



Action Guide Chuditch



Dasyurus geoffroii

Conservation action for a threatened species relies on the identification of the species' requirements and of the threats to its survival. Conservation action aims to eliminate, or at least mitigate, the human-induced threats to the species. Conservation action involves consultation and collaboration between various groups and individuals, both local and remote. [About Action Guides](#)

Chuditch

The Chuditch is the largest carnivorous marsupial in Western Australia. Chuditch is the name that Nyoongah Aboriginal people gave this small brown animal with striking white spots. It has also been called the Western Quoll or Western Native Cat. The Chuditch is Endangered, and likely to become extinct if threats to its survival continue. Chuditch populations declined dramatically after European settlement; they vanished from eastern Australia last century, and from the central desert by about 1950. Chuditch were fairly common in Perth suburbs until the 1930s.

Information about the [Chuditch](#), its habitat and threats to its survival.

Action for Chuditch conservation

The Chuditch Recovery Plan aims to improve this animal's chances of survival by reducing threats, expanding known populations and establishing new ones.

Chuditch recovery - A team effort

Chuditch Recovery Plan is in operation from 1992-2001. Actions will cost a total of \$1.4 million and are managed by the Chuditch Recovery Team representing:

Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM)

Perth Zoo

Alcoa of Australia

World Wide Fund for Nature

Australian Nature Conservation Agency

Recovery actions

1. Habitat management in the Jarrah forest: CALM is doing research to develop forest management guidelines that will minimise impact of forest operations on Chuditch. Alcoa is providing Chuditch den sites and habitat in rehabilitation areas after surface mining.

2. Impact of the fox and fox baiting programs: Foxes are controlled using dried meat baits injected with 1080 poison. Many animals native to south-west WA are much more tolerant to 1080 than introduced species. Although Chuditch sometimes eat baits, this does not affect their survival or breeding. Research has shown that Chuditch numbers increased after fox baiting started, but stayed low in nearby

unbaited areas.

3. Population and habitat monitoring: CALM carries out Chuditch monitoring at Mundaring, Batalling and Kingston. These sites are being baited to control foxes, and Chuditch numbers are starting to increase above former levels. CALM and Alcoa also monitor Chuditch and other animals in the Jarrah forest as part of other projects.

4. Research in the Wheatbelt and semi-arid areas: CALM has surveyed several wheatbelt reserves in an attempt to locate a Chuditch population. As of mid-1995, only one Chuditch had been found despite an intensive trapping program. Occasional sightings and road kills indicate Chuditch are still present outside the Jarrah forest.

5. Captive breeding: The successful breeding program at Perth Zoo provides Chuditch for introduction to areas where foxes have been controlled. Chuditch on display at Perth Zoo help to raise awareness of this threatened species, and gain support for its conservation.

6. Translocation: CALM has released fifty-nine Chuditch at Julimar Conservation Park, in the northern Jarrah forest. Chuditch had not been recorded at Julimar since 1973. After more than two years, Chuditch numbers have stabilised at Julimar. Fox baiting in an adjacent Department of Defence training area will provide protection for Chuditch over a larger area. The Recovery Team plans to establish a Chuditch population at Lake Magenta Nature Reserve in the south-eastern wheatbelt, starting in 1996.

How you can help the Chuditch

1. Report sightings of Chuditch or road kills to the CALM Wildlife Research Centre, or the Ecologist at your nearest CALM Regional Office. Information about location, time, date and activities of the animal will help in planning future conservation actions.

2. Drive carefully at night in the Jarrah forest and near remnant vegetation in the wheatbelt. Chuditch often forage near roads or tracks. Motor vehicles are a major cause of Chuditch deaths in some areas.

3. Take your rubbish home after a visit to the Jarrah forest. Chuditch have been injured or have died after becoming caught in plastic six-pack holders. They will scavenge for food around picnic and camping spots, and have been known to eat bubblegum, used sticking plasters and pieces of aluminium foil. Like all native animals, Chuditch are best left to find food from natural sources.

4. Get involved and help to raise awareness of the Chuditch in your local community. A brochure about the Chuditch Recovery Plan is being prepared and will be available through WWF. Display material and other resources will also be available for loan.

5. Participate in Chuditch surveys and monitoring.

To help conserve Chuditch, the Recovery Team needs information about where they can be found. Some areas of Jarrah forest and woodland in the south-west have never been surveyed for Chuditch. A major survey was carried out by CALM in the Eastern Goldfields in 1995. WWF plans to coordinate a major survey in Denmark/Albany/Esperance area later in the year. There may be opportunities for volunteers to assist in other surveys and monitoring as part of the Recovery Plan. What can you do? Encourage reporting of Chuditch sightings or road kills to the WWF Project Officer or the Ecologist at your CALM regional office. Register your interest in monitoring a local area of forest or woodland. Register as a volunteer for Chuditch surveys. Chuditch are already making a successful comeback in the wild as a result of the Recovery Team's work.

Who to contact

*World Wide Fund for Nature
GPO Box U1946
Perth 6845.*

Help Perth Zoo maintain its Chuditch colony by donating to:
*Chuditch Breeding Program,
PO Box 489 South Perth 6151.*

Each year the zoo uses 22 000 mice and 180 000 mealworms to help feed the breeding colony.

For more information please contact:
*Chuditch Recovery Team
Wildlife Research Centre,
Department of Conservation and Land Management
PO Box 51 Wanneroo WA 6065
Tel. 09 4055100, Fax 09 3061641*

General Action Guide - Getting Started

Action for Forests Conservation

Information about forest conservation is located in Forests information.

To Chuditch Information

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Would you like to make contributions or comments about this program?

Australian Threatened Species Program home page