

White-footed Dunnart + 18 other species in a week on the NSW South Coast



White-footed Dunnart

We had a fantastic week on the New South Wales south coast (Australia) seeing 19 mammal species. Our purpose was to look for White-footed Dunnart which we found at 2 places – making this mammal #200 for us in Australia – so a great success.

David Andrew, my wife Kathy, and I were discussing that there was a mammal, only a few hours drive away, that would be new for us all. So, using various references including very helpful advice from the authors of a couple of posts on Facebook pages we set off to the New South Wales south coast to search for a White-footed Dunnart. David joined us for the week-end at Tathra, whereas Kathy and I made a week of it, camping at 2 other places.

These marsupial carnivores are nocturnal, about 8-10 cm long (HB) and weigh around 25 gms so finding them with eye-shine alone is pretty much impossible, however using a thermal you can at least find where you should be shining your torch.

Our first night was in Eurobodalla National Park. **Common Brush-tailed Possums** and **Swamp Wallabies** were everywhere around the campground. Out in the dunes were many **House Mice** and **Eastern Grey Kangaroos**. This is also where we found our first **White-footed Dunnart**.

Very excited – these little mammals are usually so active that it is often hard to get them to stay still long enough to work out what species you are looking at, especially after many false starts with many hot spots turning into a House Mouse. However, one animal stayed still long enough

for us to be sure of ID as well as get some photos (although the camera seemed to have an issue, with black lines through the photo). And being mammal #200 in Australia made it even more special.



Broad-toed Feather-tailed Glider

A cabin at Tathra was our base for the next 3 nights and was another target spot to look for the Dunnarts in bush nearby. We were successful on 2 of 3 nights there. This proved to be very productive bush where we saw 12 species in all. Other species, we were particularly pleased to see were **Agile Antechinus** and **Broad-toed Feather-tailed Glider**. The latter was only the second one we have ever seen and the first in southern Australia where both species of Feather-tailed Glider occur. A photo showed the naked tail-tip hence the positive ID compared to all the Narrow-toed we have seen elsewhere in NSW. These gliders are tiny at around 7 cm HB and 15 g in weight.



Common (or Eastern) Ring-tailed Possum

Bittangabee Bay and Green Cape in Beowa National Park was our final destination. Our 3 days and nights here revealed 10 species, so also a very good place. Seeing many **Common Wombats** on the lawns around the lighthouse at night was very nice. Luckily they are habituated and don't run off. **Feather-tailed** Gliders were also seen in many trees around Bittangabee Campground, but they didn't stay still for long enough to get a photo. Despite lots of looking we were unable to find any Eastern Pygmy Possums here which we have had success with in the past. Two qualifying statements should be made for full disclosure: (1) in previous visits to Bittangabee Bay we have been able to confirm that the Feather-tailed Gliders were Narrow-toed, so that is what we have recorded here, even though we didn't have photos on this occasion. And (2) the range boundary published for Sugar Gliders (*Petaurus breviceps*) and Krefft's Gliders (*P. notatus*) is right around this area, so we were not prepared to call our sightings to species level. [Meaning that we had 18 species positively identified in total for the week and possibly 19 if the Beowa NP ones were Krefft's Gliders.]



Common Wombat

Species List

1	Long-nosed Bandicoot	<i>Perameles nasuta</i>	Tathra (1)
2	Agile Antechinus	<i>Antechinus agilis</i>	Tathra (1)
3	White-footed Dunnart	<i>Sminthopsis leucopus</i>	Eurobodalla NP (1) Tathra (4)
4	Common Wombat	<i>Vombatus ursinus</i>	Green Cape (5)
5	Common Brush-tailed Possum	<i>Trichosurus vulpecula</i>	everywhere
6	Broad-toed Feather-tailed Glider	<i>Acrobates frontalis</i>	Tathra (1)
7	Narrow-toed Feather-tailed Glider	<i>Acrobates pygmaeus</i>	Beowa NP (3)*
8	Sugar Glider	<i>Petaurus breviceps</i>	Tathra (3n)
9	<i>Petaurus</i> sp	<i>P. breviceps</i> or <i>P. notatus</i>	Beowa NP (1n)*
10	Eastern Ring-tailed Possum	<i>Pseudocheirus peregrinus</i>	Tathra & Beowa
11	Eastern Grey Kangaroo	<i>Macropus giganteus</i>	everywhere
12	Red-necked Wallaby	<i>Notamacropus rufogriseus</i>	Eurobodalla NP (1)
13	Swamp Wallaby	<i>Wallabia bicolor</i>	everywhere
14	Feral/Domestic Cat	<i>Felis catus</i>	Tathra (1)
15	New Zealand Fur Seal	<i>Arctocephalus forsteri</i>	Narooma (1) Green Cape (many)
16	Grey-headed Flying Fox	<i>Pteropus poliocephalus</i>	Beowa (many)
17	European Rabbit	<i>Oryctolagus cuniculus</i>	Green Cape (1)
18	House Mouse	<i>Mus musculus</i>	Eurobodalla NP (many)
19	Australian Bush Rat	<i>Rattus fuscipes</i>	Tathra (1)

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