



**Australian Government**  
**National Land & Water Resources Audit**



**Assessing invasive animals in Australia 2008**

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**Invasive Animals Cooperative Research Centre**

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## About the National Land & Water Resources Audit

The National Land & Water Resources Audit ('the Audit') provides data, information and nationwide assessments of Australia's land, water and biological resources to support sustainable development. It commenced in 1997 and published the first set of detailed assessment reports in 2002.

The Audit (2003–08) has six key areas of activity:

- developing a consistent national reporting mechanism for collating natural resource information collected under the National Natural Resource Management Monitoring and Evaluation Framework
- collating information to support the national State of the Environment (SoE) reports
- developing nationally consistent, but regionally relevant integrated resource condition reports
- facilitating reporting on the ongoing collection of natural resource information for key theme areas, including those related to the National Natural Resource Management Monitoring and Evaluation Framework
- reporting on national data and information management (in collaboration with ANZLIC — the Spatial Information Council)
- developing national assessments (as requested) and supporting program evaluations.

For further information see <http://www.nlwra.gov.au>

## About the Invasive Animals Cooperative Research Centre

The Invasive Animals Cooperative Research Centre (IA CRC) was funded by the Australian Government in 2004 and builds on the strong foundation provided by the previous Pest Animal Control CRC. The IA CRC aims to counteract the impact of invasive animals through the development and application of new technologies and by integrating approaches across agencies and jurisdictions. Through the IA CRC, participants from research, industry, environmental, commercial and government agencies work together to create and apply solutions for invasive animal threats. A total of 41 organisations are participating in the Invasive Animals CRC. By combining national and international skills in science, management, commerce and industry, this unique partnership will deliver the means to combat existing high-profile invasive animal pests that have the potential to cause catastrophic impacts in the future.

The IA CRC aims to:

- develop new tools and strategies to control invasive animals
- develop new services to take more effective action against invasive animals
- advance understanding of the nature and behaviour of Australia's invasive animals
- build greater capacity to anticipate, detect, prevent, limit or manage the impacts of existing or new invasive animals.

For further information see <http://www.invasiveanimals.com>



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The Commonwealth accepts no responsibility for the accuracy or the completeness of any material contained in this report and recommends that users exercise their own skill and care with respect to its use.

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# Foreword

Invasive animals cause enormous damage to Australia's economy, environment and society. *Assessing Invasive Animals in Australia 2008* presents, for the first time, consistent national information on the distribution and abundance of significant invasive animals in Australia.

This report is the result of collaboration between the National Land & Water Resources Audit, the Invasive Animals Cooperative Research Centre, and all states and territories. It reports on indicators of the extent and impact of 10 invasive animal species, which have been compiled from existing datasets using nationally agreed methods. Where available, information on trends was collated and reported, and potential distribution information was modelled for species that are still spreading.

The work is an important step in laying the foundations for ongoing monitoring of invasive animals — and this ongoing monitoring should be an essential component of all future programs that invest in controlling these invasive species.

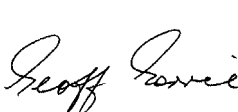
Key findings presented in the report include:

- Invasive animals are a national issue because they inhabit all areas of mainland Australia and many islands.
- About 73 invasive animal species have established wild populations in Australia and several inhabit over 70% of the continent.
- Invasive animals are estimated to cause losses in excess of one billion dollars per year through environmental and economic damage.
- Invasive animals are listed in the top three greatest threats to threatened species and ecosystems, and they continue to colonise new areas.
- Many species are already widespread and established; however, new and emerging pest species, particularly alien fish, could establish wild populations, and managers must remain vigilant for possible incursions.

The report identifies the need to:

- implement consistent monitoring techniques to measure change in pest populations
- develop mechanisms to monitor and respond to new pest incursions
- include new and emerging species, as well as alien fish species, in monitoring and reporting activities and in future assessment reports
- conduct further research to identify the magnitude of impacts of invasive animals in Australia and to improve tools and techniques to monitor impacts
- collate information on investment and management activities, the impacts of species on assets, and the effectiveness of management
- develop a national information system for invasive animals that addresses the needs of each state and territory, and provides detailed and consistent reporting
- continue coordinated efforts between governments at all levels, research, industry groups, suppliers of innovative control technologies, landholders and the broader community to address the escalating problems caused by invasive animals in Australia.

