land remains a threat, logging in the publicly owned forests that are critical strongholds for swift parrot breeding has become a priority issue for the future of the species.

Despite substantial research and regulatory efforts, the loss of critical areas of swift parrot habitat in this production forestry landscape is ongoing. An in-progress nomination to list the swift parrot as nationally ‘critically endangered’ – in other words, one step away from extinction – has detailed the extent of logging threats.<sup>2</sup>

## **Logging and Swift parrot Survival**

As the extinction trajectory continues to gather pace, the publicly-owned custodian of production forests, Forestry Tasmania (FT) is seeking to provide greater assurance to the Tasmanian community and to consumers of timber products regarding its conservation, sustainability and public accountability credentials.

These efforts involve a range of measures, including an ongoing application for Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification, the international ‘gold standard’ for forest management. At the time of writing, the independent auditor’s assessment of FT’s initial application for FSC was yet to be released, however it is has been reported that FT is unlikely to initially gain accreditation, due to a range of required changes.<sup>3</sup>

Concurrent to FT and the broader industry’s efforts to provide greater confidence to the community and customers has been ongoing logging in increasingly critical habitat for swift parrots.

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<sup>1</sup> Swift Parrot Critically Endangered Nomination 2014/15, p12, obtained under Freedom of Information. <http://wilderness.org.au/reports>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-04-28/forestry-tasmania-fsc-certifier-criticises-greens-leader/6426638>

FT's two initial attempts to author 'high conservation value' management plans in order to gain FSC made no specific mention of the logging threat or extinction risk for swift parrots. These plans also argued that forest habitat for species such as the swift parrot that occur 'across the landscape' should not be considered as a 'high conservation value', and thus need no additional management to achieve FSC.<sup>4</sup>

Prior to FT's FSC application, new management tools were also developed to identify critical areas for threatened species that requiring special management attention in wood production forests. The Forest Practices Authority, with expert, industry and departmental collaboration, developed the Threatened Fauna Advisor tool to identify forest areas and management approaches to protect important 'non-wood' values.<sup>5</sup> However, implementation has been marred by Tasmanian Government interventions that have severely hampered the effectiveness of protections.

The actions of the Tasmanian Government regarding the swift parrot have also garnered ongoing negative media coverage. This includes senior Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment (DPIPWE) staff approving logging despite strong expert advice on the impacts on swift parrots,<sup>6</sup> and the Tasmanian Government withdrawing from the national recovery team attempting to save the species, at the same time as changing logging rules to facilitate logging in important habitat.<sup>7</sup>

It is in the context of this extinction threat, public debate, and FT's reform and branding efforts that FT has released its 2015 to 2018 Three Year Wood Production Plan (the three year plan). The plan sets out the schedule of forestry coupes for logging over the next three financial years.

The three year plan includes 681 native forest coupes. The following analysis seeks to assess where swift parrot habitat intersects with planned logging operations, and how swift parrot protections could be applied to keep the parrot safe from extinction.

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<sup>4</sup> Forestry Tasmania (2014) *High Conservation Values Assessment and Management Plan*, [http://cdn.forestrytasmania.com.au/uploads/File/pdf/pdf2014/hcv\\_mp\\_november\\_2014.pdf](http://cdn.forestrytasmania.com.au/uploads/File/pdf/pdf2014/hcv_mp_november_2014.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.fpa.tas.gov.au/fpa\\_services/planning\\_assistance/advisory\\_planning\\_tools/threatened\\_fauna\\_advisor](http://www.fpa.tas.gov.au/fpa_services/planning_assistance/advisory_planning_tools/threatened_fauna_advisor)

<sup>6</sup> Pullinger, P (2015) *Pulling a Swiftie*, <http://www.et.org.au/swiftie>

<sup>7</sup> Jordan, W(2015) *Logging rings death knell for swift parrot*, <http://www.themercury.com.au/news/opinion/talking-point-logging-rings-death-knell-for-swift-parrot/story-fnj4f64i-1227469785818>

## Swift Parrot Habitat in Tasmania's State Forests

The following analysis was conducted using geographic information system (GIS) analysis of publicly available datasets.<sup>89</sup> Coupe boundaries were 'digitised' using maps downloaded from Forestry Tasmania's 'Interactive Map Viewer',<sup>10</sup> and some coupe data was imported from FT's three year plan documentation.<sup>11</sup>

The analysis sought to provide data on a number of key questions:

- *How much important swift parrot habitat occurs in Tasmania's state forests?*
- *How much important swift parrot habitat is in logging coupes on Forestry Tasmania's 2015 to 2018 Three Year Wood Production Plan?*
- *What area would be impacted if Threatened Fauna Advisor prescriptions for swift parrots were fully applied to the three year plan?*

### Question 1: How much important swift parrot habitat occurs in Tasmania's state forests?

The geographic areas most important for swift parrots are known technically as Swift Parrot Important Breeding Areas (SPIBAs). These areas occur in the southern and east coast forests of Tasmania.

The nesting and foraging habitat inside these areas consists of flowering *Eucalyptus globulus* (blue gum) and *E.ovata* forests, and adjacent mature forest with hollows within 10 kilometres.<sup>12</sup> For successful breeding, both feed trees, and trees with suitable hollows in adjacent forest, are required.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> The limitations of publicly available data may result in small inconsistencies between results of this analysis and data held by Forestry Tasmania or other agencies.

<sup>9</sup> Original Datasets – globmap, mature habitat availability mapping, Swift parrot Important Breeding Area, Swift parrot core range, the List State wide land tenure 2015, Tasmanian Reserve Estate layer 2013 (informal reserve data only); Derived datasets – coupe locations from 2015-18 three year wood production plan, digitised coupe boundaries from FT online interactive map viewer.

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.forestrytas.com.au/forest-management/interactive-map-viewer>

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.forestrytas.com.au/forest-management/3yp>

<sup>12</sup> Forest Practices Authority (2014) *Fauna Technical Note No. 3: Identifying swift parrot breeding habitat*,

[http://www.fpa.tas.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0005/99635/Fauna\\_Tech\\_Note\\_03\\_Swift\\_parrot\\_breeding\\_habitat.pdf](http://www.fpa.tas.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0005/99635/Fauna_Tech_Note_03_Swift_parrot_breeding_habitat.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> Swift parrot Critically Endangered Nomination 2014/15, p6, obtained under Freedom of Information. <http://wilderness.org.au/reports>

The analysis undertaken identified nesting habitat using the *Globmap* dataset.<sup>14</sup> This dataset identifies forest containing ‘canopy dominating’ and ‘subdominant’ blue gum. A conservative approach to identifying nesting habitat was taken, with young or regenerating forest and forest with less than 5% blue gum excluded from the analysis. Given swift parrots may use scattered feeding trees, the analysis likely underestimates suitable feeding habitat.

