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# WESTERN QUOLL

**SCIENTIFIC NAME:** *Dasyurus geoffroii*

**IDENTIFICATION:** Largest carnivorous marsupial in Western Australia. The Chuditch has a soft, white spotted, brown fur, large rounded ears, pointed muzzle, large dark eyes and a non-hopping gait. The tail is about  $\frac{3}{4}$  the length of the head and body with a black brush at the end. It is usually active from dusk to dawn. Head and body length 310–400 mm (males) 260–360 mm (females)  
Tail length 250–350 mm (males) 210–310 mm (females)  
Weight 0.70–2.00 kg (males) 0.60–1.12 kg (females)

**HABITAT:** Chuditch are known to have occupied a wide range of habitats from woodlands, dry sclerophyll (leafy) forests, riparian vegetation, beaches and deserts.

**DIET:** Chuditch are opportunistic feeders, and forage primarily on the ground at night. Their diet can include mammals (including southern brown bandicoots, numbats, woylies, brush-tail possums, and rodents), birds, small lizards, bird and reptile eggs, but the majority comprises a range of large invertebrates including crickets, scorpions and spiders. The red pulp surrounding *Zamia* seeds is sometimes consumed, as well as small fruits and parts of flowers. Food is scarcest during the colder months from June to August.

**STATUS:** Vulnerable. Formerly occurred over nearly 70 per cent of the Australian continent from Western Australia across to Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria. The chuditch now has a patchy distribution throughout the Jarrah forest and mixed Karri/Marri/Jarrah forest of southwest Western Australia. Also occurs in very low numbers in the Midwest, Wheatbelt and South Coast Regions with records from Moora to the north, Yellowdine to the east and south to Hopetoun. Chuditch have been translocated to Julimar State Forest east of Bindoon (1992), Lake Magenta Nature Reserve (1996), Cape Arid National Park (1997), Mt Lindsay National Park (1999), and Kalbarri National Park (2000).

**INTERESTING FACTS:**

- Occasionally Chuditch will climb trees to catch prey or to escape from predators.
- Average lifespan in the wild is only two years, though five years have been recorded.

