



CENTRE FOR  
INVASIVE SPECIES SOLUTIONS

# IMPACT REPORT 2023-24

# WELCOME

Use your cursor to navigate through our report. Click the 'welcome' on any page to return to this page. Use the arrows to go forwards or backwards through the report. Use the side tabs and the index tabs on this page to navigate directly to a section or page.



*The Centre for Invasive Species Solutions acknowledges the continuing connection of this land's Traditional Custodians to culture, country and community and pays respect to Elders past and present.*

*Once abundant within its range, the critically endangered Orange-bellied parrot now has fewer than 50 individuals left in the wild. One of only two migratory parrot species globally, it faces threats from habitat loss, weeds, predation by foxes and cats, and competition for nesting sites from starlings.*

The Centre for Invasive Species Solutions gratefully acknowledges the financial and in-kind contributions made by its members and associate members.

We are a not-for-profit, member-based organisation formed to address the impact of invasive plants and animals across Australia.

The Centre is governed and managed by Invasive Animals Ltd with an independent skills-based Board of Directors. Bruce Christie is the Chair of the Board and Andreas Glanznig is the Centre's Chief Executive Officer.

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# 1.1 MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

The threat of invasive species entering new or different parts of Australia, and the impact of the ones already here, continue to increase.



In recent days, we've seen a report on the nation's lack of preparedness and response capabilities for the COVID-19 pandemic and future human pandemics.

For those of us who have worked in biosecurity for many years, we've seen this cycle over and over again. Insufficient, poorly directed or timed investment into biosecurity and a failure to collaborate effectively leads to poor preparedness, prevention, response and management of pests and diseases that have the potential to decimate our economy, environment and our communities, regardless of whether that is in humans, animals, plants, or invasive species.

Back in 2005, when the Invasive Animals CRC came into existence, it was recognised that there was a need for a national approach to invasive species research, development and engagement (RD&E).

Since then, the company has changed from a CRC, into Invasive Animals Limited/Centre for Invasive Species Solutions (IAL/CISS) – a not-for-profit (NFP) institution – and more recently, as the result of changing membership needs, we have been successfully transitioning into a company that will continue our core work promoting and managing strategic RD&E but also expand our scope and strategic direction to further support the national approach to invasive species.

As part of these changes, we are driving a:

**'Profit for purpose' ethos** This will allow the company to continue to move towards a funding base that is wider than at present, with more funds than we have now or have had in the past.

We cannot rely on any one source of funding. We are an NFP but that doesn't mean we can't make money and invest it in any of the areas we work in.

**Broader ecosystem focus** This requires the Centre to balance the focus on pest and weeds at a landscape scale across agriculture, environment and social amenity outcomes.

**Deeper environmental biosecurity emphasis** A stronger focus on biosecurity threats and how these pressures impact both threatened species and the environment.

As part of our drive to emphasise our interest and credentials in environmental biosecurity we have recently made four submissions to the Department of Climate Change Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) and the Nature Repair Committee on the importance of invasive species and how we can be of assistance in developing and undertaking work needed for the Nature Repair Market.

**Wider service base** This includes invasive species management and control.

Our overall objective is to secure the Centre as a permanent, national and collaborative institution that enables and drives a more coordinated and efficient approach to invasive species management across Australia's national biosecurity system.

We now cover vertebrate pests, weeds and environmental invertebrates and diseases, and we are seeking revenue from

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government and non-government sources including corporate, commercial and private businesses and companies and deductible gift receipts through our Public Fund.

In my Chair’s message last year, I proposed that we can evolve into Environment Biosecurity Australia with responsibility for driving efforts to build a national environmental biosecurity system on par with those in place for agricultural biosecurity. This would help mature Australia’s biosecurity system.

In addition to the changes being implemented as part of the Centre’s transition program, there are also some Board and senior management changes afoot.

As you know, Andreas Glanznig is retiring after 17 years with the business, 14 of which as either CEO of the CRC or the Centre. His leadership enabled the initial Invasive Animals CRC to be first extended for five years and then transitioned into the Centre in 2017. In that time, I have seen his dedication, enthusiasm and strategic thinking guide and shape IAL/CISS as well as assist with nationally coordinated invasive species RD&E. Thanks for all your efforts over the years, Andreas.

We are also losing Jan Ferguson OAM from the Board. Jan has been a Director for the past six years but – in keeping with the IAL Constitution – must now retire. In this time, she has provided governance leadership in many key areas including strategic planning and oversight of the Centre’s RD&E activities, and establishment of our tax-deductible Invasive Species Trust. On a personal level, she has provided me with sage advice and been a rock of support for me as the Chair.