To identify forest with hollows, the FPA Mature Habitat Availability mapping was used<sup>15</sup>. This mapping is used as part of the forest practices system, and identifies areas with high, medium, and low densities of tree hollow habitat, forest areas with negligible hollows, and cleared land.

Given the limited availability of suitable hollows for swift parrots, and the identified and increasing threat from the loss of hollows in the landscape,<sup>16</sup> all forest areas in the swift parrot important breeding areas with modelled available hollows were considered ‘important’ habitat critical for the survival of the species.<sup>17</sup>

The results of this initial habitat analysis can be seen in Table 1 below.

**Table 1 - Swift parrot habitat in important breeding areas (state forest)**

	Blue gum foraging habitat	Hollow tree nesting habitat	Total important habitat	Total important habitat available for logging
<b>habitat in state forest in swift parrot important breeding areas (hectares)</b>	1 963	33 301	34 544	24 531

<sup>14</sup> DPIPWE (2010) *GlobMap, The swift parrot foraging habitat map*. Biodiversity Conservation Branch, Department of Primary Industries Parks, Water and Environment. Tasmanian Government. Hobart <http://dpiuwe.tas.gov.au/Documents/GlobMap.pdf>

<sup>15</sup> Forest Practices Authority (2012) *Fauna Technical Note No. 2: Explanatory notes on the mapping of areas that potentially contain mature forest characteristics (the ‘mature habitat availability map’)*,

[http://www.fpa.tas.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0019/68203/Fauna\\_Tech\\_Note\\_2\\_Mature\\_habitat\\_availability\\_map.pdf](http://www.fpa.tas.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0019/68203/Fauna_Tech_Note_2_Mature_habitat_availability_map.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> Swift parrot Critically Endangered Nomination 2014/15, p6, p20-22, obtained under Freedom of Information.

<http://wilderness.org.au/reports>

<sup>17</sup> That, ‘high, medium, and low’ mature habitat availability categories as identified by the FPA mapping

**The area of important swift parrot habitat in FT’s permanent timber production zone is roughly 34,000 hectares. 24 000 hectares is available for logging,<sup>1819</sup> comprising only 3% of the total timber production zone.**

The area of important habitat in state forest was calculated as comprising only 13% of the total area of important habitat across all tenures. However, recent flowering events required to sustain successful breeding have occurred substantially in state forest areas, and the threat of primary habitat loss threat is most substantial in logging areas in state forests, although private land logging is also of concern. This makes habitat in the permanent timber production zone of critical importance to swift parrot survival.

The importance of state forest habitat is heightened on Bruny Island, where forest is regularly used by swift parrots and where there is no glider population<sup>20</sup>. The forest practices system ‘Threatened Fauna Advisor’ tool also identifies the importance of protecting feeding and nesting habitat in the South Bruny and Southern Forests SPIBAs where breeding is concentrated.<sup>21</sup>

The South Bruny SPIBA has a small amount of state forest comprising 1756 ha. A quarter of this area is important swift parrot habitat available for logging. The Southern Forests SPIBA, running from Huonville to the south coast, comprises 35,000 ha of forests, with 20% of that area being important habitat available for logging.

**Table 2 - Swift parrot habitat in South Bruny and Southern Forests important breeding area (state forest)**

	Blue gum foraging habitat	Hollow tree nesting habitat	Total important habitat	Total important habitat available for logging	Total area of state forest
<b>South Bruny (hectares)</b>	106	551	608	485	1756
<b>Southern Forests (hectares)</b>	742	8634	9191	6869	34986

<sup>18</sup> That is, outside of informal reserves, noting other areas may be inaccessible for practical and planning reasons. Based on 2013 reserve mapping data for informal reserves –no data available on changes to informal reservation since this time.

<sup>19</sup> Swift parrot Critically Endangered Nomination 2014/15, p6 , obtained under Freedom of Information. <http://wilderness.org.au/reports=>

## Question 2: How much important swift parrot habitat is in logging coupes on Forestry Tasmania’s 2015 to 2018 Three Year Wood Production Plan?

Analysis identified 43 native forest coupes on the three year plan inside the SPIBAs (see Map 1; see Appendix 1 for a full list of coupes). 41 contain more than 1 hectare of important habitat. **The 43 coupes contain a combined total of 1100 hectares of important habitat, about half of the total logging area.**

**These coupes are concentrated in several key areas – Franklin, Kermadie Divide behind Geeveston, South Bruny Island, Tyler’s Hill and the Hopetoun/Esperance area near Dover, and Tooms Lake on the east coast. With the exception of Tooms Lake, all of these areas are located in the South Bruny and Southern Forests SPIBAs.**

