



# Don't Bag the Environment

## Mountain Pygmy-possum

Paddy Pallin established the 'Don't Bag the Environment' program in 1992 as a means by which we could make a positive contribution towards reducing unnecessary packaging from our stores.

To encourage you to support our efforts, every time you decline to take a bag with your purchase, Paddy Pallin will donate 20 cents towards a project which helps to preserve Australia's natural heritage.

'Don't Bag the Environment' aims to:

- Reduce packaging waste, so that less rubbish finds its way into our bushland and waterways.
- Conserve energy resources which would otherwise be used in the manufacture of the bags.
- Reduce the use of landfill tips, thereby retaining land for native wildlife habitats.
- Support environmental projects by raising funds to assist them.
- All proceeds go directly to the nominated beneficiary, which is changed every six months.
- Naturally, you are welcome to make a personal donation as well in store or at [www.paddypallinfoundation.org.au](http://www.paddypallinfoundation.org.au)

From October 2010 – March 2011 all funds collected from the Don't Bag the Environment program will be donated to help preserve the Mountain Pygmy-possum. The possum's dilemma is that it only occurs above the winter snowline in areas of southern New South Wales and north-eastern Victoria and that snowline is rapidly receding with global warming.

The main habitat of the possums is boulder fields and shrubby heathland. These areas attract millions of migratory Bogong moths, providing the main food for possums in Spring. They also protect the possums from the attention of feral predators.

Mountain Pygmy-possums are the only marsupials that hibernate during winter. Snow provides an insulating doona for hibernating possums. The depth and duration of snow cover and time of snow melt strongly influence possum survival. Low snow cover and rain during winter provides less insulation and more frequent awakening of hibernating possums, depleting energy stores and decreasing their survival rate. Early



snowmelt in Spring, before the arrival of migratory Bogong moths, deprives them of protein-rich food during the critical early Spring period at the beginning of the breeding season. The possums are more susceptible to predation by feral cats and foxes as they forage outside the shelter of the rocks in the surrounding shrub land.

A crucial action to ensure the survival of the Mountain Pygmy-possum is a captive breeding program. This program aims;

- to provide an insurance population for re-introduction in case of further declines
- to provide a population that can be introduced into areas of alpine habitat not currently occupied and;
- to explore the possibility of adaptation to warmer climates.

The Foundation for National Parks & Wildlife needs your help to support this captive breeding program. We must act now to guarantee this gorgeous animal survives for future generations. It would be a tragedy if we lost the Mountain Pygmy-possum, with a fossil record going back thousands of years, and after only 40 years of recognising its existence.

*Paddy Pallin*