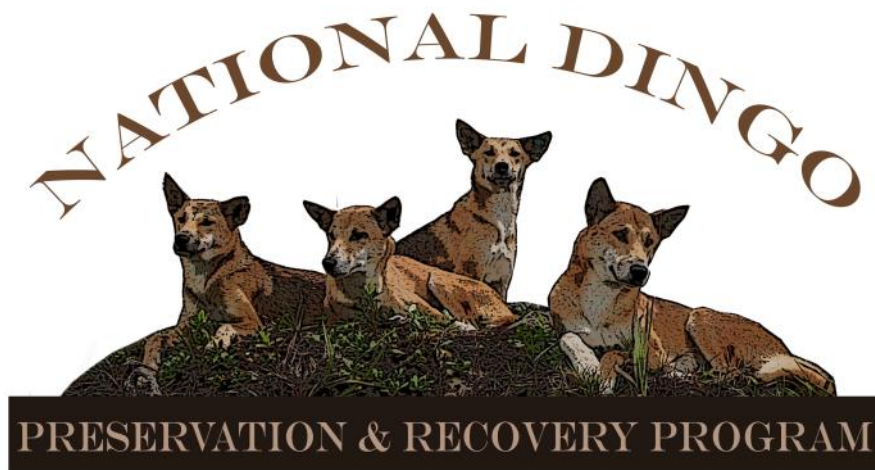


National Dingo Preservation and Recovery Program

NDPRP MAGAZINE
Summer 2017. Volume 5 Number 1

NDPRP brings together a small number of well-informed and experienced people who strive to intervene strategically, advocating for the dingo using environmental and ecological research



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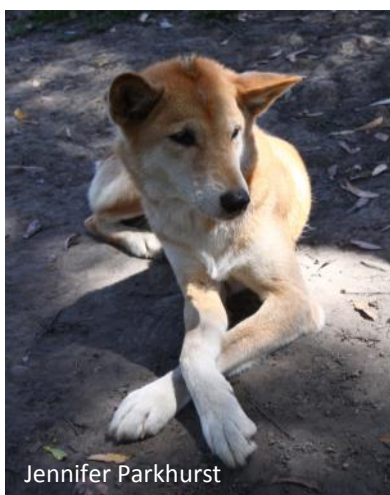
Incorporation No. A0051763G

**‘Great spirits have always
encountered violent opposition from
mediocre minds’**

Albert Einstein

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Compiled by Jennifer Parkhurst
And Ernest Healy

Affiliate Organisations:

- Australian Dingo Conservation Association (NSW)
- Humane Society International (Aust)
- Save Fraser Island Dingoes (Qld)
- Gumbaya Park (Vic)
- Australian Wildlife Protection Council (Vic)
- Eagle's Nest Wildlife Sanctuary Qld)

President's Report

Merry Christmas! Welcome to the next NDPRP Magazine. We hope you find it full of interesting information about what is happening in the dingo world, as well as what we've accomplished over the past year and what we are still trying to accomplish.

I would like to thank my hard-working committee, especially Ernest, who literally has not stopped this year, not even it seems, to sleep. Ernest is the recipient of this year's Sime V award; for details, read on! Thanks also to Ian Gunn, our outgoing President, for his guidance, support, commitment and passion which never waiver. And to our members, thank you for your considerable efforts with research, lobbying, letter-writing, petition signing, and general enthusiasm to continue fighting for the welfare of our dingoes. A special thank you goes out to Rheya Linden for the Animals Active campaign to save the Pelorus Island dingoes. Her report follows.

As usual there has been a lot of frustration, government stone-walling and a general lack of government support both in Victoria and in Queensland which is very disappointing considering our ongoing efforts. This next year we are committed to continuing to pursue the governments in each state to let them know we aren't going away. With a solid track-record of accomplishments and important interventions, some big, some small, all significant, we're moving forward nice and strong into the next year. With the assault on the environment worse than ever, the need for the NDPRP is greater than ever.

Please visit the NDPRP website and let us know what you think. Any contributions to the site are welcome – especially blogs from members. To add a blog, please send your article to me at fidingo@bigpond.net.au website: http://www.nationaldingo.org.au/dingo_dr/

Because the dingo seems to be becoming a victim of 'taxonomic slander', one of our aims is to educate the public about dingoes in general, dispelling myths and promoting a more positive view of the dingo – it is a top-order predator, and as such it does kill to eat, like all predators. It is however, not a killing machine as often described by those who wish to vilify it.

You will see in various reports throughout the newsletter which show that a great deal of money is being spent in Victoria to alleviate the 'wild dog problem'. When we look at the figures, ie, approximately \$13 million being spent on wild dog control, with a population of approximately 13 million sheep and a dingo-kill rate of less than 1,000 sheep per year, we can see that the dingo is being demonised and that the various control measures being taken are completely out of proportion, and in many cases, don't even work. Dingo 'control' seems to be a tax-payer funded *business*, a deception used deliberately in an attempt to wipe out an ecologically significant animal that isn't actually causing all the harm it is purported to be causing.

So the propaganda continues, but the fight goes on!

*Vice President, Dr Ian Gunn
Secretary Dr Ernest Healy,
President Jennifer Parkhurst,
President's assistant, Kari*



Wild Dog Program data 2016-17

Livestock losses (killed or maimed)

Gippsland 590

Hume 364

North West 15

No WDMZ 26

Total 995 (to August) (In 2014-15 – approx. 2,700)

Numbers of 'wild dogs' killed through trapping and shooting 2016-17

Hume 259

North West 15

Gippsland 233

Total 507

Number of ground baits laid 2016-17

14,000 (25% of baits taken)

Traps set, checked or removed 2016-17

24,000 times

Aerial baiting Autumn 2017

Kilometers baited 425.2

Number of baits deployed 3,932

Total number of sheep and lambs in Victoria 2015-16

13,064,743

Proportion of sheep population taken by 'wild dog' predation:

995/13,064,743 = .0076%



Above: 1080 poison baiting

Below: trapping

Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1q80WPx_tOc&feature=youtu.b



Wild Dog Program data 2016-17

RESOLUTION: (Feel free to use this resolution to send to your local Minister)

The NDPRP notes that:

The number of sheep reported lost to 'wild dog' predation in Victoria is very small and, as a proportion of Victoria's total stock of sheep, is miniscule.

Persons presenting scalps for the bounty are only required to indicate the shire or municipality in which 'wild dog' is killed. Therefore, there is no way of ensuring that the dogs are killed in locations near to farms effected by predation, or that scalps were taken within the legal 3 kilometer control area at the interface of public and private land.

The cumulative number of 'wild dogs'/dingoes killed for bounty collection over the period 2011-12 to 2016-17 is significant

There is now a substantial Australian research literature which highlights the importance for apex predator function in maintaining the resilience and biodiversity of ecosystems.

The NDPRP therefore resolves that:

The Victorian government should only deploy lethal 'wild dog'/dingo control on a scale and intensity necessary to protect farm stock.

The destruction of 'wild dogs'/dingoes should not be considered an end in itself.

At present, the effort and public expenditure by the Victorian government for 'wild dog' control is grossly disproportionate to the small scale of the actual stock predation problem.

The 'wild dog' bounty has no rigorous, empirical farm stock protection justification.

The 'wild dog' bounty may be causing significant environmental harm through unnecessary interference with apex predator function within Victorian ecosystems.

The Victorian government should examine the more environmentally and financially responsible option of compensating farmers directly for stock lost to 'wild dog'/dingo predation. For example, if farmers were compensated \$200 by government for every sheep lost to predation, the cost to taxpayers would be less than \$400,000. By contrast, the *2016/17 Victorian Budget* for 'wild dog' control is \$6.2 million.

Areas within Victoria where 'wild dog'/dingo predation numbers are very low, such as the north west of Victoria, should be permanently removed from the Victorian 'wild dog' control program with the primary emphasis being upon ecosystem maintenance and conservation.

The NDPRP expresses concern that:

The Minister for Agriculture, the Hon. Jaala Pulford, is not being adequately advised on these issues, specifically as to the very localised and small scale of reported 'wild dog'/dingo predation in Victoria.

Dingo destruction takes on a life of its own

By Melinda Browning with Ernest Healy



Over the past decade, lethal dingo or 'wild dog' destruction has increasingly taken on a life its own, independent of any genuine need to protect farm livestock (principally sheep) from predation. While 'wild dog' control has always been associated with environmental ignorance or conducted with scant regard for negative environmental consequences, an additional dimension is now obvious. 'Wild dog' destruction has become a growth industry, aligned to powerful vested economic interests, which are now desperate to maintain legitimacy in the face of the scientific realization that the dingo is an important part of Australian ecosystems and that the systematic destruction of the animal has likely been a source of environmental destabilization and potentially of native species loss. The information below provides some insight into the way that the pastoral industry and associated vested interests have organized themselves in response to changing attitudes towards the dingo.

Reflecting growing international scientific attention to the importance of apex predators within ecosystems for biodiversity maintenance and environmental stability there has been a steadily growing body of Australian research on the role of the dingo as terrestrial apex predator. Research has often concluded that healthy dingo populations are of net benefit to ecosystems, including for the survival prospects of critical weight range marsupials, which are in significant decline.

The findings of this corpus of research have run head on against the inherited view of dingoes as a pest animal to be lethally controlled because of the historical reliance of the Australian rural economy upon sheep grazing. For a nation that 'rode on the sheep's back' in its formative stages, the dingo has never really been accepted as native wildlife in the usual cuddly sense. Its status has been ambiguous at best. Its presence as a placental mammal within a natural environment rich in marsupials has been a source of suspicion concerning its origins and identity.

As knowledge of the ecological importance of the dingo steadily advanced at the scientific level, a political shift was afoot in Victoria, which also ran counter to the entrenched culture of disdain towards the dingo. Following a threatened species nomination for the dingo to the Victorian Scientific Advisory Committee in 2007, the Committee subsequently determined that the dingo is a legitimate native taxon, and that it faced the threat of extinction (in part from the threat of lethal control). As a consequence, the Brumby Labor government listed pure dingoes under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act, with the final touches put in place in late 2010. It is no exaggeration to say that pest management agencies around Australia, and farming representative organizations (historical hotbeds of dingo hatred and propaganda), had their gaze fixed on the outcome in Victoria. As a result of the listing, overnight, the dingo was transformed from an 'established pest animal', along with feral pigs, goats and rabbits, to threatened wildlife. Wildlife and threatened species status for the dingo threatened to become a major impediment to business-as-usual lethal landscape-level control of 'wild dogs'.

This new changed situation of rapidly expanding scientific knowledge about the ecological significance of the dingo and the prospect that governments may recognize the dingo as wildlife to be protected, rather than relegated as a pest with no positive environmental status, soon led to a highly organized conservative reaction from vested interests within the pastoral industry and, as we will see, interests involved in the industrial scale production and distribution of poison. 'Wild dog' destruction is big business. As seen below, the rhetorical distortions and misinformation propagated in an attempt to prop up outdated attitudes and the lethal control industry has at times taken on Orwellian proportions.

Dingo destruction takes on a life of its own

By Melinda Browning



'Wild dog' destruction as big business

The following diagram indicates the network of business and 'research' organizations that constitute the 'wild dog' destruction industry in Australia.

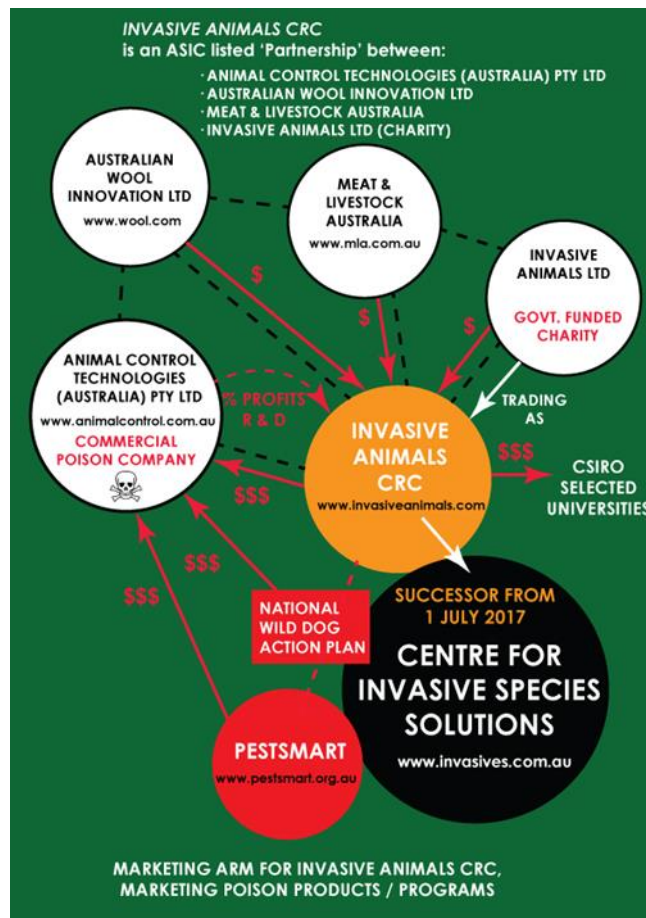


Figure 1: Poisons marketed by government agencies and percentage of commercial profits from poison manufacture reinvested into further 'Research and Development' programs and promotion.

A key component of the network is the Centre for Invasive Species Solutions, a successor organization to the Invasive Animals CRC (Cooperative Research Centre). As the original name indicates, this organization funds and directs research into lethal control activity. Other entities within the network include pastoral industry advocacy organizations (Meat and Livestock Australia, and Australian Wool Innovation Ltd), and industry interests involved in poison manufacture (Animal Control Technologies (Australia) Pty Ltd).

