

Meet your plant and animal
neighbours

Parent pack



Explore Campbelltown

Campbelltown is home to a huge array of plants and animals as well as the many different habitat types that they call home. We are bordered by the Nepean River to the west and the Georges River to the east with many waterways that drain to each. The underlying geology of Campbelltown influences soil types which in turn shapes the vegetation that grows and the animals that live within them.

The Georges River Corridor is a key area for biodiversity and also holds a rich cultural history to the traditional owners, the Dharawal Aboriginal people who lived on and managed the lands across Campbelltown and beyond for thousands of years.

Places such as the Basin, Freres Crossing, Simmos Beach and the Dharawal National Park are a short car trip away for our residents and visitors, whilst urban biodiversity hotspots like Smiths Creek and Noorumba Reserve might be right over your back fence to explore.

and Learn

What tree is that?

Trees provide us with clean air to breathe by trapping carbon from the air and turning it to oxygen. They provide shade on hot days, amenity in our parks and provide habitat for our wildlife. In bushland areas trees are part of a vegetation community, this is the name for the combination of plants that are found together in one area and are generally influenced by soil type and topography. All of the plants within these communities provide habitat to Campbelltown's special and important animals. Habitat is another word for home.

At your house, think about all the things you need to survive:

- Air
- Water
- Food
- Shelter

Animals also need all of these things to survive, although their homes look a little different to ours.

Let's discover the main habitat types in Campbelltown:

Cumberland Plain Woodland

Found on shale-clay soils on the western side of Campbelltown near Varroville, St Andrews and Raby. Unfortunately over many years Cumberland Plain Woodland trees have been cleared, first for farmland and now houses and roads. As a result of the clearing, only 6% of its original extend is left, approximately 5,000 hectares or 10,000 football fields. In 2009 Cumberland Plain Woodland was listed as Critically Endangered which means that all efforts must be made to protect it before it is all gone.

Cumberland Plain Woodland is made up of the following trees:

Forest Red Gum (*Eucalyptus tereticornis* or *Buringo* in D'harawal)

- A tall tree growing up to 50m high.
- Smooth barked, white or grey that sheds in large plates or flakes.
- It gets its name from its distinctive reddish colour timber.
- Also often found along river-flats.
- Can flower all year round in response to rainfall.
- Was used for construction of railways as sleepers.
- Its leaves are a secondary food source for our koalas.

Grey Box (*Eucalyptus moluccana* or *Terriyergro* in D'harawal)

- A medium sized tree up to 35m high.
- The grey bark is rough lower down on the trunk and smooth higher up the trunk above the first main branches where it sheds in long ribbons.
- Flowers all year round in response to rainfall.
- Its leaves are a secondary food source for our koalas.

Shale-Sandstone Transition Forest

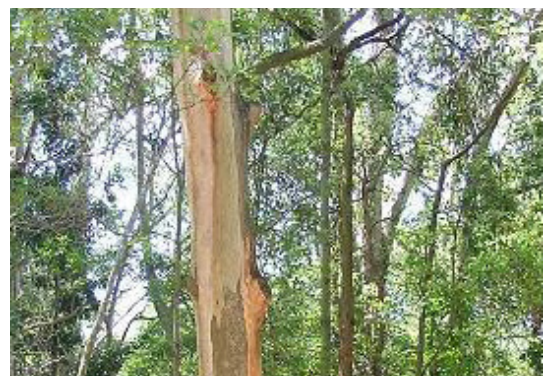
Found on shale-sandstone areas to Campbelltown's east towards the Georges River and through Kentlyn, Minto Heights, Long Point and Wedderburn. Over many years Shale Sandstone Transition Forest has suffered from being cleared for farmland and now houses and roads. It is estimated that only 22 per cent of its original extend remains or approximately 10,000 hectares or 20,000 football fields. In 2014 it was also listed as Critically Endangered.

