

IDNYA e-NEWS

Welcome to the sixth edition of “Idnya e-News”, a regular update on the trial reintroduction of the western quoll to the Flinders Ranges National Park. Idnya is the Adnyamathanha name for the western quoll.



BACKGROUND

During April 2015, 37 idnya (20 females and 17 males) were released into the Flinders Ranges National Park following on from the successful release of 41 idnya in 2014. The release is a partnership between the Foundation for Australia’s Most Endangered species (FAME), the South Australian Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources (DEWNR) and the Western Australian Department of Parks and Wildlife (DPaW).

UPDATE

Idnya were released into the Flinders Ranges National Park on the 6th of May 2015. They arrived from Perth at 5.30 pm and after a quick visual check were released at four release sites. Idnya were released at sites around the edge of the current known population, along northern Wilcolo, at the base of the Heysen Range, in Edeowie Gorge and along the Jones Camp Spring track.

Most female idnya have stayed close to their release sites but males are moving around, some up to 8km. One male “Burke” travelled off the park to Edeowie Station but returned a week later. Breeding season has already started, female pouches are developing and males are starting to be seen out during the day. This risky behaviour leaves them vulnerable to predators but it seems the lure of a female idnya during the breeding season turns a nocturnal quoll into a risky daydreamer.



Male idnya Phillip, exhibiting some risky behaviour during the breeding season.

The new idnya arrivals have settled in well and are using a range of shelter sites including rabbit warrens and fallen logs. We are tracking them from the air every few days to check their positions and then walking in on them on the ground.



Log used by female idnya "Zedora" as a shelter site



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Cats continue to pose a risk to Idnya with three newly released idnya being killed by cats in the first month after release. One of these cats was captured near two of the kill sites and was a large male cat over 4kg. We continue to trap and shoot cats in the release area with 13 cats removed just in the last month. Cat numbers appear to be on the increase with numerous sightings around the resort and campground.



Photo: Melissa Jensen

Male feral cat captured along the Jones Camp Spring track in the park

We are lucky enough to have volunteer Cassandra Holt with us at the moment assisting us for two months with the idnya release. Cassandra has just finished her honours at Deakin University and has been enjoying learning some new skills such as radiotracking and quoll trapping. Thanks Cassandra for all your hard work so far.



Volunteer Cassandra Holt brushing up on some radiotracking skills



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Report by Katherine Moseby (Ecological Horizons Pty. Ltd.)

THE IDNYA TEAM

Idnya Reintroduction Team- **FAME** Peter Kay (Chair, Executive Taskforce), Cheryl Hill, Elizabeth Davis, David Peacock; **DEWNR** Anthony Freebairn, Rob Brandle, Trish Mooney, Greg Patrick, Peter Copley, Jenny Barker; **Ecological Horizons** Katherine Moseby (Project Coordinator); **WA Department of Parks and Wildlife** Keith Morris.

Idnya contractors- Pat Hodgins

Idnya volunteers-Cassandra Holt, Brendon Bevan, Cathy Peacock.

Idnya Pilot- Matt Graham

Idnya research student- Mel Jensen, The University of Adelaide

Donate now!

FAME is leading the drive to raise approximately \$1.7 million over a five-year period to fund the recovery of the Western Quoll (Idnya).

They greatly 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 contacting fame@fame.org.au for more information.

Contact Mary Rayner (Director of Business) on 0414 634 094.



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ABOUT THE PROJECT

Last seen in the Flinders Ranges during the 1880s, the Western Quoll is a small Australian native carnivorous marsupial which once thrived across 80% of the Australian continent. Until the start of the trial re-introduction project, the nation's western quoll population could only be found in the south-west of Western Australia.

Expected to bring ecological and tourism benefits to the Flinders Ranges, the western quoll also has great cultural significance for the Adnyamathanha people, for whom the quoll (Idnya) is a totem and an integral part of their Dreaming.

Since their release the quolls' survival rates and well-being have been actively monitored by radio tracking individuals and, once the re-introduced quolls have established themselves in their new habitat, trapping will be undertaken to assess their condition and breeding status.

PROJECT PARTNERS

Through its Bounceback program, the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources has been controlling predators such as foxes and cats, and herbivores such as goats to protect the habitat in the Flinders Ranges needed for the quoll's long term survival.

FAME is leading the drive to raise approximately \$1.7 million over a five year period that will support the recovery of the species in one of its former territories.

Western Australia's Department of Parks and Wildlife has donated the Western Quolls from their conservation parks.

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

KEEP INFORMED!

To receive these regular e-updates please email SAAridlands@sa.gov.au with the subject 'Quoll update' and you will be added to or contact the Natural Resources Centre in Port Augusta 8648 5300.



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