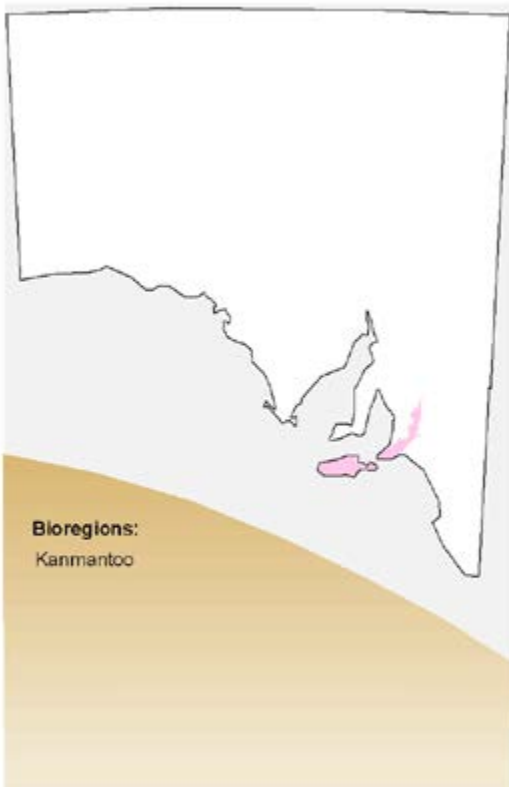


Kangaroo Island Dunnart

Sminthopsis aitkeni



Map courtesy of Mapping Unit, Customer and Commercial Services.

Map is not intended to indicate spatial distribution of the species, only the bioregions in which the species is found.

The Kangaroo Island (KI) Dunnart is a nationally endangered marsupial found only on Kangaroo Island. It is the only mammal endemic to Kangaroo Island and belongs to the Dasyurid family. KI Dunnarts can be distinguished from other species by the dark sooty coloured fur on their backs, their light grey bellies and slender pointed muzzles. They are small marsupials with an adult body length between 80-90 mm. Their tails are longer than their bodies, they weigh 20–25 grams and have rows of sharp pointed teeth.

The KI Dunnart was only identified as a different species from the Common Dunnart in the early 1980s. It is unknown how many of them exist today, but there are thought to be less than 500.

Diet

KI Dunnarts eat mainly invertebrates such as spiders, ants, beetles, scorpions, grasshoppers and centipedes.

Breeding

Females have an incomplete pouch that can hold more than one baby, and studies indicate that they can give birth more than once in a year.

Habitat

There are records of sightings from all over KI, however they have only been found on the western end of the island in recent times. KI Dunnarts have been recorded in different habitat types suggesting they are habitat generalists. They have shown a preference for sheltering in Yakka plants (*Xanthorrhoea spp.*) either under their fronds or inside their trunks when they are burnt out. They usually rest during the day in nests or sheltered places, and have been found in sheds and even in a cupboard!

Threats

KI Dunnarts are vulnerable to predation by feral cats. Excessive incidences of major bushfires threaten their immediate survival and their habitat and food supplies. The historical clearance of habitat areas for agriculture and their small population size are other problems they have to deal with.



Natural Resources
Adelaide & Mt Lofty Ranges



Government of
South Australia

Mysterious marsupial! Despite thousands of traps being laid to capture KI Dunnarts only 32 have been successful to-date. Are they very rare or well adapted at evading capture or both?

Conservation

Programs of capturing, tracking and monitoring the KI Dunnart have been active since the early 1980s, to try and find out more about these rare and elusive animals.

You can help the KI Dunnart by:

- being a responsible pet owner – desex your cats and dogs, keep them inside at night and don't take them into national parks
- learning more and spreading the word about the secretive KI Dunnart
- joining a local conservation group to help native species like the KI Dunnart to survive.

For further information

Public enquiries

For more local information on any of the species in this resource please contact your nearest Natural Resource Centre office on:

Eastwood: (08) 8273 9100

Gawler: (08) 8523 7700

Lobethal: (08) 8389 5900

Willunga: (08) 8550 3400

Education enquiries

For teachers wanting more information about environmental education resources and opportunities please contact the relevant NRM Education sub regional team on:

Northern Adelaide: (08) 8406 8289

Barossa: (08) 8563 8436

Central Adelaide: (08) 8234 7255

Southern Adelaide: (08) 8384 0176

Southern Fleurieu: (08) 8551 0524