Grey Gum (*Eucalyptus punctata*)

- A medium sized tree up to 35m high.
- Smooth-barked that is shed in late summer creating beautiful patterns of sandstone orange, cream and grey shapes.
- For the remainder of the year it is grey, hence its name.
- White flowers burst out in summer.
- Its leaves are a primary food source for our koalas, their favourite.

Narrow-leaved Ironbark (*Eucalyptus crebra* or *Muggago* in D'harawal)

- A medium sized tree up to 35m high.
- The bark is grey-black, thick and extends the whole way up the tree.
- An important source of nectar in the honey industry.
- Can flower all year round in response to rainfall.
- Very strong, durable and heavy timber used in construction.
- The rough bark is crumbly and a good home for invertebrates and is a good feeding place for small birds such as tree creepers and thorn bills.



Sydney Sandstone communities

Sydney sandstone communities are found in areas along the coastline generally no further than 30kms inland from the ocean. These areas are abundant in the Sydney region due to the infertile and free draining nature of the soils, their location is generally on steeper slopes and large sandstone outcrops. For these reasons these areas provided minimal use to humans, particularly for intensive agriculture. These are found further to the east of Campbelltown in both steep gullies and on ridgetops that extend all the way to the ocean.

Ridge-top Forest

Sydney Red Gum (*Angophora costata* or *Yeh-dthedeh* in Dharawal)

- A very variable tree typically medium sized up to 25m.
- The most characteristic tree of sandstone Sydney.
- Smooth grey bark that is shed in early summer when it changes to a bright sandstone orange colour.
- Flowering occurs from late spring to early summer.
- Forms beautiful twisted shapes and readily drops branches forming hollows for animals.

Red Bloodwood (*Corymbia gummifera* or *Boona* in Dharawal)

- A small – medium sized tree typically up to 20m high.
- Has a rough corky bark.
- In season produces large amounts of flowers that are an important nectar source for a range of wildlife.
- Flowers in late summer.
- The Dharawal Aboriginal people used the trees sap or 'resin' as a glue for weaving with cabbage tree palm leaves and for tooth aches and mouthwash.

Scribbly gum (*Eucalyptus haemastoma*)

- A very variable tree typically medium sized up to 25m.
- Bark smooth, with scribbles, white or grey or yellow, shedding in short ribbons.
- Flowers from Spring to Autumn.
- Scribbles are created by the larvae of the scribbly gum moth as they munch through the under layers of bark. As the outer layers are shed the trails of the moth larvae are revealed.