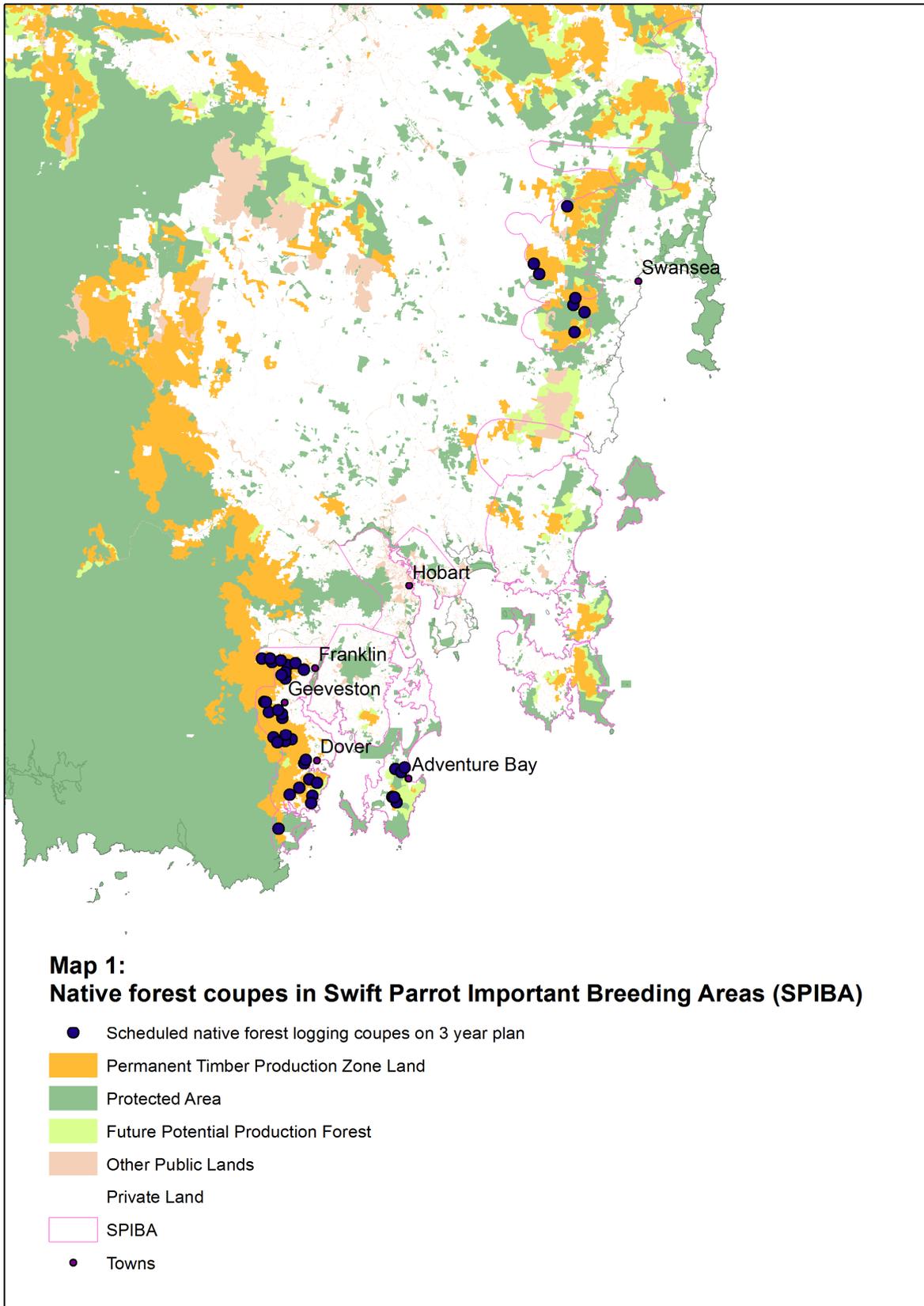
**Table 3 – Area of important swift parrot habitat in coupes on Forestry Tasmania 2015-18 three year wood production plan**

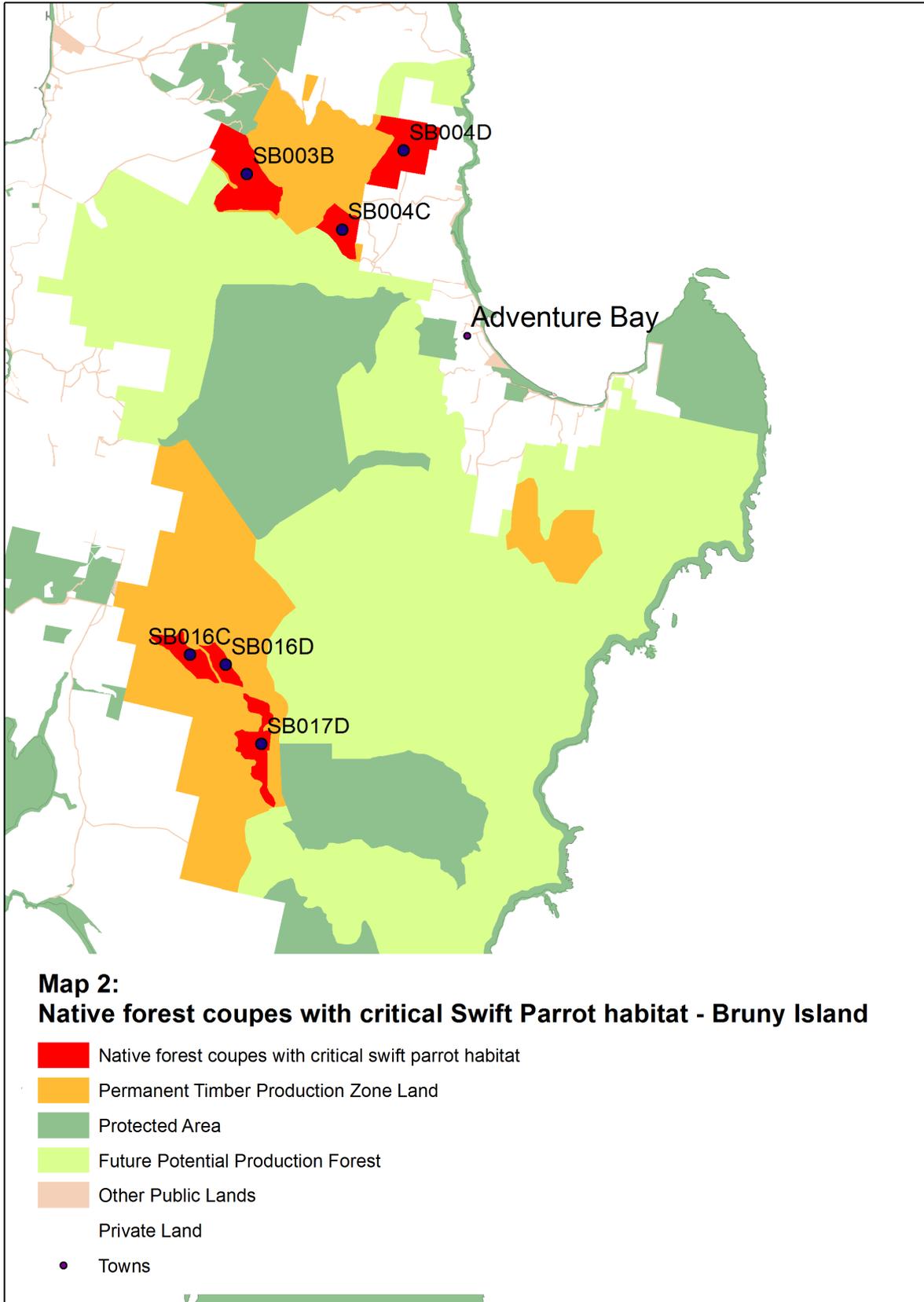
	Foraging habitat	Nesting habitat	Total important habitat	Total area of coupes
Swift parrot habitat in three year plan coupes (hectares)	108	1034	1092	2183

