

# Media Release

**The Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP**

Minister for Energy

Minister for the Environment and Climate Action

Minister for Solar Homes



Monday, 25 July 2022

## NEW SPRINKLER PROTECTING OUR FLYING FOXES

The Andrews Labor Government is protecting Victoria's largest permanent flying fox colony in the face of climate change.

Minister for Environment and Climate Action Lily D'Ambrosio visited Yarra Bend Park on Wurundjeri Country today, where a new, custom-built sprinkler system will be installed to protect the grey-headed flying fox colony.

The \$180,000 works are part of a \$5.3 million boost for wildlife in the *Victorian Budget 2022/23*.

The sprinkler system works to cool the flying foxes on days of extreme heat, helping reduce the impacts of climate change on the nationally endangered species and manage the risk to volunteers and Parks Victoria staff responding to heat stress events.

The grey-headed flying fox or fruit bat plays a vital role pollinating and dispersing seed for native forests across the east coast of Australia. They are naturally susceptible to heat stress, with many individuals migrating south to cooler environments during summer.

The new sprinkler systems will be installed at Yarra Bend Park by late 2022 and will be placed at two sites that have been identified as important refuges for the grey-headed flying foxes.

Protecting this important habitat and refuge for the flying foxes will ensure that Yarra Bend Park continues to offer a unique wildlife experience for visitors, within 4 kilometres of Melbourne CBD.

This project is part of ongoing work to protect threatened grey-headed flying fox in collaboration with DELWP, Melbourne Water, Parks Victoria, Yarra Bend Golf and Zoos Victoria.

Since 2014, the Labor Government has invested \$560 million towards protecting Victoria's threatened species.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Environment and Climate Action Lily D'Ambrosio

*"The flying fox population at Yarra Bend are an iconic part of Melbourne's environment and this funding will give them the best chance of success in the face of climate change."*

*"With extreme heat events occurring more frequently, additional management interventions – like this new sprinkler system - are becoming necessary to ensure the survival of Victoria's native threatened species."*