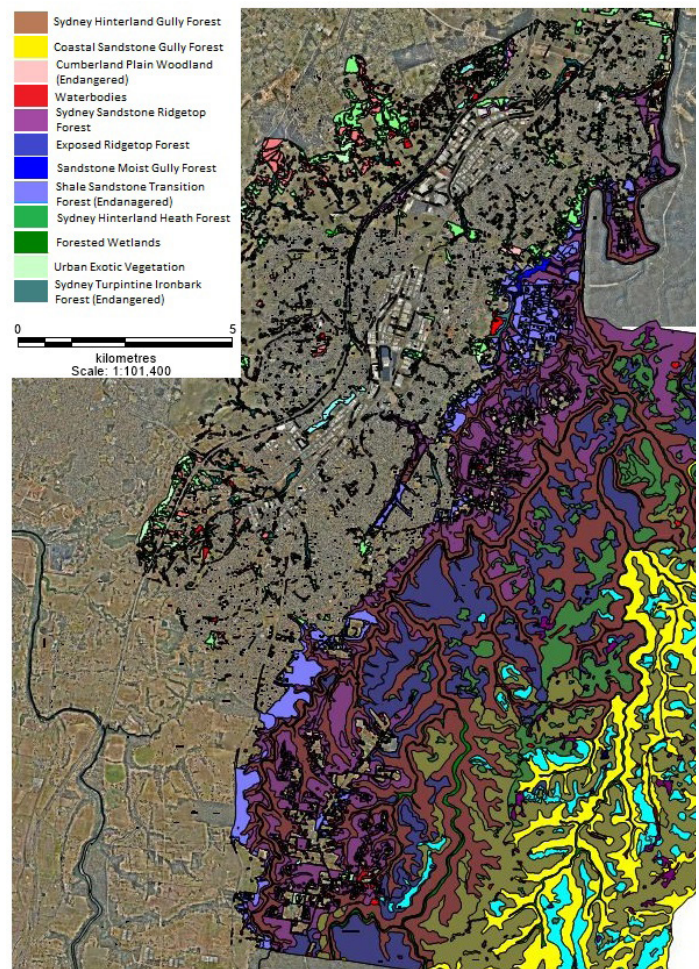
Gully Forest

Turpentine (*Syncarpia glomulifera* or *Booreeah* in Dharawal)

- A tall tree growing up to 55m high.
- A dense dark cover of leaves quite different to most gums, a prominent shelter tree for koalas but its leaves are not eaten.
- Has a dark fissured bark twisting up the trunk – like a barley sugar.
- Has distinctive UFO style seed-pods.
- Flowers late winter to early summer.
- Has very strong water resistant timber that was particularly useful for pylons in wharves (e.g. Sydney Harbour).
- The Dharawal Aboriginal people ate the flowers and seeds, made tools from the hard wood and used the sap to stain tools and weapons.

Blackbutt (*Eucalyptus pilularis* or *Yarr-warrah*, *Yerrawarra* in Dharawal)

- A very tall tree up to 70m high.
- Found in the sheltered deeper soils of creek lines.
- The grey brown bark is rough half way up the trunk then smooth white to grey higher up where it sheds in long ribbons.
- Flowers late spring to early summer or mid-summer to mid-autumn.
- Important timber tree – straight hard wood.



What about our unique animals?

Campbelltown is home to some of Australia's most iconic species, from our furry koalas to platypus in the Georges and Nepean Rivers and common species such as wallabies and wombats. Many of these animals had cultural significance to the Dharawal Aboriginal people, some were noted as totem species that were inherited by members of a clan or family as their spiritual emblem, some were eaten for food and many others were used for traditional clothing.

Most native animals require special environments and specific habitat to survive, whether this be tall trees in untouched bushland, healthy waterways free of pollution or grasslands with ample critters to eat.

Many animals we have in Campbelltown are nocturnal, meaning that the chances of seeing them during the day are limited because they are mainly active during the night whilst everyone else is sleeping.



Have you seen any of these animals in Campbelltown?

Koala (*Phascolarctos cinereus* or *Kurilwa* in Dharawal)

- Koalas are marsupials meaning they raise their young in a pouch.
- There are approximately 300 koalas in Campbelltown.
- We have one of the last remaining populations in the Sydney basin and one of the only disease free populations in NSW unaffected by chlamydia.
- Koalas mainly live in areas to the east of Campbelltown in Shale Sandstone Transition Forest however sometimes venture out onto the Cumberland Plain clay soils for more nutrient filled leaves.
- Koalas feed on 6 different species of gum tree leaves in Campbelltown and these leaves are toxic to most animals.
- The leaves are nutritionally quite poor so to save energy, they can spend over 20 hours a day asleep.
- To help our koalas, always walk your dog on a leash and encourage people to drive carefully at night and be aware of wildlife
- The Dharawal Aboriginal people used koalas for their meat and fur.

Platypus (*Ornithorhynchus anatinus* or *Jummalung* in Dharawal)

- Platypus are known to exist in both the Nepean and Georges Rivers in Campbelltown.
- The platypus is one of only five mammal species in the world that lays eggs. These species are known as monotremes.
- Platypus are an aquatic species that feeds on aquatic invertebrates which they forage for underwater. To catch their prey they pick up electrical signals through receptors in their bill.
- They raise their puggles (young platypus) in a long burrow in a riverbank.
- Male platypus have venomous spurs on their hind-legs. It is suspected that the spurs are for competition for mates, not for protection.
- When first discovered by Europeans in 1799, platypus were judged as fake and suspected to be made of several animals sewn together.