Lethal control as a 'Charitable' activity

It is astonishing that Invasive Animals Ltd (IAL) is listed with the Australian Charities and Not-For-Profit Commission (ACNC) as an entity involved in:

'Preventing or relieving suffering of animals' and

Dingo destruction takes on a life of its own

By Melinda Browning



This is astonishing because established means of lethal 'wild dog' control, such as the use of leg hold traps with long visitation time requirements and 1080 poison are widely accepted as cruel. Such cruelty in Victoria, for example, allowing 'wild dogs' (dingoes) to be held in leg hold traps for up to 72 hours, is rendered legal under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act through an exemption clause relating to pest animal management. If you imagine that strong scrutiny would exist for a government accredited and funded charity with these aims - animal welfare and protection of wildlife as primary concerns, you would be sadly mistaken. By contrast to widespread concern about 1080 being cruel, a key aim of the network has been to promote the idea that 1080 poison is a humane lethal control tool. Another Orwellian aim, which flies in the face of mounting research to the contrary, has been the promotion of 'wild dog' control as a form of biodiversity protection.

The stated aims of this 'charity' include:

'We are end user and demand driven.'

'Delivery of collaborative solutions to maximise investor returns.' (2)

Comments from the **CEO of the Centre for Invasive Species Solutions (CISS) in 2017 indicated the scale of federal government support to this network via Invasive Animals Ltd:**

'And I think particularly, there was a very, very positive announcement as part of the election last year, when the Deputy PM committed \$20 million over 5 years for the new Invasive Solutions Centre.' (3)

Partner companies and organizations

A search of ASIC information reveals the following about Invasive Animals Ltd partner companies/organisations:



Business Name Holder - Organisation

Extracted from ASIC's database at AEST 20:40:02 on 28/08/2017

Name: Australian Wool Innovation Limited & Others ABN: 74 267 438 408 Regulator: Australian Securities and Investments Commission Business name(s): Invasive Animals CRC
--

Figure 1: The true business name holder of the Invasive Animals CRC and the partners involved.

Dingo destruction takes on a life of its own

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Business name holder details		
Holder type – partnership		
Name: Australian Wool Innovation Limited & Others		
ABN: 74 267 438 408		INDUSTRY
Holder start date: 19 March 2015		
Partner details		
Name: MEAT & LIVESTOCK AUSTRALIA LIMITED		INDUSTRY
Holder start date: 2015-03-19		
Name: AUSTRALIAN WOOL INNOVATION LIMITED		INDUSTRY
Holder start date: 2015-03-19		
Name: ANIMAL CONTROL TECHNOLOGIES (AUSTRALIA) PTY LTD		COMMERCIAL POISON MANUFACTURER
Holder start date: 2015-03-19		
Name: INVASIVE ANIMALS LTD		* GOVERNMENT FUNDED CHARITY
Holder start date: 2015-03-19		

Figure 2: The true business name holder of the Invasive Animals CRC and the partners involved. Additional notes in red.

Relevant website links:

www.pestsmart.com.au
www.invasiveanimals.com
www.invasives.com.au
www.wool.com
www.mla.com.au
www.animalcontrol.com.au

Involvement of commercial poison interests

In a speech by the **CEO of the Centre for Invasive Species Solutions (CISS) three months prior to its reinvention as CISS**, it was stated:

*'So when we talk about wild dogs, again 1080 is the mainstay. But how do we add an additional tool into the toolbox? And that's been through a very strong partnership with Australia Wool Innovation **and our commercialiser, Animal Control Technologies.***
[Our emphasis]

It simply prevents the [inaudible] from oxygen binding to haemoglobin and the animal falls asleep. So it's a very humane toxin. And this wouldn't have been achieved without the strong financial and other support that we received from farmers through their levies through Wool Innovation.' (4)

Animal Control Technologies describes itself as (5) the:

'Leading manufacturer of pest animal Products in Australia'

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Its website states (6):

Animal Control Technologies (Australia) Pty Ltd is one of Australia's leading research and manufacturing companies, specialising in the control of vertebrate pest animals: foxes, wild dogs, feral pigs, rabbits and plague mice and rats. For nearly 20 years ACTA has developed, registered and manufactured a range of world class products.(8)

ACTA services all of Australia, New Zealand, and other export markets, managed by a highly qualified sales and marketing team and deals with all government departments, local and regional councils, Landcare groups, major and independent rural merchants.

Since inception, ACTA has been committed to providing Australian landholders and agencies the tools to deal with vertebrate pest animals and we remain at the forefront of technological innovation through our participation in the Invasive Animals CRC (IACRC) and through the ACTA research and development team.

Federal and State Environment Department involvement in the poison industry

With the appointment of the first Threatened Species Commissioner in July 2014 and the development of the Threatened Species Strategy, it is interesting to note that the very first measurable target listed in the strategy document is (7):

'...2 million feral cats culled by 2020'

Government funding to Threat Abatement Plans, relating to the management of feral cats, indicates over \$5 million spent on research and development, registering and renewals of patents and trademarks of feral cat baiting products. This includes spending on three types of feral cat baits, being Curiosity (PAPP), Eradicator (1080) and more recently, Hisstory (1080).

The point here is not to dismiss the significant threat posed to native wildlife by feral cats, but to highlight government involvement in the development and patenting of lethal poison products.

Searches of the Australian Government IP Australia website reveal the following:

Quick search > Search results > Trade mark 1755593		Advanced search	
Currently registered ☒ Filed Lodgement 29 Feb 2016 ☒ Examined First report 12 Apr 2016 ☒ Acceptance / Opposition Acceptance advertised 21 Jul 2016 ☒ Registered Renewal due 28 Feb 2026	Number 1755593 Words HISTORY Status Registered/Protected Priority date 29 Feb 2016 (Lodgement) Class 5 Kind Word	Dates Renewal due 28 Feb 2026 Registration advertised 06 Oct 2016 Entered on Register 29 Sep 2016 Acceptance advertised 21 Jul 2016 Acceptance 12 Apr 2016 Registered from 29 Feb 2016 Lodgement 29 Feb 2016	
	Goods & Services Class 5: Poisons; contraceptives; bactericides; toxicants; bacterial, fungal or other inoculants; biological agents; pest control agents; pest control formulations; preparations for destroying pests; pesticidal preparations; bacterial poisons; pharmaceutical preparations; preparations for destroying vermin including baits; pesticides; veterinary preparations; preparations for control, destruction and eradication of vermin and pests; insecticides; bio-pesticides; appetite suppressants for medical purposes; pharmaceutical appetite suppressants; vaccines; veterinary vaccines; viral vaccines; vaccine	Owner Commonwealth of Australia as represented by and acting through the Department of the Environment See full address >	
		Address for service PHILLIPS ORMONDE FITZPATRICK See full address >	
		Indexing constituents Word HISTORY HISTORY	

Figure 3: Hisstory feral cat trademark owned by federal Department of the Environment and Energy.

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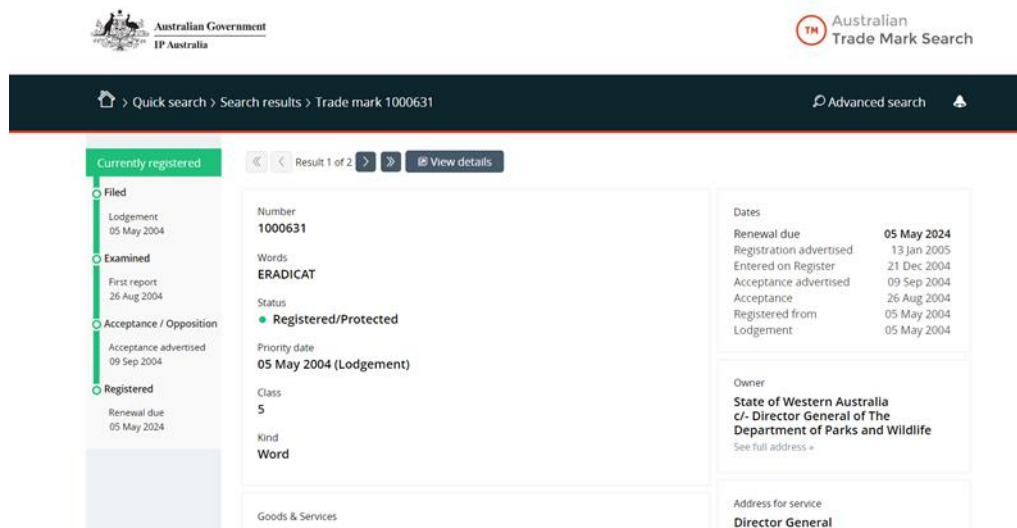


Figure 4: Eradicat feral cat bait trademark owned by the Western Australian Department of Parks and Wildlife

A trial of Hisstory (1080) feral cat bait proposed by the federal Department of the Environment and Energy, to be conducted at Yampi Training Area (Department of Defense), in a remote corner of the Kimberley, WA, **was rejected in June 2017 (potentially as a result of public responses to the EPBC Referral Notice 2017/7977**, which has since disappeared from the list of EPBC Referral Notices (9)). The proposal was to aerial drop 1080 Hisstory baits, into this pristine wilderness area that supports rich biodiversity and is home to many threatened and endangered species, to test the uptake of Hisstory on Northern Quolls (Threatened Species). The Referral Notice states:

The Hisstory bait is intended to provide an effective, target-specific, broad-scale bait for feral cats to be used in northern Australia. In addition, this work has been recognised as a potential way of minimising risk to northern quoll by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority from Eradicat baiting by the Western Australian Department of Parks and Wildlife.

However, in August 2017, the trial was moved to neighboring Mt Hart, within the King Leopold Range Conservation Park and listed in August 2017 for public comment. This version of the trial, it was argued, was not a 'Controlled Action':

'On 21 August 2017, the proponent requested revisions to Referral EPBC 2017/8012. The proposed revisions included that the trial be undertaken using hand broadcast of Hisstory bait in an area of 6 km² (instead of 116km²) ... at the King Leopold Ranges Conservation Park in Western Australia.'

At no point was it considered that the broad scale deployment of Hisstory 1080 baits in this pristine wilderness may be environmentally detrimental because of the threat posed to dingo populations as apex land predator. Such discussion would have cast doubt over the commercialization potential of the poison industry.

Dingo destruction takes on a life of its own

By Melinda Browning



PestSmart is described as an 'Environmental conservation organization based in Canberra, Australian Capital Territory'.

Although presenting as an organization which encourages greater public understanding of pest management issues, it does not appear this way in relation to facilitating an informed debate about lethal dingo control. The following provides an example.

The PestSmart Facebook page recently highlighted a 'successful' wild dog 1080 baiting campaign on 21st November 2017. In response, the accompanying comment posted raising dingo-related issues. The comment was removed shortly thereafter and the contributor blocked from making further comment.

The influence of this network of organizations has been pervasive, including amongst government agencies and appointees. It appears that Gregory Andrews, Federal Threatened Species Commissioner (recently resigned), has been no exception.

During a visit to New Zealand, Gregory Andrews spoke out in favor of New Zealand's Department of Conservation - *Predator Free 2050 Program*, including support of New Zealand's increasing use of 1080 in an attempt to meet this aim. (12)

In a pro-1080 video, he claimed that:

*'1080 is environmentally safe.....1080 is humane
Because 1080 occurs naturally, many of our species here are either immune or highly tolerant to 1080
If we choose not to use 1080 we are choosing more extinctions.'* (13)

Shortly afterwards, he released another video, where he unconvincingly attempted to reconcile the wholesale use of 1080 poison with dingo preservation. In this he closely reflected the poison industry network perspective.

'Dingoes are not a panacea.

Dingoes actually affect farmers' incomes by preying on their stock and we need to support farmers to manage that and we can't expect our farmers who grow our food for us and to export to the world to put up with negative impacts on their incomes and their families.

Dingoes also hybridise with feral dogs. Feral dogs are not native and they're destroyers of our native wildlife and of farmers' incomes.

The Threatened Species Strategy' is not indiscriminately targeting dingoes or harming dingoes through the use of technologies such as baiting with 1080.

We can't afford to be precious about not using 1080.' (14)

How is 'success' measured?
Number of baits put out? In excess of 94,000 ground baits? It is baiting that causes a 'wild dog' problem in the first place by disrupting natural social order of dingoes and territory boundaries resulting in complete breakdown of packs. Suppression of breeding among subordinates goes unchecked and hyperpredation is the result with negative impacts on livestock. Not to mention explosions in rabbits, kangaroos and destructive cats and foxes decimating wildlife.

29 minutes ago · Like · Reply · 1

[View 1 previous reply](#)

Figure 5: Comment on PestSmart Facebook page that resulted in the commenter being blocked from making any further comments on their page

Dingo destruction takes on a life of its own

By Melinda Browning



Where does this leave Dingoes and Wildlife?

With Invasive Animal Ltd, being promoted as Australia's leading authority on 'invasive species', as a government funded charitable organisation concerned with the '*Preventing or relieving suffering of animals*' and '*Advancing natural environment*', it is little wonder that their marketing appears to be largely accepted without question, including by government agencies. Credibility seems assured with researchers from the CSIRO and affiliated industry-based universities backing their claims.

All indications are that, as stated, IAL's primary consideration is to '*maximise investor returns*' with their investors being wool, meat and livestock industry associations, as well as the commercial interests of Australia's leading poison manufacturer. Hence, it is no surprise that the organisation's focus is eliminating 'pest' species that:

Impact on farming and

The weapons of choice are a growing suite of poison products and delivery devices that may provide some short term benefits for farmers?

Their National Wild Dog Action Plan, which has been widely endorsed by governments around Australia, makes no distinction between dingoes, hybrids or roaming domestic dogs and with a growing 'army' of government agencies and community organisations being called upon to assist in their eradication. With an ever increasing 'arsenal' of weaponry that includes high tech 'detection' apps/ devices and a growing suite of lethal poisoned weapons, the chances of dingoes survival as a species and its ecological function are rendered more precarious.

The Department of the Environment and Energy has now completed trials for Hisstory and will be applying for approval from the APVMA in the near future. Once approved, Hisstory will be used, as it was intended, as a 'broadscale feral cat bait for northern Australia'. These baits will impact on remote pristine areas of global biodiversity significance, such as the Kimberleys, home to untouched, pure stable dingo populations and the impacts on biodiversity and healthy ecological functioning is unknown.

Finally, Pest Smart's influence upon state and federal government pest management policy, particularly in relation to dingoes is extremely worrying. It is of grave concern when vested private interests virtually write government policy. This has occurred at a time when governments have taken the razor to biodiversity staffing levels with a consequent loss of bureaucratic talent within government departments. As the capacity of government departments to develop credible and responsible policy has been diminished, private interests have filled the void – essentially a corruption of democratic policy development. A prime example is the National Wild Dog Management Plan, an unprofessional and biased document that would not pass muster in any genuine governmental policy making process.