The Audit Advisory Council and the Invasive Animals Cooperative Research Centre view this report as a substantial contribution to information regarding natural resource management in Australia.



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# Contents

- Foreword** ..... iii
- Acronyms and abbreviations** ..... xi
- Executive summary** ..... xiii
  - Intended audience and overall objective ..... xiv
  - Key findings ..... xiv
  - Functions of this Assessment ..... xviii
  - Future directions ..... xix
  - Funding of this Assessment ..... xx
- 1 Introduction** ..... 1
  - Invasive animal pests ..... 2
  - Current management ..... 3
  - A guide for future management ..... 3
  - Building on previous initiatives ..... 4
  - The national assessment work plan ..... 5
  - The National Land & Water Resources Audit ..... 6
  - Invasive Animals Cooperative Research Centre ..... 7
  - Collaborating agencies ..... 7
- 2 Monitoring and reporting** ..... 9
  - Frameworks for monitoring, evaluation and reporting ..... 9
  - Information needed on invasive animals ..... 10
  - Indicators and information requirements ..... 11
  - Species for reporting ..... 12
  - Monitoring protocols ..... 13
  - Distribution and abundance — Indicator 1 ..... 13
  - Impacts — Indicator 2 ..... 14
  - Data collection and collation ..... 15
- 3 Distribution and abundance of significant invasive vertebrate pests** ..... 21
  - The extent of significant invasive vertebrate pests ..... 21
  - Occurrence of 10 nationally significant invasive animals ..... 21
    - Feral pigs ..... 22
    - Feral goats ..... 25
    - Feral deer ..... 28
    - Rabbits ..... 31

	Foxes.....	34
	Wild dogs.....	37
	Feral cats.....	40
	Common starlings.....	43
	Common carp.....	47
	Cane toads.....	50
	<b>Other significant invasive animals.....</b>	<b>54</b>
	<b>Summary of distribution and abundance information.....</b>	<b>55</b>
	<b>Conclusions.....</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Impacts of significant invasive vertebrate pests.....</b>	<b>57</b>
	<b>Measuring and monitoring impacts.....</b>	<b>57</b>
	<b>Case studies of impacts.....</b>	<b>58</b>
	Case study 1 — The threat posed by invasive animals to biodiversity in New South Wales.....	59
	Case study 2 — National valuation of invasive animal impacts — Counting the costs assessment.....	62
	Case study 3 — Impacts of invasive animals on national environmental assets and biodiversity.....	63
	Case study 4 — Monitoring feral pig predation on nesting threatened sea turtles in Cape York, north Queensland.....	65
	Case study 5 — Monitoring feral pig damage to banana and sugar cane production in north Queensland.....	66
	Case study 6 — Monitoring rabbit impacts on native vegetation and regeneration in the Flinders Ranges, South Australia.....	67
	Case study 7 — Monitoring predation impacts of foxes on native wildlife at Southern Ark Program, Victoria.....	69
	Case study 8 — Monitoring predation impacts by foxes on threatened shorebirds in New South Wales.....	70
	Case study 9 — Monitoring introduced predator impacts on native fauna in the Jarrah Forest bioregion, southwest Western Australia.....	71
	<b>Use of information about the impacts of invasive animals.....</b>	<b>73</b>
	<b>Summary of current impacts information.....</b>	<b>73</b>
	<b>Improving monitoring and reporting of impacts.....</b>	<b>74</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Investment in the management and control of invasive animals.....</b>	<b>75</b>
	Where is funding going and what benefits does it provide?.....	75
	Areas of active management.....	76
	Pest impacts and environmental assets.....	76
<b>6</b>	<b>Building on national compilations in future assessments.....</b>	<b>77</b>
	Building on existing information.....	77
	Future assessments.....	77
	Requirements for future monitoring and reporting.....	78

