

FLYING FOXES AND HORSES

Flying foxes have been observed foraging in vegetation in the vicinity of horses in paddocks surrounding Moranbah. Flying foxes may also be establishing temporary camps in areas potentially frequented by horses.

Flying foxes play a vital role in ecosystem health.

They forage on the fruit of native rainforests and vines as well as the nectar and pollen of native trees (particularly Eucalyptus, Melaleuca and Banksia species).

As a consequence, flying foxes spread seed and pollen over long distances improving the health and diversity of native forests.

Three species of flying foxes are known to occur in the Isaac Regional Council area, the little-red flying fox (*Pteropus scapulatus*), the grey-headed flying fox (*Pteropus poliocephalus*) and the black flying fox (*Pteropus alecto*).

All are protected under state legislation and the grey-headed flying fox is protected under federal legislation.

FLYING FOXES, HORSES AND HENDRA VIRUS

Flying fox are hosts for Hendra virus which can be passed onto horses. These infections are rare and may result in the death of the horse.

Humans are only known to have been infected by Hendra virus via close contact with infected horses. There is no evidence that the virus can pass from flying foxes to humans directly.

Isaac Regional Council urges horse owners to take precautions to reduce the risk of infection to their horses.

- Contact your private veterinarian to have your horses vaccinated
- Do not place feed and water under trees
- Cover feed and water containers with shelter to avoid contamination from above
- Avoid leaving food out that could entice flying foxes such as apples, carrots or molasses
- Regularly inspect paddocks to identify flowering or fruiting vegetation
- Relocate horses away from flowering or fruiting vegetation which may be temporarily attracting flying foxes
- Consider temporary or permanent fencing to exclude horses grazing under fruiting or flowering vegetation
- Clean up and secure any fruit debris under trees before horses are returned to the paddock
- Consider stabling horses before dusk and overnight when flying foxes are most active

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As a general precaution all sick horses should be isolated from all other animals, including domestic pets.

If you suspect your horse has been infected contact your local veterinarian immediately. If you are concerned about your own health, contact your local doctor or local public health unit immediately.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
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