Swamp Wallaby (*Wallabia bicolor* or *Buruell* in Dharawal)

- The swamp wallaby is one of four species of kangaroo/wallaby/wallaroo that live in the Campbelltown area (common wallaroo,

eastern grey kangaroo, swamp wallaby, red-necked wallaby).

- They have a grey coat, with a dark brown to black back and light yellow to orange chest.
- They are a small macropod marsupial, meaning they only eat plants and raise their young in a pouch.
- They can grow up to 76cm in height and weigh up to 17 kg.
- The swamp wallaby is the only living member of the genus *Wallabia*.
- The Dharawal Aboriginal people used swamp wallabies for their meat and used their skin as cloaks as well as presents that were decorated and given to other tribes.

Common Wombat (*Vombatus ursinus* or *Gulung* in Dharawal)

- Wombats are uncommon and found only in small numbers in the western districts often along farmland creek lines, such as the western areas of Campbelltown.
- Wombats are nocturnal marsupials meaning they are active only at night and raise their young in a pouch.
- There are 4 species of wombats, the common wombat (NSW, SA and TAS), the southern hairy-nosed wombat (SA) and the very rare northern hairy nosed wombat (QLD).
- Wombats live in burrows (holes in ground) that can be a home or also a fire refuge to many other smaller animal species.
- Wombats have proportionately the largest brains of any marsupial mammal and they do square poos.
- The Dharawal Aboriginal people used wombats for their meat and its fat was rubbed into the skin of new born babies to keep them warm.

Gliders (*Petaurus spp* or *Bunggu* in Dharawal)

- Gliders are arboreal, nocturnal marsupials meaning they live in trees nocturnal, are only active at night and raise their young in a pouch.
- Most are omnivorous, feeding on nectar, pollen, seeds, and insects and in the case of Sugar and Squirrel Gliders – on small birds and their eggs.
- Gliders are a family of possums that have skin that stretches between their front & back legs which allows them to glide from tree to tree.
- There are 6 species of glider in Australia, at least 3 of which have been recorded in Campbelltown.
- Sugar gliders are the most common species – about the size of a kitten. They eat a wide range of plant and animal life and make a distinctive ‘yip-yip’ call.

- Feather-tail gliders are the smallest species – the size of a mouse.
- Yellow-bellied gliders are cat-sized and have a loud shrieking call. They also lap tree sap from special grooves they cut with their incisor teeth.

Goanna/Lace monitor (*Varanus varius* or *Gindoala* in Dharawal)

- The Lace Monitor is one of the largest lizards in the world, sometimes reaching a length of 2m and weighing 14kg.
- Their body is dark grey to dull bluish-black with scattered, cream-coloured spots and the head is black and the snout is marked with black and yellow bands.
- Lace monitors eat a wide range of animal life including dead animals, eggs and young animals.
- When disturbed they often climb up the trunk of a tree where they can be easily observed.
- Many monitor species have mildly venomous bites, however can carry many diseases.
- The Goanna was a totem animal for the Thurruwal people and its eggs were eaten by Dharawal Aboriginal people.

Water dragon (*Intellagama lesueurii* or *Waruga* in Dharawal)

- The water dragon is the largest member of the large dragon family of lizards which are found across Australia.
- They are grey-brown in colour with black banding, and some have a red belly and chest.
- They have long powerful limbs and claws for climbing, a long muscular compressed tail for swimming and are common around creeks and dams through much of Sydney.
- They can be quite tame and often allow people to approach quite close to them.

