Animal Pests of South Australia

What you need to know

Introduced animal pests pose a major threat to agriculture, the environment and public safety in South Australia. This brochure explains landowner responsibilities and methods for controlling some of our worst pest animals. It also identifies some Alert Pest animals – serious pests not currently present, but which are at risk of establishing in South Australia.

**Impacts of Pest Animals**

Introduced animal pests cost South Australian agriculture millions of dollars in damage, lost production and control efforts. Rabbits damage sown crops and, with other introduced herbivores, compete with domestic livestock for pasture. Foxes and wild dogs prey on livestock, causing severe losses especially to the sheep industry.

Animal pests also cause incalculable damage to the natural environment. Rabbits and other introduced herbivores over-graze and prevent regeneration of native plants threatening individual plant species and reducing pasture availability for native herbivores. Rabbits also support large populations of foxes and feral cats. Foxes have been implicated in the extinction of almost 30 native mammals from mainland South Australia and continue to threaten many more.

Introduced pests cause a range of other problems. Deer and other large herbivores are a road hazard. Rabbits and hares damage revegetation and amenity plantings and foxes chew holes in irrigation pipes. As well, introduced pests can act as reservoirs for serious exotic diseases including Foot and Mouth Disease and Rabies that might enter Australia. Dealing with wild pest animal populations increases the complexity and cost of eradicating exotic diseases.

Effective control of pest animals by all landowners is the key to reducing their impacts.

### Declared animal pests

**Existing animal pests**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Animal</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dingo/ Wild Dog</td>
<td><em>Canis lupus dingo &amp; hybrids</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feral Camel</td>
<td><em>Camelus dromedarius</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feral Deer</td>
<td>eg. <em>Red Deer</em> <em>Cervus elaphus</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Alert animal pests**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Animal</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>European Rabbit</td>
<td><em>Oryctolagus cuniculus</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown Hare</td>
<td><em>Lepus capensis</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feral Goat</td>
<td><em>Capra hircus</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feral Pig</td>
<td><em>Sus scrofa</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Common (Indian) Myna

- *Acridotheres tristis*

### Red-whiskered Bulbul

- *Pycnonotus jocosus*

### Indian Ringneck Parakeet

- *Psittacula krameri*

### Five-lined Palm Squirrel

- *Funambulus penenti*

### Spice Finch

- *Lonchura punctulata*

### House Crow

- *Corvus splendens*
- Large & wary, sharp eyebrow ridge; poison glands behind eyes. Serious pest. Escaped populations in interstate wetlands. Competes with native tortoises. Prohibited in SA.

### Red-eared Slider

- *Trachemys scripta elegans*
- Red behind eye; yellow stripes on head & legs; domed shell. Escaped from pet shops. Competes with native turtles. Prohibited in SA.

### Cane Toad

- *Bufo marinus*
- Large & wary, sharp eyebrow ridge; poison glands behind eyes. Occasional stowaways to SA via pot plants, furniture & produce. Potential to invade SA via far north-east river systems.
State Alert pest animals

All landowners in South Australia have a legal responsibility to manage pest animals declared under the Natural Resources Management Act 2004. Declaration places restrictions on the movement, keeping, sale and release of some animals. It may also require landowners to control or destroy declared pests on their property or to notify authorities about their presence.

Landowners are required to be aware of declared pest species on their properties and take appropriate measures to control them. A property management plan incorporating a pest animal control calendar is a good way to meet your responsibilities. For example, the best time to control rabbits by baiting is in late summer and early autumn when their numbers are least, breeding has ceased, food is declining and the rabbits are hungry. This is followed by ripping all warrens then fumigating any burrows that re-open.

Contact an Authorised Officer at your regional NRM board for further advice on pest animals and their control.

Contact your regional NRM board for help

South Australia's NRM boards

- Adelaide & Mount Lofty Ranges
- Alinytjara Wilurara
- Eyre Peninsula
- Kangaroo Island
- Northern & Yorke
- South Australian Arid Lands
- South Australian Murray-Darling Basin
- South East

Crystal Brook (head office) 8636 2361 Riverton 8847 2544 Minlaton 8533 2795 Orroroo 8658 1086
South Australian Arid Lands NRM Board 8532 1432 Berri 8582 4477 Burra 8892 3033
South Australian Murray-Darling Basin NRM Board 8576 3400 Lancefield 8853 2795 Minlaton 8847 2544
South East NRM Board 8853 3400 Mt Barker 8391 7500

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State Alert pest animals

State Alerts are potential new pests. They are not present in the wild in SA, but pose a high risk of establishing with serious consequences for agriculture, the environment and public safety.

These include major international pest species such as the Common (or Indian) Myna and Cane Toad which have wild populations interstate and occasionally turn up in South Australia and the House Crow which does not occur in Australia but sometimes arrives here aboard visiting ships.

It is important that landowners are familiar with State Alert pest animals to enable timely eradication of any outbreaks before they spread. Report all suspected State Alert pest animals to your regional NRM board.

Potential new pests

Many exotic animals pose a high risk of becoming new pests in Australia. Without keeping control over their keeping and importation, some would inevitably escape due to poor security or accidental or deliberate release and establish new populations.

Animals such as lagomorphs (e.g. North American cotton-tail rabbits), rodents (e.g. hamsters), mustelids (e.g. stoats and weasels) and amphibians are considered to pose such a serious threat that they are prohibited from being imported into Australia for the pet trade.

The entry, movement, keeping, sale and welfare of these animals can only be kept in high security zoos and research facilities which meet strict criteria.

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5. R. J. H. S. (European Rabbit)
6. S. L. Whelan & B. T. O'Connell (Feral Camel)
7. P. H. Hume & B. T. O'Connell (Feral Camel)
8. R. J. H. S. (Feral Deer)
9. S. L. Whelan & B. T. O'Connell (Feral Deer)
10. P. H. Hume & B. T. O'Connell (Feral Deer)
11. R. J. H. S. (Feral Goat)
12. S. L. Whelan & B. T. O'Connell (Feral Goat)
13. P. H. Hume & B. T. O'Connell (Feral Goat)
14. R. J. H. S. (Feral Pig)
15. S. L. Whelan & B. T. O'Connell (Feral Pig)
16. P. H. Hume & B. T. O'Connell (Feral Pig)

Contact your NRM board for help

Contact your regional Natural Resources Management (NRM) board office for further advice on pest animals and their control.

Adelaide & Mount Lofty Ranges NRM Board
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Northern & Yorke NRM Board
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Information on animal pests can also be obtained from:
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