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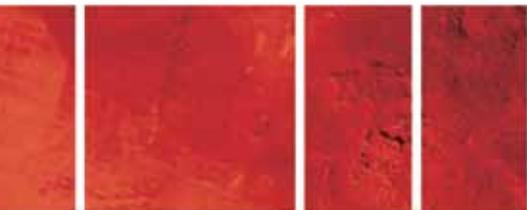


# Glovebox Guide for Managing Wild Dogs

Benjamin Lee Allen

An IA CRC Project





**Website:** [www.feral.org.au/pestsmart](http://www.feral.org.au/pestsmart)

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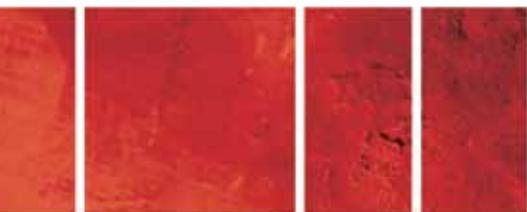


Image: Lee Allen

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# 1. About this guide

This *Glovebox Guide for Managing Wild Dogs* is a general guide to managing populations of wild dogs in Australia. This guide uses the term 'wild dogs' to describe any wild-living members of the genus *Canis*, including pure dingoes, feral domestic dogs and crossbreds between the two. Wild dogs present significant economic, environmental and social impacts in many places, but are also viewed as an important part of most mainland environments.

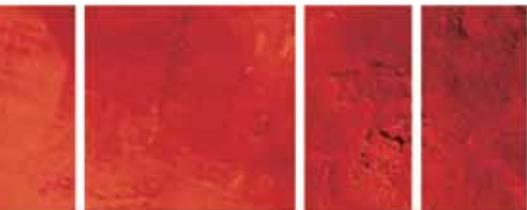
The need to manage wild dogs for their impacts has not diminished in the last 200 years. There might be new laws or different control tools and strategies, but the principles remain the same. This guide seeks to enable best-practice wild dog management by providing broadly applicable information on:

- wild dog ecology
- identifying wild dogs and their impacts
- management tools and strategies
- working dog safety
- policy and legislation.

This glovebox guide does not cover all the details of wild dog management, so you should consider participation in developing community wild dog management plans or enrolment in recognised vertebrate pest management courses. For more information on wild dog management visit [www.feral.org.au](http://www.feral.org.au).



Image: Richard Ali



## 2. Wild dog ecology

### Taxonomic names:

*Canis lupus dingo*  
*Canis lupus familiaris*  
*Canis familiaris dingo*  
*Canis dingo*  
*Canis familiaris* (feral/wild individuals)

### Common names:

Wild dog, dingo, feral dog



Image: Peter Fleming

### Description

Wild dogs have a variety of coat colours. In order of occurrence, the most common colours are ginger (red to sandy), black and tan (often with a white chest patch), white, or black. Other coat colours found are sable (with a dark ridgeline like German shepherds), brindle (faintly striped), patchy white and ginger, or patchy white and black. Many wild dogs also have five 'white points' (white toes/feet, socks and a white tail tip), but you can't tell how pure an animal is by its coat colour. Dew claws might be present or absent.

Wild dogs vary in size, but most are similar in size and shape to kelpies. Adults are usually slender and weigh about 15 kg on average, although some individuals and populations might be considerably larger, weighing over 20 kg. Feral domestic dogs weighing up to 70 kg have been captured in the wild.

### Pathways of spread

The colonisation of the dingo began in northern Australia where it was introduced via Indonesia about 5000 years ago. Dingoes spread across the mainland within about 500 years after introduction, possibly assisted by Aboriginal people. Other breeds of domesticated dogs were later brought to Australia with European settlers and spread from southeastern Australia. The greatest densities of pure dingoes live in northwestern Australia, while the greatest densities of hybrids live in southeastern Australia. A decline in the use of netting fences and inefficient or relaxed lethal control is predicted to result in an increase in wild dog populations in areas where they are presently in low numbers (ie areas inside the national dog fence).

## Distribution and abundance

Derived from wolves in eastern Asia about 10-15,000 years ago, dingoes are also found across southeast Asia. Similar subspecies of wolf are found in other parts of the world. Wild dogs (including dingoes) are present across all of mainland Australia, although their abundance varies between regions.

Wild dogs were once locally eradicated from many parts of southeastern and southwestern Australia (ie inside wild dog barrier fences), where they had been intensely persecuted after European settlement. Wild dogs are now present in these areas in low numbers and are becoming more common. They are naturally sparse in central Australian areas where water is unavailable. Only feral domestic dogs are present in some parts of Tasmania and other offshore islands.

## Habitat description

Wild dogs occur in all habitat types on mainland Australia, including alpine, desert, temperate forests, rainforests, meadows, grasslands, and agricultural and urban environments. They reach their highest densities around human-dominated habitats and regions with high-density prey populations, such as areas with many rabbits.

