



Department of  
Environment and Conservation

*Our environment, our future*



**ANNUAL REPORT  
THREATENED SPECIES OR COMMUNITY RECOVERY TEAM**

**PROGRAM INFORMATION**

<b>Recovery Team name</b>	Numbat Recovery Team	
<b>Reporting Period (Financial/Calendar Year)</b>	Calendar year 2009	
<b>Current membership</b>		
	<b>Member</b>	<b>Representing</b>
1. Chair	<b>Dr Tony Friend</b>	DEC Science Division
2.	<b>Brett Beecham</b>	DEC Wheatbelt Region
3.	<b>Rob Brazell</b>	DEC Wellington District (South West Region)
4.	<b>Peter Collins</b>	DEC Albany District
5.	<b>Peter Copley</b>	Department of Environment and Heritage (South Australia)
6.	<b>Helen Crisp</b>	Arid Recovery (South Australia)
7.	<b>Peter Orell</b>	DEC Species and Communities Branch
8.	<b>Dr Manda Page</b>	Australian Wildlife Conservancy (AWC)
9.	<b>Vicki Power</b>	Project Numbat
10.	<b>Dr Helen Robertson</b>	Perth Zoo
11.	<b>Paul Tholen</b>	DEC Perth Hills District (Swan Region)
12.	<b>Neil Thomas</b>	DEC Science Division
13.	<b>Ian Wilson</b>	DEC Donnelly District (Warren Region)
<b>Changes to Recovery Team</b>	Helen Crisp of the Arid Recovery Project at Roxby Downs, South	

	Australia, was invited to join the Numbat Recovery Team due to the interest in reintroducing the numbat to the Arid Recovery area.
<b>Dates meetings were held</b>	5 March 2009 and 3 September 2009
<b>One to two paragraph summary of achievements suitable for WATSNU</b>	<p>In September 2009 the Numbat Recovery Team approved a fourth release of numbats at Cocanarup Timber Reserve, near Ravensthorpe. On 6 Dec 2009, 13 numbats bred at Perth Zoo were released to supplement the three previous releases. Eight numbats from previous releases were still alive and transmitting in the area as well as one young born and radio-collared at Cocanarup in 2009.</p> <p>Monitoring of the numbat population at Dryandra in 2009 produced disturbing results, with the lowest sighting rate since the early 1980s and mounting evidence that predation by cats is increasing and having a significant effect on this important numbat population. Dryandra has the most genetically diverse numbat population and for this reason has been used as the original source of stock for all translocations and captive breeding so far. It is critical that cat control is implemented at Dryandra very soon or this population is likely to become extinct in the next two years.</p>
<b>List of actions undertaken by Recovery Team (from actions in Recovery Plan)</b>	
<b>Action 1 Management of existing populations and habitat.</b>	<p>Fox control, fire management and visitor management, where appropriate, were carried out at all eight DEC-managed sites that support numbat populations. AWC manages two fenced wildlife sanctuaries (Yookamurra in South Australia and Scotia in NSW) that are free of foxes and feral cats and support reintroduced numbat populations.</p> <p>Fox control is carried out monthly at Dryandra Woodland, Boyagin and Tutanning Nature Reserves and within Cocanarup Timber Reserve and adjacent Unallocated Crown Land and quarterly at Dragon Rocks Nature Reserve, Stirling Range National Park, Perup Nature Reserve, Kingston State Forest and surrounding areas and in State Forest in the Batalling area. All of these sites support numbat populations.</p> <p>Monitoring of existing populations is an integral part of their management and driven surveys were carried out in Dryandra in April and November 2009, while a number of radio-collared numbats were monitored through the year. Driven surveys were also carried out at Yookamurra and Scotia sanctuaries, as well as a diggings survey in the Perth Hills area. Track counts are also carried out at Scotia, where the substrate is very suitable for this activity.</p> <p><i>The results of the 2009 Dryandra driven surveys are particularly worrying as they indicate a rapid decline of the Dryandra population. <b>Cat predation</b> has emerged as a major cause of mortality in the last two years and it is likely that successful fox control in Dryandra has made conditions more suitable for cats.</i></p> <p><i>Cat control has not been attempted in Dryandra. Mounting evidence of the effect of cats on woylies and numbats in Dryandra militates for the early deployment of cat control methods in Dryandra on an experimental basis or on an operational basis with monitoring.</i></p> <p><b>Inaction regarding cats at Dryandra could result in the extinction of this vitally important population within two years.</b></p>
<b>Action 2 Genetic survey of existing populations.</b>	Ear tissue for DNA analysis is collected routinely from all numbats handled in DEC-managed populations. A genetic survey of Dryandra,

