

MEMBERS' PAGE

HONEY POSSUM HEAVEN!

ROSS and Kit Backhouse are farmers at Narrikup in the south coast region. They have installed about 5 ha of native plant species to pick for the commercial flower market.

Ross delights in some of the special experiences he has with wildlife that now live within the flower plantation. One of his favourite times is when he comes across honey possums still feeding on the flowers (even when the sun is quite high in the sky). Ross noticed that if the wind is blowing downwind from his approach they don't smell him coming and he can watch them for quite some time feeding on the flowerheads. The possums show no fear and hop quite happily onto Ross's hands allowing him to have a good look at each one of them.



The pic shows Ross standing next to one of the scarlet banksias they have planted. Unusually these banksias were still flowering in mid March on their property.

So here is an instance where a commercial plantation of native flora has a very definite benefit to native fauna!

Sylvia Leighton