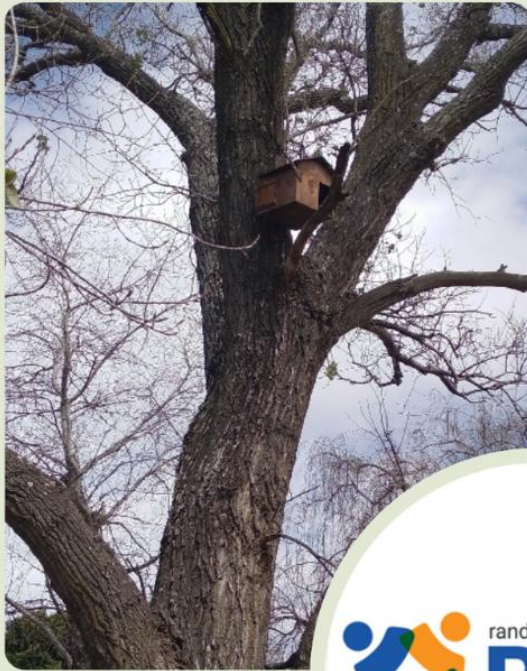


Randpark Ridge Village Association



Artificial Habitat Annual Report

2026 OWL AND BAT BIODIVERSITY PROGRAMME

Contents

Executive Summary.....	3
Programme Overview.....	3
Study Area	4
2026 Highlights	4
Bat Habitat Programme	5
Cape Serotine Bat (<i>Laephotis capensis</i>)	5
Spotted Eagle Owl (<i>Bubo africanus</i>)	5
Barn Owl (<i>Tyto alba</i>)	5
Bat Habitat Results.....	6
Owl Habitat Results.....	6
Understanding Non-Target Occupancy	7
Discussion	7
Supporting Natural Pest Management.....	8
Recommendations	8
Communicating Your Success.....	9
Appendix A – Images	10
Bat Habitat.....	10
Owl Habitat	11
Owl Habitat	13

Executive Summary

EcoSolutions completed the 2026 annual service of the **Randpark Ridge Village Association Artificial Habitat Programme** during July 2026. The programme currently comprises **three bat habitat installations, four Spotted Eagle Owl boxes and two Barn Owl boxes**, distributed throughout the suburb to support indigenous wildlife while contributing to natural insect and rodent management.

The programme is well aligned with the RRVA's environmental objectives. Randpark Ridge is characterised by established greenbelts and open spaces, and the Association specifically recognises owl boxes and bat hotels as valuable tools for creating a healthier, more balanced suburban environment. By maintaining artificial habitat for bats and owls, the community supports natural predators that help regulate insects and rodents while reducing reliance on harmful poisons. [RRVA](#)

The **bat habitat network continues to perform strongly**. Both Rocket Bat Hotels were occupied by **Cape Serotine Bats (*Laephotis capensis*)**, while the Bat Bank recorded occupancy in **two of its three roost units**. These findings continue a long history of bat occupation within the RRVA network and demonstrate the value of maintaining artificial roosting habitat within the suburb.

The owl network required more intensive maintenance during the 2026 service. Two Spotted Eagle Owl boxes required replacement, while another continued to experience occupation by Egyptian Geese. One Barn Owl box was identified for replacement during the next annual service, while the second was replaced and relocated after the previous site became occupied by honeybees.

The findings highlight the importance of **annual servicing and adaptive management**. Artificial habitat is exposed continuously to weather, non-target occupants and natural structural deterioration. Regular inspections allow boxes to be repaired, replaced or relocated where required, ensuring safe nesting and roosting opportunities remain available for indigenous species.

2026 Programme Highlight

All three bat habitat installations showed current occupancy, while the owl network received the structural maintenance and adaptive management required to remain available for future breeding seasons.

Programme Overview

Infrastructure	Quantity
Bat Banks	1
Rocket Bat Hotels	2
Spotted Eagle Owl Boxes	4
Barn Owl Boxes	2
Total Active Structures	9