Red-bellied black snake (*Pseudechis porphyriacus* or *Moondaar* in Dharawal)

- The red-bellied black snake is one of the many Australian venomous snake species that are potentially lethal to humans although no deaths have been recorded.
- Fortunately they are not usually aggressive and will leave you alone if you leave them alone.
- They can grow to 2m in length and have glossy black upperparts, bright red or orange flanks, and a pink or dull red belly.
- They are normally found around waterways and mainly feed on frogs and small lizards.
- They are good swimmers, once one was reported as staying submerged for 23 minutes.

What bird is that?

Campbelltown is home to over 250 different species of birds from cockatoos to corellas to king parrots to honey eaters and our many birds of prey. Some species can be found in urban areas like your backyard or you'll have to venture to local bushland or to water bodies such as lakes or rivers to see others.

We even have birds that travel from thousands of kilometres away each year, either stopping here for a break in their lengthy journey or to breed. They then make the trip back to their home. We have compiled a list of common bird species as well as some that are very rarely seen – to find these you'll have to keep your eyes and ears open at all times.



Gang-Gang cockatoo (*Callocephalon fimbriatum*)

Brown goshawk (*Accipiter fasciatus* or *Bibburdugang* in Dharwal)

- A large bird of prey common in local bushland and leafy suburbs.
- A fierce and agile hunter that specialises in hunting other birds which it chases through the trees & catches in mid-flight with its long legs and sharp claws called talons.
- Has a brown head, grey to brown upperparts with a red-brown neck, and finely barred underparts of red-brown with white.
- The alarm calls of smaller birds can often alert you to the presence of a brown goshawk, often the smaller birds will gang-up together to chase the goshawk away.

Gang-Gang cockatoo (*Callocephalon fimbriatum*)

- Campbelltown is home to as many as nine different species of cockatoos, generally most well-known are the sulphur crested.
- Gang gangs are threatened species of cockatoo found only in forests across coastal and mountain areas of Victoria and NSW.
- They are commonly known for their cute curly mohawks, better known as crests.
- Males have a red head and crest, with the rest of the body grey.
- Adult females have a dark grey head and crest, with the under feathers pink and yellow.
- They have a distinctive call that sounds like a creaky door, similar to a cork being pulled from a bottle.
- Like most cockatoos and parrots they like to nest in large tree hollows.

King parrot (*Alisterus scapularis* or *Wullungurrit* in Dharawal)

- Campbelltown is home to as many as 16 species of parrots throughout the year, some, like the swift parrot, are migratory meaning they travel vast distances.
- King parrots are the largest parrot species found in Sydney (but still smaller than most cockatoos).
- Males have green backs and wings and red heads and bodies.
- Females and young birds are similar but have green heads and chests.
- When flying they often communicate with one another with a 'sneeze'-like call.
- Commonly seen in bushland and leafy suburbs.

Powerful owl (*Ninox strenua*)

- A threatened species of owl and the largest in Australia.
- They are dark grey-brown above, with white and off-white below.
- They can grow to 60cm in height and have a wingspan of up to 140cm.
- They have big, strong feet and sharp talons that help them catch prey like possums, flying foxes and even koalas.
- They eat their prey whole and later cough up the undigested remains of fur and bones in a dry poo-like pellet under their favourite roost tree.
- They nest in large hollows in trunks of big old gum trees.
- Powerful Owls mate for life (over 30 years in some cases) and pairs defend their territory year round – that's commitment.

Tawny frogmouth (*Podargus strigoides*)

- Often called frogmouth owls because they look like owls, however frogmouths in fact belong to a completely different family of birds.
- Like owls frogmouths are nocturnal and are predators meaning they are only active at night and they eat other animals.
- They are silver-grey in colour, slightly paler below and streaked and mottled with black and reddish-brown.
- Frogmouths are wonderfully well camouflaged and can look just like a stump of a branch which allows them to sleep uninterrupted through the day.
- They can be found in parks, bushland reserves and gardens.
- Unlike owls frogmouths catch their prey with their enormous bills before they swallow them whole.

