

# Tree planting on Mount McKay

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## Saving pygmy possums

STUDENTS at the Bogong Education Centre did their bit for the environment recently, planting habitats for the endangered Mountain Pygmy Possum.

VCE outdoor education and environmental studies students from Yarrowonga Secondary College took to the slopes of Mt McKay for the task.

In a joint venture between Bogong Outdoor Education Centre and Falls Creek Resort Management, the 12 students and two staff worked at an elevation of 1800m to plant more than 400 mountain plum pine seedlings.

The 2003 and 2006 bushfires wiped out a large number of the trees, which provide an essential habitat cover and food source for the endangered Mountain Pygmy Possum.

These tiny alpine specialists are restricted to the highest peaks of the Australian Alps and feed on and gather the fruit of the plum pine during the summer months.

The current total population for the Mountain Pygmy Possum is estimated to be around 3000 adults, so the restoration of mountain plum pine habitat is a key factor to the survival of the species.



**HELPING OUT:** Planting trees at Mt McKay are (from left) Yarrowonga Secondary College staff member Raeleen Davis, students Jake Savy and Teagan Panter and Falls Creek Resort Management environmental officer Stacey Lay.

PHOTO: Michelle Forrer.