


Designing old forest for the future: informing policy & practice

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Policy responds to community needs & knowledge
Management responds to policy & knowledge
Research responds to needs for knowledge, provides information to all



Strategic questions

- Integrate or segregate?
- At what spatial scale?
- Retain & regrow scattered trees or patches among regrowth?
- Small or large patches?
- Fine or coarse grained mosaics?
- Extreme segregation: plantations on cleared land?

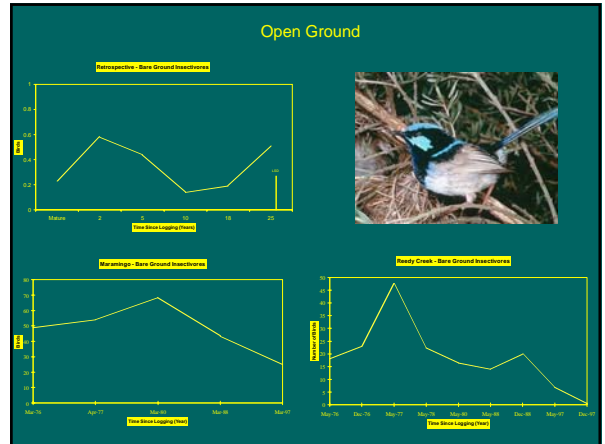
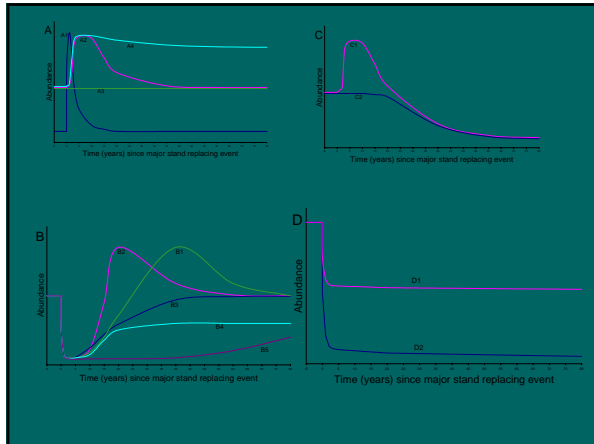
Forest research approaches

- Experimental (before-after)
- Retrospective (space for time)
- Habitat analysis
- Modelling, across tenures




Case studies

- Retrospective studies (effects of time)
- Habitat modelling (RFA)
- Old trees
- Edge effects
- Patch size
- Plantations
- Conclusions



Sooty Owl

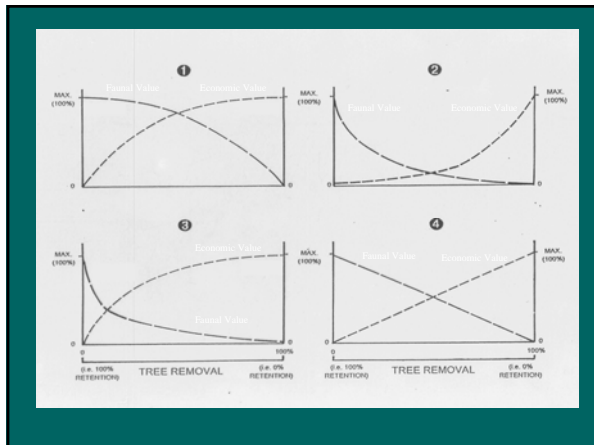
logit P = - 12.96




- + 1.31 if EVC = Herb-Rich Foothill Forest
- + 0.43 Number of EVCs in 500 m
- + 3.76 if growth stage = Senescent/Mature
- + 0.17 ha Mature forest in 500 m
- + 0.0018 ha Senescent forest in 5 km
- 1.56 if EVC = Montane Dry Woodland
- 2.37 if EVC = Grassy or Healthy Dry Forest
- 0.077 ha Drier forest in 500 m
- 1.44 if growth stage = Regrowth/Mature



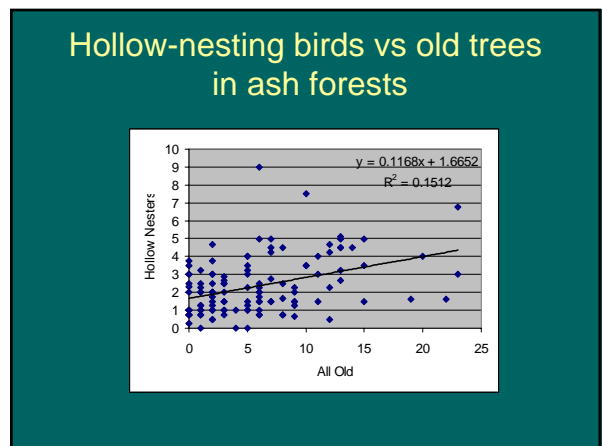
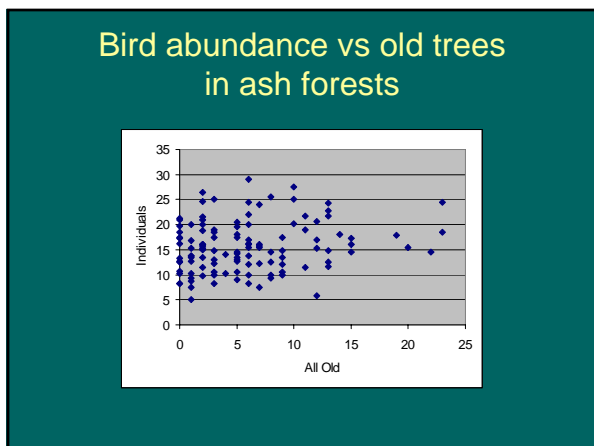