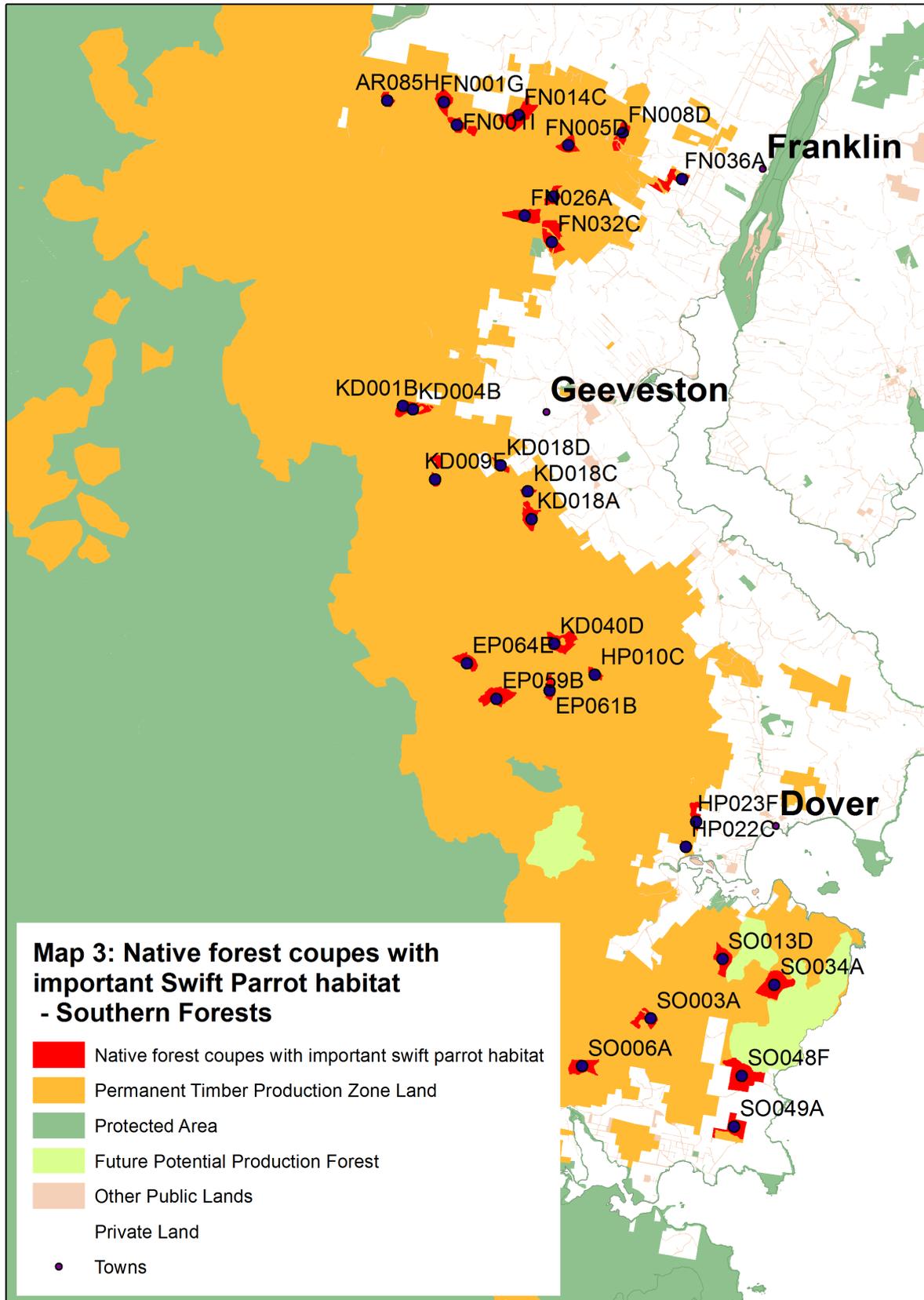
In 23 coupes, the area of important habitat is greater than half of the coupe area. For example, SB004C is located on South Bruny Island, in the hills directly behind Adventure Bay (see Map 2). It has a coupe area of 32 ha, and contains 29.5 ha of mature forest with tree hollows. This forest is scheduled to be clearfelled in 2016-17. A second example, SB003B, is also located behind Adventure Bay. This 93ha coupe contains 76 ha of foraging and/or mature habitat, and is due for clearfelling in 2016-17.

**Bruny Island has been identified as particularly important due to the absence of sugar gliders. If all areas of important swift parrot habitat in the 6 three year plan coupes on South Bruny are logged, the area of habitat in South Bruny state forest will be reduced by 37%.**

Another key area for swift parrot habitat is the Kermadie Divide, a small mountain range in the forests behind Geeveston, with numerous nest sites, and known recent flowering events (see Map 3). Kermadie Divide has 7 coupes on the three year plan, with 4 having more than 20 ha of habitat. For example, 99% of the 44 hectare coupe KD018A is made up of important swift parrot habitat, including 5 ha of blue gum foraging habitat.







### **Question 3: What area would be impacted if Threatened Fauna Advisor prescriptions for swift parrots were fully applied to the three year plan?**

#### ***The Threatened Fauna Advisor***

The Threatened Fauna Advisor (the advisor) is a tool used under the forest practices system by forestry planners to protect threatened animals, birds, and invertebrates. The advisor was developed by the FPA and DPIPWE, in collaboration with recognised experts.

Like any regulatory tool, the advisor is constrained by inherent compromises to satisfy multiple interests, and by implementation and enforcement mechanisms. Given the new found threats and escalating likelihood of extinction, a more aggressive habitat protection approach beyond the advisor requirements appears necessary to maximise the chances of saving the swift parrot from extinction.