Arabella Douglas also resigned from the Board in July 2024. Even though her time on the Board was short, her drive has helped us shape our strategic direction.

Thank you to the Centre’s staff for your commitment and dedication and the Board for sharing your knowledge and skills, your open and respectful approach to debates and your camaraderie.

Finally, welcome to Shauna Chadlowe: our new CEO. With her background in law, entrepreneurship, networking, philanthropy, revenue generation and environmental conservancy, she is ideally placed to help the company grow. I am very much looking forward to working with Shauna, the Board, our staff, Members, Associate Members and Partners to take us to the next level of service.

Shauna starts on 2 December 2024.

**Bruce Christie**, Chair

*The Centre is at the forefront of technology harnessing drones, machine learning and AI to deliver solutions for invasive species at landscape scale.*



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# 1.2 MEMBERS

## Members



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## Associate Members



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# 1.3 CEO'S SNAPSHOT

This year's Impact Report puts a spotlight on both our achievements and our staged transition towards greater operational diversification. Key milestones included the launch of PAPPutty™ toxic paste, the WeedScan app as well as hosting the successful 19th Australasian Vertebrate Pest Conference (AVPC ) and co-hosting the 3rd Australian Biosecurity Symposium (ABS).

This year has also seen the formal completion and evaluation of all Portfolio No. 1 RD&E projects, with results and outputs published on a refreshed research hub on the Centre's website. The estimated current benefit of \$435.5m underscores the value of a nationally collaborative RD&E approach building on the respective strengths of the States, Commonwealth, CSIRO, partner universities and SMEs.

Working with our members, we are continuing our transition from a strategic RD&E portfolio model to a more focussed RD&E model that will be driven through 14 selected core national RD&E priority areas. These areas reflect strong drivers for cross-jurisdictional coordination and collaboration.

This has coincided with the release of Australia's Rabbit Biocontrol Pipeline Strategy, which aims to continue this cost-effective national R&D pipeline—in place since 2012—together with the implementation of the initial stages of the National Weed Biocontrol Pipeline Strategy. These knowledge and innovation pipelines are a cornerstone of the Centre's collaborative RD&E approach developing solutions to hugely costly pest and weed problems.

This Impact Report provides a snapshot of projects in train as well as new best practice management summaries, particularly for improved feral deer management.

The Centre's nationally coordinated community engagement approach has consolidated this year: through the efforts of our National Coordinators working in the wild dog, feral cat and fox space, and improvements made to our national digital monitoring and management platforms. Meanwhile, improvements to the Weeds Australia platform and its role in national weed initiative public consultations has led to a major increase in use. This approach will be further strengthened with the addition of a National Rabbit Management Coordinator in late 2024.

Our efforts to diversify our revenue base is crystallising around a new Centre business unit: LandSmart Services. The initial offering in vertebrate pest research and management has seen demand for feral pig management projects from both government and corporate clients. Over the next year, we anticipate this will expand to include weed surveillance.



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### Research



26

Projects



27

Collaborating organisations

### Engagement



Best practice platforms

weedsAUSTRALIA

pestSMART

216,000

active users

286,000

active users

### Development

weedSCAN  
PAPPutty™

2

Product launches



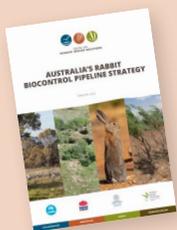
38

Centre publications



11

Research publications



Australia's Rabbit Biocontrol Pipeline Strategy

2

R&D strategies



National Weed Biocontrol Pipeline Strategy



Community monitoring and management platforms

weedSCAN

feralSCAN

19,441

app downloads#

22,000

more users\*

\* Downloads (Apple and Android).

\* Increase in total registered and private users from FY23 to FY24.



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National Coordinators

The Centre's tax-deductible Trust also continued to promote the value of investing in both building research capability as well as new technology solutions to pressing pest and weed challenges. These included striving to attract additional investment in our genetic biocontrol pipeline, as well as improvements to our new WeedScan app.

Finally, as I retire in December 2024, I would like to sincerely thank and commend all the researchers, coordinators, policy experts, businesses, practitioners and investors I have had the privilege of working with over the past 17 years. Their leadership, nous, tenacity, generosity and collegiate nature, displayed in spades through both the Invasive Animals CRC and Centre, has created an impressive national legacy.

Collectively, we have delivered a mountain of knowledge and innovation to strengthen our national biosecurity system and invasive species management in fields including genetic and digital surveillance, humane toxins, classical biocontrol, genetic biocontrol, national coordination and community engagement. The scope of technology pipelines and products progressed and integrated into improved management strategies has confirmed my staunch support for strategic RD&E approaches able to generate the critical mass needed to deliver solutions at a national scale.