<b>7</b>	<b>Information management and a national information system</b> .....	79
	The Australian Natural Resources Atlas and associated Data Library .....	79
	Australia's Resources Online .....	79
	A national information system for invasive species .....	79
	Urgent need for a national information system .....	80
<b>8</b>	<b>Future directions</b> .....	81
	Species of national significance .....	81
	Involving stakeholders .....	81
	Monitoring protocols .....	82
	Roles and responsibilities .....	82
	Future assessments .....	83
	Additional information .....	83
	A national invasive species information system .....	84
	<b>Appendix 1 Protocol for monitoring distribution and abundance</b> .....	85
	<b>Appendix 2 Protocol for monitoring impacts</b> .....	87
	<b>Appendix 3 Summary of pest species data</b> .....	89
	<b>Appendix 4 National guidelines for data aggregation</b> .....	91
	<b>Acknowledgements</b> .....	93
	<b>Glossary</b> .....	94
	<b>References and further reading</b> .....	96
<b>Figures</b>		
Figure 1.1	Landscape health in bioregions and subregions of Australia .....	5
Figure 1.2	The 56 Natural Resource Management (NRM) regions of Australia .....	7
Figure 2.1	The monitoring, evaluation, reporting and program improvement cycle for natural resource management .....	10
Figure 2.2	Diagrammatic representation of the National Natural Resource Management Monitoring and Evaluation Framework .....	11
Figure 2.3	Data compilation process of local and regional data to produce state, territory and national datasets .....	16
Figure 2.4	Step-wise data collection and collation process for occurrence, distribution and abundance data .....	17
Figure 3.1	Occurrence of 10 of Australia's nationally significant invasive animals .....	21
Figure 3.2	Feral pig occurrence throughout Australia .....	22
Figure 3.3	Occurrence, distribution and abundance of feral pigs throughout Australia .....	22
Figure 3.4	Feral pig abundance throughout Australia .....	23
Figure 3.5	Percentage of reporting units occupied by feral pigs for each abundance class .....	23
Figure 3.6	Feral pig distribution throughout Australia .....	23
Figure 3.7	Trend in the abundance of feral pigs throughout Australia .....	24

Figure 3.8	Data quality of information for feral pigs throughout Australia . . . . .	24
Figure 3.9	Suitable climate and habitat for feral pigs . . . . .	24
Figure 3.10	Suitable climate and habitat against the current extent of feral pigs . . . . .	24
Figure 3.11	Feral goat occurrence throughout Australia . . . . .	25
Figure 3.12	Occurrence, distribution and abundance of feral goats throughout Australia . . . . .	26
Figure 3.13	Feral goat abundance throughout Australia . . . . .	26
Figure 3.14	Percentage of reporting units occupied by feral goats for each abundance class . . . . .	26
Figure 3.15	Feral goat distribution throughout Australia . . . . .	26
Figure 3.16	Trend in the abundance of feral goats throughout Australia . . . . .	26
Figure 3.17	Data quality of information for feral goats throughout Australia . . . . .	27
Figure 3.18	Predicted suitable climate and habitat for feral goats . . . . .	27
Figure 3.19	Predicted suitable climate and habitat against the current extent of feral goats . . . . .	27
Figure 3.20	Feral deer species occurrence throughout Australia . . . . .	28
Figure 3.21	Occurrence, distribution and abundance of feral deer species throughout Australia . . . . .	29
Figure 3.22	Feral deer species abundance throughout Australia . . . . .	29
Figure 3.23	Percentage of reporting units occupied by feral deer for each abundance class . . . . .	29
Figure 3.24	Feral deer species distribution throughout Australia . . . . .	29
Figure 3.25	Trend in the abundance of feral deer species throughout Australia . . . . .	30
Figure 3.26	Data quality of information for feral deer species throughout Australia . . . . .	30
Figure 3.27	Rabbit occurrence throughout Australia . . . . .	31
Figure 3.28	Occurrence, distribution and abundance of rabbits throughout Australia . . . . .	32
Figure 3.29	Rabbit abundance throughout Australia . . . . .	32
Figure 3.30	Percentage of reporting units occupied by rabbits for each abundance class . . . . .	32
Figure 3.31	Rabbit distribution throughout Australia . . . . .	32
Figure 3.32	Trend in the abundance of rabbits throughout Australia . . . . .	33
Figure 3.33	Data quality of information for rabbits throughout Australia . . . . .	33
Figure 3.34	Fox occurrence throughout Australia . . . . .	35
Figure 3.35	Occurrence, distribution and abundance of foxes throughout Australia . . . . .	35
Figure 3.36	Fox abundance throughout Australia . . . . .	35
Figure 3.37	Percentage of reporting units occupied by foxes for each abundance class . . . . .	35
Figure 3.38	Fox distribution throughout Australia . . . . .	36
Figure 3.39	Trend in the abundance of foxes throughout Australia . . . . .	36
Figure 3.40	Data quality of information for foxes throughout Australia . . . . .	36
Figure 3.41	Wild dog occurrence throughout Australia . . . . .	37
Figure 3.42	Occurrence, distribution and abundance of wild dogs throughout Australia . . . . .	38
Figure 3.43	Wild dog abundance throughout Australia . . . . .	38
Figure 3.44	Percentage of reporting units occupied by wild dogs for each abundance class . . . . .	39
Figure 3.45	Wild dog distribution throughout Australia . . . . .	39
Figure 3.46	Trend in the abundance of wild dogs throughout Australia . . . . .	39