Right: Melinda and dingo Minka



Dingo destruction takes on a life of its own

By Melinda Browning



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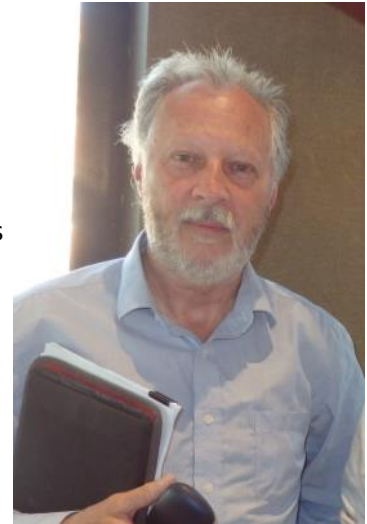


The Simon Validzic NDPRP Excellence Award

As there are so many 'unsung heroes' in the conservation world, the NDPRP decided it would present an award each year at our AGM to an outstanding achiever. We have named this award after Simon Validzic, a Croatian activist who has made several generous donations to us.

This year's award goes to Dr Ernest Healy.

I first became acquainted with Ernest in 2008 when the NDPRP was at its inception. Julie Fechner from the Dingo Care Network, Ian Gunn and Ernest became interested in the Fraser Island dingo debacle and were instrumental in helping me to put together the media conference in 2009 in Rainbow Beach which officially launched the campaign to save the Fraser Island dingoes.



Based in Victoria, Ernest's main focus is in that state, where he feels the greatest strategic opportunities exist for improving the conservation status of the dingo Australia-wide. Ernest feels that if we can make further gains in Victoria, then this may provide a basis for lobbying for gains elsewhere in Australia.

Ernest is passionate about lobbying the federal and state governments on dingo policy reform. He is also looking at possible avenues for legal challenge over dingo destruction through bounties and aerial baiting. To this end, Ernest ramped up efforts with the Victorian Labor Party with a view to making progress on the protection of dingoes from within the party. Thus he has spent many an evening going to Labor Party meetings, and has slowly developed influence on the Victorian Labor Government's environmental policy committee, and drafted an apex predator section for inclusion in its recent environmental policy review. It is not clear how much of his new apex predator section will survive the party vetting process. But it may result in some important policy gains. Despite such efforts being difficult, he considers that the Labor Party is still the most open to progressive environmental reform.

He has also spent numerous hours meeting and forming relationships with the various Environment Ministers' advisors, year after year, tirelessly pursuing ways to educate the advisors on their decision making with regards to dingo 'control'.



I wouldn't like to see Ernest's phone bill, as he is constantly on the phone discussing matters with anyone and everyone he can think of contacting. One lead follows another, and with his tenacity, Ernest has been able to form alliances that have been very helpful.

Ernest has also spent quite a lot of time maintaining our robust working relationship with the Humane Society International, which has a strong pro-dingo policy position.

Left: Ernest's Staffordshire terrier cross
Rockie

The Simon Validzic NDPRP Excellence Award



He has been appointed by the Victorian Environment Minister to the Victorian Agriculture Department's newly reinstated Wild Dog Management Advisory Committee.

This is a committee of anti-dingo farmers and Agriculture Department bureaucrats. It is quite influential and a major problem for us. However, for the first time, the Environment Minister has appointed two conservation members to the committee - Ernest, as I mentioned, and Dr Euan Ritchie, who is a brilliant young environmental scientist

who considers the dingo crucial for ecosystem health in Australia. It is tough going on this committee, which has met three times so far this year. But, Euan and Ernest are doing their best to hold back farming industry excesses.

In his spare time, Ernest lectures at Monash University.

His hobbies (what are those? he says) are playing with his dogs: Jackie, a wild-born ginger dingo; Sheba, a black and tan dingo; and Rockie, Staffordshire terrier cross. It is quite normal to be talking to Ernest on the phone and hear the chorus howl of the dingoes in the background. He also loves his chooks which get the benefit of air conditioning inside when Melbourne's weather gets too hot. (Kari loves Ernest's chooks too and nearly caught one, which didn't impress Ernest, but impressed his dingoes and she was officially invited into the pack!)



In his spare, spare time, Ernest and his wife Robin travel to Warrnambool with the pack, where they are building a mud-brick house which they eventually plan to retire to. On occasion Ernest is able to follow his other passion, that of photography and collecting vintage cameras. He is quite the photographer.

I'm exhausted just writing about what Ernest has accomplished and will continue to accomplish, and the committee and members of the NDPRP would officially like to thank Ernest for his passion, tenacity, and commitment to saving our precious native dog.

J Parkhurst



Left: an example of Ernest's photography



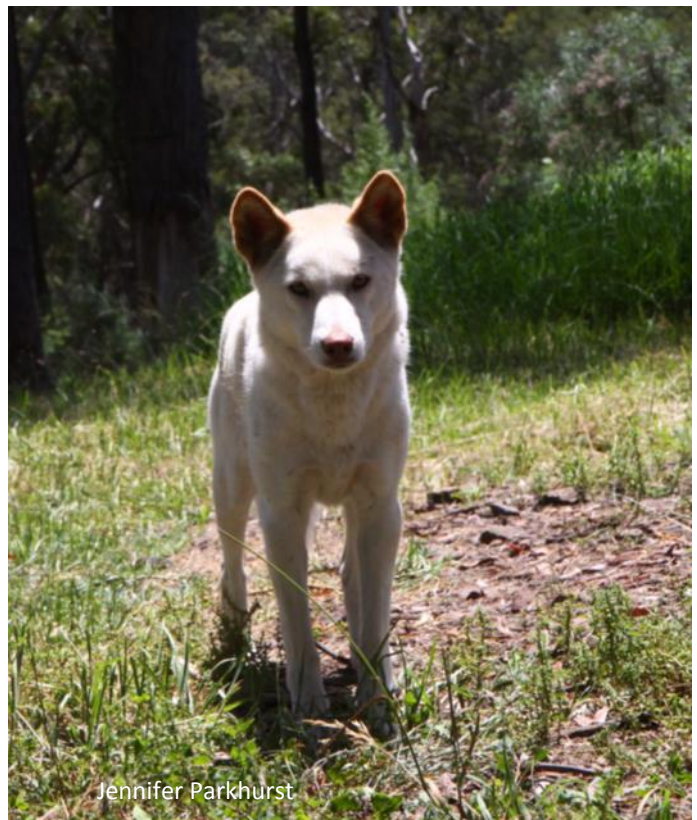
Victoria—Wild Dog Management Advisory Committee

This year, the Victorian Agriculture Minister reinstated this committee. It was initially created by the previous Liberal/Nationals Coalition government in Victoria, partly in response to heavy pressure and complaints by elements of the farming lobby – in particular the Victorian Farmers Federation. In turn, this pressure seems to have been fuelled by the Victorian dingo threatened species listing (under the Flora and Fauna guarantee Act), which had the final touches put to it in the final months of the previous Brumby Labor government in 2010. To ‘wild dog’ control hard liners, for whom hatred of ‘wild dogs’ is a way of life, and a form of ancestor worship (because this hatred is often inter-generational and inherited), the dingo threatened species listing was a slap in the face, by city slickers with no true understanding of the land or nature.

That the current Andrews Labor government chose to reinstate a Committee, the purpose of which was in part to undermine the conservation gains of a threatened species listing put in place by a previous Labor government seems perplexing. But, we live in strange times, where political principle frequently gives way to rank political opportunism. It is as if, on this issue, the current Labor government has policy amnesia - no corporate policy memory.

Part of the explanation for this policy amnesia (failure of principle) is the presence in the Victorian Upper House of two representatives of the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party, elected at the 2014 state election. Both of these members received only a tiny proportion of first preference votes, but nevertheless made it across the line through tattslotto-like preference redistribution. Although this political party initially focussed narrowly on the right to own arms, it has subsequently attempted to broaden its appeal, in part through advocating recreational shooting and ‘conservation hunting’.

Given the fine political balance of power in the Victorian upper house, whereby the Labor government has to gain the support of such political fringe dwellers to get legislation through the parliament, behind-the-scenes political horse trading has resulted in government endorsement of the ‘conservation hunting’ idea and the portrayal of recreational hunting as a legitimate activity in biodiversity policy literature.



Jennifer Parkhurst



Victoria—Wild Dog Management Advisory Committee

A concrete example of this unprincipled political horse trading has been the Labor government's reinstatement of the Victorian 'wild dog' bounty. 'Wild dogs' have become political collateral and are an easy political target (excuse the pun). Although there is a virtual consensus amongst ecologists and even invasive pest management authorities that bounties are an ineffective form of control, the Victorian Labor government reintroduced the bounty for the 2016-2017 financial year. Clearly, the underlying reason for this was to appease the aforementioned upper house members' need to legitimise gun ownership, recreational hunting and 'conservation' hunting. Of course, 'wild dogs' soon became tangled up on this machiavalian political process.

Moreover, this grubby political outcome was hatched at a time when some of the best and most respected environmental minds in the land were directly appealing to the Victorian government to broaden protections for both pure dingoes and dingo hybrids as a means of improving biodiversity conservation and helping stabilise Victorian ecosystems.



An 'evidenced-based' assessment of the 'wild dog' bounty is currently the first task of the newly reinstated WDMAC. This task has turned out to be problematic because the data collected from bounty claimants (on the statutory declaration required), relating to where scalps were taken, provided no accurate idea of where the scalps had been taken (only an indication of Shire). As a consequence, it is impossible to tell whether scalps have even been taken near to affected farms, or even from within the legal 3 kilometer public land zone at the interface of public and private land.

However, it is unlikely that this Committee will let the facts (or lack of them) get in the way of a good story. The well worn refrain from control advocates is that, if you put enough ineffective control measures together, they might add up to something substantial. It is thereby concluded that the bounty should be kept because it is part of an 'integrated' wild dog control plan; we need 'all the tools in the box'. In reality, the goal

of 'evidence-based' assessment has descended into self-serving metaphysics. Scandalously, discussion on the committee does not go much beyond this subterranean level.



Bounty propaganda advertised by Peter Crisp The Nationals Member for Mildura



Victoria—Wild Dog Management Advisory Committee

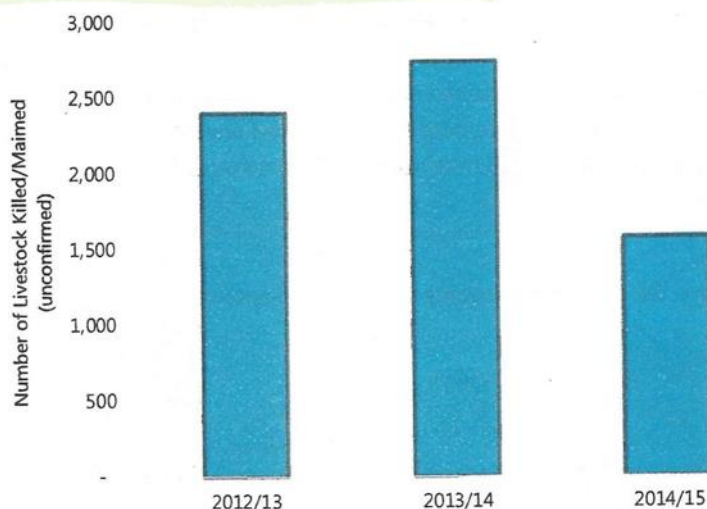
The outrageous thing is that the Minister is likely to decide in favour of a continuation of the ‘wild dog’ bounty with the claim that it was recommended by a committee of experts on the subject.

It might have been expected with the resurrected WDMAC that things might have been different, as, for the first time, two environmental advocates were appointed, in contrast to only sheep farmers and the Victorian Farmers Federation previously. Indeed, these two appointments were decided by the Minister for the Environment as opposed to the Minister for Agriculture, the latter having had primary responsibility for appointing the committee and framing the terms of reference.

Any dissent from wild dog control orthodoxy, nevertheless, remains stifled. The two environmental members remain a minority on the committee and the terms of reference stipulate that committee members must commit to the majority committee view. Dissenting views are not to be included in the report and recommendations to the Agriculture Minister. Neither are dissenting, minority reports allowed. This is despite objection to this virtual censorship early in the Committee’s deliberations, as a potential breach of the Victorian human rights and responsibilities legislation, which clearly protects individuals’ freedom of speech, thought and expression. Democracy at work!

Through the mental contortions used to rationalise the continuation of ‘wild dog’ control on an ever more complex, industrial scale, certain basic facts do nevertheless see the light of day. The first is that, from the official data showing reported stock lost from predation, the numbers of stock lost in Victoria overall is very small in absolute and relative terms. The following chart is from a consultancy report commissioned by the Victorian government. It shows the reported numbers of stock lost to ‘wild dog’ predation selected years.

Figure 9: Livestock deaths from wild dogs – overall





Victoria—Wild Dog Management Advisory Committee

The reported number of stock lost to predation in Victoria for 2016-17 was only 995 (the Marsden Jacob report was released before this latter figure was available.) However, absolute stock losses from predation do not tell us a great deal. Losses need to be considered in relation to the total sheep population for Victoria for these years.

The total Victorian sheep population has declined somewhat over the past several years from around 15 million to 13,064,742 in 2012-13 (ABARE).

The highest reported stock loss figure in recent years, for 2013-14, was 2,700. If we assume the total sheep population for that year to have been 14 million, this means that 190 sheep were lost to predation in every one million sheep! ($190 \times 14 = 2,660$ – difference due to truncation of decimal places)

Something clearly does not stack up in terms of the relatively low number of stock (predominantly sheep) claimed to be lost to predation and the costly, industrial scale ‘war on dogs’ that has become entrenched in government policy in Victoria.

It is a scandalous assault on the natural world that ‘expert’ committees are even established to deliberate over the miniscule scale of the ‘wild dog problem’. We seriously doubt if either the Victorian Minister for the Environment or the Minister for Agriculture have ever been presented with an understanding of the scale of sheep predation in Victoria in such unadulterated terms.

