

Who lives in Walla Gum Swamp Reserve?

TALL TREES TO TINY SEDGES

At the Gum Swamp there are two types of vegetation - woodland areas and wetland areas. The most common plants are: River red gum, Grey box, Yellow box, Kidneyweed and Fuzzweed.

The River red gum tree is 30-metres in height and is a tree that grows in the wetland areas of the swamp. They can live to 1000 years old! After 100 years the tree will form hollows and make homes for many different types of creatures and birds.

In the wetlands you will find sedges and rushes. The wetland plants provide habitat for frogs, fish, water bugs and turtles.

In the woodland areas you will find many Grey box trees and plenty of native grasses.



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FLYING AT NIGHT

There are lots of micro-bats in Australia, and Gum Swamp is home to a number of these small mammals. Micro-bats eat many different types of pest insects including beetles, midgies, termites, mosquitoes and many, many more.

Gum Swamp is home to the vulnerable Fishing bat. This type of micro-bat is very interesting indeed. When the Fishing bat hunts for its food, it flies down to a lake, stream or a river and then skims the surface of the water to catch frogs, fish and insects in its claws. How amazing is that!

Make sure you keep an eye out for these elusive creatures when you visit Walla Gum Swamp Reserve upon dusk!



BOUNGING THROUGH

There are many mammals that call Gum Swamp home. You might find Eastern grey kangaroos, Red kangaroos, wombats, Swamp wallabies, Ringtail and Brushtail possums and even Squirrel gliders.

Red Kangaroos are new to the swamp. They are quite large with a reddish colour. They can grow up to 1.6 metres long. The Red kangaroo are herbivores, primarily eating grass but also eat forbs and leaves of shrubs in the woodland areas. They will sometimes bounce through the wetland. If you go to Gum Swamp you might just see one.



Walla Gum Swamp Reserve is located north of the town of Walla Walla in NSW. It is a large reserve of about 458ha. The dam in the middle of the woodlands is where the township got their water from. The Gum Swamp fills with water from Petries Creek and drains out into Billabong Creek. The Gum Swamp usually fills four out of ten years.

Wiradjuri people, the traditional owners of the land, used the swamp site as a source of water for most of the year. The trees were used to cut out coolamons and canoes. Today, the Gum Swamp provides homes for lots of native animals, an abundance of plants and a place of recreation for the local community.

BIRDS OF A FEATHER

At Gum Swamp there are a lot of different species of birds. You might spot honeyeaters, Grey fantails, Spoonbills, Black swans, Whistling kites and even the White-bellied sea-eagle.

The Grey fantail is a small insectivorous bird and lives in the woodland area. Their distinctive flying style has earned them the nicknames 'Mad Fans' or 'Cranky Fans'. You might be able to spot these fascinating birds by listening for their call.

In the wetlands, lots of waterbirds will be searching for food in the water. The sea-eagles will make their huge nests in the old gum trees above.



SCALY CRITTERS

Reptiles can be spotted sun baking at Gum Swamp, or they are hiding as there is so many safe places for them.

Most of these reptiles are hard to find but the most common to see are skinks. Sometimes if you look very carefully in the water bank you may see the Eastern Long Neck Turtle.

Other reptiles in Gum Swamp are Boulenger's skinks, Eastern brown snake, Robust ctenotus, Marbled gecko, Legless lizard and goannas.

The Goanna (Googar) is a totem animal for the Wiradjuri people. These reptiles are very sneaky so keep your eyes peeled to try and spot them.

