

Woylies at 'Wildwater'

IN Western Wildlife 5/1 we reported that, in Dec 2000, woylies were released onto two properties in Harvey. This was the first time they had been put back onto private property that didn't have a fox-proof fence - but, of course, both have strict fox-baiting regimes.

Well, in October, Don Watts did some monitoring on 'Wildwater'. He reports that, of the 19 woylies released, he has retrapped 15 and many of the females have pouch young! In addition, he trapped 3



untagged females, the offspring of the original woylies. Don said: 'I was excited to find that one of the untagged females had a joey in the pouch, indicating that the woylies are settling in and breeding'. The woylies have spread up to 3 km from the release point and their diggings were found near the Harvey River in summer 2000 and on the higher ground last October. Don will continue his monitoring programme with spotlighting this summer and trapping in autumn 2002.

Peter Orell, the Western Shield Zoologist responsible for the translocation programme, was delighted with these results. 'This is a very high retention rate' he says. 'It shows that this is excellent habitat for woylies and that it is possible to reintroduce them into the wild without exclusion fencing, providing that the fox control is adequate'.

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