## Nutrition

Wild dogs are predominantly carnivores, and are an opportunistic predator of a variety of mammal, bird and reptile species of all sizes. They prefer small-to-medium sized (less than 15 kg) mammals (such as rodents, rabbits and bandicoots) although larger species (such as kangaroos) can be staple prey when available. Invertebrates and vegetation are also commonly found in wild dog diets. Wild dogs are also scavengers, eating carrion, rubbish and a range of fruits, vegetables and eggs according to opportunity and need.



*Image: Lee Allen*

Wild dogs eat prey equal to about one fifth (20%) of their body weight each day. They need up to 12% of their body weight in water per day in summer, although a lot of this can be supplied from the blood and other fluids found in prey. They might not drink freely available water for several days at a time.

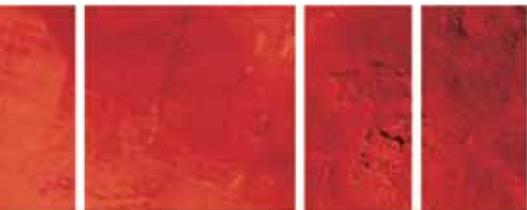


Image: Lee Allen

## Reproduction

Wild dogs are annual breeders, with female pro-oestrus and oestrus periods generally lasting 10-12 days or possibly up to 60 days. Mating usually occurs in April-May, with pups born about two months later. Breeding sometimes happens at other times of year, although this is uncommon. Females produce an average of five pups in each litter (range 1-11). The onset and extent of breeding varies significantly between regions, and is influenced by a range of factors including age, social status, latitude, seasonal conditions and genetic purity. Feral domestic dogs might be capable of producing pups more than once each year, although environmental and energetic constraints probably prevent this in wild-living dogs.

## Lifecycle stages

Pups are born after a gestation period of 61–69 days. Milk production lasts less than two months and pups are weaned gradually. Females usually breed from two years of age, and males reach sexual maturity from one year of age. Wild dogs can live up to about 10 years in the wild (slightly longer in captivity),

although it is unusual for animals to live longer than five to six years. Many don't survive beyond four years. Dispersal of young dogs begins in late summer and continues through to the onset of breeding in winter. Wild dogs have been recorded dispersing over 550 km in less than one month, or travelling 1300 km in four months. Larger-than-average males typically disperse further and more often.

These lifecycle stages mean that wild dogs are most active in autumn and early winter. There is usually an increase in observed tracks, scratches, scats, howling and other signs around this time. Wild dogs are most quiet in late winter and spring, when they are busy raising pups. It is common for signs of wild dogs to 'disappear' for several months when they are actually still there, but hiding.

## Biological and behavioural weaknesses

Wild dogs are top-order predators and have few natural predators besides humans. Pups can be vulnerable to birds of prey and other predators, such as foxes, cats, snakes or goannas. Although wild dogs do not need to drink free water on a daily basis, the distribution of arid-zone populations is usually linked to the availability of water.

## Potential uses

Wild dogs are considered a pest animal in most states and territories, although some recent studies suggest they might be useful for indirectly reducing the impacts of foxes and feral cats on small prey species. Wild dogs can also be useful for sport hunting and trapping. Pure-looking dingoes provide tourism opportunities to some parks and conservation areas.



## Impacts

### Economic

Wild dogs pose a threat to livestock because they readily prey on poultry, sheep, goats and cattle. Wild dogs can also impact other industries such as small crops and orchards, where the dogs can eat fruit and damage infrastructure by chewing irrigation and sprinkler systems. They can transmit the parasites *Echinococcus granulosus* (hydatid tapeworms) and *Neospora caninum* to livestock and native animals. Hydatids can produce cyst-affected organs that cannot be sold and also affect the health of livestock. *Neospora* can result in abortions in infected livestock. Hydatids can also be transmitted from dogs to people. In urban areas, wild dogs are considered a health risk to humans and pets through transmission of these and many other parasites (such as hookworms, roundworms and mange mites) and pathogens (such as giardia, salmonella and campylobacter).

### Environmental

Wild dogs have been implicated in the declines of several small and medium-sized native animals in Australia. They are currently recognised as a known or potential risk to at least 14 nationally threatened mammals, reptiles and birds. The risk of wild dog

predation to threatened vertebrates can be severe in some cases. Wild dogs also transmit diseases and pathogens to native animals. For example, it has been shown that hydatids cause large cysts in the lungs of wallabies, drastically affecting lung function and further increasing their risk of predation. Whether or not these predation and disease threats actually become real can depend on other factors, such as vegetation clearing and habitat alteration. On the other hand, wild dogs can also assist some threatened species through their interactions with foxes and feral cats.

### Social

The main social impacts of wild dogs are not direct impacts, but rather flow out of the economic and environmental impacts. Examples include stress from receiving lower farm profits or from knowing native species are being preyed on. Wild dogs can also have direct social impacts. Examples include psychological distress caused by wild dog predation on household pets, poultry and livestock, and trauma from vehicle accidents with animals. Some urban recreational areas (such as parks and reserves) might be less appealing to the public due to fear of wild dog attacks or concern over the hygiene of facilities contaminated with dog faeces. The increasing diversity of rural land use and rural residents can also cause conflicts within a community.

### More information

More information on the ecology of wild dogs can be found in the book *The Dingo in Australia and Asia* (2001), by Laurie Corbett.