This national agenda has been facilitated by our outstanding team at the Centre. I would especially like to acknowledge the leadership and drive of Bruce Christie and his fellow Directors in ably leading and governing the Centre, supported by the efforts of the Centre team, especially Lucie Hassall, General Manager and Dr Tony Buckmaster, Principal RD&E Manager. Together, we have continued the drive to produce solutions that protect our agriculture, environment and way of life from the impact of invasive species.

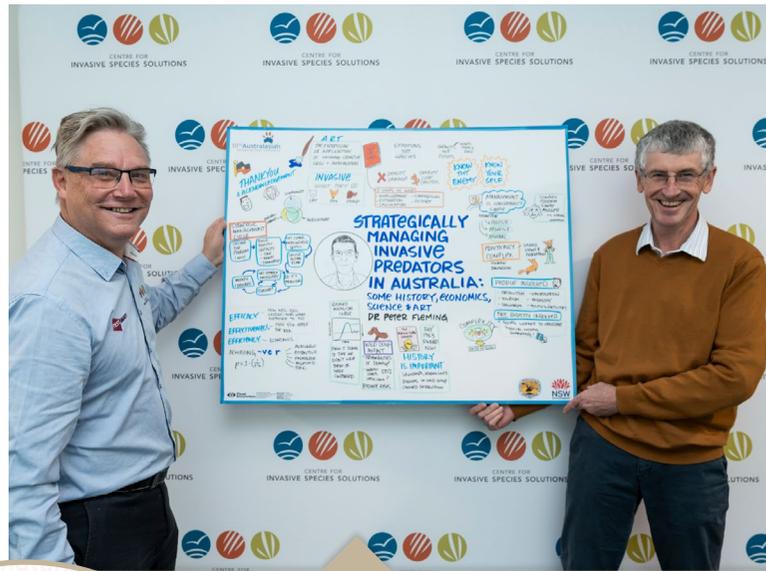
Andreas Glanznig, CEO

# Thought leadership in action

## 19th Australasian Vertebrate Pest Conference (AVPC)

Click through for more event images, program details, proceedings and videos.

Assoc Prof Katherine Moseby, a distinguished Conservation Biologist from the University of New South Wales, one of the AVPC keynote speakers.



Andreas Glanznig, CEO with the Centre for Invasive Species Solutions with Dr Peter Fleming of NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (NSW DPIRD).



Alex Nankivell, CEO of Nature Foundation, one of the AVPC keynote speakers.



Keynote speaker, James Templeton of the Conservation Ecology Centre and host Pip Courtney, host of ABC's Landline, capture a selfie with the audience.

The event's cartoonist expertly captured the essence and details of each session during the conference.



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Dr Lana Harriott from Biosecurity Queensland presents her insights on red-eared slider turtle surveillance.



Peter West presents on the FeralScan app.



Delegates engaged with topics and speakers.



The Hon Tara Moriarty MLC, NSW Minister for Agriculture, opened the conference alongside Scott Charlton, Dr Bertie Hennecke, Bruce Christie, and Andreas Glanznig.

Natalie Grassi from Murdoch University was awarded the Best Student Presentation trophy by Mal Leeson of NSW DPIRD. Her research highlights the impact of feral cats on native species in the Fitz-Stirling landscape.



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### 3rd Australian Biosecurity Symposium (ABS)



As a Costanaut from 2030, ABC TV host Costa Georgiadis energised the crowd, emphasising the need for Australia to double down on innovation to ensure the nation's biosecurity system is fit for purpose into the future.



Host organisation CEOs wrapped up the event by highlighting the momentum to transform our biosecurity system.

From left: Justin Bellanger (Board member), Bruce Christie (Board Chair), Costa Georgiadis and Robbie Davis (Board member) join the Centre's staff, Lucie Hassall (General Manager) and David Picker (Head of Strategic Partnerships) at the Centre's exhibition stand.

The event's illustrator captured presentation detail beautifully.



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# 1.4 2023-24 AT A GLANCE



## August 2023

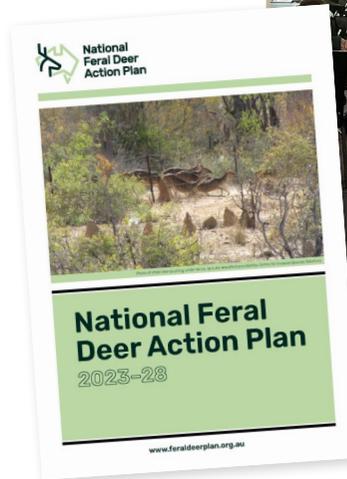
National Feral Deer Action Plan launched.

