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MORE CHUDITCH FACTS...

Threats: Clearing of habitat has led to decline of Chuditch. Fox predation is the major current threat, as well as road traffic and illegal poisoning and trapping.

Size: An average adult male weighs about 1.3 kg - about half the size of a house cat - while an average female is smaller, weighing about 0.9 kg.

Diet: Chuditch eat mostly termites, beetles, centipedes, cockroaches and grasshoppers. They will also eat small lizards, birds and mammals.

Behaviour: At night Chuditch search for food, mostly on the ground. They spend the day sleeping in a hollow log or burrow. An adult female will search for food over an area of 3-4 km², a male's foraging area may be as big as 15 km². Each animal may use many den sites within its home range.

Breeding: Two to six young are born in early winter, 17 to 18 days after mating. Newborn Chuditch are about the size of a grain of rice. The young stay in the pouch for nine weeks then are left in a den while their mother forages. By six months of age, the young are weaned and leave their mother's home range.

The average Chuditch life span in the wild is three to four years.

HOW YOU CAN HELP THE CHUDITCH

- **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.
- **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.
- **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.
- **Get involved** and help to raise awareness of the Chuditch in your local community. You can participate in Chuditch surveys and monitoring. Contact the World Wide Fund for Nature at GPO Box U1946 Perth 6845.
- **Help Perth Zoo maintain its Chuditch colony** by donating to the 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

Telephone 09 4055100 Facsimile 09 3061641

Chuditch on cover drawn by Trish Fleming.

Chuditch

An Australian Endangered Species



The Chuditch, *Dasyurus geoffroii*, is the largest carnivorous marsupial in Western Australia.

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



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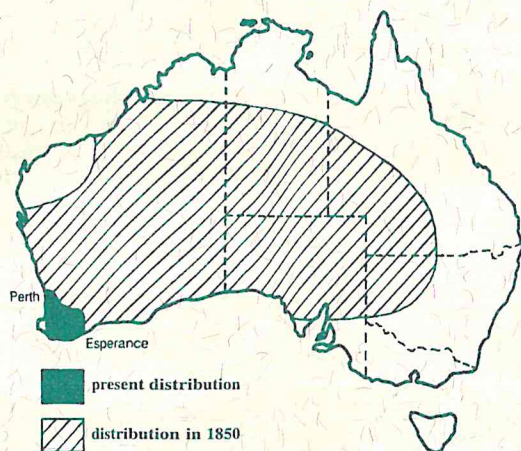


CHUDITCH FACTS...

- Status:** Endangered - likely to become extinct if threats to its survival continue.
- Past Distribution:** Forest, woodland and desert habitats across more than 70% of mainland Australia.
- Decline:** 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.

Current Distribution: South-west Western Australia. They are seen regularly only in the Jarrah forest, but are occasionally sighted in the Wheatbelt and South Coast areas.

Current Population: Fewer than 6000 Chuditch remain in the wild, mostly in the Jarrah forest.



CHUDITCH RECOVERY - A TEAM EFFORT

The Chuditch Recovery Plan is in operation from 1992 to 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 more than 60 Chuditch at Julimar Conservation Park in the northern Jarrah forest. Chuditch had not been recorded at Julimar since 1973.

Chuditch numbers have stabilised in the release area 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.