Image: Guy Ballard

# 3. Identifying wild dogs and their impacts

## Detecting the presence of wild dogs and their impacts

It is common for wild dogs to be present but go unnoticed or unrecognised. No matter what colour a free-roaming dog is, if it is not your dog it should be considered a wild dog. There are several indicators

that suggest that wild dogs might be present in an area. Read through the indicators listed in the table, and follow the exercise outlined below.

Category	Potential indicator of wild dog presence	Score
1	free-roaming dogs seen or heard	10
1	wild dog footprints found in places where working dogs have not been used (eg around water points, road junctions, along animal pads, under holes in fences, newly graded tracks)	10
1	wild dog scats/faeces and scratch marks found in similar places (scats should contain hair, bones, scales, feathers, or insects)	10
1	livestock kills and damage, including bite marks or torn ears	10
2	unexplained livestock losses or low marking/branding/mustering percentages	8
2	unusually high percentages of cows not producing milk	8
2	the absence of young kangaroos and feral goats	7
2	kangaroos caught in fences when there has been no one present to disturb the mobs	7
3	sheep coming into water at a gallop and leaving in the same way (lead animal taking last animal back out before it has drunk)	5
3	changes in livestock or goat behaviour (eg stock no longer camping on the dam or grazing where they always have in the past)	5
3	sheep that won't work into the wind or visit good feed down one end of the paddock	5
4	kangaroos/livestock drowned in full dams	4
4	feral goat numbers lower than expected	4
4	crows following your working dogs	3
4	increased localised crow numbers	2
4	birds of prey consistently flying over rough, barren areas where you would not otherwise expect to find much food	2

### Are wild dogs present in my area?

Using the indicators described above, complete the following exercise:

1. Circle each of the indicators you have observed for your area.
2. Add up your scores separately for each category.
3. Locate your chances of wild dogs being present in the following table.

A score of 10 or more in Category 1	You definitely have wild dogs
A score of 15 or more in Category 2	You probably have wild dogs
A score of 10 or more in Category 3	You might have wild dogs
A score of 10 or more in Category 4	You might have wild dogs
One score/indicator each from Category 2, 3, and 4	You probably have wild dogs

Ask your neighbours to complete the exercise as well. If you think you have wild dogs, talk to your local pest animal authority.

## Distinguishing between wild dog, fox, cat and quoll tracks

The presence of wild dogs is often discovered by seeing their tracks in the soil, but sometimes the tracks of other species look similar to those of wild dogs (see Figure 1). Wind, rain, organic matter in the soil and other factors can make it difficult to accurately identify some tracks or determine how fresh they are.



Figure 1 - The relative size and shape of wild dog, fox, quoll and cat tracks (top row shows front foot and bottom row shows back foot).

The average size of wild dog footprints also changes throughout the year as pups become active and begin wandering around. For example, in late spring and early summer, some wild dog footprints (of pups) can be as small as foxes' and it can be hard to tell them apart. By autumn and winter, all wild dog prints are usually much larger than foxes' prints (see Figure 1).

The front foot length of adult wild dogs (excluding nails) is usually greater than 6 cm. When wild dogs, foxes and cats walk, their front foot hits the ground first and their back foot print usually lands nearby (see Figure 2).

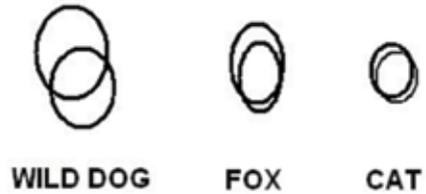


Figure 2 - Usual foot print placement for wild dogs, foxes and cats

In good track-reading conditions in sand, silt, or mud:

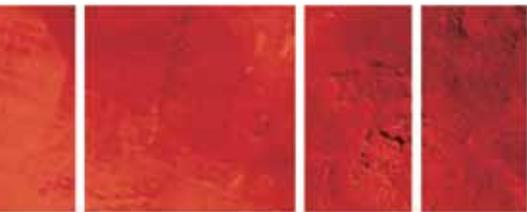
- dog prints are usually larger and rounder, foxes' prints are smaller and more elongated, and cats' are small and very round
- dog toe nails usually point out straight, fox nails point inwards, and cats have no toe nail marks
- the back foot usually partly overlaps the front foot for dogs, mostly overlaps for foxes, and almost completely overlaps for cats
- the front foot of quolls shows all five toes (wild dogs, foxes and cats only show four).

## More information

For more information to help identify tracks and other signs of wild dogs and other animals see the book *Tracks, Scats and Other Traces: A Field Guide to Australian Mammals* (2004), by Barbara Triggs. If you suspect that you have wild dogs in your area, talk to your neighbours and your local pest animal control authority.



Image: Ben Allen



## 4. Management tools and strategies

### Tools to control wild dogs

There are a variety of different lethal and non-lethal tools available to control wild dogs. These include poison baits, traps, shooting, fencing, guard animals and aversion techniques (such as lights, alarms, and flagging). Not all tools are useful for a given area; each tool varies in its effectiveness, depending on a range of factors specific to the local situation. The use of many control tools is also subject to various laws and regulations. Wild dog control officers are familiar with these and are able to advise people on what is and is not permitted in your local area.

