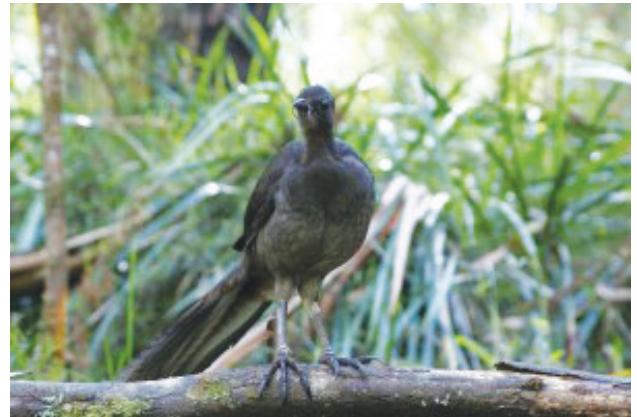




On Saturday 8th July was the 7th Annual Lyrebird Survey at Charles Reserve. Over 30 people attended which was a great turn out, and we'd like to thank everyone for coming along. Upon arrival we were blessed with a fairly still morning and some roaring fires courtesy of Don and Sue, who must have got there at a very early time to have it all set up.



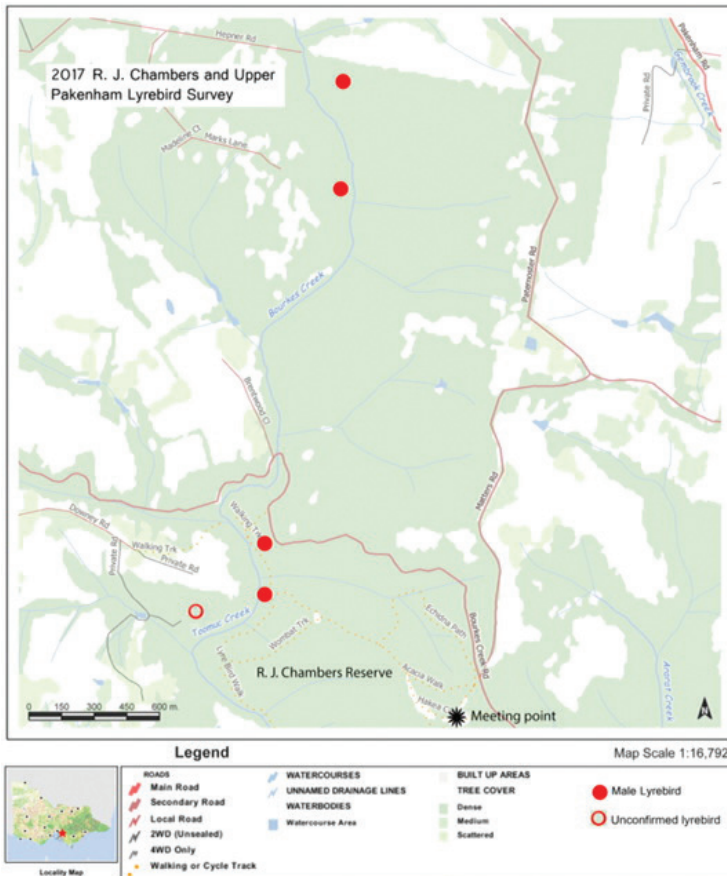
At approx 6.30am Alex Maisey gave us all a briefing of how to note the male adult Lyrebirds as they come down from their evening roosting locations and start their territorial call. The idea is that if we have people set up in certain locations around the reserve we can record their call and time and we can triangularly plot their location. Alex has explained that by adding 2.5 to the each adult male we hear calling we can calculate the size of the population of Lyrebirds in an area. In previous years we have usually found around 4 adult males. Therefore we can assume the population has been around 14 Lyrebirds in the Chambers Reserve.



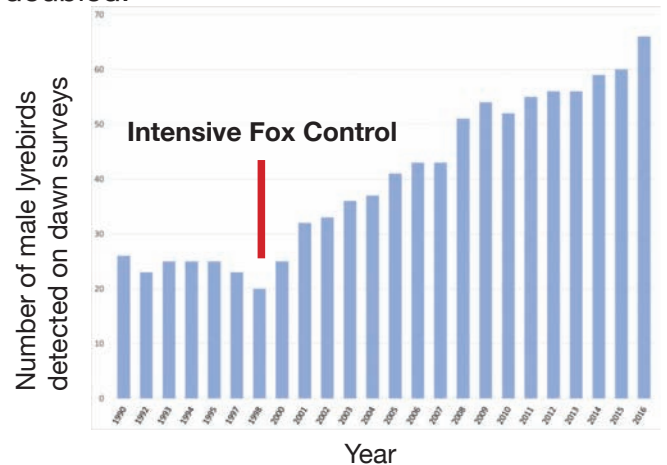
So we all headed off in groups to pre-determined locations to be ready to start recording at 7am. By 7.30am it was all done and we headed back to the picnic ground to warm up by the fires and enjoy some breakfast and coffee, again thanks to Don and Sue. The fact that most people stayed for awhile tells me that they enjoyed the food and the catch-up. It also gave Alex the opportunity to show some of the younger members of the group some videos of Lyrebirds singing and dancing.

After collating the recordings, unfortunately there is some very disturbing news. This year we have only recorded two birds calling.

This is a massive drop from 12 months earlier and of grave concern for the future of the entire Lyrebird population.



The obvious question is why? So we asked Alex who has a long history with the Sherbrook Lyrebird Group. “This is most likely the result of killings caused by feral foxes and cats in the area”. He was able to show us some graphs of how they had a similar problem around the turn of the century. Since then however, they have been able to reduce the impact the foxes have had and the Lyrebird numbers have over doubled.



The problem is the Lyrebird has very few native predators so no great defence from the likes of feral cats and foxes, so they can wipe out entire populations. The other concern is that these animals do not exclusively feed on Lyrebirds so they would be having a similar impact on all the native wildlife including the recently re-discovered bandicoots in the reserve.

Where to from Here?...

For us to be able to save these iconic Australian birds, we need to immediately re-start our trapping and baiting program.

How Can You Help?

To be successful in this campaign we need to get support from the wider community, especially those who live close to Chambers Reserve. Foxes can travel several kilometres in a night in search of food, and shooters who have been operating on private properties in the area have been staggered by the high numbers of foxes in the area.



Dead Lyrebird. Coloured rings are the bird's identification bands.

List Of Things You Can Do:

- Join the Toomuc Landcare Group.
- Tell us if you would be willing to have your property as part of the fox reduction program.
- Come to our next Lyrebird Survey.
- Check out our website: www.toomuclandcare.com.au