Is this democracy at work? Does this represent the greatest good for the greatest number? Is this respecting the intrinsic value and integrity of nature? We don’t think so. It is a saddening debasement of political process.

If farmers were compensated \$200 per lamb/sheep claimed to be lost to wild dog predation, in 2016-17 this would cost the Victorian government \$190,000. Even taking the higher predation figure for 2013-14 (2,700), at \$200 per head, this would amount to total compensation of \$540,000. This is a far cry from the more than \$6 million announced by the Victorian government this year for the wild dog control program. The wild dog control machine has clearly taken on a life of its own and appears to be only marginally to do with actual predation.

The table below shows the total cost of the Victorian wild dog program for the period:

Figure 4: Change in program expenditures



Source: Marsden Jacob and Associates, Final Report – Review of the Victorian Wild Dog Management Program and Recommendations for Future Approaches, prepared for DEDJTR, June 2016



Victoria—Wild Dog Management Advisory Committee

Yet the potential toll on dingo populations and upon Victorian ecosystems is disturbing.

The figures below show the numbers of scalps handed in for the wild dog bounty for the years 2011-12 to 2016-17, the total being 2,477 scalps.

Bounty scalps handed in by financial year (no bounty 2015-16)

Wild dog Collection Yearly Totals		
Financial Year	# participants	# acceptable wild dog skin pieces
11/12	76	283
12/13	120	493
13/14	156	583
14/15	184	739
15/16		
16/17	54	325
17/18	18	54
Grand Total	608	2477

*Participant figures have been calculated using the number of applications paid out by accounts payable.

Source: DELWP Wild Dog Program Overview, August 2017

Over the coming period, the NDPRP Inc. will continue its critical examination of the dodgy logic and dirty politics behind the Victorian wild dog program.



Jennifer Parkhurst

Bounties and baiting a poor tactic to reduce numbers

EUAN RITCHIE, The Weekly Times

November 2, 2016 12:00am

WE MUST support farmers to transition to more effective ways of preventing livestock loss.

Seeing production animals dead, dying or severely injured as a result of attack by “wild dogs” or foxes is unquestionably traumatic. The effects of such losses go well beyond the economic: this is a very serious matter. The Victorian Government recently re-instated a wild dog bounty, in addition to the existing one for foxes, in an attempt to reduce livestock loss.

There will also be extensive poison baiting of foxes, and wild dogs in some areas. But scientific research conducted in Australia and overseas suggests this approach is unlikely to work, and could even make things worse.

There are many reasons why bounties and broad-scale baiting are often ineffective. It can be difficult to locate and kill sufficient numbers of the problem animals. Even if large numbers are killed, other target animals quickly reinvade from nearby areas. Lethal control can also cause breakdown in animal territories, and again, more breeding.

Controlled populations of dogs often consist of younger animals that may attack livestock more. Lower fox and dog numbers can lead to more feral cats, feral pigs and kangaroos. Corruption of bounty schemes is also common, such as claiming for animals not killed in the bounty area.

For these reasons, and others, bounty schemes and broad-scale baiting are often economically and environmentally ineffective approaches.

The only way we could measure success and return on taxpayer-funded investment would be to monitor problem animal numbers before, during and after their control, compared with a non-bounty area, and how this has affected livestock damage and loss.

In place of bounties and broad-scale baiting, there is a range of effective solutions, including improved animal husbandry and the use of guardian animals.

We need to invest the substantial funds earmarked for bounties and baiting to help farmers transition to what are likely more effective and long-term solutions.

- **Euan Ritchie is an ecologist based at Deakin University**



Victorian Labor destroys legacy with backflip on dingo bounty

26th October 2016

Humane Society International (HSI) is incensed by the announcement that the Victorian Labor Government has destroyed its dingo conservation legacy with “*a bigger, better bounty*” than the Coalition program they scrapped just a year ago. A far cry from the previous Labor Government’s landmark listing of the dingo as a threatened species in 2008, the move signals a new era where Labor is beholden to the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party with the state’s wildlife considered nothing more than collateral.

An abundance of reasons this regressive and misguided bounty program is bound to fail at the expense of Victoria’s environmental health were [outlined by HSI](#) and [echoed by experts](#) last week. They include: leaving the Government exposed to fraud; an inability to determine genetic purity in the field; and ‘wild dog’-dingo hybrids playing the same ecological role as genetically pure dingoes, including suppressing feral cat and fox populations to the benefit of countless native species.

“The Victorian Government is using taxpayer money to incentivise the killing of a threatened species with the ecological fallout to impact dozens more, it’s inexcusable and the public should be outraged. An opportunity to reform management to the mutual benefit of farmers and the environment has been ignored for purely political purposes, and we’re left with short-sighted investment in outdated methods that have repeatedly been tried and failed,” said **HSI Senior Program Manager Evan Quartermain**.

Minister for Agriculture Jaala Pulford’s justification that a bounty of \$120 per ‘wild dog’ scalp will be introduced “*In recognition of the role hunting can play in supporting the management of wild dogs*” is in stark conflict with expert organisations such as the Invasive Species Council, who have determined that shooting is a highly ineffective control measure for canid species. Similarly, Minister Pulford’s claim that “*One less dog roaming on people’s farms is a good outcome*” demonstrates an alarming lack of ecological understanding. The latest research suggests that such control programs in fact increase stock predation due to pack disturbance altering behaviours.

“Alternative stock protection methods such as guardian animals have proven to be effective and are ripe for Government investment. Yet against all evidence the Labor Government has turned their back on the iconic and threatened dingo, bowing to shooters groups and trashing their conservation legacy by mimicking Coalition policy. They should instead be focused on strengthening the dingo’s threatened listing, with the voice of Minister for the Environment Lily D’Ambrosio conspicuous in its absence,” **Mr Quartermain** concluded.

HSI is currently seeking legal advice on the legality of the Victorian ‘wild dog’ bounty announced today.

NDPRP Media Release

Date: Monday November 7 , 2016

Does Victoria have an Environment Minister?

Agriculture Minister continues to trash threatened species listing

The National Dingo Preservation and Recovery Program Inc. (NDPRP) today expressed dismay that, as the Victorian Minister for Agriculture, Jaala Pulford, appears to have run amok with environmentally damaging 'pest animal' policy, the Victorian Environment Minister seems to have resigned herself to a junior minister role over crucial biodiversity decision making.

It is extraordinary that at the very same time as the Minister for Agriculture has announced a 'wild dog' bounty, she has announced a review of the same policy in 12 month's time by a newly established 'Wild Dog Management Advisory Group'. The NDPRP urges the public to ask why a policy that has so little to recommend it was adopted in the first place.

Having been strongly advised by peak environmental organisations, environmental experts and progressive elements within the Victorian ALP itself that bounties are an ineffectual means of pest animal control, would undermine Victoria's listing of the dingo as a threatened species and would be environmentally harmful, the Agriculture Minister has persisted in imposing the bounty, for which recreational hunters will receive \$120 dollars for each dingo scalp. President of the NDPRP, Dr Ian Gunn, today stated:

"The announcement of a review of the bounty decision in one year's time is clearly a concession that the Agriculture Minister has been forced into by more environmentally responsible elements within the Victorian Labor Party. However, if the justification for the bounty policy is so spurious, why was it reinstated at all? Why would the Victorian Labor government allow the Agriculture Minister to dictate poor policy that is known to have no environmental or pest management validity?"

Part of the answer is the presence of two Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party members in the Victorian Legislative Assembly, with whom political horse trading has become a priority – in this instance at the expense of good environmental management.

Dr Gunn added:

"Unfortunately, the Victorian Government is endorsing what amounts to a publically-funded membership recruitment drive for recreational hunting organisations, as membership of these organisations is an eligibility requirement collection of the bounty."

"At present the Victorian Labor government is in a race to the bottom with the Liberal-Nationals Opposition to show that Labor can implement the toughest wild-dog policy, regardless of the environmental consequences."

NDPRP Media Release

This is evident in the second stated purpose of the ‘Wild Dog Management Advisory Group’, which is to review the central pillar of the dingo threatened species listing – that lethal control for dingoes/wild dogs not be permitted beyond a 3 kilometer buffer at the interface of public and private land (on public land). This buffer was put in place by the Brumby Labor government to ensure equitable protection for both farm livestock and the threatened dingo population. Dr Gunn stated:

“The NDPRP considers that, on being forced into a review of the flawed bounty policy before it has even begun, the Minister for Agriculture has countered by including a review of the key protective element at the heart of the dingo threatened species listing, which had been put in place by the Brumby government in 2010 – the 3 kilometer limitation on lethal control.

It appears that the Minister is effectively using her privilege of having shared responsibilities for wild-life and biodiversity conservation legislation to undermine measures previously put in place to protect Victorian biodiversity.”

Perhaps the most extraordinary aspect of the Victorian Labor Government’s treatment of the ‘wild-dog’ bounty issue is the invisibility of the Victorian Environment Minister, Lily D’Ambrosio.

Dr Gunn stressed:

“Any review of the terms of the dingo threatened species listing should be led by the Victorian Environment Minister and state biodiversity officers, not the Department of Agriculture. It is extraordinary that a review of key aspects of the dingo threatened species listing, arrived at through extensive stakeholder consultation with the Department of Sustainability and Environment in 2009, should now be subject to review by the Department of Agriculture. The public might be forgiven for asking whether Victoria has an Environment Minister at this point in time.”

The NDPRP calls upon the Premier, Daniel Andrews, to ensure that any review of the terms of the dingo threatened species listing be conducted by the Department for the Environment and led by the Minister for the Environment. The primary focus of any such review must be biodiversity conservation, not pest animal management. The Department of Agriculture has shown itself to be incapable of responsible, balanced decision making on this issue. The current approach is quite perverse and is damaging the Victorian Labor government’s environmental credibility.



Jennifer Parkhurst

Observations regarding the Victorian Wild Dog Bounty

Key background facts:

'Wild dog' scalps may only be legally taken for the purposes of the bounty from within the 3 kilometre dingo un-protection zone prescribed under the FFG Act dingo threatened species listing GIC Order. Declarations made by bounty claimants only require information about the location of kill at the municipality or shire level. It is, therefore, currently not possible to know from the bounty declaration information whether the 'wild dogs' are actually being killed within or outside of the prescribed bounty take zone.

At the same time, accurate coordinates of stock loss due to wild dog predation have not been required or provided.

Despite it only being legal to claim the bounty for scalps taken within the prescribed 3 kilometre zone, it is nevertheless legal to hunt 'wild dogs' over vast areas of the public estate where recreational hunting is permitted.

Compliance uncertainties

The potential for bounty fraud is very real because recreational hunters are legally able to kill 'wild dogs' over large areas of the Victorian crown land beyond the prescribed 3 kilometre bounty zone (on crown land at the interface between private and public land). This confused policy framework may well be acting as an *incentive* for defrauding the bounty system.

This incoherence, between dingo conservation policy and policy relating to the recreational killing of 'wild dogs', is almost certainly causing confusion amongst recreational hunters about bounty compliance obligations. In addition, information on the Victorian government website, as to where recreational hunters may kill 'wild dogs' for the bounty (including available maps), is extremely vague. Any reasonable person may wonder if such vagueness is a consequence of departmental ineptitude or whether it is deliberate.

The most likely explanation for these policy contradictions and vague/confusing departmental information is that the motivation for reintroduction of the bounty has not been evidence based, or genuinely focused on stock protection, but is crude and political in nature in relation to demands from the gun lobby. Guns first; environment last.



Photo from: The Conversation: <http://theconversation.com/will-we-hunt-dingoes-to-the-brink-like-the-tasmanian-tiger-19982>

PROPAGANDA

Solving a problem just over the back fence - managing wild dogs within the Gold Coast, QLD

To view the video, click below. Please click on the thumbs down icon.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1q80WPx_tOc&feature=youtu.be

From 'feral flyer' the newsletter of Centre of Invasive Species Solutions. This is just one example of what type of propaganda biosecurity organisations are spreading under the guise of conservation.

Hobby farmer Lionel Thompson of the Gold Coast says: 'The thing about these wild dogs is that they kill for fun... it's just a game to them, they'll run them [sheep] down, disembowel them, leave them alive, and we've got to come around and clean up the mess. This also happens to native animals as well such as koalas and wallabies and every other native under the sun.'

What Thompson fails to realise is that dogs are predominantly carnivores, and as such all wild dogs, be they dingoes or feral dogs [including free-ranging domestic dogs gone wild] need to kill to eat. This is not an anomaly. Lions in Africa do not have to apologise for being lions and eating prey.

Michael Pyne, senior vet at Currumbin Wildlife hospital. 'We're finding wild dogs in some pretty built up places. With the urban fringe impacting on their areas they're finding they've got nowhere else to go. They're managed because of their impact on the community and their impact on rare and threatened species within our conservation areas. Dog attacks usually end in fatalities – it's very extensive what happens when dogs attack our wildlife. These animals may survive anything up to a couple of weeks before they pass away.'

It is unlikely these are dingo attacks – a dingo would eat its prey, not kill for fun and leave perfectly good food lying around. We would suggest he is referring to free-roaming domestic dogs. Photos below taken from the video.



From video: This certainly doesn't look like a dingo to us

Pelorus Island—Update

PELORUS ISLAND’S “DEATH ROW” DINGOES: A CHRONICLE OF ENVIRONMENTAL RECKLESSNESS AND ANIMAL CRUELTY by Rheyra Linden

In July 2016 two dingoes were trapped in the Queensland cane fields, neutered, fitted with GPS tracking collars, and released on Pelorus Island for the purpose of hunting and eradicating the Island’s goats over an estimated two-year period. The architects of this grossly incompetent and inherently cruel experimental procedure, that remains an ongoing nightmare for the dingoes involved, are father and son team, ecologists Lee and Ben Allen.

