



THREATENED SPECIES AND COMMUNITIES OF THE ACT

Spotted-tailed Quoll (*Dasyurus maculatus*)

A vulnerable species

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The Spotted-tailed Quoll is the largest of the six living quoll species (including subspecies) and the largest marsupial carnivore on mainland Australia. Males of this species have a head and body length of 380–760 mm, a tail length of 370–550 mm and weigh up to 7 kg (average 3 kg). Females have a head and body length of 340–420 mm and weigh up to 4 kg (average 2 kg). The fur ranges from rich rufous brown to dark on top, pale below, with conspicuous white spots of varying size over the body and tail.



The species is primarily a carnivore that preys on medium-sized mammals including possums, gliders and rabbits. Other prey includes small mammals, birds, reptiles and invertebrates and is also known to prey on domestic poultry and to scavenge on carrion.

The species is generally solitary and occupies home ranges in the order of many hundreds to a few thousand hectares.

Mating takes place in April to July. The average litter size is five, and the young remain in the pouch for about seven weeks, becoming fully independent at around 18 weeks.

The species occurs in a wide range of forested habitats throughout its range. It appears to favour areas with a relatively complex understorey, often in association with complex rock formations, hollow-bearing trees, rocky escarpments and/or fallen logs.

It has been recoded in south-eastern Queensland, eastern NSW (including the ACT), Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania (although this population is likely to be reclassified as a separate sub-species).

There have been ten specimen backed records of the species in the ACT since the 1950s, the most recent in 2004 from Namadgi National Park. Occasional sightings continue to occur across the ACT and surrounding region.

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CONSERVATION THREATS ACROSS THE SPECIES DISTRIBUTION

- Habitat loss, fragmentation and degradation through clearing of native vegetation, timber harvesting and other forest management practices including fire.
- Competition and predation involving foxes, feral cats and wild dogs.
- Poisoning as a result of feral animal control programs through primary and secondary poisoning.
- Direct killing by humans.

CONSERVATION ACTION

The following conservation actions will be given priority attention:

- Maintaining links with national and regional networks to ensure coordination of research, survey and monitoring programs.
- Supporting and contributing to national and regional recovery efforts.
- Undertaking surveys in the ACT to identify suitable quoll habitat and establishing the species presence in those habitats, thereby gaining an understanding of the species distribution.

- Ensuring that all pest animal control activities in areas of known or potential Quoll populations comply with current best practice prescriptions to minimise the risks of baiting programs on Quolls.
- Where appropriate, implementing any other identified management actions or methods required to protect the species and its habitat.

FURTHER INFORMATION

The primary source of information for this information sheet is the ACT Action Plan for the Spotted-tailed Quoll (*Dasyurus maculatus*)—Action Plan No. 30, where a full bibliography is available.

Action plans are available online at www.environment.act.gov.au or by calling Canberra Connect on 13 22 81.

Acknowledgement

The illustration of the species was prepared for Environment ACT by Lesley Wallington.