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One of the seven orphaned Idnya

Baby Idnya born in the Flinders Ranges

For the first time in about 150 years the Flinders Ranges is home to baby Idnya (Western Quolls).

The news of up to 60 juvenile Idnya is a terrific milestone in this ambitious trial reintroduction – a partnership between the Foundation for Australia's Most Endangered species (FAME) and the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources – which saw 41 Idnya released in their former homeland in April-May.

It is also a significant achievement for DEWNR's 22-year *Bounceback* conservation program.

The new arrivals were first discovered in June and July when the reintroduction team found that 12 females had an average of six pouch young each.

Since then the team has been tracking the female Idnya which have now deposited their pouch young in dens, where they will be weaned at between five and six months.

The reintroduction team hope that the population will grow faster than the number which are lost through predation and accidents.

Feral cats have been the main cause of mortalities to date with intensive monitoring throughout the trial showing that one quarter of the Idnya has been taken by cats since their release in April.

Indeed, seven juvenile Idnya were rescued from their nest hollow in September after their mother was killed by a feral cat.

They are being hand-reared with the help of the Adelaide Zoo and will be released back into the wild before Christmas.

While the death of the Idnya is disappointing, some deaths were expected as the animals adapt to their new habitat and predation is a natural and necessary process in sustainable natural populations.

The team is also collecting useful knowledge about the interaction between quolls and feral cats, breeding habits, food and habitat preferences, critical information for conserving this species in our state.

Thanks to the many volunteers, contractors, donors, land managers and partners of *Bounceback* and FAME for their support for this project.



FAME is leading the drive to raise approximately \$1.7 million over a five year period to support the recovery of the Idnya. They need your help to continue this vitally important project and make it the success it deserves to be. Donations to the Western Quoll project can be made by visiting fame.org.au/projects/western-quoll or contact fame@fame.org.au for more information.