



Potoroo Postings

Issue # 2024/1



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CALENDAR

NOTE: All volunteers undertaking field work with GPAG require a DBCA Dieback Green Card. See details on page 5

Members will be emailed with more details on upcoming events & volunteering opportunities as dates etc firm up.

Non-members should keep an eye on our social media channels & website for more information or email mail@potoroo.org.

May 14, 2024: GPAG AGM both in person and online if you can't make it Albany. Details to be confirmed.

Autumn (dates to be confirmed): Servicing motion sensing cameras at Two Peoples Bay. Exact dates to be advised.

Nov 30 - Dec 1, 2024: South Coast Threatened Species Forum 2024. Celebrating 30 years since the rediscovery of Gilbert's Potoroo. More details coming soon.

GPAG ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS DUE NOW

It's that time of year again...!! Our annual membership invoices to those whose membership is tied to our financial year were sent out in early March, so this message is just a gentle reminder to those of you for whom paying might have slipped your mind. A big thank you to those who have already paid and/or updated their personal details to ensure our data base is correct. And a warm welcome to all our new members who have joined over the past year. We are delighted that our GPAG membership has stayed over 100 and continued to grow and we hope, whether you are old or newer members, that you will all choose to renew your membership for another year – or join for the first time if it's something you have been meaning to do but haven't quite done yet... If you've set up an annually renewing membership through the website you will not have received a renewal notice as your membership will be renewed automatically on your payment anniversary. Thank you everyone for your ongoing support – your membership is very important to us.



Contact us: Email: mail@potoroo.org, Mail: PO Box 654, Albany, WA 6331

Visit us: www.potoroo.org

Follow us:  @gilbertspotoroo  @GilbertsPotorooActionGroup  @gilbertspotoroo

FROM THE CHAIR

Gilbert's Potoroo - 30 Years On

When I was preparing a talk on Charles Darwin's visit to Albany a couple of years ago, I came upon an interesting diagram showing Darwin's family tree. Some of the boxes containing names of his ancestors and descendants were coloured differently from others and I realised that these were people who had entries in Wikipedia. An impressive number of Darwin's descendants had boxes of that colour. This made me wonder if an entry in Wikipedia is now considered an unofficial measure of someone's fame.

Gilbert's potoroo has an entry in Wikipedia but GPAG does not (yet). For someone who may not know much about Gilbert's Potoroo the Wikipedia page is a reasonably good and up-to-date source of information about the species although Wikipedia rules against editors having what they consider a "conflict of interest" seem to prevent our Communications Co-ordinator Jackie Courtenay from directly editing the page to correct any inaccuracies. We have no idea who set up the Gilbert's Potoroo Wikipedia page and who the contributors are who are maintaining it but for the most part they are doing quite a good job!

Early in the entry there is mention of the rediscovery of the potoroo at Two Peoples Bay in 1994, after a century of presumed extinction. About 40 animals were found there and no other populations were discovered. This is the thirtieth year of work aimed at saving the species and much has been done by the scientific and technical staff of DBCA and its predecessors. GPAG was formed in 2001 and has led the community effort to help and support this work for 23 years. We have also achieved a great deal. In that time we have raised over \$1.25 million in donations and grant funds to support potoroo conservation work and increased public awareness of the species enormously.

We will be celebrating 30 years of potoroo conservation at our Threatened Species Forum in Albany on November 30th and December 1st. It will be a great chance to hear from scientists and conservation workers in the field as well as community members and citizen scientists who are involved in conservation work. I hope you can come.

Alan



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Gilbert's potoroo

VOLUNTEERING

Intensive Radio-tracking at Two Peoples Bay: February 2024

By Javier Delgado Esteban

In February 2024, I embarked on an intensive week-long expedition with the Gilbert's Potoroo Action Group (GPAG) in Western Australia's breath taking Two Peoples Bay Nature Reserve. The aim was to collect vital data on the elusive and critically endangered Gilbert's Potoroo or Ngilkat (*Potorous gilbertii*) - one of the world's rarest marsupials.

Over a fortnight, a rigorous radio-tracking study was conducted on the critically endangered mammal. The project involved two cohorts, each comprising twelve volunteers, who diligently worked mostly nocturnally for seven consecutive days. Their primary objective was to monitor the activities of four individual animals using advanced radio-tracking techniques.