*National Feral Deer Research Conference, Canberra. Co-hosted with PIRSA. The event heard from the former Federal Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Senator the Hon Murray Watt.*



## July 2023

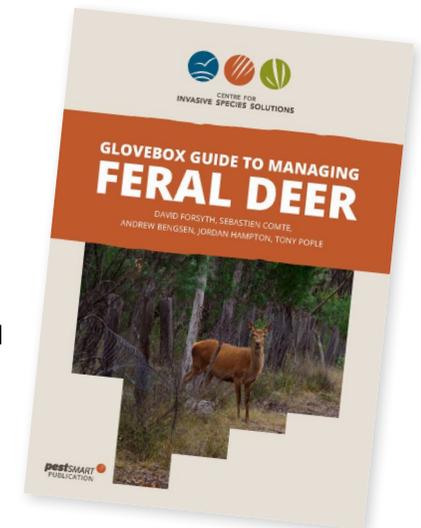
National economic impact and exclusion fencing reports published.



## September 2023

Glovebox Guide to Managing Feral Deer published.

This management tool added to the Centre's PestSmart feral deer toolkit.



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### October 2023

#### Parliamentary Friends of Biosecurity launch.

The Centre attended the launch of the Parliamentary Friends of Biosecurity at Parliament House, Canberra, along with our Decade of Biosecurity partners.



#### WeedScan pre-launch.

Dr Alexander Schmidt-Lebuhn, Senior Research Scientist with CSIRO, presented on the WeedScan app at the Australian Land Conservation Alliance Private Land Conservation event.



### December 2023

#### WeedScan app and web application launched.

In an Australian first, the Centre and its partners, with funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Program, launched the WeedScan app using AI to identify, record and report priority weeds.



### May 2024

#### PAPPutty™ toxic paste launched.

New welfare-positive lethal trap device launched to improve humaneness of wild dog and fox control.



#### Australian Rabbit Biocontrol Pipeline Strategy released.

The Strategy outlines 10 recommendations to improve the use of existing agents and develop new ones.



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### June 2024

#### National Weed Biocontrol Pipeline Strategy: high threat weed nominations opened.

The process was a vital step in bringing the strategy to life.



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# 1.5 INVASIVE SPECIES SOLUTIONS TRUST

The Invasive Species Solutions Trust championed new, non-lethal and ethical technologies to control invasive mammal pests.

Together with the University of Adelaide, the Centre hosted a briefing at the South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute in Adelaide in October to introduce guests to a world-first in gene drive technology.

The Trust continued to support innovation in invasive species management during the year with a fundraising campaign to support the upgrade of WeedScan - Australia's first computer vision powered weed app.



**We're adding new features and even more weed species to support Landcare, Bushcare and other groups manage special places.**

**weedSCAN**  
Powered by the Centre for Invasive Species Solutions  
Bringing AI smarts to tackling Australia's priority weeds

**Help WeedScan grow!**  
Make a tax-deductible donation today: [invasives.com.au/donate/](https://invasives.com.au/donate/)

*The Centre matched tax-deductible donations of up to \$25,000 to help tackle Australia's weed challenges.*

The Invasive Species Solutions Trust extends its gratitude to its inaugural patron, Her Excellency Mrs Linda Hurley, whose patronage concluded this year.



*The event attracted corporate partners, Members of Parliament and key industry leaders to learn more about this ground-breaking gene drive technology which could also be adapted for rabbits and feral cats.*




**Genetic Biocontrol**  
Genetic Biocontrol has the potential to reduce vertebrate pest management globally. Genetic Biocontrol is a species-specific, targeted gene modification used to disrupt the reproduction of targeted invasive pest.

Join the fight to protect threatened species using world's first technology.

**Professor Paul Thomas of the University of Adelaide and Andreas Glanznig.**



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# 1.6 STRATEGY AND APPROACH

VALUES Transformative ... Collaborative ... Bold ... Ethical ... Trusted

VISION An invasive species free Australia

PURPOSE STATEMENT Together, create and deliver valued invasive species solutions for primary industries, the environment and communities

CISS is a national leader and coordinator of invasive species solutions. We:

- develop and deliver solutions to important problems
- drive innovation to enhance integrated landscape management
- accelerate building and strengthening of community biosecurity networks and surveillance systems
- advance outcomes through the application of digital tools and management systems
- build efficiencies and critical mass, brokerage and capacity
- plan for and create long term outcomes in a changing environment