Figure 3.47	Data quality of information for wild dogs throughout Australia . . . . .	39
Figure 3.48	Feral cat occurrence throughout Australia . . . . .	40
Figure 3.49	Occurrence, distribution and abundance of feral cats throughout Australia . . . . .	41
Figure 3.50	Feral cat abundance throughout Australia . . . . .	41
Figure 3.51	Percentage of reporting units occupied by feral cats for each abundance class . . . . .	41
Figure 3.52	Feral cat distribution throughout Australia . . . . .	41
Figure 3.53	Trend in the abundance of feral cats throughout Australia . . . . .	42
Figure 3.54	Data quality of information for feral cats throughout Australia . . . . .	42
Figure 3.55	Common starling occurrence throughout Australia . . . . .	44
Figure 3.56	Occurrence, distribution and abundance of common starlings throughout Australia. . . . .	44
Figure 3.57	Common starling abundance throughout Australia . . . . .	44
Figure 3.58	Percentage of reporting units occupied by common starlings for each abundance class. . . . .	44
Figure 3.59	Common starling distribution throughout Australia . . . . .	45
Figure 3.60	Trend in the abundance of common starlings throughout Australia. . . . .	45
Figure 3.61	Data quality of information for common starlings throughout Australia . . . . .	45
Figure 3.62	Suitable climate and habitat for common starlings . . . . .	46
Figure 3.63	Suitable climate and habitat against the current extent of common starlings . . . . .	46
Figure 3.64	Common carp occurrence throughout Australia . . . . .	47
Figure 3.65	Occurrence, distribution and abundance of common carp throughout Australia. . . . .	48
Figure 3.66	Common carp abundance throughout Australia. . . . .	48
Figure 3.67	Percentage of reporting units occupied by common carp for each abundance class. . . . .	48
Figure 3.68	Common carp distribution throughout Australia . . . . .	48
Figure 3.69	Trend in the abundance of common carp throughout Australia . . . . .	48
Figure 3.70	Data quality of information for common carp throughout Australia . . . . .	49
Figure 3.71	Predicted suitable climate for common carp with major rivers in Australia. . . . .	49
Figure 3.72	Cane toad occurrence throughout Australia . . . . .	50
Figure 3.73	Occurrence, distribution and abundance of cane toads throughout Australia. . . . .	51
Figure 3.74	Cane toad abundance throughout Australia . . . . .	51
Figure 3.75	Percentage of reporting units occupied by cane toads for each abundance class. . . . .	51
Figure 3.76	Cane toad distribution throughout Australia . . . . .	51
Figure 3.77	Trend in the abundance of cane toads throughout Australia. . . . .	52
Figure 3.78	Data quality of information for cane toads throughout Australia . . . . .	52
Figure 3.79	Suitable climate and habitat for cane toads . . . . .	53
Figure 3.80	Suitable climate and habitat against the current extent of cane toads . . . . .	53
Figure 4.1	Percentage of threatened species in each natural resource management region at risk from invasive animals in NSW. . . . .	60
Figure 4.2	Abundance of invasive animals and the density of affected environmental assets for (a) feral pigs, (b) feral goats, (c) rabbits, (d) feral cats and (e) foxes . . . . .	64
Figure 4.3	Monitoring sea turtle nest predation in north Queensland. . . . .	65
Figure 4.4	Feral pig sow destroyed after damaging sugar cane crops . . . . .	66