This undertaking would involve recording the whereabouts of potoroos, to study their movements, behaviours, and habitat preferences while working alongside experienced researchers, and a group of dedicated volunteers. During down periods of an otherwise very busy schedule, I had the opportunity to document the expedition through a combination of film and aerial photography.

Our team consisted of passionate volunteers, seasoned researchers and skilled professionals from the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA). Among these experts was renowned potoroo researcher Dr Tony Friend who generously shared his wealth of knowledge accumulated over 25 years enhancing our understanding of the intricate lives of Gilbert's Potoroo and guiding us towards meaningful outcomes.

Before venturing into the field, all members underwent comprehensive training sessions covering radio-telemetry techniques, stringent wildlife monitoring protocols and strict biosecurity measures, particularly around Dieback (*Phytophthora cinnamomi*) which poses a significant threat to native Western Australian flora. The pathogen can spread easily, causing disease, death and potential extinction in susceptible plants, and loss of habitat for animals so it is critical to prevent further spread.

Each day, we meticulously prepared ourselves both physically and mentally for the tasks ahead, especially gearing up for the more demanding night shifts. As darkness enveloped the landscape, our team of dedicated volunteers embarked on monitoring the movements of four potoroos from strategically positioned tracking stations dispersed around the gully where the potoroos typically reside.



Learning to use the aerial and determine the signal bearings. Photo: Javier Delgado Esteban.

Noteworthy discoveries might unveil once processed significant insights regarding key breeding grounds, preferred nesting sites, and remarkable instances of site fidelity displayed by certain individuals remaining stationary within limited spatial ranges throughout the observation period.

The data and footage collected hold immense value. They will inform the development of improved conservation strategies and ignite public awareness about the plight of this unique Australian marsupial.

With each click of my shutter and each fly of my drone, I endeavoured to capture the raw beauty and quiet resilience of the potoroo's habitat as well as the team effort of everyone involved, their dedication working tirelessly to gather data and protect these remarkable creatures. Every moment was a testament to the delicate interconnectedness of life in the wild.



Panoramic view of the Mt Gardner headland looking towards Two Peoples Bay. Drone photo by Javier Delgado Esteban

As we concluded our journey at the end of the week, the overwhelming sense of accomplishment coupled with profound gratitude towards everyone involved became palpable. Through collaboration, resilience, and sheer determination, we have managed to contribute meaningfully to ongoing efforts aimed at safeguarding this irreplaceable treasure of Australia's natural heritage.

Our collective experiences encapsulate what can be achieved when people come together driven by passion, purpose, and a deep-rooted commitment to conserve our planet's most vulnerable inhabitants.

Our short documentary, "Gilbert's Potoroo Radio Tracking-Expedition" serves as a visual ode to the fragile dance of conservation and creativity. Through stunning imagery, we offered a glimpse into the world of Gilbert's Potoroo and the dedicated individuals working tirelessly to safeguard its future.

GPAG has created a motivational environment that carried us through the challenges encountered during our week in the field. DBCA's proficiency and logistical prowess guaranteed the seamless execution of our objectives, allowing us to maximise our data collection efforts.

Each individual's unwavering dedication to preserving this unique piece of Australia's natural heritage left an indelible impact on me, reinforcing the importance of collaborative efforts in ensuring the survival of our planet's most vulnerable species. Through our collective efforts, we not only expanded our understanding of potoroo ecology but also crafted a narrative of hope and resilience in the face of adversity.

Javier Delgado Esteban is a biologist, award-winning photographer and filmmaker from Spain and lives in Albany, Western Australia.

This project was the second of two intensive radio tracking fortnights funded by GPAG's 2019 State NRM Community Stewardship Grant. The first fortnight tracking Potoroos at the Waychinicup enclosure in 2020 was reported on in Potoroo Postings #2020/2. [Back to page 1](#)

Video of Intensive Radio-tracking at Two Peoples Bay, February 2024

As described above Javier Delgado Esteban created a short documentary entitled "Gilbert's Potoroo Radio Tracking-Expedition" that captured the experience of the intensive two-week radio-tracking project at Two Peoples Bay in February 2024. It is quite short (the actual video before the acknowledgements runs for less than two minutes) but it packs in key points of the story of Gilbert's Potoroo, the purpose of the radio-tracking, the role of the volunteers, how the radio-tracking was done and gorgeous drone footage of Two Peoples Bay, without seeming rushed! It is a lovely record of the radio-tracking which can possibly be used for promotion in the future if the intensive radio-tracking fortnight is run again. The video can be viewed by clicking on the image below or at the following link

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u5TM-WQPSFk>.