#### Poison baiting

Poison baits can be made from pieces of animal meat or offal (such as kangaroo, cattle or horse meat) cut to about the size of a tennis ball or larger. Average and minimum weights vary between States so check the size you require. Manufactured baits (such as DOGGONE® or De-K9®) can also be bought. Sodium fluoroacetate (or '1080') is the main toxin used to control wild dogs, although a new toxin called 'PAPP' (para-aminopropiophenone) is being developed and should be available soon for the control of wild dogs and foxes. Both 1080 and PAPP are expected to be available into the future. Strychnine is no longer permitted for use in poison baits in any jurisdiction.

#### Ejectors

An ejector is a small cylindrical device that is buried in the ground, leaving only a 'bait head' exposed on the surface. The bait head contains a replaceable capsule of poison and is about the size of a cylindrical golf ball. When an animal puts its mouth over the

bait head and pulls it, the poison is ejected into the mouth in a quick puff or spurt. Ejectors are similar to a permanent one-shot bait station.

#### Trapping

Leghold traps may be used to capture live animals for later euthanasia, usually by shooting. A range of different trap types are available, but not all trap types are permitted for use in each jurisdiction. The most humane and efficient traps are called 'soft-catch' traps, including Jakes, Victors, or Bridgers. Each has slightly different design features for use in various situations. Professional wild dog trappers are also available to contract in many areas.

#### Shooting

Firearms may be used by landholders, professional wild dog controllers, or hunting groups to shoot wild dogs in a safe and humane manner, in accordance with the relevant laws and guidelines.

#### Fencing

Fencing is perhaps the best method of excluding wild dogs from an area, but a high level of maintenance is needed to keep fences dog proof. Netting or electric fencing can both be effective barriers, but it is often necessary to eradicate dogs from inside fenced areas. Well-maintained fences can stop wild dogs from crossing over, but they can't stop dogs from going around them, and might also prevent wild dogs from leaving once they have got in.

#### Guard animals

A variety of guard animals are used all around the world to protect livestock from predators.

In Australia, guard dogs (such as maremmas), llamas and alpacas, or donkeys are sometimes used with varying degrees of success. Using guard animals is designed to prevent livestock attacks, but they might not exclude wild dogs from a given area.

### Aversion techniques

A range of different aversion techniques and devices have been suggested. Although untested, aversion methods include flashing lights, sounding alarms or objects flapping in the wind, such as coloured flags.

## Strategies to control wild dogs

### Working with nature

The ecology and behaviour of wild dogs follows a seasonal and cyclical pattern each year as dogs transition from breeding season, to whelping, to dispersal and back to breeding season again. Wild dog management strategies can be optimised if the biology and nature of wild dog populations are carefully considered. For example, many control programs are run in autumn to try and target mature dogs before they have a chance to breed. Alternatively, control programs can be run in spring in attempts to target juvenile dogs before they disperse. Control programs run over the summer try and target migrating dogs. The best time to control wild dogs will depend on your local situation.

### Working with people

Wild dog management strategies are most successful when people work together. Because wild dogs do not respect tenure boundaries such as fences, borders or land uses, wild dog managers in one area are likely to be affected by the actions or inaction of people in surrounding areas. Working together ensures that all

stakeholders have input into a management approach that covers the views of each interest group. This typically requires a little bit of work from a lot of people, rather than a lot of work from a few people.

### Adaptive management

An adaptive approach to managing wild dogs broadly involves: defining the issue, developing a plan of action with achievable and measurable goals, putting the plan into action, monitoring progress, evaluating the plan, and making adjustments and improvements before trying it again. Defining the issue is usually the most difficult and time-consuming part, but is critical for success. It must take into account all the socio-ecological components and current knowledge before further planning or further action can proceed successfully. Compromise might be needed to progress, and new information might mean that changes to working plans need to be made along the way.



*Image: Ben Allen*

## Choosing the right control tool

The destruction of wild dogs might not always be needed to resolve the problems you face. However, when the control of wild dogs is required, both lethal and non-lethal control tools can be used inside an adaptive management framework that incorporates the views of each stakeholder. There are limited control tools available, but each has advantages and disadvantages – not all tools will be useful in every situation.

The most effective approach usually involves using a range of tools (an 'integrated' approach), and not relying on just one tool. The table below shows some of the basic pros and cons of common control tools. The advantages and disadvantages described might be different for each situation, and local knowledge and consultation can help determine the best tools to use for a given situation. Note that some control tools might not be allowed in certain areas.