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Strategic Priority Areas and how we will achieve them:



## Strategic collaborations

Partnerships and collaborations to leverage, lead and amplify outcomes

- Provide national leadership and coordination advice and expertise
- Broker and secure new national and international collaborations to magnify outcomes across systems
- Grow capacity through relationships and opportunities with aligned organisations



## Integrated solutions

Research, innovation and engagement (R,I&E) to advance large-scale coordination and breakthroughs

- Set and drive the long-term collaborative RI&E agenda to meet member priorities
- Deliver and service our R,I&E collaborations to increase impact
- Accelerate adoption of solution based research and innovation
- Evaluate, synthesise and share performance and impact of programs and projects



## Capability and adoption

Acceleration of best practice management adoption to build communities of impact

- Build capacity and accelerate adoption of best practice integrated land management and surveillance
- Influence behaviour through improving education and communications that motivate action, and enrich social licence
- Facilitate knowledge exchange and build the capacity of researchers and leaders



## Efficient and effective Centre

Internal governance and operations, financial management, effective communication and skilled staff

- Govern and manage the company and ISS Trust effectively
- Maintain strong working relationships with members and partners
- Grow, diversify and leverage income, and our membership base
- Attract and retain skilled staff

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Strategic shifts we seek:

- Growth across national and global collaborations
- Creation of critical mass for greater impact
- Translation of technologies across species
- Scaling solutions and impact
- Increased land manager and community engagement
- Increased adoption of cross-tenure and landscape scale management
- Longevity of investment across sectors
- Enhanced recognition of our brand value

## 2.1 'PROFIT WITH PURPOSE' FUTURE

As the Centre looks to the future, we are embracing a 'profit with purpose' ethos, based on the successes we have achieved as a proudly apolitical, non-partisan and not-for-profit innovation leader valuing boldness, strong ethics and trustworthiness.

We'll continue to work in ways that are transformative and collaborative, and forge new innovative partnerships with corporate agriculture, resource extraction companies, Indigenous trusts, rangers, and local communities.

Together, we are creating products and services that meet a critical market need to accurately measure, monitor, and manage biodiversity in agricultural and environmental settings. These collaborations are driving production and nature-positive outcomes while also delivering tangible benefits for our communities and way of life.

Consistent with this ethos is the development of a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), which reflects our commitment to building strong partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The RAP will guide our renewed philanthropy strategy, fostering collaborations with First Nations organisations and acknowledging their vital role as custodians of Australia's natural landscapes.

Through these efforts, the Centre aims to blend purpose with profit, supporting sustainable practices and community well-being across the nation.

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# 2.2 NEW BUSINESS UNIT: LANDSMART SERVICES

The Centre launched LandSmart Services this year as a dedicated new business unit to harness the Centre’s expertise and deliver impactful, on-ground solutions.

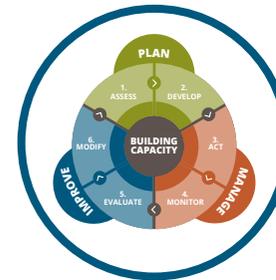
Born from a Board business development workshop, LandSmart Services is focused on expanding pest and weed control offerings using cutting-edge technologies that not only improve biodiversity and agricultural productivity but also foster community engagement.

By enhancing project delivery, the initiative aims to build trust and attract investment and partnerships in strategic invasive species management, positioning the Centre as a trusted partner in environmental stewardship.

Backed by an impressive RD&E pedigree, the Centre has made significant strides, particularly in feral pig management, securing contracts with Queensland’s Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (QDAF), Western Downs Regional Council, and Australian Pork Limited (APL). LandSmart Services is leveraging the success of these projects to attract and negotiate agreements with a range of other organisations.

As the Centre negotiates agreements, including within Australia’s energy sector, with the North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance, and even partners beyond Australian shores, LandSmart’s impact continues to grow.

Complementing these efforts, the landscape-scale weed management service is set to benefit from new AI projects like WeedRemeed™ – a collaboration to develop scalable, cloud-based weed-detection technology using AI and machine learning, in partnership with 2pi Software, Nature Foundation, Bush Heritage, and Cassinia Environmental.



PestSmart approach



Decision support system



On ground impact



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# 3.1 NEW CONTRACTS IMPLEMENTATION

From landscapes to future preparedness, the Centre's projects are a critical piece of a broader strategy to protect Australia's unique ecosystems and agricultural resources.

Through these innovative research and management efforts, the Centre is setting new benchmarks for invasive species management at landscape-scale and strengthening our biosecurity system.