Faunal responses



- Convex: Leadbeater's Possum
 - scattered trees among regrowth if possible
- Concave: Yellow-bellied Glider, Sooty Owl
 - large patches if possible
- Straight: Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo, many birds
 - quality & number of trees more important than distribution



Guild responses in ash

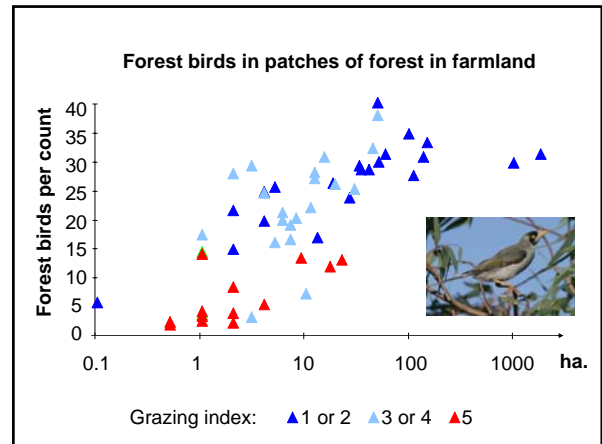
Hollow nesting birds

= 0.0646 tree size (dbh) **

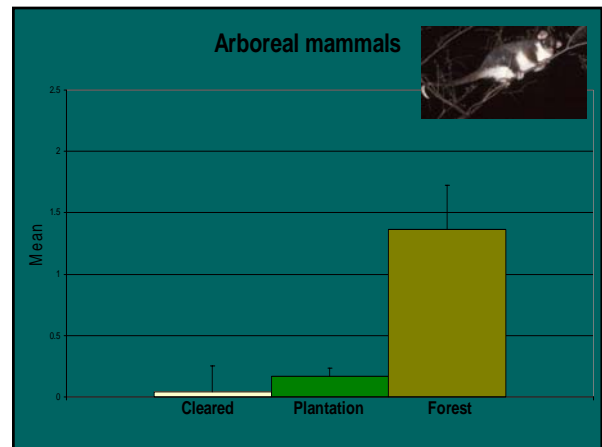
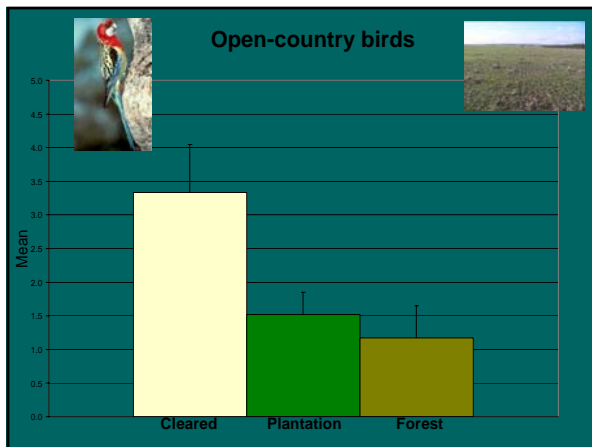
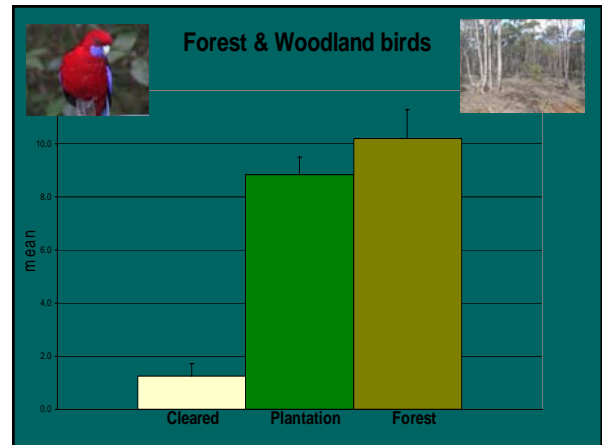
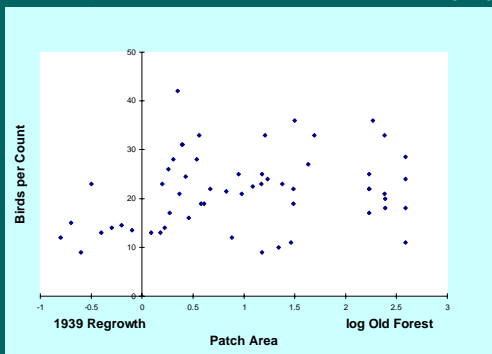
-0.000329 dbh² **

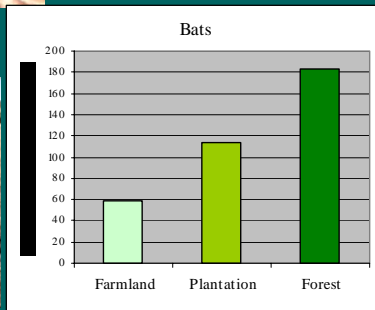
+0.0108 old trees per ha ***

$r^2 = 23\%$



Forest birds in patches of old Mountain Ash forest among regrowth





Fauna in Plantations

- Plantations can provide habitat for many but not all species
- Shrub-foragers use young eucalypts as if they were shrubs
- Bark-foragers prefer rough-barked eucalypts
- Little difference young commercial vs young reveg
- Hollows common in Sugar Gums aged 60-80 years
- Embedded remnants; work continues



Conclusions

- Research is needed to inform strategic policy & adaptive management
- Strategic research is most helpful
- Think long-term: retrospective studies
- Mixed-species foothill forests (70% x 7m = 5m ha) neglected
- Monitor outcomes and adapt!

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