Control tool	Advantages	Disadvantages	Common uses
1080 baiting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• can be applied on a broad scale by vehicle, plane or helicopter</li> <li>• can be flexible with bait type, using manufactured products or meat from various animals</li> <li>• is relatively cheap</li> <li>• requires relatively little time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• has restricted use in peri-urban areas</li> <li>• is dangerous to pet dogs and some other non-target animals</li> <li>• results in a relatively slow death to poisoned animals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• most commonly used to protect livestock across broad areas in less-populated regions</li> <li>• small-scale campaigns can sometimes be run in peri-urban areas, but they usually need a high level of preparation</li> </ul>
PAPP baiting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• can be applied on a broad scale by vehicle, plane or helicopter</li> <li>• may be used more safely than 1080 around peri-urban areas and other places where domestic or working dogs are at risk</li> <li>• has an antidote</li> <li>• provides a relatively quick and humane death</li> <li>• is relatively cheap</li> <li>• requires relatively little time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• may be limited to only manufactured bait types</li> <li>• presents risks to some non-target species</li> <li>• antidote is currently only available from a vet</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• currently under development, so not yet available for general use</li> </ul>
trapping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• can be selective and target specific</li> <li>• can be done in peri-urban and other areas where poison baiting is not suitable</li> <li>• can confirm the control of specific individual animals</li> <li>• enables a relatively quick and humane death</li> <li>• is relatively cheap</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• has limited broadscale application</li> <li>• requires a high level of technical ability and local knowledge</li> <li>• captured animals may be distressed for some time</li> <li>• requires relatively high time inputs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• commonly used in areas with high risks to people, working dogs and other non-target species</li> <li>• is used to capture specific individuals</li> </ul>
ejectors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is highly target specific</li> <li>• can be used with either cyanide, 1080, or PAPP</li> <li>• is relatively cheap</li> <li>• requires relatively little time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• has limited broadscale application</li> <li>• requires a moderate level of technical ability and local knowledge</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• currently under development, and only available for use on crown lands in NSW</li> </ul>

Control tool	Advantages	Disadvantages	Common uses
shooting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is selective and target specific</li> <li>• can be done in areas where poison baiting is not suitable</li> <li>• can confirm the control of specific individual animals</li> <li>• enables a relatively quick and humane death</li> <li>• is relatively cheap</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• has limited broadscale application</li> <li>• requires a high level of technical ability and local knowledge</li> <li>• requires relatively high time inputs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• commonly used together with trapping programs</li> <li>• is used to target specific individuals</li> </ul>
fencing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is capable of completely excluding wild dogs from an area</li> <li>• removes the need for additional livestock fencing</li> <li>• probably involves relatively little ongoing time inputs once constructed in some places</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is relatively expensive to construct and maintain in a dog-proof condition</li> <li>• limits movements of other wildlife</li> <li>• does not remove wild dogs already present in the exclusion zone</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• most frequently used in local areas to protect high-value assets, such as livestock studs and threatened wildlife reserves</li> </ul>
guard animals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• may be able to provide ongoing control of wild dogs</li> <li>• does not require the killing of wild dogs</li> <li>• has limited non-target impacts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• often requires significant investment in time and training</li> <li>• is relatively expensive</li> <li>• has limited broadscale use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• most frequently used in restricted areas to protect high-value livestock</li> </ul>
aversion techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• does not require the killing of wild dogs</li> <li>• has limited non-target impacts</li> <li>• is relatively cheap</li> <li>• requires relatively little time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• typically provides only very short-term control</li> <li>• has limited broadscale use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• most frequently used in association with fencing</li> </ul>

Choosing the right control tool is an important step towards succeeding with a wild dog control program. No one tool is best overall and a variety of control tools are often used together in a community control program. Reducing wild dog numbers is best achieved when control is applied across broad areas at the same time, and repeated on a regular basis, leaving no gaps in space or time.

It is most important to remember that reducing wild dog numbers might not actually reduce wild dog impacts, so control programs should only be considered successful when wild dog problems have ceased or been reduced to an acceptable level.

## More information

For more information on control tools visit [www.feral.org.au](http://www.feral.org.au). Detailed instructions on how to develop a wild dog management plan can be found at this website, where you can download a copy of *Working Plan to Manage Wild Dogs (Green Book)* and the *Guidelines for Preparing a Working Plan to Manage Wild Dogs (Brown Book)*. Further information can also be found in the book *Managing the Impacts of Dingoes and Other Wild Dogs (2001)*, by Peter Fleming, Laurie Corbett, Robert Harden and Peter Thomson. The book *Guardian Dogs - Best Practice Manual for the Use of Livestock Guardian Dogs (2011)*, by Linda van Bommel, is also available from the [www.feral.org.au](http://www.feral.org.au) website.

## 5. Working dog safety

### Risks to working dogs

Wild dogs and working dogs are usually very similar in size and behaviour, and many of the control tools available cannot discriminate between different types of dog. Poisons and traps present the highest risks to working dogs, and non-lethal control techniques do not pose a risk to working dogs.

Both PAPP and 1080 wild dog baits (and ejectors) are toxic to working dogs. For these reasons, working dogs (and other domestic dogs) are the non-target animals most at risk during wild dog baiting campaigns. The best way to prevent working dogs from being poisoned is to keep them away from any source of poison. This is partly managed by following the label instructions and the usage guidelines for the product, including informing your neighbours of where and when you plan to use baits, and storing and transporting baits in appropriate containers.



Image: Ben Allen

Working dogs may also get caught in traps set for wild dogs. Dogs captured accidentally are unlikely to get any major injuries, but they can be 'foot sore' for a short time and might not be able to work until they've recovered. Working dogs are also susceptible to poisoning from lethal trap devices if poison has been used on the trap.

