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Flying-Foxes under pressure in Ingham

North Queensland Conservation Council (NQCC) is concerned for the plight of flying foxes and would like to see community-awareness raising initiatives to foster better understanding of these animals.

A group of people in Ingham have expressed concern that flying foxes are taking up residence in urban areas. NQCC says that habitat clearing has reduced roost options for flying foxes and then puts pressure on urban roost sites.

“It’s important that the community, local governments and the Queensland Government all work together to protect roost sites and to make provisions for human safety,” said Tarquin Moon, NQCC Campaigns Manager.

“Flying foxes are under tremendous pressure with habitat loss and heat wave events. It is a worry because these animals play an important part in forest regeneration and keeping ecosystems healthy by helping to pollinate flowers and disperse seeds as they fly through the skies across to different forests.”

“They are incredibly misunderstood creatures, and concerns surrounding the spread of lyssavirus need to be informed by the correct information provided to the community.”

“We have seen recent heat waves cause the death of thousands of bats and many hundreds of orphaned and sick bats have found their way to overwhelmed wildlife carers. These people volunteer their time and are helping to protect these species.”

There are four species of flying fox found in mainland Australia: the Little Red Flying-Fox, Black Flying-Fox, Spectacled Flying-Fox and Grey-Headed Flying-Fox. The latter two species are listed as “vulnerable” by Australia’s Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act, and their extinction would have catastrophic implications for Australia’s forest ecosystems. The Ingham roost is among only two flying-fox roosts in the country to support all four species.

More information about the lyssavirus can be found here:

<http://conditions.health.qld.gov.au/HealthCondition/condition/14/217/10/australian-bat-lyssavirus>

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NQCC is the voice for the environment in North Queensland, campaigning as the peak non-government environmental organisation in our region since 1974. We protect the environment through advocacy and education, promote the values of the natural environment, and engage with policy and planning processes to advocate ecologically sustainable development. Our region covers the coast from Cardwell in the north, south to Bowen and west to the Northern Territory border