

MEDIA RELEASE

Contact: Ronan Carroll Ph: 5150 4434



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Only high fliers need apply!

A pair of rare, high flying young nesters are being sought for a prime East Gippsland Water location in the centre of Bairnsdale.

On offer is a room with a view to dive for; comprising one nesting box, high up on the disused water tower in Main Street, tailor made for a pair of discerning peregrine falcons.

This rare opportunity is the brainchild of the Gippsland Plains Conservation Management Network and supported by East Gippsland Water.



The water tower, nesting box and a potential nester (photo courtesy of Rohan Bilney)

Said the Network's Facilitator, Andy Booth: "The number of breeding peregrines has been in serious decline in Gippsland for many years. This is because their preferred nesting spot is in towering red gum trees. Once these provided dense cover across much of the Gippsland Plains between Bairnsdale and Traralgon, but now they've largely disappeared from much of the region's landscape.

"Our Save the Gippsland Peregrine Falcon initiative is trying to reverse the bird's decline. We've been keen to provide suitable, alternative nesting sites in areas like central Bairnsdale where the birds are regularly seen, mounting nesting boxes on poles and the sides of high rise buildings for example.

"We're keeping our fingers crossed that the Bairnsdale water tower will provide enough of a wow factor to have the peregrines setting up home!"

Said East Gippsland Water's Managing Director, Bruce Hammond: "We're delighted to be able to support this very worthwhile conservation effort, which complements our commitment to safeguard the natural environment as part of our operations."

This is one of two significant conservation initiatives that the water corporation is working on with the Gippsland Lakes Conservation Management Network. The other is focusing on the restoration of wetland owned by East Gippsland Water at Cobblers Creek, south of Bairnsdale.

Extensive weed clearance is underway and native plants are being re-established with the help of thousands of seeds collected from the site and propagated. Also, nearly 20 habitat boxes have been installed to encourage bats, sugar gliders, ducks and parrots to take up residence.

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