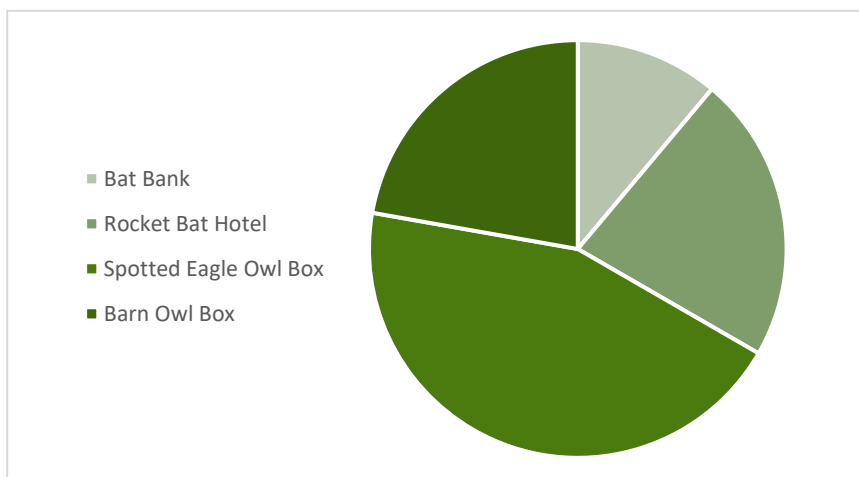


Figure 1 Composition of the RRVA Artificial Habitat Programme in 2026, comprising nine active bat and owl habitat structures.

Supporting Urban Biodiversity

Randpark Ridge has developed from historic farmland into an established residential suburb characterised by spacious properties, greenbelts and a strong community identity. These green spaces provide important habitat corridors for urban wildlife and create opportunities for conservation initiatives to function within the residential landscape.

Artificial bat and owl habitat supplements natural roosting and nesting opportunities that may become limited through urban development. By providing safe habitat for indigenous predators, the programme contributes to biodiversity conservation while delivering valuable ecosystem services to residents.

The RRVA itself highlights the role of these structures in supporting natural predators that help control insects and rodents without harmful poisons.

Study Area

The artificial habitat network is distributed across the Randpark Ridge area, including greenbelts and other suitable open spaces where bats and owls can forage naturally.

The placement of structures across the suburb creates a connected network of habitat opportunities rather than concentrating conservation activity at a single site. This is particularly valuable for mobile species such as bats and owls, which forage across relatively large areas and may utilise different structures at different times of the year.

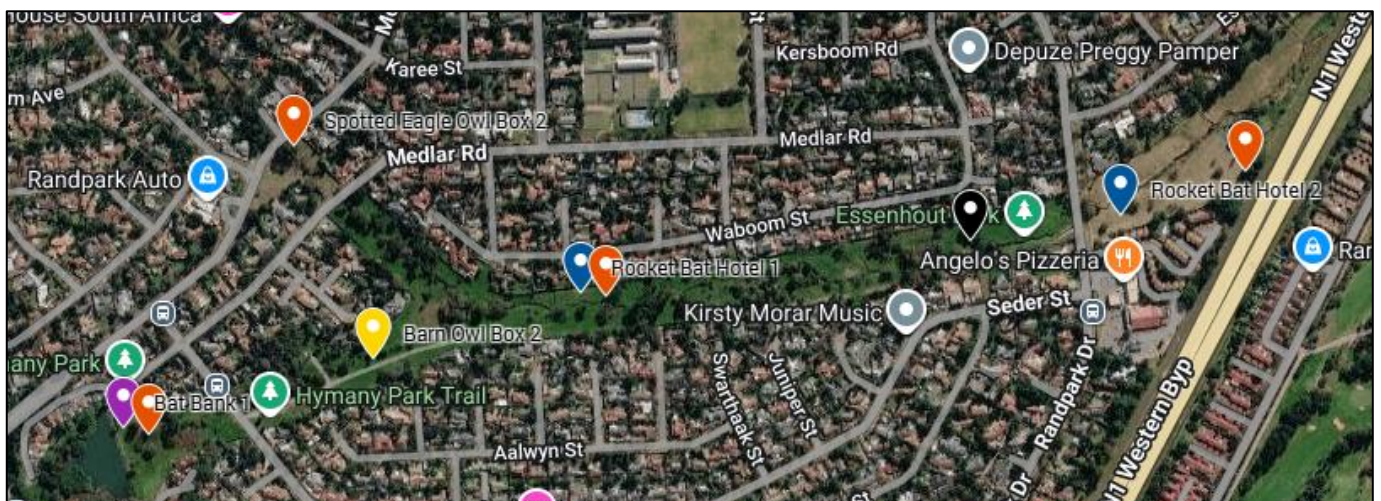


Figure 2 Distribution of the RRVA artificial bat and owl habitat network. Clicking on the map opens the online interactive version.