Yellow-tufted honeyeater (*Lichenostomus melanops*)

- Honeyeaters are a very large family of bush birds that can be found across all states of Australia.
- They have long brush shaped tongues which allow them to effectively lap nectar from many species of flowers.
- They have an olive-yellow head with a broad black mask that extends from the base of the bill, over the eyes to the sides of the neck.
- The yellow-tufted honeyeater is one of the less common species found in the Sydney region and locally quite special.
- In the autumn hundreds of thousands of honeyeaters migrate from Victoria and mountain areas of southern NSW to spend the winter on the warmer coasts of NSW.

Lyrebird (*Menura novaehollandiae* or *Calboonya in Dharawal*)

- It is one of the world's largest songbirds and is renowned for its beautiful tail and romantic displays as well as its excellent mimicry.
- Lyrebirds are ancient Australian animals, with fossils dating back to about 15 million years ago.
- They are mainly dark brown on the upper body with greyish-brown underparts and red-tinged flight feathers.
- Adult males have tails up to 700mm long, consisting of sixteen feathers.
- The lyrebird was a totem animal for the Dharawal Aboriginal people. 'The lyrebird and the kookaburra' tells a story of a man whose totem was a lyrebird. He challenged all other birds that the lyrebird could imitate and excel in their songs. The only bird the lyrebird could not accurately imitate was the kookaburra.

Spotted pardalote (*Pardalotus punctatus*)

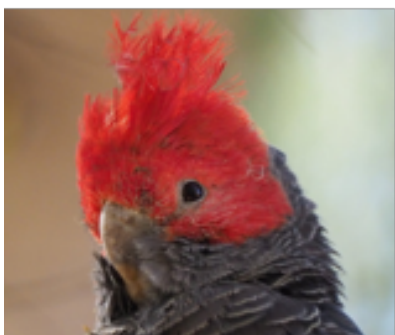
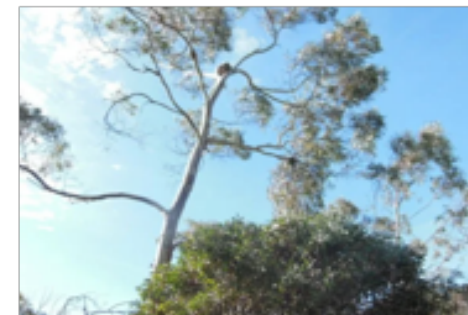
- One of Australia's smallest bush birds which are most often found high in a eucalypt canopy and detected by its characteristic call.
- Males have a pale eyebrow, a yellow throat and a red rump and the wings, tail and head are black and covered with small, distinct white spots.
- They forage on the foliage of trees for insects, especially psyllids and sugary extracts from leaves.
- Unusually for a bush bird they nest in burrows that they excavate in sandy banks.
- They have a distinctive and persistent 'poop-poop' call.

White-throated treecreeper (*Cormobates leucophaea*)

- One of a family of birds that feed by spiralling up tree trunks looking for small insects and spiders without backbones called invertebrates. They use their strong feet and tail feathers to cling on and balance themselves.
- They are dark brown with a distinctive white throat and chest. It has white streaks on its sides edged with black and the wings have a red bar that is visible in flight.
- Outside of the breeding season they often join other bush birds like honeyeaters and thornbills to form a feeding flock that roves around the forest. This method allows for many sets of eyes and ears looking out for predators like goshawks and sparrowhawks.
- They have a loud distinctive piping call that can be heard many hundreds of metres away.

Habitats of Campbelltown

Match each animal to its habitat





1. Look at the photo to the left, think of 10 animals and plants/trees that might live here?
Remember that all living things need food, water, shelter and a safe place to raise babies.

2. Draw five animals in their habitat.

3. Draw five plants in their vegetation community.

3. How would this habitat satisfy those needs for each plant/tree and animal?
Write a sentence for each:

4. Research some of the key threats to the loss of habitat.
Write five key threats:



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w campbelltown.nsw.gov.au
p 4645 4000