However, more aggressive habitat protection needs notwithstanding, the key failing of the threatened fauna advisor is in its application. As the advisor *User Manual* notes:<sup>22</sup>

*The recommended actions for individual species are to be applied unless alternative management actions are accepted by the FPA in consultation with DPIPWE as a way of meeting the management objective for the species.*

As has been noted in several recent analyses by nature conservation groups,<sup>232425</sup> ‘alternative management actions’ to full threatened fauna protections are comprised of senior DPIPWE civil servants overriding expert advice and ticking off logging that will impact on swift parrots. The current departmental interpretation of the ‘duty of care’ provisions of the forest practices code<sup>26</sup> places an effective maximum of 10% of any forest coupe to be excluded from logging, regardless of threatened species needs or expert advice.

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<sup>22</sup>Forest Practices Authority (2014) *Threatened Fauna Advisor User Manual Version 0.2*

[http://www.fpa.tas.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/file/0016/113227/Threatened\\_Fauna\\_Advisor\\_2014\\_User\\_Manual.pdf](http://www.fpa.tas.gov.au/__data/assets/file/0016/113227/Threatened_Fauna_Advisor_2014_User_Manual.pdf), p3

<sup>23</sup>Pullinger, P (2015) *Pulling a Swiftie*, <http://www.et.org.au/swiftie>

<sup>24</sup>Wilderness Society (2015) *An Opportunity for Genuine Reform: Replacing the Regional Forest Agreements*, p7, [http://www.wilderness.org.au/sites/default/files/PDFS/TWS\\_RFA\\_Reform\\_Report\\_FA\\_Web\\_HR\\_SinglePages.pdf](http://www.wilderness.org.au/sites/default/files/PDFS/TWS_RFA_Reform_Report_FA_Web_HR_SinglePages.pdf)

<sup>25</sup>The Wilderness Society, Environmental Defenders Office Tasmania (2015) *State Forests, National Interests: A Review of the Tasmanian RFA*, [https://www.wilderness.org.au/sites/default/files/TAS/TWS\\_Tasmanian\\_RFA\\_Report\\_FA\\_Web.pdf](https://www.wilderness.org.au/sites/default/files/TAS/TWS_Tasmanian_RFA_Report_FA_Web.pdf)

<sup>26</sup>through the 2014 FPA-DPIPWE ‘Agreed Procedures’ document

[http://www.fpa.tas.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0010/57718/FPA\\_and\\_DPIPWE\\_agreed\\_procedures\\_2014.pdf](http://www.fpa.tas.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0010/57718/FPA_and_DPIPWE_agreed_procedures_2014.pdf)

As the April 2015 Environment Tasmania report *Pulling a Swiftie*<sup>27</sup> documented, this 10% limit is enforced by decisions of senior DPIPWE civil servants to ignore both the threatened fauna advisor and expert recommendations. Given Forestry Tasmania's continuation of unaltered logging operations in important swift parrot habitat since April 2015, and the scheduling of coupes in the three year plan in swift parrot areas, it appears likely that this situation is ongoing.

To-date, public discussion on the threatened fauna advisor and duty of care has focused on this failed implementation in respect to swift parrots. The following analysis seeks to inform discussion by quantifying what is required to fully implement the advisor in the context of new logging plans on public land.

### **Analysis**

Analysis was conducted using Threatened Fauna Advisor requirements inferred from a 'dry run' test of the advisor, using the following method.

A coupe known to satisfy the Threatened Fauna Advisor eligibility requirements relevant to swift parrots was identified using GIS analysis. This coupe (FN014C) was then run through the online threatened fauna advisor tool,<sup>28</sup> resulting in a set of outcome recommendations (see Appendix 3). This process was repeated for several other coupes to confirm consistency.

The eligibility requirements for a coupe being subject to the advisor were modelled for coupes on the three year plan. That is, being located in a SPIBA and a swift parrot core habitat area, and having less than 30% of the forest within a 5km radius of the coupe centre containing mature (high and medium density category) habitat.

The habitat management requirements that would need to be implemented within eligible logging coupes to fully meet the Threatened Fauna Advisor were then modelled:

- Exclusion of mature (high and medium density) habitat greater than 1 hectare in size from logging
- Areas of *Eucalyptus globulus* where 90% of blue gums greater than 80cm in diameter must be retained, and

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<sup>27</sup> Pullinger, P (2015) *Pulling a Swiftie*, <http://www.et.org.au/swiftie>

<sup>28</sup> [http://www.fpa.tas.gov.au/fpa\\_services/planning\\_assistance/advisory\\_planning\\_tools/threatened\\_fauna\\_advisor](http://www.fpa.tas.gov.au/fpa_services/planning_assistance/advisory_planning_tools/threatened_fauna_advisor)

- Areas of mature (low density category) habitat where 90% of potential nesting trees must be retained.

