

Of the many reptiles in the Reserve, two are particularly interesting. Rosenberg's Monitor is up to a metre long, has powerful limbs, eyes with movable lids and a deeply forked tongue like that of a snake, which constantly flicks in and out.



Rosenberg's  
Monitor

The small, rarely seen legless Pink-tailed Lizard, 15-18cm long, lives in ant burrows and eats the ants and their larvae. It occasionally basks under sun warmed rocks.



Eastern  
Spinebill

The grey-leaved *Grevillea lanigera* bushes are common. Some grevillas have greener less hairy leaves, the result of cross pollination with other grevillea varieties in nearby gardens. Honey-eaters including Eastern Spinebills, are attracted to the reddish flowers.



Woolly  
Grevillea

North Ridge Reserve functions as a significant bird migration corridor.

**Further Reading**  
*The Aboriginal People of the Monaro*  
*Discovering Monaro*  
*Flora of the ACT*  
*Birds of the ACT*  
*Reptiles & Frogs of the ACT*

Young M., Mundy E., & Mundy D.  
Hancock W. K.  
Burbidge N. & Gray M.  
Taylor M. & Day N.  
Bennett R.

The mainly nocturnal Common Wombat makes its burrows in the banks of Cooma Creek, but marks its territory throughout the Reserve by its prolific droppings on rocks and tracks, accompanied by scratchings. They feed on grass and low vegetation.



Common Wombat



Sugar Glider

Dusk brings the possums out to forage for leaves and fruits. The Common Brushtail Possums produce a single young each season. When it leaves the pouch it is carried on the mother's back until maturity. The smaller Ringtail Possums use their tails as a fifth limb to climb or carry nesting materials up a tree. The third possum is the Sugar Glider with a dark stripe down its back.



Red-  
leaved  
Wattle

Spring is heralded by the yellow shades and heady perfume of the wattles. The first to flower is the feathery-leaved Silver Wattle (*Acacia dealbata*). This is followed by the widespread, shrubby Red-leaved Wattle (*A. rubida*). Not until November-December do the pale yellow flowers of Black Wattle (*A. mearnsii*) appear.

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Illustrated by Rouvena Evans, Cooma

## North Ridge Reserve Cooma

### Aims

Cooma-Monaro Shire Council, with community participation, aims to achieve the long term conservation of the plants, animals and natural features of the Reserve. Council recognises its importance for passive recreation and education.

### History

This Reserve of 124 hectares is approximately 2.5km long on the North-South axis and 0.5km wide. It comprises three parcels of land that have been amalgamated. In 1981 the majority of the Ridge area was transferred from the Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Authority (SMHEA) to the NSW Lands Department. Cooma-Monaro Shire became the trustee of this land in 1991 and purchased further land from SMHEA in 1996. The southern Flora Reserve of the 1950s was added in 1997.

Five hundred million years ago North Ridge was a sea floor. During the next hundred million years this was pushed up to form mountains. Subsequent erosion has exposed various rocks which consist mainly of granitic gneiss.

### Flora and Fauna

The Ridge contains a relatively uncommon combination of Black Cypress Pines (*Callitris endlicheri*) and eucalypts.

The main eucalypt species are the widespread Manna or Ribbon Gum (*Eucalyptus viminalis*), Broad-leaved Peppermint (*E. dives*) and the Inland Scribbly Gum (*E. rossii*).

The Ridge in season has a rich understorey of plants including flowering shrubs, peas, heaths, daisies, bluebells, orchids, grasses and many others.



## Walks in North Ridge Reserve Cooma



A very useful and comprehensive scientific survey of Cooma North Ridge was carried out in 1991 by Dr. Peter Barrer. Included in this were lists of flora and fauna. His lists have been updated and are available at the Cooma Visitors Centre.

The acrobatic Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos and the colourful Crimson and Eastern Rosellas are included in the list of 80 species of local birds and the Bearded, Donkey, Tiger and Greenhood Orchids are among the list of 184 species of plants.

On the Ridge's scenic walks you may meet one of the Macropod family, like the large Grey Kangaroo, the heavily built Wallaroo, the Red-necked Wallaby or the shy Swamp Wallaby, all residents of the Reserve. Watch out for the Spiny Echidna as it forages for ants.

On a daytime walk, you may hear one of the four frog species or see a skink sunning itself on a rock. You may also hear raucous Gang-Gang Cockatoos or a melodic Grey Shrike Thrush. Four species of snakes have also been recorded, so take care where you place your hands and feet.