Although referred to as ‘wild dogs’, presumably in anticipation of public outrage at the dingoes’ treatment, it was nevertheless acknowledged that increasingly, “you’re seeing more and more domestic dog-looking wild dogs, but invariably, if you take a blood sample from those and have it tested, they will be mostly dingo genetics.”¹ If it were not cruel enough to remove the dingoes from their familiar habitat and release them into unfamiliar terrain within hours of undergoing desexing surgery, the most sinister element of this disturbing experiment was that both animals were implanted with timed-release 1080 poison, timed to activate once they had eradicated the Island’s goats—an estimated time frame of two years, after which they would be subject to prolonged suffering and an excruciatingly painful death.

In Ben Allen’s own memorable words: “The plan is: dingoes wipe out goats, we come back and humanely shoot those dingoes ‘cause they’ll have tracking collars, so we can find out where they go. If for whatever reason we can’t come back and shoot those dingoes, well then those little time bombs’ll go off.”²

The program was initiated on behalf of Hinchinbrook Shire Council and cleared by Biosecurity Qld where Lee Allen is employed. It became obvious that under the guise of an environmental program, the goat eradication experiment was little more than an opportunity for the Allens to occupy this space professionally, a career move regardless of the cruelty and environmental irresponsibility involved. The Allen’s global ambitions for their program was evident in media comments by Ben Allen who “said, he expected other authorities in Australia and elsewhere that were struggling to eradicate feral goats would consider programs using similar predators, such as coyotes and wolves”.³



1. Lee Allen <http://www.abc.net.au/tv/programs/landline/oldsite/content/2016/s4506188.htm>

2. <http://www.abc.net.au/tv/programs/landline/oldsite/content/2016/s4506188.htm>

3. <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/nation/selfculling-dingoes-could-be-conservation-model/news-story/ba5c723f2ed433f34f26d1752d8f6c7d>

Ben and Lee Allen by Dominique Schwartz ABC

Pelorus Island—

Not only did the Allens' experimental model mean the dingoes were encumbered with large tracking collars inhibiting their hunting ability and the likelihood of a clean kill of any preyed goats, their release on Pelorus Island, a known habitat of two vulnerable native species, the ground dwelling Beach stone-curlew and the native rat species *Melomys burtoni*, was environmentally disastrous. Evidence that the Allens' were aware of the risk posed by the dingoes to the survival of resident native species came in the form of another media comment from Ben Allen. In response to a reporter's question about the likelihood of their becoming prey for dingoes he responded : " Yeah, they will. So, we're monitoring the situation so we can see which one wins". 4.

Needless to say an outcry arose from wildlife and dingo protection organisations, animal rights groups, RSPCA Queensland and horrified members of the public in the wake of media coverage announcing the program's launch and cynically lauding the use of "self culling dingoes" as a new conservation model. 5.

The voices in defence of the dingoes, the native species destined as their prey, and against the cruelty of the 1080 "time bombs" as well as in recognition that the Island's goats would suffer prolonged and tortuous deaths came from Queenslanders as well as the broader national and international communities. They were loud and persistent in emails, social media posts and phone calls to Dr. Steven Miles, Queensland Minister for Environment & Heritage Protection, demanding urgent action.

To his credit Minister Miles listened and acted with immediacy. He shut down the program less than a month after its launch, on 18 August 2016. Through an Interim Conservation Order under the Nature Conservation Act 1992 the Minister required Hinchinbrook Shire Council to immediately cease using dingoes to eradicate feral goats on Pelorus Island, declaring that pest "control should always be carried out in the most humane way possible – not by death row dingoes. As of today no dogs can be released on to Pelorus Island and any wild dogs already on the island must be removed within the next 14 days." The Minister further stated: " I do not take this action lightly but on the advice of experts from the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection it's clear that this misconceived program needs to stop before irrevocable harm is done to the island's population of Beach stone-curlews." 6. He identified the factors determining his decision as both environmental and the inherent cruelty of the misguided program: "I was shocked to learn of this cruel experiment but even more alarming is the lack of thought for the native animals on the Island" 7.

Following the Minister's action, the Allens retreated from their heroic media statements but the dingoes remained forsaken on the Island, to face a cruel death from the imminent activation of 1080 poison. Hinchinbrook Council continues with its less than credible claim that despite the tracking collars they can't find the dingoes and therefore cannot comply with the conditions of the Conservation Order. 8.

4. <http://www.abc.net.au/tv/programs/landline/oldsite/content/2016/s4506188.htm>

5. <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/nation/selfculling-dingoes-could-be-conservation-model/news-story/ba5c723f2ed433f34f26d1752d8f6c7d>

6. Dr. Steven Miles, Queensland Minister for Environment & Heritage Protection
<http://statements.qld.gov.au/Statement/2016/8/18/rare-bird-blocks-bizarre-deathrow-dingoes-plan>

7. <http://statements.qld.gov.au/Statement/2016/8/18/rare-bird-blocks-bizarre-deathrow-dingoes-plan>

8. <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-09-01/deadline-passes-for-removal-of-death-row-dingoes-pelorus-island/7806906>

Pelorus Island—



The “Let Them Live” petition campaign was initiated with some urgency in the face of this stalemate with a plea to Minister Miles to extend his compassion towards the long-suffering dingoes by authorizing their capture and return to the mainland. Aware that under Queensland legislation the dingoes, once caught, cannot be released to their former habitat we sought and gratefully received a commitment from Queensland-based Eagles Nest Sanctuary and Wildlife

Hospital to house the two dingoes for life as well as arrange, once they are on the mainland, for the removal of the poison implants.

We delivered thousands of signatures and email alerts to Minister Miles and then Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, Bill Byrne. The Queensland, national and international communities again responded pleading for the reprieve of the “death row” dingoes and condemning Australia’s tolerance of barbaric treatment of our native species. No doubt many of you signed the petition and sent personal emails to both responsible Ministers as a matter of urgency.

Our petition was noted but not tabled. Belatedly we were informed that the Queensland parliament will only table signatures from Queensland residents generated on their official website. Fearing that the implanted “time bombs” would activate we set about generating a second petition that gathered in a few short weeks an additional 700 or so signatures from Queensland residents. It’s plea, as with our first petition was:

Queensland residents draw to the attention of the House the unacceptable treatment of the so-called “death row” dingoes released on Pelorus Island by Hinchinbrook Shire Council for the purpose of wild goat control. Petitioners are especially concerned that with each day’s delay not only will threatened species on the Island continue to be predated, the 1080 poison pellets with which the dingoes are baited risk activation, bringing about a slow lingering death involving horrendous suffering. Your petitioners request the House to call on responsible Ministers, the Honourable Dr. Steven Miles, Minister for the Environment and Heritage Protection and the Honourable Bill Byrne, Minister for Agriculture, to bring about a speedy and humane resolution of the sorry saga on Pelorus Island by ensuring that the long-suffering dingoes are not subjected to further distress and unnecessary deaths by sniper bullet or 1080 poison. We further request that the House call on responsible Minister Miles and Minister Byrne to show compassion in resolving the dingoes’ plight by enforcing the dart anaesthetising, capture and return of the dingoes to the mainland and their release to Eagles Nest Wildlife Sanctuary where they will be housed for life and the 1080 implants safely removed to avoid further suffering and a prolonged and painful death.

Pelorus Island—

The petition was formally tabled by Minister Miles on August 8 2017, but his response to the petition's plea was disappointing, failing to address the signatories concerns, effectively washing his hands of the matter. Our most recent communication with Minister Miles' department, by letter in which we pointed out that "the onus to remove the dingoes is no longer with Hinchinbrook Council, that your Department has responsibility to finalise the unacceptable stalemate on Pelorus Island as soon, and as humanely, as possible in compliance with the requirements of the ICO. Given that the poison capsules are timed to release in 2018 (9.) we seek an unambiguous response outlining a plan of action as a matter of urgency" was met with the response that the department acknowledges our "ongoing concerns about the welfare of the two wild dogs and desire to see Eagles Nest Sanctuary and Wildlife Hospital given the opportunity to receive and care for the animals" an option "that the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection has no objection to" but lacks power to enforce. Further, the Department has made a decision not to pursue Hinchinbrook Council further despite "a prima facie breach of the Conservation Order". So the Council is no longer required to take steps in removing the dingoes from Pelorus Island and "the department now regards that matter as finalised". 10.

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

Neither consideration -environmental irresponsibility and cruelty-upon which Minister Miles relied in his determination to shut down the Allen's experimental program has been satisfied. His department has simply walked away, claiming that the tracking collars are no longer emitting signals while failing to implement alternative measures such as trackers, darters, aerial searches to locate the dingoes or compel the Allens to provide GPS data that would reveal their location. In the meantime the dingoes, if still alive, continue to predate vulnerable resident wildlife while they themselves remain abandoned to a cruel and unnecessary death.

CALL TO ACTION

Please call, email, send a tweet to, or facebook post Minister Stephen Miles. Remind him that we are running out of time for a humane resolution for the "death row" dingoes. Insist that the Queensland Government is morally bound to intervene and enforce the conditions of its own Conservation Order rather than abandoning the field.

CONTACT: The Hon Dr. Steven Miles, Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection

Email: environment@ministerial.qld.gov.au Phone: 07 3719 7330 (Ministerial office); 07 3703 2100 (Electoral office)

Facebook: www.facebook.com/stevenmilesmp Twitter: @stevenmilesmp

The dingoes need experienced trackers, darters, ecologists willing to spend time on the Island establishing that they are alive and can indeed be located. If you are out there please don't delay in making contact. At best we will shame the Queensland authorities into taking responsibility for their welfare; at the very least we will re-activate waning media interest in the present fate of the so-called "self-culling dingoes".

Rheya Linden

Animal Active Australia Inc

Phone: 0408 666 987

Email: info@animalactive.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/AnimalActive

9. <http://bit.ly/2vd03gg>

10. Letter of 9 November 2017 from Lindsay Delzoppo, Director Wildlife Assessment, Strategic Compliance and Northern Operations, Department of Environment and Heritage Protection

Dubbo accountant's dog deterrent spray to stop dog attacks

Queensland Country Life, November 23 2017, by Lucy Kinbatcher

<http://www.queenslandcountrylife.com.au/story/5076383/the-sheep-spray-that-could-stop-dog-attacks/>

A DUBBO accountant believes he may have found the answer to stop wild dogs attacking sheep using a chemical sourced from England which is a taste deterrent similar to that used in products to stop nail biting. John Shepherd attended the Surat Predator Control Day yesterday armed with the product he has named, Protectum.

The chemical, which has been around since the 1960s, has no smell but an awful taste which Mr Shepherd believes once tried by a wild dog will deter them from attempting to attack again.

Producers would need to apply a 30ml dose of the chemical onto their sheep twice a year, during shearing and crutching, which sits on the tip of the wool and has no impact on the wool or meat quality.

While Protectum isn't a commercial product yet, Mr Shepherd has begun trialling the product on properties at Cunnamulla and Dubbo with success.

He said if there was a way to keep dingoes alive, they could be used to kill other pests rather than sheep. "The ultimate would be if we could have the sheep industry and dingoes living harmoniously, meaning the dingoes can go and eat the wildlife, and the kangaroos and the cats and foxes can be controlled by dingoes," he said.



 Dubbo accountant John Shepherd has established a spray deterrent for sheep which he believes could see wild dogs stop attacking sheep and live harmoniously.

New evidence shows Jennifer Parkhurst Should be exonerated

The photographs below, published in the Griffith News from a media release: 'Griffith researchers have you covered – umbrellas to protect against dingoes on Fraser Island' November 23, 2017 by Stephanie Bedo, clearly show Rob Appleby doing exactly what Jennifer Parkhurst was doing when she was convicted of 'interfering with a natural resource' (dingoes on Fraser Island) and given a criminal conviction and nine months' suspended jail sentence in 2010—photographing dingoes up close.

The article referred to in the media release in part exonerates Jennifer, with statements like: 'it's actually very rare that dingoes attack or bite people', 'Our results also clearly show that dingoes rarely seriously injure even the most vulnerable of people, despite the opportunity to do so arising on occasion. Nor do they regularly seriously injure people more generally.', 'Young dingoes, in particular, might be expected to engage in more play activity (compared with adults). Chasing and mock attacks are common features of play Behaviour in canids (Bekoff 1974a, 1974b, 1995; Bauer and Smuts 2007), and, in turn, incidents that involve such Behaviour may be mistaken for similar behaviours exhibited in other contexts, such as predation. At present, we tentatively suspect that most incidents that feature young, solitary dingoes chasing or harassing adult humans while they are walking or running are probably not predatory and are more likely playful', and 'Overall, the role played by feeding in incident dynamics remains unclear...Behrendorff et al. (2016) recently found that the incidence of anthropogenic food in dingo scats has markedly declined in recent years, yet incidents, some serious, continue to occur.'

If that information had been available at Jennifer's trial, the Magistrate could not have found Jennifer guilty. Not only that, but the photographs taken by Appleby – significantly similar to Jennifer's – show the dingoes engaging with the camera, something which was found to be proof that she was interfering with the dingoes because they 'knew she was there'. This, the court was told, meant Jennifer caused the dingoes to become habituated and thus aggressive.

According to the media release, Appleby is asking people to carry an umbrella to deter dingoes. However, in the photo of Appleby, he certainly isn't carrying an umbrella and doesn't appear to be in any danger!

It is disappointing to read that Appleby recommends the use of aversive conditioning collars. The RSPCA does not condone the use of aversive conditioning collars, in fact, says they are inhumane. The NDPRP certainly does not endorse their use either.

Isn't it amazing how there are two sets of rules. One for 'dissenters' who are trying to actually save the dingoes by telling the truth about what is going on on Fraser Island, and another for QPWS supporters who are towing the party line.

Ian Gunn.



WOLF NEWS

Female wolf found to have travelled 500km to settle in rural Denmark

Wolves may be making a comeback in rural Denmark after at least five of the creatures were found to have settled in the west of the country.

Peter Sunde, a prominent zoologist from Aarhus University, claims to have obtained DNA evidence that not only proves wolves have returned to the west Jutland region, but that one female has travelled over 500km (310 miles) from Germany to settle there.

Reports of their return to the Scandinavian country began in 2012, the first sightings since Denmark's last wolf was killed almost 200 years ago.

There are currently more than 12,000 wolves in western Europe, with the population in Germany said to be growing at 25-30 percent each year.

Speaking to the Guardian, Guillaume Chapron, a researcher at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, warned of the potential impact a growing wolf population might have on livestock.