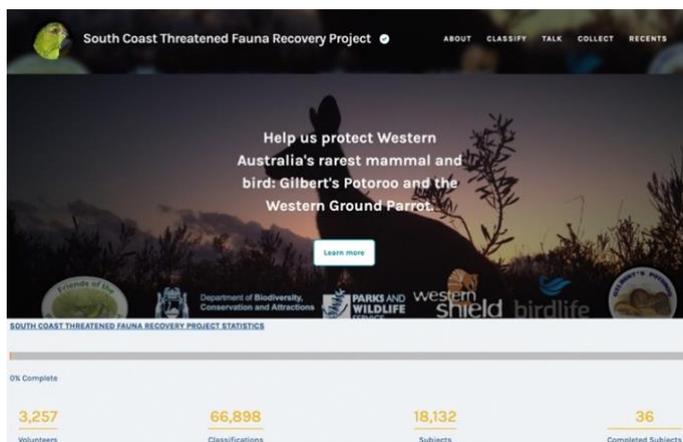
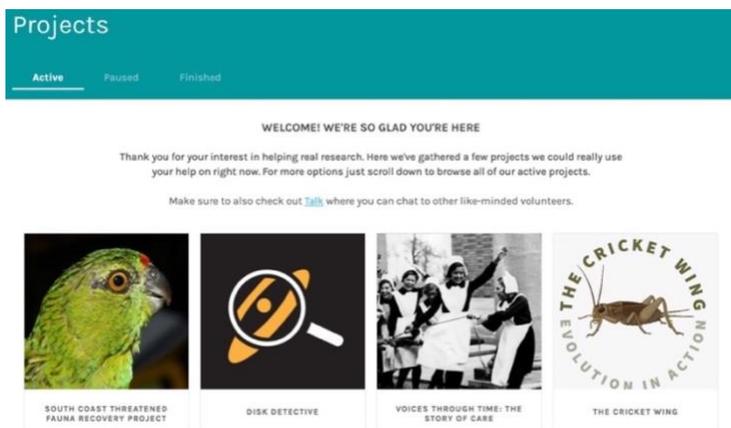
Gilbert's Potoroo Radio Tracking-Expedition. February 2024

South Coast Threatened Fauna Zooniverse project featured for 2 weeks in early January

For two weeks in early January, the South Coast Threatened Fauna Zooniverse project was featured on the Zooniverse home page alongside three other projects. The order in which the four projects appeared varied but the bright green close-up image of the head of a Western Ground Parrot was definitely eye catching (see picture below left on following page). Over the course of the two weeks the number of volunteers participating increased by 453 to 3257 (see image below right on following page). Both images are screen shots from the Zooniverse website (the left hand one from the general Zooniverse home page <https://www.zooniverse.org/projects> during the time the project was featured and the right hand one

from the South Coast Threatened Fauna Recovery Project home page

<https://www.zooniverse.org/projects/abbsta/south-coast-threatened-fauna-recovery-project>).



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DBCA report on first batch of Zooniverse images available

Still on Zooniverse, a DBCA report on the results of analysis of the first batch of Zooniverse images from Two Peoples Bay and Waychinicup National Park (not the Potoroo enclosure) are now available on the Zooniverse website at the following link <https://www.zooniverse.org/projects/abbsta/south-coast-threatened-fauna-recovery-project/about/results>. To the surprise of absolutely no-one who has done any analysis of the images, Quokkas were the most common species seen on the cameras at both Two Peoples Bay and Waychinicup, accounting for just under 22% and just over 28% of identifications respectively. Cats and foxes were detected at both Two Peoples Bay and Waychinicup at rates of 0.4 - 0.6% of images identified which varied slightly between the two locations. Unfortunately no Potoroos turned up on this batch of images but we are hopeful that they will in future batches. Overall there were 216,501 image classifications at Two Peoples Bay. At an estimated rate of 100 classifications per hour (the rate that we were advised DBCA uses to calculate volunteer time in their Western Shield Zooniverse project), this amounts to about \$104,000 worth of volunteer time spent on image analysis which is a huge contribution to the project. The fact that we know that the volunteers come from all over the world is also a great indicator of the awareness raising value of this project.



