

## Tips for rural landholders

If you own or manage land with rocky areas or native grassland, please protect these key habitats:

- retain rocks in the landscape
- avoid ploughing, ripping or driving in rocky areas
- avoid “improving” or tree-planting in native grassland
- limit grazing and fertiliser use in these areas
- consider getting advice on the conservation value of your land and how you can enhance it

## Help for rural landholders

If you are interested in making your property more wildlife-friendly, you can contact us for help.

We would especially like to hear from people in Googong, Burra and Royalla, where we are working with landholders to survey, enhance and connect key habitat for pink-tailed worm lizards.

We can help with:

- site assessments
- advice on how to manage key habitat for pink-tailed worm lizards and other species
- information, contacts and invitations to events relevant to your conservation goals

We can also connect you with land management incentives and grants for conservation work, especially if your property has high conservation value.



## About the Molonglo Conservation Group

We are a registered not-for-profit body that delivers environmental programs and projects across the southern tablelands of the ACT and NSW.

- [www.molonglo.org.au](http://www.molonglo.org.au)
- [communications@molonglo.org.au](mailto:communications@molonglo.org.au)
- (02) 6299 2119

## Other useful contacts

- **NSW Government** 131 555  
[www.environment.nsw.gov.au](http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au)
- **ACT Government** (02) 6207 1923  
[www.environment.act.gov.au](http://www.environment.act.gov.au)
- **Your local Landcare group**  
There are Landcare groups throughout the region including at Googong, Burra and Royalla

### Acknowledgements

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Inside left bottom photo courtesy of herpetologist John Fowler  
[www.australianherpetology.com](http://www.australianherpetology.com)

Inside top photo of *Aprasia* habitat near Googong Township by MCG ecologist Dr Jasmyn Lynch

Outer panel photo of *Aprasia parapulchella*, Pink-tailed Worm-lizard, Mt Taylor Nature Reserve courtesy of Matthew Frawley

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# Save our Pink-tailed worm lizard



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**GOOGONG**

**SAVING OUR SPECIES**

## Meet the pink-tailed worm lizard

Pink-tailed worm lizards (*Aprasia parapulchella*) are one of Australia's tiniest and most mysterious reptiles.

They spend much of their lives underground in ant nests, where they feed on ant eggs and larvae.

Females generally lay 2 eggs in a clutch a year, and hatchlings can take up to four years to reach maturity.

Adults can grow up to 24 cm long. They have a dark head, grey-brown body, and a pinkish tail that they can drop to escape predators and then re-grow.

**Pink-tailed worm lizards are legless, so they are easy to confuse with baby snakes. Please don't handle them!**



If you do see a pink-tailed worm lizard, please get a photo and log details of your sighting with us, or with a citizen science website like the Canberra Nature Map ([canberra.naturemapr.org](http://canberra.naturemapr.org)).



## Where do pink-tailed worm lizards occur?

Pink-tailed worm lizards are a threatened species found only in NSW, the ACT and Victoria.

In the Canberra region, pink-tailed worm lizards are most often found in a corridor of land that runs from the Googong Reservoir across to Mount Taylor, and out along the Molonglo Valley. They prefer:

- rocky slopes
- native grasses, especially Kangaroo Grass (*Themeda triandra*)
- certain species of ant, especially *Iridomyrmex rufoniger*

## What is being done to save this species?

We are managing a \$1m project to protect these tiny lizards. This 6-year project, which is jointly funded by Googong Township and the NSW Government Saving Our Species Fund, will support an extensive conservation program including:

- creation and management of a new 30ha sanctuary on the edge of Googong Township
- community education and workshops
- working with landholders throughout the Googong, Burra and Royalla region to identify and protect key habitat

*Each pink-tailed worm lizard has a unique scale pattern on its head that can be used to identify it throughout its lifetime.*

## Known threats to pink-tailed worm lizards

The main threat to this species is habitat destruction, in the form of:

- rock removal
- ploughing
- heavy grazing
- exotic pasture grasses
- weeds like African lovegrass and serrated tussock
- tree-planting in natural grasslands
- land clearing

## How you can help pink-tailed worm lizards

The best thing you can do is leave bush rocks alone. If you want to add rocks to your property:

- ask your supplier where the rock is from
- only use rock salvaged from approved sources or development projects

## What about cats?

Cats are a threat to pink-tailed worm lizards and many other threatened species, so please don't let your cat roam. For tips on catproofing your house and yard, check out the *RSPCA Guide to Keeping Your Cat Safe and Happy At Home*.