Chapron said: *"In Denmark there's no reason wolves can't thrive. But the question has to be asked, are people going to accept the wolves? The wolf will need to eat something. When they realise that Danish sheep don't taste too bad that may be a little problematic. It will be interesting to see how far we can coexist with big predators."*



The Danish government has already responded to reports of the killing of livestock by offering compensation to farmers and funding for protective fencing.

Wouldn't it be great if our politicians compensated farmers for stock loss and helped pay for exclusion fencing instead of continuing the costly and cruel use of 1080 poison, costing our economy \$16.5 million per year, especially when in Victoria, where there are approximately 13,000,000 sheep and only approximately 900 reported sheep killed by dingoes per year.

Photo copyright Global Look Press

Wooleen Station couple taking radical stand to recover ancient outback property

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-05-08/wooleen-station-couple-taking-radical-stance-over-regenerations/8484476>

David Pollock is a cattleman with no cows. He would rather watch the grass grow on the historic Wooleen Station. He is slowly returning his childhood home in remote WA to its ancient splendour. David is the new, young face of pastoral conservationism.

He and his wife Frances Jones are upending what it means to be a modern-day pastoralist. They are implementing a series of radical steps to rescue his beloved Wooleen from the brink of environmental disaster.

Wooleen Station is a 400,000-acre property located in the southern rangelands in the Murchison region, 700 kilometres north of Perth. The property became rich riding off the sheep's back. In its heyday Wooleen ran 50,000 stock and was like a small town, supporting a workforce of about 60 people.

The crash in sheep prices late last century saw the Pollock family and most of their neighbours move into cattle. But 100-plus years of intensive grazing saw the grass die and their land disintegrate into red dust, taking their livelihoods with it. Today, most properties in the region are down to a workforce of just two; usually a husband and wife team, with at least one person seeking an income off-station. David's first decision shocked not just his brother, but his neighbours as well. He got rid of all the livestock, affording the land some breathing space and giving the long-lived perennial plants a chance to return.

But the delicate ecological balance shifted about three years into the destocking program when a thunderstorm left an abundance of water on Wooleen. Within a month the kangaroo population exploded, threatening the couple's success. "Kangaroos are natural to the Australian environment. But definitely not in the proportions that we've seen them. Grass is the preferred food of kangaroos. They can wipe out a whole year's worth of effort," Frances said.

Over time, the couple found an ecological solution to control kangaroos and non-natives such as wild goats. This time, it was even more radical. Dingoes.

Dingoes keep the grass-feeding populations down, as they did before white settlers arrived with their livestock.

He and Sandy have discussed the possibility of an exclusion fence to separate the dingoes from sheep [on nearby properties].

Wild dogs and dingoes are a declared pest in Western Australia. By not participating in baiting programs, the couple risks breaking the law. But it's a risk they are currently prepared to take.





Feature article by Arthur Gorrie - KILLING 'BOLD'

'Killing Bold

Managing the dingoes of Fraser Island',

An essay by Rowena Lennox, published in the Griffith Review, caused a bit of a stir in the dingo world.

Rowena Lennox has published essays, fiction, memoirs and poems in *Hecate*, *Kill Your Darlings*, *Meanjin*, *New Statesman*, *Seizure*, *Social Alternatives* and *Southerly*, among others. Her book *Fighting Spirit of East Timor* (Pluto/Zed, 2000) won a NSW Premier's History Award in 2001. She is currently a doctoral student at University of Technology Sydney. I asked Rowena to tell me a little bit about her essay *Killing Bold* and what drove her to write it:

'I started thinking about dingoes because I enjoy the company of my dog, who is a kelpie – cattle dog cross. Both these Australian working breeds trace their ancestry – overtly, in the case of cattle dogs, or covertly, in the case of kelpies – to the dingo, an ancient canid that has evolved in isolation in Australia for millennia. Dingoes are a keystone cultural species for Aboriginal people and, as Australia's apex predator, very important to the ecology of the continent. But they are killed on pastoral land because they predate on livestock. They are also killed in national parks, intentionally, under the guise of 'wild dog control', and unintentionally by baits intended for foxes and cats. Australian laws and government policies enable this killing and encourage many people to regard these intelligent, sociable animals as vermin.

'The Queensland government's heavy-handed treatment of [Jennifer] Parkhurst intrigued and scared me. She claimed that she fed a pack of dingoes because they were going to die of starvation; she was on the dingoes' side. In a leap that seemed entirely logical to me, I construed the actions of DERM and QPWS against Parkhurst as yet another form of state violence against dingoes. Observing from New South Wales, the Queensland government's treatment of Parkhurst also seemed to be a continuation of the authoritarian and unrestrained use of power that made the state notorious when Joh Bjelke-Petersen was premier and police corruption was rife.

'In May 2015 on a visit to K'gari with Jennifer Parkhurst I met a free-ranging ten-month-old dingo on the beach whom I nicknamed Bold. In August 2015 he was killed by QPWS staff because of his subsequent interactions with people. Framed by a tour I took of the island in November 2015 and using data from QPWS's interaction reports about Bold, scientific accounts and descriptions of my meeting with him, 'Killing Bold' critiques the rationale for and effectiveness of killing dingoes to keep people safe. My aims are to offer an alternative to the strongly held and seemingly intractable views that are part of the story of dingo management on the island by giving voice to plurality and provoking thought. In my attempt to give Bold his life back, I turned to Bob Dylan's songs because they express love, anger, sadness and confusion in a way that is not fixed, and they depict complicated relationships and stories. 'Killing Bold' does not offer solutions but seeks to imagine its way towards conservation that is not completely human centred.'

For a copy of the essay 'Killing Bold' please follow the link below:

<https://griffithreview.com/articles/killing-bold-managing-the-dingoes-of-fraser-island/>

KILLING 'BOLD' by Arthur Gorrie

In response to the essay, Colleen Enchelmaier, President of the **Fraser Island Defenders Organisation** (FIDO) wrote a letter to the Griffith Review, part of which I will publish below. FIDO is a group which in its early days was highly critical of the QPWS management strategy but turned tail more recently and became hyper critical of QPWS protagonists instead, particularly Jennifer Parkhurst. FIDO's newsletter 'Moonbi' Regularly referred to Jennifer and her supporters as 'dingophiles'.

Enchelmaier wrote:

I am very unhappy about the essay 'Killing Bold' by Rowena Lennox, in the latest, otherwise excellent *Griffith Review*. I find it a very sentimental, unrealistic and one-sided report on the situation. It is interesting that she says early in the essay that 'I was in too deep.' This means, I suppose, that her interaction and visit to the island with Jennifer Parkhurst and her attendance at the forum held by Save Fraser Island Dingoes had already formed her views. This seems to have been the case.

The comments about Queensland still being a police state as it was in the days of Joh Bjelke-Petersen and relating that to how the law treated Jennifer Parkhurst in 2010 after she had committed forty-six offences is so inaccurate. Using a reference to Tony Fitzgerald's comments on Campbell Newman in 2014 before Newman was so thoroughly rejected by Queenslanders is very poor argument and history. Tony Fitzgerald is a great and vigilant fighter for democracy as we all must be whatever the political party or government. New South Wales has not been pure in this regard. How this ridiculous referencing relates to why the writer felt 'scared', how the rangers deal with dingoes on K'gari or how Jennifer Parkhurst was treated by the law mystifies me. The essay is especially disappointing as the author purports to be a historian.

Having been attacked on two separate occasions by domestic dogs while I walked on a Brisbane city footpath, I know the fear one can feel as a dog approaches. A third attack on my hand now has me immediately lift my hand to my chest when near a dog. According to new research reported in the *Herald Sun* on 16 July 2017 and on the ABC, in Australia, fifty people a week are admitted to hospital with dog bites.

The difficult problem of dealing with human-dingo interaction is a very complex one... There are a number of solutions that could be suggested: tourists could be banned from the island (this is not going to happen – imagine the outcry); the island could be divided in half with the top half for dingoes (this is not going to happen as it would be expensive, ineffective as it is impossible to run a fence across the beach and into the water at the eastern and western ends, very destructive to the flora and requires monitoring a very long fence inland behind Orchid Beach down across the island – imagine the outcry if people were not allowed in the northern half. It would also affect the fauna in the south with the removal of the major predator); offending dingoes could be put into the care of persons or refuges or zoos on the mainland (this would not solve the existing, as yet unknown, effects of removing dingoes from packs as O'Neill et al refer); QPWS could inform the public that it no longer takes responsibility for human-dingo interactions and that the public must take responsibility for their safety within the law (this would lead to more deaths and injuries to both humans and dingoes as people would protect themselves any way they can. Imagine the outcry); or QPWS continues with the care and protection it is giving humans and dingoes. These suggestions just illustrate how difficult the problem is. Like all dogs (see how many people are admitted to hospitals in Australia each year with dog bites – fifty a week), dingoes are inquisitive and on the search for food, but like many dogs they are also likely to bite at unexpected moments. I am sure the rangers on K'gari would love to have a simple solution to the problem, and they certainly do not support as a first priority 'sustainable extractive capitalism which allows dingoes no space'.

KILLING 'BOLD' by Arthur Gorrie

This author jumps to so many unwarranted insinuations and conclusions, as for example when she refers to the closing of dumps and the Azaria Chamberlain case. She does not listen when she is told that rangers have twenty-five years of experience of observing dingoes on K'gari, and dismisses the efforts made to educate the public and keep them and the dingoes safe. She does not reveal the detail of the research on dingoes that has been done. She has been influenced far too much by one side. It is a sentimental, insinuating, unrealistic, biased investigation of the real situation and provides no solutions.

Rowena responded, and her response can be found at the end of the article via the link above. i also responded and was assured by the publishers of the Griffith Review that they would publish MY response. They did not.

The letter that the Griffith Review would not publish:

by Arthur Gorrie

Wednesday, 6 September 2017 12:34 PM

In response to Colleen Enchelmaier's comments on the Killing Bold essay, it is clear she supports, on behalf of the Fraser Island Defenders Organisation, many views advanced by the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service.

I have a lengthy experience reporting on the QPWS over 18 years and have found its statements on many issues affecting the Cooloola Sand Mass area, to be regrettably misleading.

Far from the QPWS being faced with complex problems managing people and dingoes, John Sinclair, founder of FIDO, once observed that FIDO's extensive research had found no evidence of dingo attacks on people before the QPWS took over.

He has also noted, in FIDO's newsletter Moonbi, that allegedly independent reviews have been limited by terms of reference which specifically exclude comparison with the benign situation which existed before. Dingoes then were fed by campers as a matter of government policy (signs advised campers to leave food scraps out for dingoes because distance made it impossible to remove all garbage).

I believe the Northern Territory parks and wildlife authority tried to blame Lindy and Michael Chamberlain when similar no feeding and lethal control policies preceded the death of Azaria Chamberlain. Failing in that, they now blame the dingoes. QPWS went straight for the dingoes in 2001 when Clinton Gage was killed. These remain the only two human deaths from dingo attack ever. Both cases involved comparable dingo management strategies, as also noted (in print) by Lindy and (on regional television) by Michael Chamberlain.

It is the smoking gun of history.



KILLING 'BOLD' by Arthur Gorrie

The refusal of Queensland bureaucracies to allow a genuinely independent review, including this historical comparison, shows that the best contribution that could be made to human and dingo safety on Fraser Island would be to get the QPWS right off the island and replace it with a more competent and absolutely transparent organisation.

Colleen seems to concede that dingoes are no more dangerous than domestic dogs, but says this is too dangerous. I suggest people should be able to make that choice for themselves, just as some choose adventure sports which can also be dangerous - far more so than camping with dingoes.

Those scared of dingoes can camp on the mainland, where dingoes have almost all been killed by QPWS authorised 1080 baiting.



Deb Tuddenham

Another dangerous misconception FIDO has always promoted is a view that the natural state of Fraser Island dingoes is wild and distant from people. FIDO members and supporters should reconsider this, I believe. It is an almost terra nullius concept which ignores the impact of Aboriginal culture and the intimate and friendly relationship the First Nations people had with dingoes, as noted by historians and explorers. Fraser Island dingoes have always been semi-domesticated and fed on middens just as they fed on the white settler's dumps, before the QPWS closed them off.

FIDO no longer criticises the QPWS but now just tears into Jennifer Parkhurst, a

person the QPWS almost flatters with its unending attention.

It has spent millions on surveillance of her, not counting the legal cost of prosecuting her. Even sending her copies of a tiny proportion of its files on her has been deemed to be an unreasonable burden on departmental resources.

Not often do we see a government organisation so afraid of one person's views and observations. Sinclair and FIDO are lucky they never were subject to such heavy handed information control, taken to the point of insulting and even threatening Australian democracy.

The QPWS argued in its prosecution of Jennifer Parkhurst that the community cannot afford her views on the benign nature of dingoes to take hold and that her expression of these views was an aggravating factor as far as penalty was concerned. This does look like an argument that the state has a right to regulate public discussion, to a point which seems to contradict one of our most fundamental human rights, the right to free political expression.



Jennifer Parkhurst

KILLING 'BOLD' by Arthur Gorrie

My view, supported by others, is that the United Nations, in its Universal Declaration of Human Rights, saw this as one of the important values that it hoped would protect the world from a re-emergence of the tyranny practised by the Axis powers.

It is not something to be cast aside lightly, as it apparently has been in Queensland. Jennifer Parkhurst was wrongly accused of committing a crime by taking photographs which everyone knew about under the auspices of a QPWS permit and did nothing that is not also a part of whale watching, administered under the same law. But a weak creature stands little chance before the law, as John Sinclair also once observed. She could not afford to defend herself, financially or with regard to her health.

The scientific value of Jennifer Parkhurst's ground breaking photographs and observational insights has even been remarked on by Dr Lee Allen, referred to at the Jennifer Parkhurst trial as a QPWS dingo expert.

I know Jennifer Parkhurst as a sincere and innocent person. The treatment she has received and the censorship of her work through criminal prosecution and the likely misuse of Proceeds of Crime laws to prevent publication of her work is no more scientific than the jailing of Galileo and Copernicus for asserting that the Earth revolves around the sun.