Camera images of a cat and kitten (above left), fox (above centre), and a Quokka mother with her large young at heel. The Zooniverse images are from Two Peoples Bay taken during the time period covered by the DBCA report. All photos from the DBCA/Zooniverse Project are shared under Creative Commons 4.0 International License.

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First Duke of Edinburgh's Award (Silver) candidate completes Zooniverse volunteering

In more news relating to Zooniverse, in Potoroo Postings 2023#1 we announced our new partnership with the Duke of Edinburgh's Award programme in Western Australia. One of the aims of that partnership was to provide opportunities for young people to be involved in conservation volunteering, including via online platforms such as Zooniverse. We are excited to share that our first Duke of Edinburgh's Award candidate has completed the volunteering component for their Silver award by classifying images on the South Coast Threatened Fauna Recovery Project. In completing the required 24 hours of volunteering for their Silver award they classified 2453 images and said that they found the experience "very fun and rewarding". They also said that they would continue with classifying images for their Gold Award volunteering so we look forward to seeing their name pop back up on the Zooniverse system when they start their next stage of volunteering. We were also very excited that the candidate was based in the UK indicating the international reach of the Zooniverse project and its potential for helping bring awareness of Gilbert's Potoroo and other threatened south coast fauna to a worldwide audience. [Back to page 1](#)

IMPORTANT REMINDER ABOUT VOLUNTEERING

All volunteers for field work with GPAG require a DBCA Dieback Green Card

Once again, this is just a reminder that, if you wish to volunteer with GPAG on our various field projects, DBCA require us all to complete Dieback Green Card training. The training can be done at home and takes about one hour to complete. The card can then be either posted out or collected at the DBCA office in Albany. If you think that you might be interested in volunteering sometime in the future, even if you are not planning to immediately, it is a good idea to complete your training and get your Green Card as soon as possible so that you are able to participate at short notice when opportunities arise or you are available. Please email Jackie Courtenay on communications@potoroo.org if you want to undertake the training and she will email you the training materials. [Back to page 1](#)

FUNDRAISING AND COMMUNITY AWARENESS

Ongoing Fundraisers

Containers for Change

GPAG Member #: C10289767

From January 1st to March 31st generous supporters donated \$214.40 in refunds from their drink containers returned for recycling. That's a fantastic 2144 drink containers recycled – a great donation to GPAG but also a lot of plastic, aluminium, glass and cardboard saved from landfill!!



Drop-off point locations and information on what types of containers are accepted for refunds can be found at the following link <https://www.containersforchange.com.au/wa>. Thank you once again for any support you can give us. [Back to page 1](#)

Awareness Raising

A true friend to region's threatened species

In February Southerly Magazine published a Heartland Journeys (by Gondwana Link) interview with Tony Friend about his life and work with some of WA's most threatened mammals including of course our beloved Gilbert's Potoroo! The



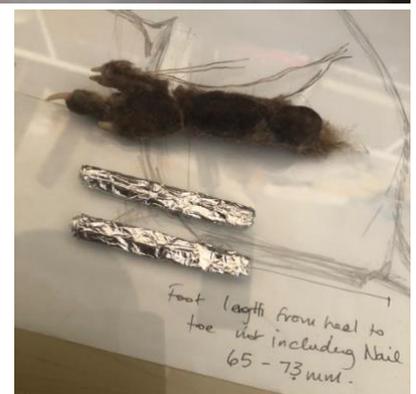
Southerly Magazine article is at the following link <https://www.flipsnack.com/southerlymag/february-2024/full-view.html> (use the scroll bar at the bottom left to scroll through to pgs 16-21). A few weeks later, the article was also published online by Heartland Journeys which is a bit easier to navigate and for this online version GPAG was able to supply a photo of Gilbert's Potoroo to add to the photos of Numbats and Dibblers in the Southerly Magazine printed version. There is also a 2009 photo of a group of GPAG members receiving (then) Department of Environment and Conservation's Volunteer Awards for Outstanding Service which is nice to see included. You can read the Heartland version at the following link <https://heartlandjourneys.com.au/stories/the-marsupials-friend/>. The interview is a lovely journey through Tony's life and work with lots of beautiful photos of the threatened species he has spent his career working hard to try and help save.