### Steps to reduce the risk to your working dog

- Know where baits have been laid (distribute baits only in places where working dogs do not visit and pick up and dispose of any remaining baits once the baiting program is finished).
- Muzzle your dogs (muzzling is cheap, takes very little time and does not usually reduce a dog's work performance, but it can prevent your dog from taking a bait, pulling an ejector or chewing a lethal trap device).
- Keep your dogs kennelled in pens or tethered on runs while they are not being used for work or play.
- Do not take your dogs into a baited area for at least two years (unless muzzled).
- Keep your dogs away from dead or dying poisoned animals and any toxic vomit.
- Supervise your dog when off the lead, and make sure suitable emetics, vets' telephone numbers and first aid materials are available to help your dog's chances of survival if poisoning does occur.
- Never assume a bait is safe - ever.



## First aid for your working dog

### 1080 poisoning

Once digested, 1080 is rapidly absorbed from the gut into the bloodstream. Once it is in an animal's circulation, it blocks the chemical reactions that produce energy in cells. Over a period of time, this lack of cell energy prevents organs from functioning properly. Each organ then begins to shut down, causing a variety of visible signs.

#### *Signs to look for:*

- anxiety
- frenzied behaviour
- hypersensitivity
- loud vocalising, yelping and howling
- failure to respond to owner
- vomiting
- uncontrolled urinating and defecating
- convulsions
- seizures and fits
- breathing difficulties
- coma or unconsciousness.

### *1080 first aid*

You need to act immediately to save your poisoned dog. Once signs of 1080 poisoning are apparent, the outlook (even with treatment) is poor and dogs rarely survive. However, if you suspect your dog has ingested a 1080 bait but has not yet begun to show clinical signs:

- induce vomiting (to get the bait out - **do not do this if clinical signs are already shown**).
- keep your dog as cool and as quiet as possible
- immediately take your dog to a vet.

### PAPP poisoning

Once eaten, PAPP is rapidly absorbed from the gut into the bloodstream. Once in the blood, it binds with the haemoglobin present in red blood cells and reduces oxygen supply to the heart muscles and brain. Poisoned animals first become lethargic and sleepy before eventually falling unconscious and dying. Even once signs of PAPP poisoning are apparent, the outlook can be good as long as the antidote (BlueHealer®) is administered in time.

#### *Signs to look for:*

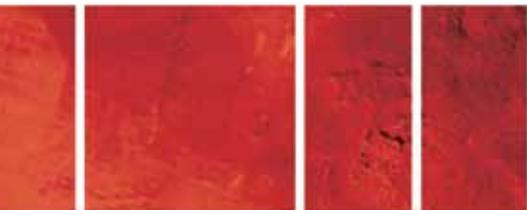
- highly increased heart rate
- colour changes to tongue, lips, and gums (from pink to blue/grey)
- rapidly increasing lethargy, indicated by
  - salivating (dribbling)
  - appearing dazed and wobbly
  - dragging feet and sitting down
  - being unable to lift head or move limbs
- unconsciousness.

### *PAPP first aid*

You need to act immediately to save your poisoned dog – the sooner, the better. Because the effects of PAPP progress from mild to worse as the poison takes hold, different first aid actions are needed at different stages. Always take your dog to a vet straight away, and keep your dog as cool and as quiet as possible.

#### *Early stages (conscious)*

- induce vomiting (to get the bait out)
- administer BlueHealer®antidote.



#### *Late stages (conscious)*

- DO NOT induce vomiting (the dog may be too weak to handle the physical energy needed to vomit)
- administer BlueHealer® antidote.

#### *Unconsciousness*

- administer BlueHealer® antidote.

#### *What can I use to make my dog vomit?*

Care must be taken when inducing vomiting as your dog may react violently and bite you. Giving too much of some emetics (ie substances that induce vomiting) might also make the dog critically ill. If the dog has vomited, be aware that the vomit is toxic and should be cleaned up immediately. Emetics should be kept in an accessible place (ie the glove box of the ute) in case of poisoning. Suitable emetics include:

- table salt in water: 2 teaspoons of salt in 1 cup of water; less for small dogs, more for larger breeds
- washing soda crystals (sodium carbonate): 3-5 crystals orally, DO NOT use laundry detergents or powders
- copper sulphate crystals: 2 pea-sized crystals.

If you can't make your dog vomit, do not waste time trying again, and take your dog to a vet immediately. The vet will need to know:

- what the suspected poison is
- how long ago your dog was exposed to it
- what your dog was exposed to (a bait, carcass or unknown)
- how the dog is acting now (clinical signs)
- how long the signs have been noticeable.

## Trap/foot injuries

Trapping will rarely leave your dog with any permanent injuries, although they might end up with some hair loss or scarring on their foot. More severe injuries might develop later, depending on how the dog was captured and how long it stayed in the trap. These injuries might include the loss of toe nails, toe/foot pads wearing off, or disfigurement. Housing your dog in a 'soft' environment (ie not on concrete or wire) during recovery can help to prevent these later injuries from happening.

Domestic and working dogs will usually yelp and howl to let you know they are caught in a trap. Be aware that dogs may react violently and bite as you get them out of a trap.