Jennifer is fighting for Fraser Island. I do not expect she will ever receive a commendation from the QPWS or an Order of Australia for her work [as did John Sinclair]. I think she should be proud of that.

And I don't think authors who choose to include her insights in their articles should be criticised for doing so.

Note from Jennifer Parkhurst: I find it sad that these pseudo intellectuals from FIDO who claim to be professional but continuously called people from my group 'dingophiles', feel it is imperative to rely purely on science, and seem to think that any kind of emotional involvement is wrong. There is nothing wrong with Rowena's essay, which takes an anthropological view of her journey on the Island, meeting 'Bold'.

Rowena is accused of being biased, but I can unequivocally say that Rowena spent a lot of time with people from both sides of the debate, not just dingo advocates. She was aware that involving my name in her essay would be contentious. The fact that people hate me so much to this day because I have a dissenting view on Island dingo management is something I see as positive. It means my work wasn't in vain and my arguments are still valid.

Some of Enchelmaier's arguments seem nothing short of contradictory and bizarre. One particular argument falls entirely short of any logic, ie relocating (problem) dingoes is bad because it removes them from their packs thus causing as yet unknown effects. Well, if the alternative is killing them, how does that preserve pack structure?

The writer is very scared of dogs and cites many examples of dog attacks in suburbia. This goes to show how wonderfully well behaved wild dingoes are in comparison. If wild dingoes were attacking people as regularly and viciously as domestic dogs then we might actually have a real problem on K'Gari. JP

Save Fraser Island Dingoes – Report

Another year has quickly passed and Christmas is upon us. Again we thank everyone for their ongoing support; it is only by consistent lobbying and public awareness that we can hold the government accountable and transparent in their management of the Fraser Island dingo.

A review of the current dingo strategy (FIDCRMS) was scheduled to be completed this year and by all reports there will be no significant changes. In other words, high risk dingoes will continue to be destroyed. SFID recently wrote an Open Letter to the government with a list of recommendations, these included further Research into dingo health, genetics, population and eliminating the continued destruction of animals. To date we are still awaiting a reply.

Wildlife Care Facility for Fraser Island. At this point the Care Centre is on hold since there has been little communication with the government. Donated money has been held in a Trust Account and we will either continue discussions with the newly elected Minister for the Environment or direct our energies in other areas that will benefit the Fraser Island Dingo.

In 2018 we hope to financially assist Geneticist, Dr. Kylie Cairns UNSW, in her DNA sequencing of the Fraser Island dingo.

This year members of the Committee trekked from one end of Fraser Island (K'gari) to the other, covering approx 1,300kms over four days. We saw only five dingoes over the four day period. It is hoped there were many more that remained out of sight, otherwise a diminishing population past a certain point will be impossible to bring back from the brink of extinction.

Unfortunately, the Butchulla Aboriginal Corporation (BAC) has put an indefinite halt to all Projects on the Island, so at this stage it is uncertain when studies on population dynamics, and other relevant Research, will resume.

We appreciate the fact that their time is being taken up with Native Title affairs but sincerely hope that the New Year will see a positive collaboration and that all parties can co-operate and unite with a common goal of protecting and preserving the dingo (wangari) population.

As visitor numbers continue to increase and climate change affects the Island, the threat to our dingo remains ongoing. We realise the economic benefits of Tourism, but without the necessary infrastructure and resources to monitor visitors, the risk to our wildlife will only escalate.

We will continue to battle the bureaucrats and hope one day that all our Fraser Island dingoes will be safe from deliberate destruction and persecution.

Wishing everyone a very Merry Christmas, safe and happy holidays and a wonderful New Year..

SFID Committee.



A GOOD NEWS STORY

<https://www.facebook.com/tennewsqueensland/videos/1688879334465433/>

Ten Eyewitness News 25 November 2017

A sub-adult dingo found lost in Logan (Gold Coast). Andrew Mayfield, Logan City Animal Control, received a phone call from the public who believed they had a dingo on their property. Council protocol is to shoot wild dogs on sight but Andrew Mayfield saw 'something special' that saved the dingo's life – it seemed domesticated. Mayfield decided to save it, and it will be the first dingo ever to be rehomed in Logan City. The O'Reilly's Rainforest Retreat has adopted the dingo, to become a part of its native animal wildlife encounters for guests..



The NDPRP operates on a very small budget but with big outcomes. While we do not actively seek to solicit donations, we have been approached by several people wishing to help financially. If you would like to make a donation, this can be done through Westpac A/C No: 25-7130 BSB: 033-289



Review of wild dog management program

Review of the Victorian Wild Dog Management Program and Recommendations for Future Approaches

Report prepared for Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources (DEDJTR) by
Marsden Jacob Associates

http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0016/327112/Wild-dog-evaluation-report-2.pdf

Whilst at first read Marsden Jacob Associates seems to be attempting to accede to its employer, on closer examination, it actually highlights the problems involved with wild dog control and even in some respects supports our opinion that the mass control of wild dogs is based largely on unsupported data, or data which in fact shows that there is less of a wild dog problem than promoted. [] Square brackets indicate editorial comments from NDPRP.

Report in summary.

The management of wild dogs has been, and continues to be a contentious issue in Victoria. The Victorian Government is committed to working with affected land owners to reduce the economic, social and environmental impacts of wild dogs in Victoria at an estimated cost of \$13–18 million per year.

At the control level, the Victorian Wild Dog Control Program comprises mainly ground baiting and trapping, sometimes complemented by aerial baiting and shooting. Trapping is the primary **reactive** control activity in terms of expenditure and labour force effort. However, in terms of the total nights during a year for which a ground bait or trap is operational, baiting remains the core **proactive** tool and the major control measure undertaken by the program.

Our evaluation has primarily focused on lethal measures, such as baiting and trapping, as it has not been possible to examine the uptake and effectiveness of non-lethal measures and other lethal measures such as shooting due to a lack of data.

Baiting is essential to strategies of pre-attack reduction of wild dogs within the buffer zone and creating control lines within the buffer zone. *In principle, it is beneficial to manage the population of wild dogs within the buffer zone to reduce the likelihood of problem dogs.* A sustained and substantial increase in the level of baiting within the 3-kilometre buffer zone would be required.

[They admit...] A drawback of baiting, which is partially managed by bait laying practices, is the likelihood of a higher level of non-target species taken compared to other control technologies.

A key challenge is that dingoes are visually indistinguishable from wild dogs thereby making it impossible to ensure that they are not inadvertently destroyed via wild dog control programs. To address this issue, in 2010, an Order in Council was made under the *Wildlife Act 1975* (and extended in 2013 for five years) which declared that dingoes are unprotected wildlife on all private land in Victoria and on public land within 3 kilometres of any private land boundary.

Review of wild dog management program

[This is their dingo conservation plan – it is illogical. How can dingoes be protected by declaring them unprotected wildlife, ignoring them and baiting them anyway?]

In some jurisdictions, the costs of direct control are shared 50:50 between the landholder and the government.

Inputs: The level of baiting has increased over the three year period 2012/13 to 2014/15 with a reduction in trapping. Both DEWLP and community baiting has increased. Outputs: It is difficult to gauge trends in the effectiveness of the two key control measures (as measured by dogs killed/dogs trapped to baits laid/traps set) over the last four years as the data does not exhibit a statistically significant trend upwards or downwards.



It is difficult to gauge trends in the effectiveness of the two key control measures (baits and traps) over the last four years as the data does not exhibit a statistically significant trend upwards or downwards. It is important to consider the effectiveness of deploying baits and traps in killing dogs in the context of overall program effectiveness as there is an uncertain relationship between the numbers of dogs killed and livestock attacked using the data available to us.

[Therefore we could almost conclude that the baiting/trapping program, ie culling program, is basically ineffective and its use is unsupported by any data. Thus again it is highlighted that the government is spending a great deal of taxpayer dollars on a program that is possibly not even effective and certainly not beneficial to the environment. It would even be classed as counter-productive in light of the fact that baiting causes severe pack disruption, and consequently more dingoes reproduce and we end up with a larger population of dingoes than we should have.]

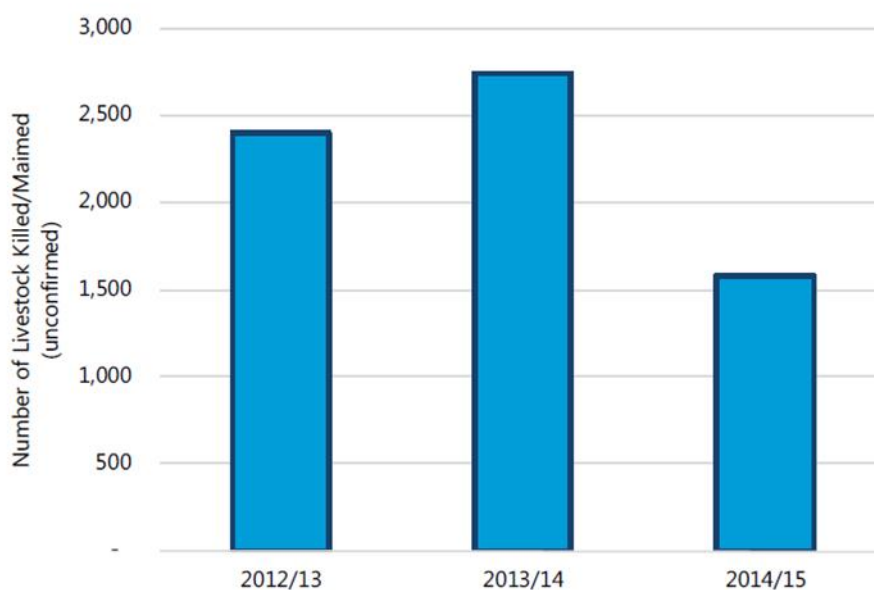
Review of wild dog management program

The current animal welfare exemptions enable 72 hour trap checking and if these inspection times were to be reduced ... [they would basically cost more money.] There is an urgent need to undertake comprehensive research on the levels of target and non-target species take by traps, ground (and aerial) baiting and CPEs. We are concerned that there are wide variations in the estimated level of take of baiting in particular. Targeted trapping can be highly effective but the empirical evidence is that trapping is more resource intensive and requires substantial skills. Research should be undertaken to test this evidence.

There is limited understanding of the size of the wild dog population and the empirical relationship between population size, buffer zone size and characteristics, and the level of attack. Improving understanding of these relationships within the Dogbytes database would provide insight into the levels of investment required to reduce dog attacks.

At present there is no systematic method of assessing the incremental contribution of individual controls on the level of attack. In effect, de-facto experimentation is being undertaken on a broad scale without appropriate controlling for other influences. Piloting of alternative mixes and levels of control measures should be considered in targeted locations (to minimise the impact of neighbouring area control influences). Further consultation with community is required to determine what might be a desirable level of dog take given likely outcomes on attacks, non-target species and program costs.

Figure 9: Livestock deaths from wild dogs – overall



[It seems that the enormous figure of \$13-18 million per year to mitigate livestock deaths is ridiculous in light of the very few reported livestock deaths to dingoes.]

In the cases in which there were statistically significant relationships the analysis indicated that higher levels of baiting or trapping was leading to higher levels of livestock deaths.

[As mentioned above, this is a logical result with the breakdown of pack social structure.]

Review of wild dog management program

[**Marsden Jacob Associates'** Conservation of Biodiversity and Animal Welfare Section only briefly touched on the cruelty of the use of traps, but did not discuss in any shape or form the cruelty associated with the use of 1080 poison. Their only concession was: 'Strychnine laced traps are allowed in some jurisdictions and are used primarily in more remote applications where it is not feasible to regularly inspect traps. Strychnine, like 1080, is Schedule 7 poison and its use is restricted by licence. Consistent with a number of other jurisdictions, Victoria does not allow the use of Strychnine laced traps. A decision was made in 2013 not to progress the introduction of strychnine LTD's in Victoria because it is not species specific and its mode of action is not considered humane.' And...' One particular LTD for wild dogs and foxes uses PAPP as the toxin, which will bring about the death of the trapped animal in a timely and humane manner.' Note: PAPP is no less inhumane than 1080; it just works quicker.]



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RESEARCH 2016-17

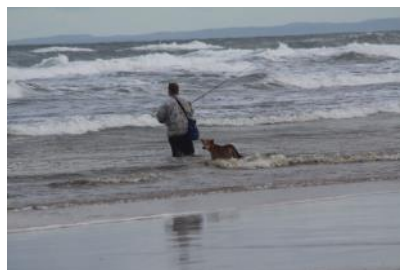
Managing dingoes on Fraser Island: culling, conflict, and an alternative

Adam J. O'Neill, Kylie M. Cairns, Gisela Kaplan and Ernest Healy

Abstract. Globally, the role of large predators is increasingly understood as essential for the restoration and maintenance of ecosystems. Consequently, predator conservation represents a paradigm shift in ecological thinking, yet the management of predators sets conflicting goals because of ongoing conflict with humans. This is exemplified on Fraser Island where dingoes come into conflict with tourists, and dingoes perceived to be dangerous are regularly culled. It is argued here that this new conservation paradigm premised on protecting predators in conjunction with conventional wildlife management can result in predator populations being held in a perpetual state of social disorder, exacerbating rather than alleviating conflict. We consider the intensity and frequency of lethal control and how this may impact upon predator social structures, healthy ecological function, stable breeding patterns and stable territoriality. The direct effects of management-induced psychological stress for the survivors of episodic culls are discussed, as well as the indirect flowon effects of social dysfunction. A final consideration is the cyclical nature of lethal control, whereby conflict with humans results in culling which, in turn, gives rise to further social disruption and conflict. In part, our assessment is derived from official data collected in the course of the management of dingoes on Fraser Island. On this basis, and on the basis of the international literature available, we offer new insights, which may inform predator management more broadly.

Some points the authors make:

The feeding of dingoes by humans is believed by QPWS to be a primary cause of dingo habituation and aggression. The [QPWS] logic behind human food supplements leading to aggression comprises four major components: attraction (human food), habituation, interaction and aggression. The first three are obviously connected, but how and whether these lead to aggression is unclear.