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Starting all over again with the needle felted Potoroo

Also in early February we received a message from Reena Harwood saying that she "had drifted off into the wrong size so she's a redo completely at this stage..." although she will be able to salvage and alter much of what has been done so far. It is very difficult to visualise her without the opportunity to spend time watching the animal to get a sense of her size and posture etc (and photos and measurements just aren't the same!).

Reena has reiterated that she is very invested in her so there will be results, and we know that the results in the end will be worth the wait but "for now we need to enjoy the CARNAGE and be thankful she's only a sculpture!".



Right top: Oops – she ended up a bit big... A comparison of the sculpture as she was alongside the foil and masking tape model of the size she needed to be based on measurements etc (and surrounded by the tools of the trade!). Right: Are her feet really that tiny?? The feet as they were initially made, alongside foil models showing the length they need to be from heel to toe tip (excluding the nail) based on the measurements provided by Tony Friend. Photos: Reena Harwood

MERCHANDISE



WATERCOLOUR CARDS: Quality hand-made cards featuring a picture of Gilbert's Potoroo from a watercolour by Jann van der Helder. Blank inside.
\$4 each or 5 for \$16.

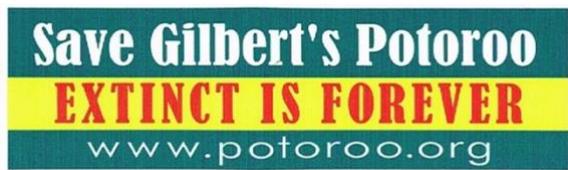


Printed by the Environmental Printing Company on 100% recycled paper using vegetable-based inks. Blank inside.
\$5 each or 5 for \$20.

JO HARRIS CARDS: Quality cards featuring a painting of Gilbert's Potoroo by Jo Harris based on a photograph by Dick Walker.



BLACK & WHITE CARDS: Quality cards featuring a pen and ink drawing of a Gilbert's Potoroo by Jackie Courtenay from a photograph by Katrin Witt. Printed by the Environmental Printing Company on 100% recycled paper using vegetable-based inks. Blank inside.
\$5 each or 5 for \$20.



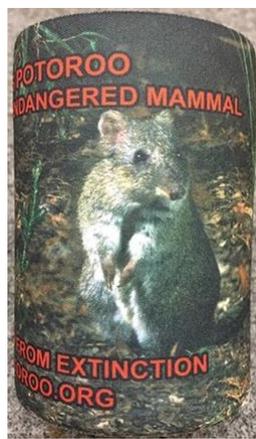
BUMPER STICKERS: FREE with other items



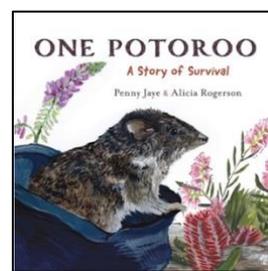
POSTCARDS: Featuring a photo of Gilbert's Potoroo by Dick Walker and information about the Potoroo on both the front and back
FREE with other items



TEATOWELS: Printed on 100% cotton with some key facts about Gilbert's Potoroo! Tea towel design by Sandy O'Doherty
\$10 each or 3 for \$25

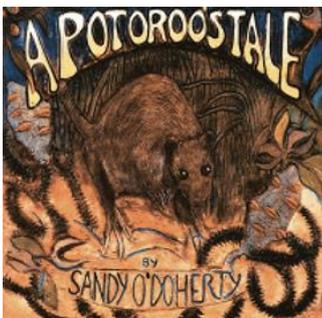


STUBBY HOLDERS: Designed by GPAG members featuring a photo of Gilbert's Potoroo by Dick Walker.
\$10 each or 2 for \$15

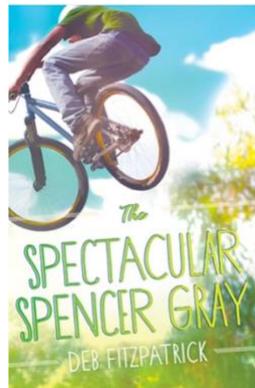


ONE POTOROO: A STORY OF SURVIVAL: A heart-warming story of disaster and rescue of one Potoroo

caught in the Two Peoples Bay fire by Penny Jaye, with beautiful illustrations by Alicia Rogerson. 35% of the sale price goes to Gilbert's Potoroo Action Group.
\$25 each



