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Conservation techniques

Conservation techniques can be classed as **Preventive** or **Restorative**. Preventive techniques keep populations and habitats intact, before numbers are critically low. In this set of techniques, owls are retained in habitats close to those in which they evolved. Preventive techniques stop problems before the species or subspecies becomes seriously threatened, or handle problems when taxa show early signs of threat but have not seriously declined. Restorative techniques handle problems after a taxon has significantly declined and is at risk of being lost.

Preventive techniques

Reserves. As a general rule, owls require space to feel secure. They rarely cope well with close human interference and they rarely nest close to houses. Although large parks and botanic gardens can offer abundant prey, vegetation and security from human disturbance for roosting and hunting, they seldom offer enough space and security for breeding. In contrast, reserves can offer enough prey, vegetation and security for non-breeding and breeding owls. Kavanagh (2002b) noted that New South Wales and Victoria were the only states that had developed management plans on public forest lands (wood production forests and national parks) for large forest owls and strong legislation in both states protect these owls. For example, in East Gippsland, Victoria, 100 locations, each 500 to 800 ha in size, are designated special protection zones, primarily unlogged reserves for Powerful, Sooty and Masked Owls. Kavanagh (2002b) outlines conservation protocols used in New South Wales wood production forests; for example, exclusion buffers of 10 to 40 m