## 2024 Centre Projects

Innovative Strategies for Sustainable Landscape Management and Emergency Preparedness

Landscape Projects		Future Preparedness Projects	
<p><b>NEW</b> </p> <p><b>Weed Biocontrol</b></p> <p>Developing a biocontrol pipeline for effective weed management.</p> <p><b>PARTNERS:</b> NSW DPIRD</p>	<p><b>NEW</b> </p> <p><b>Weed Integrated Management</b></p> <p>Showcasing chemical and non-chemical strategies for invasive grass control.</p> <p><b>PARTNERS:</b> NSW DPIRD</p>	<p><b>ONGOING</b> </p> <p><b>Genetic Technology for Mouse Management</b></p> <p>Exploring innovative gene drives for species-specific suppression.</p> <p><b>PARTNERS:</b> CSIRO, NSW DPIRD, University of Adelaide</p>	<p><b>NEW</b> </p> <p><b>Capacity Building for Effective Management of EAD Outbreaks</b></p> <p>Building capacity for managing emergency animal disease outbreaks.</p> <p><b>PARTNERS:</b> NSW DPIRD</p>
<p><b>NEW</b> </p> <p><b>Wild Pigs, Deer and Other Vertebrate Pests</b></p> <p>GPS tracking to study deer behaviour and validate aerial shooting.</p> <p><b>PARTNERS:</b> NSW DPIRD</p>	<p><b>NEW</b> </p> <p><b>Informing risks of African Swine Fever (ASF) transmission</b></p> <p>By collection and analysis of feral pig movement data.</p> <p><b>PARTNERS:</b> QDAF</p>	<p><b>NEW</b> </p> <p><b>Technical Developments for EAD Preparedness</b></p> <p>Developing AI-based technologies for invasive animal detection and control.</p> <p><b>PARTNERS:</b> NSW DPIRD</p>	<p><b>NEW</b> </p> <p><b>Developing a Risk-Based Surveillance System for Wildlife Disease</b></p> <p>Field-testing adaptive sampling for early EAD detection.</p> <p><b>PARTNERS:</b> NSW DPIRD</p>
<p><b>NEW</b> </p> <p><b>WeedRemeed™: Drone AI detection of priority weed species at scale</b></p> <p>Applying AI and Machine Learning (ML) technology to address weed threats.</p> <p><b>PARTNERS:</b> 2pi Software, Bush Heritage Australia, Cassinia Environmental, Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, Nature Foundation</p>		<p><b>NEW</b> </p> <p><b>Enhanced Preparedness to Diagnose Priority Pests and Diseases</b></p> <p>Implementing advanced diagnostic tests for biosecurity threats.</p> <p><b>PARTNERS:</b> NSW DPIRD</p>	

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# Solutions for landscapes



The **Weed Biocontrol project**, led by Dr Andrew McConnachie from NSW DPIRD, aims to establish a seamless biocontrol agent delivery pipeline, supporting the research and implementation of biocontrol agents such as mealybug, long-horn beetle, and cactus weevil to combat invasive weeds like Harissia cactus. The investment in this project not only strengthens biocontrol capabilities but also lays the groundwork for long-term, sustainable weed management solutions.



The **Weed Integrated Management project**, meanwhile, guided by Dr Hanwen Wu, tackles the challenge of invasive grasses through a multi-faceted approach. With three demonstration sites across New South Wales, the project showcases innovative strategies to manage Serrated Tussock, Chilean needle grass, and African lovegrass. This initiative reveals the critical need for integrating chemical and non-chemical methods, such as strategic grazing and competitive pastures, to prevent herbicide resistance and promote effective control.

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Vertebrate pests continue to threaten the integrity of our landscapes, leading Sebastian Comte to drive a groundbreaking study on the **spatial behaviour of pest animals**, gathering unprecedented data on their movements through GPS tracking. This research not only provides new insights into deer and feral pig behaviour but also validates the use of aerial shooting as an effective control tool during emergency animal disease outbreaks. These findings are now shaping more targeted and efficient pest management strategies.