	<p>Perup and Boyagin was carried out in 1995 and the results published. Another survey is proposed in the near future.</p>
<p><b>Action 3 Translocations to establish at least six further self-sustaining populations.</b></p>	<p>In accord with the decision of the Recovery Team, 13 captive-bred numbats from Perth Zoo were released on December 2009 at Cocanarup Timber Reserve, near Ravensthorpe, in the fourth annual (December) release at that site. All numbats were radio-collared before release and monitoring of radio-collared animals was carried out at least monthly during 2009.</p> <p>High mortality, mainly due to raptor predation, was noted following the 2006 release, which occurred three weeks after a large wildfire in part of the Timber Reserve. Only one numbat was known to survive the year until the next release and although one female produced young, she died before the young were weaned. In 2008, the results of monitoring the 2007 release were more positive, with at least four animals known to survive to the next release. Two of these were females that had produced young during 2008, although the young were not captured. Several sightings of an uncollared animal were reported by members of the public, however.</p> <p>In 2009, six numbats from previous releases were still alive in early December, comprising five females and one male.</p> <p>The Cocanarup translocation was partly funded by the Natural Heritage Trust through South Coast NRM (salary) until September 2009 when that funding ceased. Operational costs were provided by DEC's Western Shield Translocation Program from 2006 to 2008 but not in 2009. To meet the funding shortfall in 2009, funds for radio-collars and for carrying out radio-tracking flights were provided through donations secured and initiated by Project Numbat. This help is greatly appreciated.</p> <p>A numbat translocation of was carried out at Scotia Sanctuary by AWC in November/December 2009 when seven male numbats were moved from Stage 1 to the adjacent Stage 2. Due to low numbers at Yookamurra, no animals were moved from there to Scotia as originally mooted.</p>
<p><b>Action 4 Disease survey and health monitoring of all populations.</b></p>	<p>A comprehensive disease survey on numbat populations was carried out during the 1990s. Health monitoring is continuing, both on the captive population and through regular monitoring of the current translocation. No disease issues have emerged recently.</p>
<p><b>Action 5 Captive breeding to provide animals for display and to supplement the translocation program if necessary.</b></p>	<p>The collaborative captive breeding program at Perth Zoo continued in 2009, providing 13 numbats for release at Cocanarup Timber Reserve in December. Two males and two females from the wild were requested by the captive colony managers for the January 2010 breeding season, in order to achieve the aim of providing up to 20 numbat progeny for release to the wild each year. Due to the decline in numbers at Dryandra, only one adult male and one subadult female from the wild population were provided by DEC in November 2009 for the captive breeding program at Perth Zoo.</p> <p>Numbats remain a popular exhibit at Perth Zoo and a focus for public education.</p>
<p><b>Action 6 Establishment and support of public awareness and sponsorship programs.</b></p>	<p>The involvement in the activities of the recovery team of the new community action group, Project Numbat (PN), has provided greater public awareness, extra funding through fund-raising and sponsorships, and a new source of volunteers. DEC, AWC, the Malleefowl Preservation Group and Perth Zoo gave whole-hearted</p>

	<p>support for PN's initiatives, including the production of its second newsletter. During 2009, PN provided \$3000 for radio-tracking flights for the numbat recovery program.</p> <p>During the year, 27 volunteers provided assistance in field activities as part of DEC's numbat recovery activities.</p>
<b>High Priority Actions Requiring Funding</b>	
<b>Task</b>	<b>Amount needed and what for</b>
<b>Cat control program at Dryandra</b>	\$240,000 for personnel (2 staff) and operational funds (vehicle use, travel, accommodation and food, baiting costs, remote camera equipment and office support), to carry out an integrated predator management program at Dryandra focussed on the reduction of cat predation on numbats without negative effects on other threatened species.
<b>Numbat translocation and monitoring program</b>	\$120,000 to provide one person and operational funds to carry out and monitor a translocation of numbats using captive-bred and wild-caught numbats; and also to survey other known numbat areas in order to assess numbers at each WA site (Dryandra, Boyagin, Tutanning, Batalling, Dragon Rocks, Stirling Range NP and Cocanarup TR).