#### *To help your dog recover from being trapped*

- Get your dog out of the trap as quick as possible.
- If the paw is swollen, gently massage it to increase blood flow.
- If the paw has minor cuts or bites, gently clean the paw with water or allow your dog to lick it clean.
- If the dog has been caught for a long time, take your dog to a vet.
- House the dog on soft surfaces while it recovers.

## More information

Talk to your local vet for more information on the treatment of poisoned or injured animals.

## 6. Policy and legislation

### Legal status and management

Wild dogs are identified by the national Vertebrate Pests Committee as a 'Category 5/Extreme' species. Category 5 means that the animal is a recognised pest that is both widespread and established, while an Extreme classification indicates that such animals should not be allowed to enter, nor be kept in any state or territory without permission. Wild dogs are also identified as a pest animal under the Australian Pest Animal Strategy.

Because of these classifications, wild dog management is constrained by legislation and policy, with various guidelines, codes of practice, and standard operating procedures applying. Legislation and policy often vary between jurisdictions at local and state levels, with overriding federal laws also affecting wild dog management. There are also other more generic Acts that function across jurisdictions. Violation of laws related to wild dog management can attract serious penalties (eg fines and jail time) for individuals and agencies.

In general, the following types of regulations should be considered before beginning any wild dog management activity.

#### Laws relating to animal welfare

There are laws in every state and territory that address the need to treat all animals humanely, whether they are considered pests or not. People managing wild dogs are obligated to use control methods that minimise any potential pain, fear or distress. These obligations encompass a wide range of activities from the capture and relocation of animals,

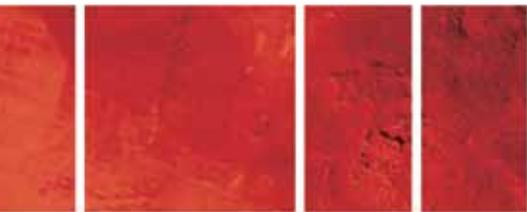


*Image: Heather Miller*



*Image: Peter Fleming*

through to poisoning, shooting or trapping. Codes of practice, standard operating procedures, and best-practice guidelines for the management of wild dogs have been developed, are publicly available, and should be followed in order to prevent cruelty to animals during control operations.



## Laws relating to land tenure

The legal status of wild dogs varies with different land tenures. In many cases, wild dogs are a 'protected species' in national parks and conservation reserves, while they are considered 'declared pests' in many livestock production areas. Listing wild dogs as protected or declared places certain restrictions and obligations on those intending to manage wild dogs in a given area. Certain management activities are not legally permissible on all tenures. Permission to access various land tenures should also be considered.

## Laws relating to the conservation status of specific wild dog populations

Laws can sometimes vary between specific populations or types of wild dog. For example, an isolated island population (such as those on Fraser Island) might be considered a unique natural asset worthy of conservation. Alternatively, people might want to only conserve pure dingoes but eliminate impure hybrids and feral dogs. Because it can be hard to identify the purity of an individual wild dog just from what it looks like, land tenure (or the expected location of important populations) is often used to define areas where different restrictions apply. For example, controlling all wild dogs (pure or otherwise) may be allowed along the boundaries of some conservation reserves, while core areas within a reserve may be set aside for wild dog conservation.

## Laws relating to the use of specific control techniques

Various control techniques are also often governed by laws independent of their use on wild dogs. For example, there is specific legislation dealing with the use of firearms, which are often used to euthanise wild dogs in trapping or shooting programs. Various

laws also govern the use of poisons and other veterinary drugs used to kill or safely handle wild dogs. Many of these chemicals have label instructions and directions for use that are legally binding. Wild dog managers are not freed from obligations under these laws even when other obligations (such as animal welfare and land tenure considerations) have been met.

## Laws relating to the use of animals for research and teaching

Not all wild dog management activities require the destruction of animals, and alternative legislation governs the use of animals for researching and teaching purposes. Some wild dog management activities might be considered 'research and teaching activities' in some jurisdictions, such as the systematic use of infra-red trail cameras or attaching tracking collars to wild dogs. If this is the case, various additional permits and approvals may be required before management activities can begin.

## Laws relating to the keeping, sale, and movement of wild dogs

Because wild dogs may be considered protected or declared, native or introduced, or a risk to livestock or not, laws differ between jurisdictions with respect to the keeping, sale and movement of wild dogs. Different states and territories might or might not allow the keeping of wild dogs as pets. A permit might be required to do so, and although permitted in one area, wild dogs might not be transportable to another state or tenure. Wild dogs may be seized and euthanised if they are being kept illegally.



## Legal obligations on owners of land where wild dogs occur

The responsibility to manage wild dogs rests largely with the owners or managers of the land where wild dogs occur. This presents challenges in places where wild dogs roam between multiple properties, and these are usually sorted out through community wild dog management plans. In places where wild dogs are considered pests, landowners have a responsibility to control wild dogs on their land and prevent them from causing problems on neighbouring lands. On lands where wild dog conservation measures are applied, managers have a responsibility to ensure that wild dogs are not leaving those lands or causing

problems in adjacent areas. These obligations apply to private, leased and crown lands. There are likely to be penalties for people and agencies that do not abide by the rules.

