



NINGALOO FOX CONTROL PROGRAM

FOXES

The fox (*Vulpes vulpes*) is one of Australia's worst introduced pests and have contributed to the decline & extinction of 18 Australian animals, including 10 from WA. They survive successfully in almost all Australian environments due to their opportunistic feeding habits and the absence of natural predators.

Fox predation on turtle eggs is one of the greatest threats to the nesting success of West Australian marine turtles. On some beaches at Ningaloo foxes had destroyed 70% of turtle nests. Human intervention can help control this pest species.

MARINE TURTLES

Three species of marine turtles nests on beaches of Ningaloo Marine Park. These are loggerhead (listed as endangered), green and hawksbill turtles (both listed as vulnerable to extinction). WA supports only one genetic stock of green, hawksbill and loggerhead turtles. This means that local population declines cannot recover through recruitment from other areas.

Due to their complex life cycles, marine turtles are not capable of rapid recovery, if dramatic declines in their population occur, population recovery may take upwards of 40 years, or worse, they may never recover.

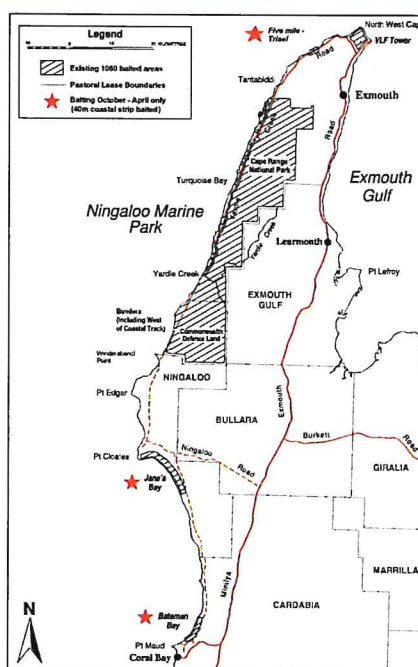
1080 BAITING FACTS

Sodium fluoroacetate known as "1080" is a poison that occurs naturally in at least 40 native plants (39 of which are only found in WA). As a result native animals have developed a high tolerance to it. 1080 is also biodegradable, humane and suitable for both large and small-scale pest control programs. Its use in Western Australia has already resulted in three animals being removed from the endangered species list. 1080 baiting is the preferred fox control method.

In contrast other available fox control methods are not as efficient. Baiting with strychnine is not permitted in WA as the poison is not species selective. Shooting, trapping and fumigating are labour intensive, time consuming and unsuitable for large areas. Also the use of spotlights for shooting is disruptive to nesting turtles and nests are at risk of being driven over.

The use of 1080 is extremely versatile and can be distributed by hand or mechanically depending on the specific area. The current baiting program includes:

1. Cape Range National Park;
2. Commonwealth land surrounding the VLF Tower field and fuel farm;
3. Commonwealth Bombing Range (including the Bundera Coastal Protection Area); and
4. Bateman Bay, Janes Bay, and Five Mile – Trisel Access (Jurabi Coastal Park) only during turtle nesting season



THE PROGRAM

The Ningaloo Fox Control Program is conducted under the Western Shield Program by the Department of Environment and Conservation (WA) and supported by the Department of Defence. For further information please contact the Dept. Environment and Conservation, PO Box 201, Exmouth, WA 6707 Ph: (08) 9947 8000 Fax: (08) 9947 8050



Department of
Environment and Conservation



Australian Government
Department of Defence