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Image credit: Charles Davis

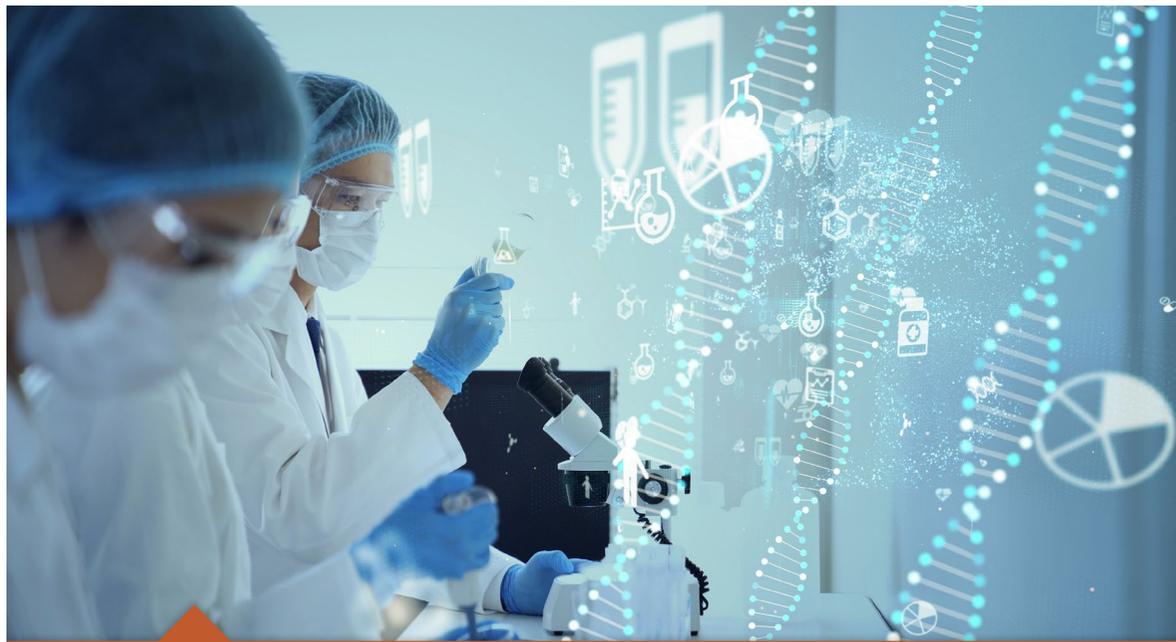
# Solutions for future preparedness



The **Genetic Technology for Mouse Management** project, in partnership with the University of Adelaide, NSW DPIRD and CSIRO, explores groundbreaking gene drive strategies to control mouse populations. Though challenges remain, significant progress has been made in developing transgenic mice that could one day revolutionise pest management.



Image credit: Jessamy Frost



The Centre is spearheading efforts to enhance diagnostic capabilities for priority pests and diseases. Under Dr Brendon O'Rourke's leadership, the **Enhanced Preparedness to Diagnose Priority Pests and Diseases** project introduces over 171 new or improved diagnostic tests. This initiative has not only bolstered the Centre's biosecurity readiness but also attracted top-tier talent to advance molecular and diagnostic technologies.

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# 3.2 PAPPUTTY™ NEW WELFARE-POSITIVE LETHAL TRAP DEVICE FOR IMPROVED WILD DOG AND FOX CONTROL

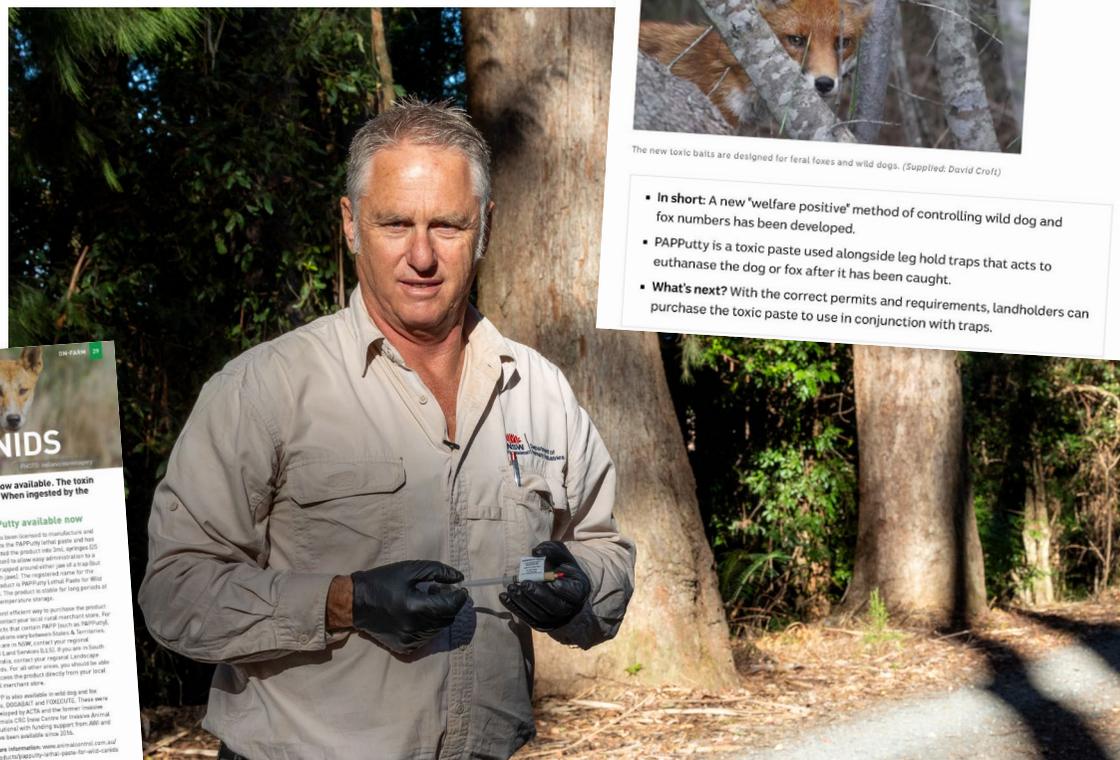
ABC News, May 2024.