### EPBC Act considerations

The *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act 1999* oversees the management of vulnerable and endangered native species, populations and ecological communities. The *EPBC Act* lists all the native species currently at risk from a variety of factors. Wild dog predation is known or expected to be a risk to the following threatened species:

Species type	Common name	Scientific name	Adult weight (kg)
mammal	marsupial moles	<i>Notoryctes typhlops</i> , <i>N. caurinus</i>	0.07
mammal	smoky mouse	<i>Pseudomys fumeus</i>	0.09
bird	black-breasted button-quail	<i>Turnix melanogaster</i>	0.1
mammal	golden bandicoot	<i>Isodon auratus</i>	0.7
mammal	northern quoll	<i>Dasyurus hallucatus</i>	1.2
mammal	greater bilby	<i>Macrotis lagotis</i>	2.5
mammal	long-footed potoroo	<i>Potorous longipes</i>	2.5
bird	malleefowl	<i>Leipoa ocellata</i>	2.5
mammal	bridled nailtail wallaby	<i>Onychogalea fraenata</i>	8.0
mammal	Proserpine rock-wallaby	<i>Petrogale persephone</i>	8.8
mammal	koala	<i>Phascolarctos cinereus</i>	12
mammal	northern hairy-nosed wombat	<i>Lasiorhinus krefftii</i>	31
bird	southern cassowary	<i>Casuarius casuarius johnsonii</i>	60
reptile	marine turtles	various	-

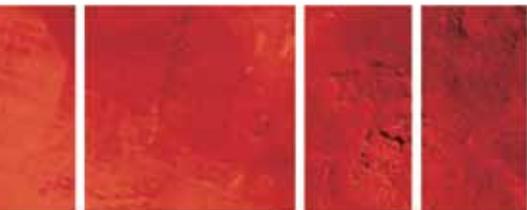


Image: Lee Allen

The *EPBC Act* also lists the key threatening processes (KTP) known to affect threatened species. Predation by wild dogs has not been recognised as a KTP in national legislation but is recognised as such in New South Wales.

Important to the management of wild dogs, new wild dog control programs might need to be reviewed under the *EPBC Act* before they are put in place, to assess the program's risk to threatened species in the area. For example, if wild dog control is to begin in a national park where control has not previously been done, the proposal must be assessed before it can start. Checking with the relevant authorities should first be done to avoid doing the wrong thing.

## More information

For further information on *EPBC Act* requirements, visit [www.environment.gov.au/epbc/approval.html](http://www.environment.gov.au/epbc/approval.html). For details on the New South Wales KTP, see 'Predation and Hybridisation by Feral Dogs (*Canis lupus familiaris*) - key threatening process listing', by R Major (2009) (New South Wales Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water website at <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/determinations/feraldogsFD.htm>).

A greater level of detail can also be found in state and local wild dog management plans (links to the following state and territory wild dog management plans can be accessed at [www.feral.org.au](http://www.feral.org.au)).

## Sample state and territory wild dog management plans

- NT - *A Management Program for the Dingo (Canis lupus dingo) in the Northern Territory of Australia (2006-2011)*. Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts: Alice Springs.
- Qld - *Wild Dog Management Strategy (2011-2016)*. Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation, Biosecurity Queensland: Brisbane.
- NSW - *Wild Dog Management Strategy (2011-2015)*. Department of Primary Industries: Orange.
- ACT - *Draft ACT Pest Animal Management Strategy (2011-2021)*. Department of Environment and Sustainable Development: Canberra.
- Vic - *Invasive Plants and Animals Policy Framework (2011)*. Department of Primary Industries: Melbourne
- SA - *Policy on Management of Dingo Populations in South Australia (2011)*. Primary Industries and Resources South Australia, Biosecurity SA: Adelaide.
- WA - *Western Australian Wild Dog Management Strategy (2005)*. Department of Agriculture: Perth

## Sample local plans and strategies

- Qld - *The Paroo Model of Wild Dog Control (2011)* South West Regional Economic Development Inc
- NSW - *Wild Dog Management Plan for the Barnard River Wild Dog Control Association Area (2010-2012)*
- NSW - *Wild Dog Management Plan for the Kempsey Rural Lands Protection Board District (2008-2011)*
- NSW - *Wild Dog Management Plan for the Nangala Wild Dog Control Association Area (2010-2012)*
- NSW - *Brindabella & Wee Jasper Valleys Cooperative Wild Dog/Fox Plan (2005-2010)*.
- Vic - *North East Wild Dog Action Plan (September 2010)*
- Vic - *Gippsland Wild Dog Action Plan (September 2010)*
- SA - *South Australian Arid lands Natural Resources Management Board Dingo Management Plan (June 2009)*
- WA - *Eastern Wheatbelt Declared Species Group Regional Wild Dog Management Plan 2008/9 to 2010/11*
- WA - *Meekatharra Zone Control Authority Regional Wild Dog Management Plan 2007-11*
- WA - *Carnarvon Zone Control Authority Regional Wild Dog Management Plan 2007-12*



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