



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**27 October 2019**

# **Discovery of Leadbeaters Possum on Blue Range**

Three Leadbeaters possums have been detected along Parks Road in the northern end of the Blue Range in the Rubicon State Forest. These, the first recorded sightings of the critically endangered Leadbeater's Possum, Victoria's fauna emblem on the Blue Range, were announced last week by WOTCH, Wildlife of the Central Highlands, an organisation of citizen scientists.

Much of this area was burnt in Black Saturday and is still recovering. The 2009 fire killed most ash areas at the southern end of the Range, with the northern end less severely hit. However most of the Rubicon Valley to the east has been clearfelled in the past 40 years. VicForests plans to soon log at least 5 coupes close to the ridge destroying the last area of intact ash forest in this remarkably beautiful and biodiverse area.

"This is not the only threatened species living in this part of the forest" said RFPG's principal ecologist, Ann Jelinek. "A sooty owl has also been recently recorded there and the area is also ideal habitat for greater gliders" Ms Jelinek said.

VicForests extreme logging has already devastated the Royston Range. The Rubicon Forest Protection Group calls for the Government to immediately remove all the coupes on the Blue Range from the threat of further logging.

The area adjoins the Cathedral Range State Park. Including this area in the Park would dramatically increase its tourism potential and help to safeguard the exceptional biodiversity of this area.

"We applaud the work of WOTCH's dedicated citizen scientists - - they are real heroes in the fight against unsustainable logging" said Ms Jelinek.

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**Photo overleaf shows one of the animals sighted by WOTCH**