This theory is not really supported by the data. Over the last 22 years on Fraser Island, human food supplementation has been significantly reduced, yet, simultaneously, dingo aggression is reported to have increased. Significantly, incidents increase following high dingo mortality events. The QPWS refuses to give any serious consideration of pack destabilisation, dispersal and conflict as a broader consequence of culling, despite evidence to the contrary. The view that habituated dingoes are more likely to harm humans is contested by the authors. They believe little consideration has been given to the potential effects of killing individual dingoes on the population's social structure. Also, the ecological consequences of social disruption can potentially promote conflict. And finally, that cull-induced stress is a potential cause of aggression. The authors also contend that management-induced aggression might entrain a cycle of culls and conflict and lead to mortality rates that threaten the population's sustainability.

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Conceptualising animals as purely mechanistic has long since been supplanted by a more sophisticated understanding that animals feel, make choices and form deep emotional bonds. Animals have been shown to experience trauma and this can be triggered by loss of family or companions, by abuse and resulting stress.

What may ostensibly appear to be relatively low official cull counts, together with non-cull deaths, may have a disproportionate impact on the dingo packs and cause stress and trauma across pack territories. Research suggests that social stability and ecological function are intrinsically linked and when predator social systems are compromised ecosystems can potentially collapse.

The current management approach is contributing to social instability and diminished territorial integrity in the dingo population, resulting in both increased human–dingo and conspecific conflict, heightened stress, elevated breeding rates and fatal dispersal of poorly socialised juveniles into neighbouring pack territories.

As it stands, the long-established management perspective on Fraser Island might entail a cycle of cull and conflict, and consequently fail to account for the possibility that current policy may be contributing to, rather than alleviating conflict. The Fraser Island dingo management regime may be applying lethal control at a level that maximises social disruption and conflict. Ending lethal control will help promote the social stability and well-being of dingoes, reduce conflict with humans, and ensure the sustainability of this unique population.

Ed: Despite the information presented in this paper, DEHP said it would not consider the paper when making any changes to dingo management. It said the management strategy had been 'objectively assessed' and reviewed several times [note: NOT independently]. QPWS stands by its position that feeding of dingoes leads to changes in their behaviour, and does not acknowledge that culling dingoes could potentially destroy pack social structure, as postulated in the article. In other words, despite the emerging science that culling dingoes is detrimental to their overall survival, QPWS is not going to change how dingoes are managed, and will continue to kill them irrespective of what some of Australia's leading dingo ecologists are telling them.



RESEARCH

Human–dingo interactions on Fraser Island: an analysis of serious incident reports

Rob Appleby, Jess Mackie, Bradley Smith, Lilia Bernede and Darryl Jones

Australian Mammalogy

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1071/AM16026>

Abstract. Wild predators that attack people represent a significant challenge to the management authorities charged with conserving populations whilst minimising human safety risk. Fraser Island is home to an iconic population of dingoes (*Canis dingo*). However, conflict stemming from negative human–dingo interactions (incidents), some resulting in serious human injury and in one case, a fatality, is an ongoing concern. In an effort to highlight important factors influencing incident dynamics, we investigated the most serious incident reports gathered by the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service for the period 2001–15. We found a consistent pattern of incidents peaking in March/April and also July, corresponding with dingo breeding and whelping seasons (respectively). Monthly vehicle permit numbers (a proxy for visitation) were not positively correlated with incident rates, except during the breeding season. Male dingoes, particularly subadult males, featured heavily in incidents. Despite the fatality being highly publicised and the advent of copious on-site warning messages and other management interventions, serious incidents continue to occur annually, including some involving children. This suggests that risks are either not always understood, or are otherwise being ignored. While our results demonstrate that dingoes generally pose minimal risk to humans, some risk remains, particularly where poorly supervised children are concerned.



Some points the authors make (summary by Cheryl Bryant):

An exhibition of what was labelled as risk enhancing behaviours on the part of people, contributing markedly to attacks (Penteriani et al. 2016). In particular, poor supervision of children appeared to be commonly correlated with attacks (Penteriani et al. 2016)

There is potentially a link between incident reports, specific dingo seasons and periods of high human visitation (e.g. In April each year), the relationship between visitor numbers and incident rates more generally is unclear. This is partly due to the records relating to visitor numbers being inconsistent (Allen et al. 2012).....Examining potential relationships between incident reports and visitor numbers therefore remains an important knowledge gap deserving of re-evaluation.

No overall significant difference between the number of incidents occurring before and after fence construction at Eurong (Allen et al. 2012)

RESEARCH

An examination of hormonal assays between the different sex-by-age classes at different times of the year on Fraser Island may therefore be illuminating in relation to incident dynamics.

The potential role of hunger and natural/ artificial food availability in driving incident mechanics is deserving of more research.

Our results also clearly show that dingoes rarely seriously injure even the most vulnerable of people, despite the opportunity to do so arising on occasion. Nor do they regularly seriously injure people more generally. In fact, large numbers of encounters, which are probably benign or positive in nature, go unreported (Burns and Howard 2003; Hytten and Burns 2007).

We would add that a critical component of management success and risk reduction pertains to whether some visitors are ignoring or misunderstanding the seriousness of warnings and, if so, why.

Play Behaviour..

While play Behaviour directed at human beings is of management concern (Allen et al. 2012); arguably, predatory Behaviour would be of the greatest concern.If dingo incidents on Fraser Island were largely driven by predatory motivations, including those where people were walking/ running, then studies highlighting the proficiency of dingo predation in other contexts (Robertshaw and Harden 1985; Thomson 1992c; Allen 2015) suggest that many more serious incidents might be expected to have occurred.

Again, however, our results demonstrate that outright attacks in which people are seriously injured are very rare. Linnell et al. (2002, 2003) stated that predatory Behaviour directed at humans was not normal Behaviour for the average wolf and that most wolves do not see humans as prey. Arguably, the same can be said of dingoes.

Many cases may also fit an alternative explanation of play as a motivation (Corbett 1998; Allen et al. 2012; Allen et al. 2015; Appleby 2015a). Young dingoes, in particular, might be expected to engage in more play activity (compared with adults). Chasing and mock attacks are common features of play Behaviour in canids (Bekoff 1974a, 1974b, 1995; Bauer and Smuts 2007), and, in turn, incidents that involve such Behaviour may be mistaken for similar behaviours exhibited in other contexts, such as predation. At present, we tentatively suspect that most incidents that feature young, solitary dingoes chasing or harassing adult humans while they are walking or running are probably not predatory and are more likely playful, but we concede that more research is required to determine whether this is the case and under what circumstances Behaviour might escalate.

Feeding.

Overall, the role played by feeding in incident dynamics remains unclear...Behrendorff et al. (2016) recently found that the incidence of anthropogenic food in dingo scats has markedly declined in recent years, yet incidents, some serious, continue to occur.

A reduction in the prevalence of anthropogenic food in dingo diet is potentially encouraging in relation to limiting the prospect for interactions. However, while we strongly support management Programs aimed at reducing access to anthropogenic food and discouraging close-quarter interactions more generally, we contend that the roles that feeding and habituation play in driving incident dynamics, at least for dingoes, remain uncertain and require further exploration

RESEARCH

New insights on the history of canids in Oceania based on mitochondrial and nuclear data

Kylie M. Cairns and Alan N. Wilton

Genetica DOI 10.1007/s10709-016-9924-z Copyright Springer International Publishing Switzerland 2016

Abstract: How and when dingoes arrived in Oceania poses a fascinating question for scientists with interest in the historical movements of humans and dogs. The dingo holds a unique position as top terrestrial predator of Australia and exists in a wild state. In the first geographical survey of genetic diversity in the dingo using whole mitochondrial genomes, we analysed 16,428 bp in 25 individuals from five separate populations. We also investigated 13 nuclear loci to compare with the mitochondrial population history patterns. Phylogenetic analyses based upon mitochondrial DNA and nuclear DNA support the hypothesis that there are at least two distinct populations of dingo, one of which occurs in the northwest and the other in the southeast of the continent. Conservative molecular dating based upon mitochondrial DNA suggest that the lineages split approximately 8300 years before present, likely outside Australia but within Oceania. The close relationship between dingoes and New Guinea Singing Dogs suggests that plausibly dingoes spread into Australia via the land bridge between Papua New Guinea and Australia although seafaring introductions cannot be rejected. The geographical distribution of these divergent lineages suggests there were multiple independent dingo immigrations. Importantly, the observation of multiple dingo population suggests the need for revision of existing conservation and management programs that treat dingoes as a single homogeneous population.

Butchulla perspectives on dingo displacement and agency at K'gari-Fraser Island, Australia

J. Carter, A. Wardell-Johnson, C. Archer-Lean

[Geoforum 85 \(2017\) 197–205](#)

Abstract: There is a complex geography to Aboriginal-dingo-settler-dog relationships in Australia. This paper examines aspects of that geography in a world heritage area, heavily contested by multiple stakeholders for whom the dingo has come to represent resource and identity, as well as a powerful symbol of nature. The Butchulla people were recently recognised in Australian law as holding native title to world-heritage listed K'gari-Fraser Island, a decision that confers recognition and consultation rights; however, genuine ownership and control of the island is denied through a lack of joint management of the island. This paper reviews evidence from some Butchulla people who declare their ongoing dispossession through various discourses and actions that attempt to circumvent extinguishment of their title to territory. They implied that dingoes have equally endured dispossession and extinguishment of territory through common colonial discourses that subjugate the 'other', albeit Butchulla people and dingoes have different forms of resistance and agency. Butchulla people in our study parallel their treatment under colonial structures of governance with those of the dingo in that both have endured limited freedom of movement and expressions of sovereignty. We argue some Butchulla people liken notions of dingo agency and resistance with their own attempts to assert sovereignty and responses to displacement. Aligning with the dingo (and broader discourses and politics that surround the dingo) may afford Butchulla people a greater entitlement to be a major voice in dingo 'management' specifically, and management of the island more broadly, than their native title resolution confers.

RESEARCH

Cattle mortality on a predator-friendly station in central Australia

Arian D. Wallach,* Daniel Ramp, and Adam J. O'Neill

Journal of Mammalogy, 98(1):45–52, 2017

DOI:10.1093/jmammal/gyw156

Large predators are declining worldwide primarily due to hunting and persecution by humans, driven in large part by the livestock industry. Some ranchers are transitioning to “predator-friendly” farming by adopting nonlethal predator deterrents. On very large rangeland properties, such as the vast stations of the Australian arid zone, ending lethal control may in itself reduce livestock losses by enabling the predator’s social structure to stabilize.

The dingo (*Canis dingo*), Australia’s apex predator, is commonly subjected to eradication campaigns to protect livestock. We analyzed causes of cattle (*Bos taurus*) deaths on Evelyn Downs, a 2,300-km² predator-friendly station in central Australia, for 2 years after dingo protection was established. Husbandry-related challenges, associated with deteriorating environmental conditions, were the leading causes of deaths of cattle. Predation by dingoes was minor and declined as the indices of dingo abundance stabilized and social stability increased.

Shifting from killing predators to improving husbandry standards is likely to improve livestock survival and welfare.



Jennifer Parkhurst

RESEARCH

Uncovering the origins of dog-human eye contact: dingoes establish eye contact more than wolves, but less than dogs

Angie M. Johnston , Courtney Turrin, LynWatson, Alyssa M. Arre, Laurie R. Santos

Abstract: Through domestication, dogs have developed a robust ability to form interspecific bonds with humans. Recent work comparing dogs and wolves suggests that eye contact is an important behaviour underlying these social bonds; however, it remains unclear how this feature of interspecific social bonding evolved. We explored eye contact in a unique comparison species that represents an intermediate point in canid domestication: the Australian dingo (*Canis dingo*). Across two different studies with two different human handlers, we examined dingo-initiated eye contact using a method similar to one previously used with dogs and wolves. In contrast to wolves tested previously, dingoes initiated eye contact with a human, but did so for a shorter time than dogs. Given that dingoes share only an early domestication history with dogs, our results suggest that the motivation to initiate eye contact with humans may have evolved relatively early in domestication. However, the tendency to maintain prolonged eye contact with a familiar human may have evolved later. These results shed new light on the evolutionary steps by which humans and dogs developed their unique social bond.

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Animal Behaviour 133 (2017) 123e129

JP: this study involves dingoes that have been domesticated and which are living in a sanctuary-type situation. I find it interesting to note that during my time with the wild dingoes on Fraser Island they soon became comfortable enough with me to engage in lengthy eye-gazing, and also in some circumstances to be able to respond to my gaze or even pointed finger. This suggests that even wild dingoes can be socialised to human body language quite readily.



RESEARCH

The case for a dingo reintroduction in Australia remains strong: A reply to Morgan et al., 2016

Thomas M. Newsome, Aaron C. Greenville, Mike Letnic, Euan G. Ritchie, Christopher R. Dickman

In their paper “Trophic cascades and dingoes in Australia: does the Yellowstone wolf-elk-willow model apply?” Morgan et al. (2016) argue that the case for dingo reintroduction in Australia, based on trophic cascade theory, is “weak”. They conclude that, “because of climate instability, the strong top-down trophic responses reported from the Yellowstone National Park case study are unlikely to apply in arid and semi-arid south-eastern Australia and are speculative at best”.

We agree that dingoes (*Canis dingo*) are likely to exert different effects on ecological communities in Australia as compared to grey wolves (*Canis lupus*) in North America. A comparison of body sizes and dietary preferences between these canid species alludes to their functional ecological differences. Differences in the biological communities and climate between Yellowstone National Park and Australia also prevent direct comparisons of trophic cascade-processes between the two regions. These facts should not, however, preclude examination of the efficacy and consequences of dingo reintroductions in Australia.

We contend that Morgan et al. (2016): (1) misunderstand the circumstances that make trophic cascades important to consider in Australia, (2) do not acknowledge key reasons why dingo reintroduction has been proposed, (3) haven’t recognised the different pathways by which dingoes could influence ecosystems via trophic cascades, and (4) do not fully acknowledge literature and theory relevant to understanding the interplay of bottom-up and top-down processes in Australia. Our reply is intended to assist managers and decision makers when deciding whether or not to reintroduce dingoes into Australian ecosystems.



Jennifer Parkhurst

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Albert Einstein***