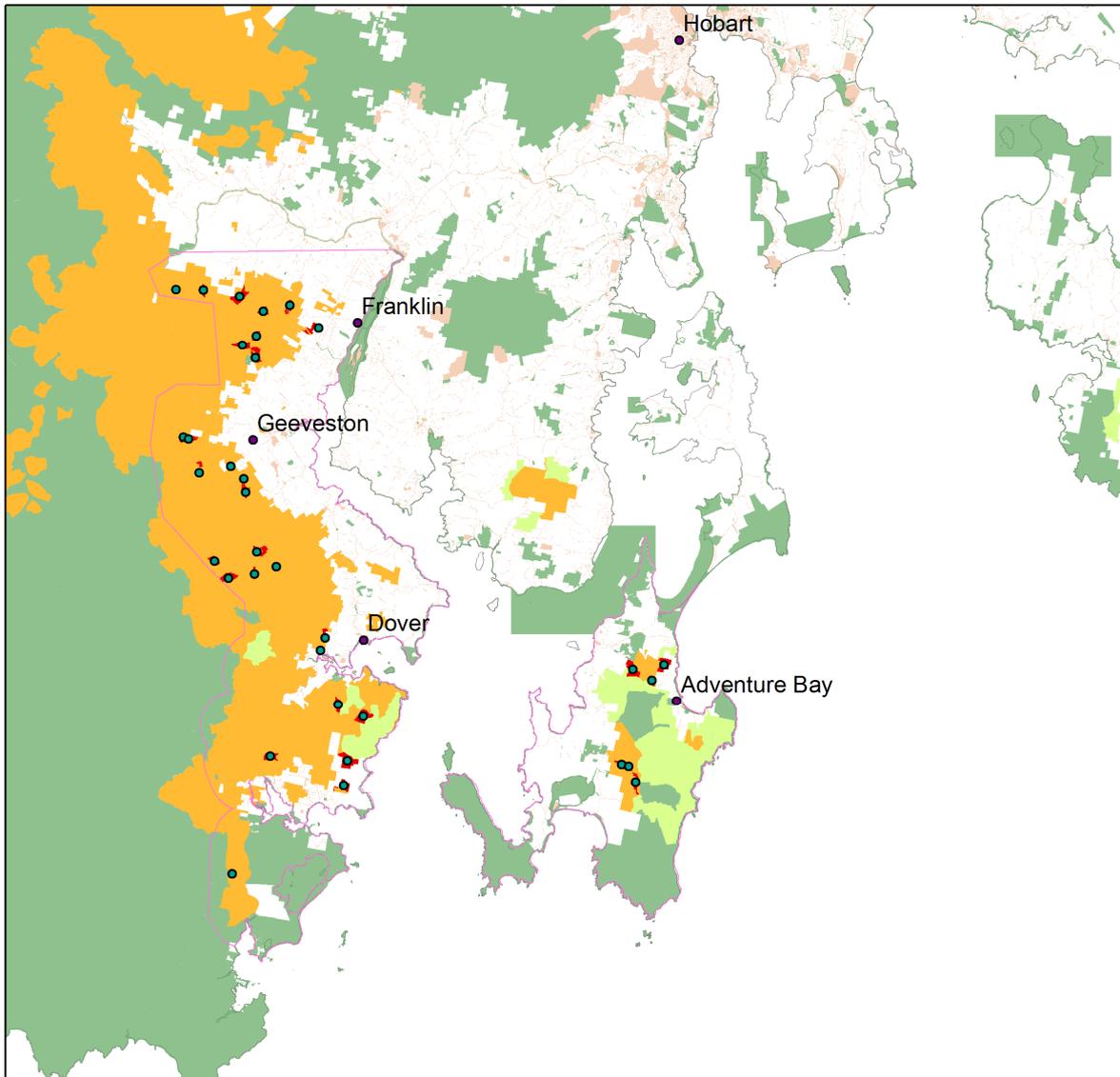
### ***Results***

The results for each coupe can be viewed in Appendix 2.

**34 of three year plan coupes in swift parrot breeding areas require habitat protection under the advisor, as they contain important habitat and the surrounding forest landscape has insufficient remaining habitat. All of these are in the Southern Forests or Bruny Island Swift Parrot Important Breeding Areas (see Map 4, Table 4).**

Specifically, analysis shows these 34 coupes contain foraging or mature nesting habitat greater than 1ha *and* occur in areas where the percentage of mature forest (high and medium density) is less than 30% in the surrounding 5 kilometres.

**Key forests include those directly above the township of Franklin; the Kermandie Divide, overlooking Geeveston; South Bruny Island; Tyler's Hill, south east of Dover; and the Hopetoun/Esperance forests west of Dover.**



**Map 4:  
Native forest coupes requiring Threatened Fauna Advisor protections  
for Swift Parrot**

- Native forest coupes requiring Fauna Advisor protections
- South Bruny and Southern Forests SPIBA
- Permanent Timber Production Zone Land
- Protected Area
- Future Potential Production Forest
- Other Public Lands
- Private Land
- Towns

**Table 4 – Forest areas on three year plan with swift parrot habitat and where less than 30% of surrounding forest has hollows**

Forest	Forest block code	Number of coupes	Hectares of Swift parrot habitat in coupes
Franklin	FN	8	185
South Bruny	SB	6	183
Kermandie Divide	KO	7	146
Hopetoun/Esperance	HP/EP	6	119
Tyler's Hill	SO	5	93
Arve	AR	1	11
Lune River	LU	1	1

Under the current application of the Threatened Fauna Advisor, where a coupe has inadequate levels of surrounding mature forest, contains mature habitat, and that habitat is proposed to be logged, advice is sought from the FPA. The FPA then commissions expert advice. Currently, if the expert advice recommends excluding areas from logging, this is invariably ignored by DPIPW, and logging proceeds in swift parrot habitat areas.<sup>29</sup>

The analysis showed the following outcome if the Threatened Fauna Advisor prescriptions were fully applied as mandatory:

- a) **High and medium density hollow tree habitat:** 319 hectares of forest in 22 coupes would be excluded from logging. This represents 0.04% of the area managed by Forestry Tasmania for logging, and just over 1% of the area of native forest coupes on the three year plan.
- b) **Blue Gum feeding habitat:** An additional 78 ha of blue gum forest in 10 coupes would need to have 90% of trees over 80cm in width retained.
- c) **Low density hollow tree habitat:** 360 hectares of forest in 26 coupes would need to have 90% of nesting trees retained. Again, this represents 0.04% of the area

<sup>29</sup> Pullinger, P. (2015) *Pulling a Swiftie*, <http://www.et.org.au/swiftie>

managed by Forestry Tasmania for logging, and 1.3% of the area of native forest coupes on the three year plan.

- d) Total habitat: The total area of habitat across the 34 coupes that would need to be managed by harvest exclusion or tree retention is 738 hectares. This is less than 0.1% of the area managed by Forestry Tasmania, and 2.7% of the area of coupes on the 2015-18 three year plan.**

**Table 5 – Swift parrot habitat to be protected or have trees retained to meet threatened fauna advisor requirements in 2015-18 three year plan coupes**

	High and medium density habitat	Foraging habitat (excluding high and medium density)	Low density habitat	Total habitat <sup>30</sup>
Number of coupes containing habitat type	22	10	26	34
Hectares	319	78	360	738
Percentage of state forest	0.04	0.01	0.04	0.09
Percentage of three year plan native forest coupes (area)	1.17	0.28	1.32	2.71
Percentage of three year plan coupes in SPIBA (area)	14.6	3.56	16.48	33.81

<sup>30</sup> There is 19 hectares of forest that is both low density mature and blue gum foraging habitat

## Conclusion and recommendations

The increasingly desperate and visible plight of the swift parrot appears to have inextricable links with the efforts of Forestry Tasmania to attain higher levels of public and consumer confidence.

This paper has sought to contribute to the discussion on these issues by identifying areas that are critical for the survival of the species, and by seeking to quantify the hectare requirements of forest management interventions aimed at maintaining the viability of the swift parrot.

Current and growing scientific knowledge clearly indicates that the swift parrot is headed for extinction. It is indisputable that preventing extinction requires more aggressive habitat protections, along with rapid advances in protection from sugar glider predation, improvements in cooperation and governance, and ongoing research.