A POTOROO'S TALE: A delightful book written and beautifully illustrated by Albany artist Sandy O'Doherty. All profits from the sale of the book will go to the Gilbert's Potoroo Action Group.
\$15 each



THE SPECTACULAR SPENCER GRAY: The award winning adventure story by Deb Fitzpatrick featuring Gilbert's Potoroo and the return of Spencer Gray in a spectacular adventure. 30% of the sale price of the book will go to Gilbert's Potoroo Action Group.
\$15 each

MERCHANDISE ORDER FORM

ABN 75 191 868 479 (Tax Invoice when paid)

Item	Cost/item	Quantity	Total Cost
Watercolour Card (ea)	\$4.00		
Watercolour Cards (5 pk)	\$16.00		
Jo Harris Card	\$5.00		
Jo Harris Cards (5 pk)	\$20.00		
B&W Potoroo Card	\$5.00		
B&W Potoroo Cards (5 pk)	\$20.00		
Postcards (ea)	FREE		
Bumper Stickers (ea)	FREE		
Tea towels (ea)	\$10.00		
Tea towels (3 pk)	\$25.00		
Stubby Holders (ea)	\$10.00		
Stubby Holders (2 pk)	\$15.00		
One Potoroo	\$25.00		
A Potoroos Tale	\$15.00		
Spectacular Spencer Gray	\$15.00		
		Product total	
		Postage & packing (<500g)*	\$10.00
		Add a donation?	
		Total Cost	

* Within Australia. Postage for larger and overseas orders will need to be costed individually depending on weight and destination. You will be contacted by the Treasurer with a final quote for postage if your order weighs more than 500g or you need the items sent overseas.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE (Work) _____ (Home) _____

EMAIL _____

Payment Methods

DIRECT DEPOSIT: Bendigo Bank BSB: 633-000; Account Number: 164 347 999

Please include your surname and "Merchandise" in the Reference line and email order form to treasurer@potoroo.org

CHEQUE: Please make cheques payable to **Gilbert's Potoroo Action Group Inc**

Send To: The Treasurer
 Gilbert's Potoroo Action Group Inc
 PO Box 654
 Albany, WA 6331

MEMBERSHIP & DONATION FORM

To become a member of GILBERT'S POTOROO ACTION GROUP INC, fill out the form below and either pay your subscription by direct deposit and email the form to treasurer@potoroo.org or print out and return by mail with a cheque enclosed.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____ EMAIL _____

Date of Birth if Under 15 Years ____/____/____

Tax Invoice

Subscription \$22 per year

Includes GST

Payment Methods

DIRECT DEPOSIT: Bendigo Bank; BSB: 633-000; Account Number: 164 347 999

Please include your surname and "Membership" in the Reference line.

CHEQUE: Please make cheques payable to **Gilbert's Potoroo Action Group Inc**

Send To: The Treasurer
Gilbert's Potoroo Action Group Inc
PO Box 654
Albany, WA 6331

Privacy Policy: The information you have disclosed other than your name and contact details is restricted to committee members. No one outside the association is given access to your personal details without your permission.

OFFICIAL USE ONLY	Nominated By: _____	Receipt No _____
	Membership Accepted: YES/NO	Date Paid ____/____/____
		Register _____

DONATIONS

As a Nationally Registered Environmental Organisation the Gilbert's Potoroo Action Group Inc. offers tax deductible donation facilities. To claim **tax benefits**, your donation must be a **minimum of \$2** and made payable to the **GPAG Public Tax Deductible Donation Fund**. Tax deductible donations can also be made through our website www.potoroo.org.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____ EMAIL _____

Payment Methods

DIRECT DEPOSIT: Bendigo Bank; BSB: 633-000; Account Number: 178 804 555

Please include your surname and Donation in the Reference line and email this form to treasurer@potoroo.org

CHEQUE: Please make cheques payable to **Gilbert's Potoroo Action Group Inc Public Tax Deductible Donation Fund**

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Gilbert's Potoroo Action Group Inc
PO Box 654
Albany, WA 6331