2026 Highlights

2026 Highlights

3/3 bat habitat installations occupied

2 Rocket Bat Hotels occupied by Cape Serotine Bats

Bat Bank recorded 2/3 occupied roost units

2 Spotted Eagle Owl boxes replaced

1 Barn Owl box replaced and relocated

Continued long-term ecological monitoring across the suburb

3/3 bat habitat installations occupied

2 Rocket Bat Hotels occupied by Cape Serotine Bats

Bat Habitat Programme

Cape Serotine Bat (*Laephotis capensis*)

Cape Serotines continue to utilise the RRVA bat habitat network and were recorded in both Rocket Bat Hotels during the 2026 service.

Cape Serotines are insectivorous bats that readily utilise artificial roosts within suburban environments. They feed on a broad variety of nocturnal flying insects, including moths, beetles, mosquitoes and other small insects, making them valuable natural contributors to insect regulation.

The continued occupation of RRVA's Rocket Bat Hotels demonstrates that the structures are providing established roosting habitat within the suburb.

Long-Term Bat Habitat Success

The RRVA bat habitat programme has now been maintained for six years. Continued occupancy following the replacement of ageing boxes demonstrates the importance of annual servicing in maintaining established roost sites rather than allowing deteriorating structures to become unsuitable.

Owl Habitat Programme

Spotted Eagle Owl (*Bubo africanus*)

Spotted Eagle Owls are well adapted to suburban landscapes and naturally prey on rodents, reptiles, insects and other small animals.

Artificial nesting boxes provide additional breeding opportunities where natural nesting sites may be limited. Occupancy may vary between years, and boxes are frequently investigated or temporarily occupied by other species.

Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*)

Barn Owls are specialised rodent predators and are particularly valuable within urban environments where rats and mice may become problematic.

Artificial nesting boxes provide secure breeding habitat while encouraging natural, poison-free rodent management. Their effectiveness is greatest where rodenticides are avoided, reducing the risk of secondary poisoning to adults and chicks.

Habitat Type	Total	Serviced	Replaced / Relocated
Spotted Eagle Owl Boxes	4	2	2
Barn Owl Boxes	2	1	1

Two Spotted Eagle Owl Boxes required replacement, while one Barn Owl Box was replaced and relocated following occupation by honeybees.

Bat Habitat Results

Installation	Installed	2026 Findings	Service History	What3Words
Bat Bank 1	August 2020	2/3 roost units occupied. Serviced and guano tray repaired.	Occupied in 2023 and 2024; boxes replaced in 2025.	///retire.onion.reviewed
Rocket Bat Hotel 1	August 2020	Occupied by Cape Serotine Bats. Serviced.	Serviced annually since 2021; replaced in 2025.	///brochure.farms.searched
Rocket Bat Hotel 2	August 2020	Occupied by Cape Serotine Bats. Serviced.	Previously occupied; serviced annually since 2021; replaced in 2025.	///bind.yourself.biked

Owl Habitat Results

Installation	Installed	2026 Findings	Previous Findings	What3Words
Spotted Eagle Owl Box 1	July 2021	Serviced. Occupied by Egyptian Geese.	Egyptian Goose occupation also recorded in 2024.	///done.spooned.expand
Spotted Eagle Owl Box 2	July 2021	Box missing and replaced.	Serviced annually from 2022–2025.	///looks.exacted.trendy
Spotted Eagle Owl Box 3	July 2021	Structural spine damaged; box replaced.	Owl occupancy recorded in 2023 and 2024.	///look.recently.standard
Spotted Eagle Owl Box 4	June 2025	Serviced.	Installed as replacement habitat after the previous Barn Owl site on private property was discontinued.	///coupler.life.dive
Barn Owl Box 1	February 2023	Serviced. Recommended for replacement at the 2027 service.	Serviced in 2024 and 2025.	///payer.dramatic.chambers
Barn Owl Box 2	June 2023	Previous site occupied by honeybees. Box replaced and relocated during 2026.	Previous location: ///trunk.roofs.equality	///ridge.awakes.pills

Understanding Non-Target Occupancy

Artificial nesting boxes are attractive to many cavity-nesting species, not only owls.

Egyptian Geese (*Alopochen aegyptiaca*) and honeybees have both utilised structures within the RRVA network. While this can temporarily prevent owl use, it also reflects the broader shortage of suitable nesting and roosting habitat within urban landscapes.

 Egyptian Geese Recorded at Spotted Eagle Owl Box 1 in 2024 and again in 2026.	 Honeybees Previous Barn Owl Box 2 location became occupied by honeybees, resulting in replacement and relocation of the box in 2026.
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Annual servicing allows EcoSolutions to identify competing occupants and adapt the programme where appropriate. Empty non-target nesting material may be removed where legally permissible, while honeybee colonies require specialist relocation.