Figure 4.5	Proportional survival of mulga ( <i>Acacia aneura</i> ) seedlings in the six months following germination in 1997 in five sets of enclosures (An1&4, An5, An6, An7, and An8) in the Vulkathunha-Gammon Ranges National Park, South Australia. Unfenced areas are grazed by rabbits, feral goats and euros. . . . .	68
Figure 4.6	Photo monitoring points to assess impacts to vegetation by grazing rabbits (a) 1992 and (b) 2007 . . . . .	68
Figure 4.7	Location of Southern Ark area of operation . . . . .	69
Figure 4.8	Monitoring sites for threatened shorebirds in NSW . . . . .	70
Figure 4.9	Breeding success of little terns at sites with and without fox control. . . . .	70
Figure 4.10	Location of the northern jarrah forest in the WA Department of Environment and Conservation's managed estate. . . . .	72
Figure 5.1	Proportion of landholdings reporting invasive animal-related issues, modified from ABS — Natural resources management of farms 2004–05 . . . . .	75

## Tables

Table 1	Summary of extent, trend, potential range and impacts of invasive species. . . . .	xv
Table 2.1	Nationally significant invasive animals nominated by the Australian Vertebrate Pests Committee . . . . .	13
Table 2.2	Phases of data compilation and reporting for occurrence, distribution and abundance data . . . . .	16
Table 2.3	Approximate resolution of original state- and territory-based data collated to develop national datasets for the distribution and abundance of invasive animals. . . . .	17
Table 3.1	Occurrence of other significant invasive pest species throughout the states and territories of Australia. . . . .	54
Table 3.2	Proportion of Australia occupied by invasive animal species. . . . .	55
Table 4.1	Number of threatened species at risk from the major invasive animal groups in NSW . . . . .	60
Table 4.2	The threat posed by invasive animals to specific groups of threatened species in NSW . . . . .	61
Table 4.3	Economic, environmental and social costs of impact of pest species (in order of cost) per year. . . . .	62
Table 4.4	Predation rates on sea turtle nests by feral pigs and wild dogs at four sites in far-north Queensland . . . . .	65

# Acronyms and abbreviations

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics	National M&E Framework	National Natural Resource Management Monitoring and Evaluation Framework
ACT	Australian Capital Territory	NFACP	National Feral Animal Control Program
ALUM	Australian Land Use and Management	NLWRA	National Land & Water Resources Audit (the Audit)
APDS	Annual Pest Distribution Survey	NRM	natural resource management
ARO	Australia's Resources Online	NRMMC	Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council
AWC	Australian Weeds Committee	NSW	New South Wales
BioSIRT	Biosecurity, Surveillance, Incident Response and Tracing	NT	Northern Territory
BRS	Bureau of Rural Sciences	Qld	Queensland
CMA	Catchment Management Authority	RHD	rabbit haemorrhagic disease
DAFF	Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry	SA	South Australia
DEWHA	Australian Government Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts	Tas	Tasmania
EPBC Act	Commonwealth <i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i>	Vic	Victoria
GIS	geographic information system	VPC	Australian Vertebrate Pests Committee, operating under the Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council
IA CRC	Invasive Animals Cooperative Research Centre	WA	Western Australia
MERI	monitoring, evaluation, reporting and program improvement		