

10 October 1987

Letter

to: Barry Wilson

From: M. Serena and T. Soderquist

Regarding: Captive Breeding of Dasyurus geoffroii

Captive D. geoffroii have been maintained at Dwellingup since April, 1986. The colony was originally established for research purposes, and has been invaluable in providing data on juvenile growth, palatability and consumption of baits used to poison canids and pigs, pouch changes associated with different parts of the reproductive cycle, etc. A further major goal in 1987 was to provide a set of juveniles for a monitored experimental release in vacant jarrah forest habitat.

Four litters (12 females, 6 males) were born in captivity in 1987. Three mothers, trapped as adults in the wild, will be released after their young are weaned. Present plans call for releasing 8-9 juvenile females and all juvenile males in the experimental transplant. This will leave a pool of 6-7 cage-reared females (3-4 juveniles, 1 parous one-year old, 2 non-parous one-year olds). We have facilities for and plan to maintain 5-6 females as breeding stock for 1988. Thus, up to 2 females are available for transfer to zoos this year (and can, up to the end of this year, be matched with unrelated juvenile males).

It is anticipated that the 1988 breeding programme will (as in 1987) utilize males brought in temporarily from the wild, to provide a diversity of genotypes among litters. Surplus juveniles from the 1988 litters (i.e. those not required by zoos) will be released into areas of appropriate habitat at the normal time of dispersal.

cc: A. A. Burbidge