Annual servicing is particularly important for owl boxes because the breeding opportunity for a season can be lost if a structure remains damaged, missing or occupied by another species.

Discussion

The 2026 service demonstrates two important aspects of the RRVA programme.

Firstly, the bat network continues to show strong long-term performance. All three bat habitat installations showed occupancy, including both Rocket Bat Hotels and two of the three individual roost units within the Bat Bank. Continued Cape Serotine occupation suggests that the network has become established within the local bat population.

Secondly, the owl network illustrates why regular servicing is essential. Missing structures, structural damage, Egyptian Goose occupation and honeybee colonies all required active management during the current service. Without annual monitoring, these issues could substantially reduce the availability of suitable breeding habitat.

The RRVA website identifies annual inspections, servicing, monitoring and responsible replacement as important components of maintaining effective wildlife habitat, and the 2026 findings demonstrate exactly why this ongoing management is necessary.

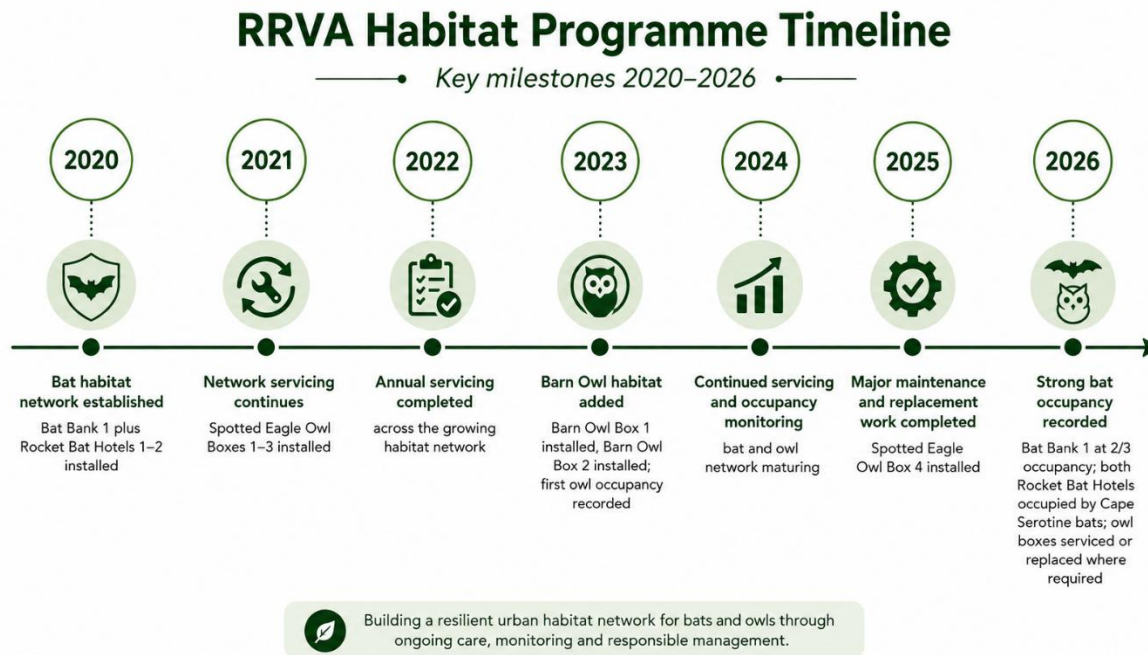


Figure 3 Development and long-term management of the RRVA Artificial Habitat Programme from 2020 to 2026.

Supporting Natural Pest Management

The artificial habitat programme provides more than conservation value.

Bats contribute to the regulation of flying insects across gardens and green spaces, while Barn Owls and Spotted Eagle Owls provide natural predation pressure on rodents.

Together, these species support a broader Integrated Pest Management approach, where natural predators complement responsible property management and reduce the need for chemical control.

Rodenticides should be avoided wherever possible around owl conservation programmes. Poisoned rodents may be consumed by adult owls or fed directly to chicks, creating a risk of secondary poisoning and undermining the conservation benefits of providing nesting habitat.

This reinforces the RRVA's existing environmental message that artificial owl and bat habitat can help control pests while avoiding harmful poisons.

Recommendations

EcoSolutions recommends continuing the annual servicing of the complete RRVA artificial habitat network.

Particular priorities for the next service include replacement of Barn Owl Box 1, monitoring the newly relocated Barn Owl Box 2, monitoring Egyptian Goose activity at Spotted Eagle Owl Box 1, and continued monitoring of previously occupied Spotted Eagle Owl Box 3 following its replacement.