Based on the analysis presented in this paper, protection of important habitat currently threatened by logging on public land is achievable. It is recommended that the following steps are implemented to maximise the prospect of successful stabilisation and improvement in swift parrot populations:

1. Fully and immediately implement the threatened fauna advisor as mandatory, including the requirement to exclude all high and medium density habitat from logging, retain 90% of blue gums greater than 80cm in diameter in foraging habitat, and retain 90% of nesting trees in low density mature forest areas, where habitat is below 30% in the surrounding landscape. The FPA-DPIPWE 'Agreed Procedures' document should be amended to reflect this change.

This full and rigorous implementation ensures that the highest immediate risks are mitigated using existing regulation.

This change would impact approximately 2.5% of the area of native forest coupes on the 2015-18 three year wood production plan, or less than 0.1% of the permanent timber production zone.

2. Immediately exclude mature habitat and foraging habitat from logging in the Bruny Island Swift Parrot Important Breeding Area. This area has been identified as a critical priority for protection in the academic literature and the recent application to uplist the species to critically endangered.
3. Exclude mature habitat and foraging habitat from logging in other Swift Parrot Important Breeding Areas within 12 months. The Southern Forests SPIBA should be prioritised given the identified importance of habitat in these forests.

Given the increasing extinction risk and the role of mature habitat in buffering swift parrot nests from glider predation, aggressive habitat protection is required.

This forest area comprises only 3% of the area managed by Forestry Tasmania. Excluding this habitat after full implementation of the threatened fauna advisor provides an opportunity to conduct operational planning to accommodate implementation of this improved and proactive habitat management.

## Appendix

### Appendix 1 – 2015-18 three year plan coupes in Swift Parrot Important Breeding Areas (ranked by important habitat as a proportion of coupe area)

coupe	coupe area (ha)	mature habitat (ha)	globmap (ha)	total important habitat (ha)	important habitat as a proportion of coupe area
MC015D	40.9	40.9	0.0	40.9	1.00
TO030C	19.7	19.6	0.0	19.6	1.00
TO035A	69.0	69.0	0.0	69.0	1.00
TO081A	83.1	82.9	0.0	82.9	1.00
KD018A	44.5	44.3	5.0	44.3	0.99
SB017D	46.5	45.3	0.0	45.3	0.98
HP010C	16.0	15.2	0.0	15.2	0.95
HP022C	13.2	0.0	12.3	12.3	0.93
KD001B	23.2	21.2	0.0	21.2	0.91
SB004C	32.5	29.5	0.0	29.5	0.91
FN005D	35.9	32.1	0.0	32.1	0.89
TO006H	108.4	91.4	0.0	91.4	0.84
SB003B	93.3	57.2	58.5	75.6	0.81
MC012L	43.7	34.4	0.0	34.4	0.79
EP061B	24.1	18.7	0.0	18.7	0.78
KD040D	63.4	46.0	0.0	46.0	0.72
KD009F	30.9	21.9	0.0	21.9	0.71
EP059B	67.6	47.6	0.0	47.6	0.70
SO006A	53.6	32.5	5.5	36.5	0.68
FN014C	84.5	55.7	0.0	55.7	0.66
AR085H	16.8	10.7	0.0	10.7	0.63
FN028C	29.8	15.6	0.0	15.6	0.52
EP064E	37.9	19.5	0.0	19.5	0.51
SB016D	18.0	8.6	0.0	8.6	0.48
FN001G	43.3	20.3	0.0	20.3	0.47
KD018C	15.7	3.5	5.2	7.0	0.44
FN026A	58.3	23.9	0.0	23.9	0.41
FN036A	48.2	14.4	0.1	14.5	0.30
FN008D	41.3	11.2	0.0	11.2	0.27

SB016C	31.3	7.8	0.0	7.8	0.25
SB004D	77.5	18.4	0.0	18.4	0.24
SO049A	55.6	2.4	10.1	12.5	0.22
HP023F	31.5	0.9	6.6	6.6	0.21
KD004B	28.6	5.4	0.0	5.4	0.19
SO034A	92.0	17.1	0.0	17.1	0.19
FN032C	71.3	12.3	0.0	12.3	0.17
SO048F	117.5	18.9	2.4	20.4	0.17
SO013D	52.6	6.7	1.7	8.4	0.16
LU018A	16.1	1.3	0.0	1.3	0.08
KD018D	15.4	0.0	1.0	1.0	0.07
SH052C	210.6	9.9	0.0	9.9	0.05
FN001I	39.3	0.3	0.0	0.3	0.01
SO003A	40.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.00

**Appendix 2 – 2015-18 three year plan coupes in Swift parrot important breeding areas containing important habitat and with less than 30% mature habitat within 5kms (ranked by area of important habitat)**

<b>coupe</b>	<b>coupe area (ha)</b>	<b>proportion of mature habitat within 5kms</b>	<b>mature habitat patches (high and medium density) greater than 1 ha (ha)</b>	<b>globmap (ha)</b>	<b>mature habitat (low density) (ha)</b>	<b>total habitat (ha)</b>
SB003B	93.3	0.227	42.2	58.5	14.5	75.1
FN014C	84.5	0.126	51.8	0.0	3.9	55.7
EP059B	67.6	0.203	47.5	0.0	0.1	47.6
KD040D	63.4	0.146	23.3	0.0	22.6	45.8
SB017D	46.5	0.220	2.4	0.0	42.5	44.9
KD018A	44.5	0.198	0.0	5.0	44.2	44.2
SO006A	53.6	0.086	2.7	5.5	28.3	35.0
FN005D	35.9	0.123	32.1	0.0	0.0	32.1
SB004C	32.5	0.177	21.1	0.0	8.4	29.5
FN026A	58.3	0.077	0.0	0.0	23.9	23.9
KD009F	30.9	0.237	7.9	0.0	14.0	21.9
KD001B	23.2	0.176	13.1	0.0	8.1	21.2
SO048F	117.5	0.123	6.9	2.4	12.1	20.4
FN001G	43.3	0.145	5.8	0.0	14.5	20.3
EP064E	37.9	0.254	11.4	0.0	8.0	19.4

