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Firewood that's more possum- and bird-friendly

A new consumer guide produced by the Victorian National Parks Association (VNPA), one of Victoria's oldest community conservation organisations, will enable Victorians to buy sustainably sourced firewood for use at home or in a business.



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'For the first time, consumers can now make an informed choice for the firewood they burn based on environmental impacts, particularly native habitat,' VNPA spokesman Nick Roberts said.

'There is more firewood burnt annually in Victoria than is exported for woodchips. Most of this wood comes from poorly managed state forests in Victoria and New South Wales.'

The Sustainable Firewood Guide looks at a number of firewood and firewood alternatives widely available in Victoria. It scored them against a number of criteria to assess which had the least impacts on forests and wildlife.

'Most firewood sourced from native forests comes from high-conservation value River Red Gum forests in northern Victoria and New South Wales. Even the very special box-ironbark forests in central Victoria are still used for firewood.

'This wood removal impacts on threatened native mammals and birds such as the brush-tailed phascogale and superb parrot.

'The product that scored the best in our analysis is produced sustainably on farms right here in Victoria. Trees cut down are replaced, and the woodlots are planted in cleared land of low environmental significance.'

The Sustainable Firewood Guide was produced following an RMIT research report for the VNPA which found overwhelming support in Melbourne for the use of sustainably produced firewood.

'This research found that 80 per cent of pubs, bars and commercial users of firewood were in favour of using sustainable firewood, with 67 per cent of wood merchants interested in selling a sustainable product,' Mr Roberts said.

'Farmers are currently being denied the opportunity to grow trees for profit due to government subsidies on wood from public forests. We now need governments and the industry to play catch up and encourage the growth and development of sustainable firewood from farm forestry and plantations.'

Source: VPNA

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