Continued responsible management of rodent populations without anticoagulant rodenticides will further strengthen the conservation value of the owl programme.

The established success of the bat habitat network also provides an opportunity to consider strategic expansion into suitable greenbelt areas, particularly where additional insect control and biodiversity enhancement would benefit residents.

EcoSolutions also recommends the installation of educational signboards at selected owl and bat habitat sites. These can explain the purpose of the structures, the ecological roles of bats and owls, the risks associated with rodenticides, and how residents can help protect local wildlife. Signage would strengthen community engagement, improve awareness of the RRVA's conservation initiatives, and help residents better understand the value of the programme within the neighbourhood.

Communicating Your Success

The RRVA artificial habitat programme is particularly well suited to community communication because it provides residents with a visible example of local conservation in action.

The RRVA already features the owl box and bat hotel network on its environmental webpage and provides residents with access to previous annual service reports and a map of the installations.

- The 2026 results provide an opportunity to build on this through:
- RRVA website updates
- Community newsletters
- Social media
- Resident environmental awareness campaigns
- Educational signage near selected structures
- Updates to the interactive habitat map
- Annual conservation reporting

Suggested Website Update:

Our Owl and Bat Programme Continues to Grow

Randpark Ridge's artificial habitat programme continues to support indigenous wildlife throughout our green spaces. During the 2026 annual service, all three bat habitat installations showed active occupancy, including Cape Serotine Bats using both Rocket Bat Hotels.

Our owl boxes were also serviced and maintained ahead of future breeding seasons, with ageing or damaged structures replaced where necessary.

By providing safe habitat for bats and owls, the RRVA is helping support natural insect and rodent control while protecting the biodiversity that makes our neighbourhood special.

Appendix A – Images

Bat Habitat



Figure 4 Bat Bank 1 before (left) and after (right) servicing August 2026



Figure 5 Rocket Bat Hotel 1 before (left) and after (right) servicing August 2026



Figure 6 Rocket Bat Hotel 2 before (left) and after (right) servicing August 2026

Owl Habitat



Figure 7 Barn Owl Box 1 before (left) and after (right) servicing August 2026



Figure 8 Barn Owl Box 2 before (left) and after (right) servicing August 2026

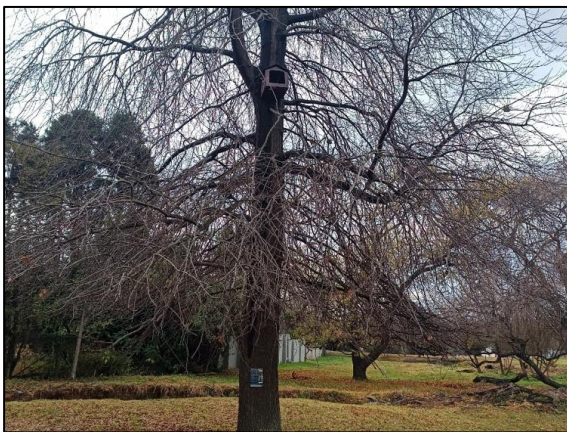


Figure 9 Spotted Eagle Owl Box 1 after servicing August 2026



Figure 10 Spotted Eagle Owl Box 2 before (left) and after (right) servicing August 2026



Figure 11 Spotted Eagle Owl Box 3 before (left) and after (right) servicing August 2026



Figure 12 Spotted Eagle Owl Box 4 before (left) and after (right) servicing August 2026

Owl Habitat



Figure 5 Spotted Eagle Owl Box 1 before (left) and after (right) servicing July 2026



Figure 6 Spotted Eagle Owl Box 2 before (left) and after (right) servicing July 2026

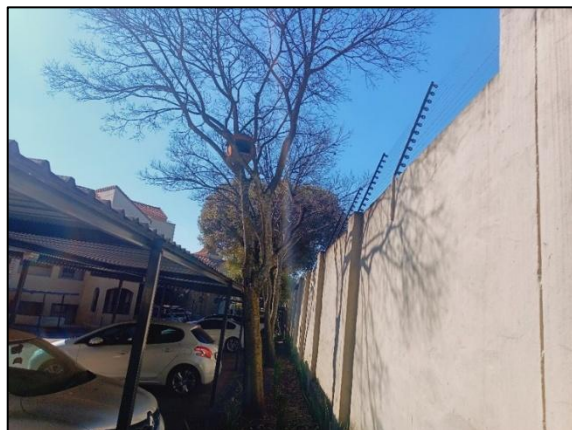


Figure 7 Spotted Eagle Owl Box 3 after servicing July 2026