EP061B	24.1	0.118	6.3	0.0	12.4	18.7
SO034A	92.0	0.120	8.0	0.0	9.2	17.1
SB004D	77.5	0.159	4.5	0.0	12.4	16.9
FN028C	29.8	0.093	1.5	0.0	14.1	15.6
HP010C	16.0	0.117	0.0	0.0	14.7	14.7
FN036A	48.2	0.132	5.2	0.1	9.2	14.5
HP022C	13.2	0.059	0.0	12.3	0.0	12.3
FN032C	71.3	0.092	0.0	0.0	12.3	12.3
SO049A	55.6	0.127	0.0	10.1	2.0	12.1
FN008D	41.3	0.155	0.0	0.0	10.7	10.7
AR085H	16.8	0.122	10.5	0.0	0.2	10.7
SB016D	18.0	0.228	4.9	0.0	3.7	8.6
SO013D	52.6	0.109	6.7	1.7	0.0	8.4
SB016C	31.3	0.232	0.0	0.0	7.8	7.8
KD018C	15.7	0.176	3.3	5.2	0.2	7.0
HP023F	31.5	0.058	0.0	6.6	0.9	6.6
KD004B	28.6	0.172	0.0	0.0	5.4	5.4
LU018A	16.1	0.201	0.0	0.0	1.2	1.2
KD018D	15.4	0.171	0.0	1.0	0.0	1.0

**Appendix 3 – Threatened Fauna Advisor requirements for Swift parrots for coupe FN014C, accessed 10/08/2015**

**Swift parrot (Recommendation 11)**

**Within southeast part of potential breeding range; within core breeding range; less than 30% of the area within a 5 km radius of the central coordinates of the planned operation comprised of potential nesting-habitat (high- or medium-density mature habitat availability); native forest silviculture**

The proposed planning unit is in an area where there is a strong probability of Swift parrot breeding if suitable habitat is present.

The primary management objective for this species is to maintain the integrity of breeding-habitat by ensuring that sufficient levels and arrangement of important nesting-habitat and foraging-habitat are retained to support breeding in any given year.

Disturbance to potential nesting- and/or foraging-habitat within the potential breeding range must be minimised to help meet this objective. To achieve this, the

following actions are recommended.

#### General

- Report immediately to the FPA any evidence of a Swift parrot nest site and/or Swift parrots being present (heard or seen) inside or within 500 m of an planning unit during September to February. A specialist survey may be necessary to confirm presence of Swift parrots, nest sites and breeding records. Surveys will be co-ordinated by the FPA and Threatened Species Section (DPIPWE) specialists.

#### Nesting habitat

- Retain all confirmed/known nesting-trees within a 50 m exclusion zone. Contact the FPA if assistance is needed in confirming nest sites.
- Retain all areas of high-density nesting-habitat that exceed 1 ha.
- If the proposed planning unit is in a SPIBA, retain all patches of high- and medium-density nesting-habitat that are at least 1 ha in size, and retain 90% of nesting-trees in areas of low-density nesting-habitat. Where this cannot be achieved, **the Forest Practices Authority must be contacted for advice.**

#### Foraging habitat

- Outside of SPIBAs, retain all patches of high-density foraging-habitat that are at least 1 ha in size. Retain 50% of foraging-trees in areas of medium- and low-density foraging-habitat that are at least 1 ha in size (this can be achieved by retaining half the area in patches or by retaining half of the foraging-trees during an operation).
- Within SPIBAs, retain all high-/medium-density foraging-habitat patches that are at least 1 ha in size. In addition, retain 50% of foraging-trees in areas of low-density foraging-habitat (this can be achieved by retaining half the area in patches or by retaining half of the foraging trees during an operation).
- For operations in the Southern Forest SPIBA or the South Bruny SPIBA (where a large proportion of foraging-habitat is low-density foraging-habitat), retain 90% of *Eucalyptus globulus* and/or *Eucalyptus ovata* >80 cm dbh in areas where 1-20% of stems (>40 cm dbh) are *E. globulus* or *E. ovata*. Where this cannot be achieved, **the Forest Practices Authority must be contacted for advice.**

- If the planned planning unit has high densities (e.g. clearly greater than approximately 30% of all stems) of regrowth (e.g. most stems clearly less than approximately 40 cm dbh) *Eucalyptus globulus* and/or *Eucalyptus ovata*, **the Forest Practices Authority must be contacted for advice** because site-specific actions may be required (note: detailed habitat mapping is not required at this stage - it is sufficient to identify that the planned planning unit meets the broad thresholds).

***In accordance with the procedures for the management of threatened species agreed between DPIPW and FPA under section D3.3 of the Forest Practices Code the above is recommended in order to meet objectives for the management of threatened fauna in areas covered by the Tasmanian forest practices system. The recommended management actions must be applied to the relevant operation/situation\*, unless:***

1. *alternative management actions are accepted by the FPA as a way of meeting the management objective for the species; or*
2. *the actions recommended above together with the actions recommended by other relevant FPA planning tools individually or collectively exceed the duty of care thresholds in the Code. In such cases, unless the actions are to be achieved on a voluntary basis with the landowner the FPO must seek further advice from the FPA to determine whether modified actions can be formulated to achieve the management objective for the species within the duty of care thresholds, or whether the matter may need to be addressed through other legislative mechanisms.*

***Further advice must be sought from the Forest Practices Authority:***

- *if endorsed or recommended actions cannot be implemented (for any reason);*
- *if a variation is made to the Forest Practices Plan that affects threatened species not covered by the actions in the FPP; or*
- *if additional threatened species values are identified in the FPP area.*

***If agreement on management prescriptions cannot be reached by the FPO and FPA specialists the FPO must refer the case to the CFPO for a determination. If the applicant for the FPP is aggrieved by a decision to amend or refuse the FPP the applicant may lodge an appeal with the Forest Practices Tribunal pursuant to s.25 of the Forest Practices Act.***

*\*Note: Forest Practices Officers must ensure that the certified Forest Practices Plan includes all actions required for threatened fauna. Appropriate wording must be included in the certified Forest Practices Plan. The recommended management action must be worded such that the action is clear to landowners and those responsible for implementing the FPP (e.g. contractor and supervisors). The recommendations delivered via the Threatened Fauna Adviser should be used to develop management prescriptions appropriate to the operation and incorporated into the FPP. Note that simply transferring all of the wording from the*

*Threatened Fauna Adviser into an FPP will usually be inappropriate; selection and/or modification of phrasing is acceptable provided that the desired outcome is met.*

Recommendation accessed at: 10/08/2015

TFA version: 13/05/2015

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Coupe:FN014C