Land managers gained a new tool this year to protect Australia's native species, livestock production and natural environment from invasive pests, with the release of a new environmentally responsible lethal measure offering effective yet humane control.

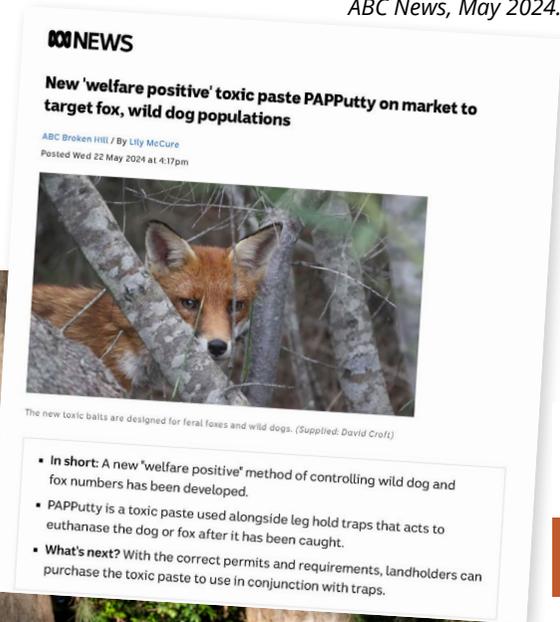
PAPPutty™ toxic paste contains PAPP, or para-aminopropiophenone, which can be applied to cloth wraps on one jaw of a leg-hold trap to target and manage wild dogs and foxes. Once caught, wild dogs and foxes tend to bite at the trap and ingest the toxin in the cloth. The product stops oxygen binding to haemoglobin, causing the animal to become unconscious and die.

The product was launched in May by the Centre and its partners – NSW DPIRD, Connovation of New Zealand and Animal Control Technologies Australia (ACTA) with financial support from the Commonwealth Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.

PAPPutty™ product guides, usage information and a training video were developed to support its adoption. It is manufactured and distributed in Australia by ACTA and is available in New South Wales, Queensland, the Northern Territory and South Australia.



Beyond the Bale, June 2024.



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# 3.3 NATIONAL WEED BIOCONTROL PIPELINE STRATEGY (NWBPS) INITIAL STAGE PROJECT TOWARDS A NATIONALLY COORDINATED APPROACH TO WEED BIOCONTROL

Across Australia’s vast and diverse landscapes, managing widespread, priority weeds is a monumental task requiring a strategic and coordinated approach. Enter the National Weed Biocontrol Pipeline Strategy (NWBPS): a visionary initiative designed to steer the future of weed management at continental scale.

The NWBPS framework, developed through a collaborative force, brings together research scientists, community advocates, industry leaders and government experts. Together, they are united in their mission to tackle the persistent problem of invasive weeds through focused RD&E activities.

The Strategy is anchored in three key elements that will shape its course:



### National Biocontrol Prioritisation Framework

This framework serves as a guiding compass, identifying which weed species should be prioritised for biocontrol efforts based on their impact and potential for successful management.



### Rolling 5-Year Research Implementation Plans

These plans outline a dynamic approach to research, ensuring that the strategy evolves and adapts to emerging needs and findings over a rolling five-year period.



### National Monitoring and Evaluation System

To measure the effectiveness of biocontrol efforts and refine strategies, a robust system for monitoring and evaluation will be established, providing valuable feedback and ensuring accountability.

The National Weed Biocontrol Pipeline Strategy: Initial Stage brings together national leaders in weed biocontrol prioritisation, digital monitoring and weed consultation into a purpose-built collaboration to commence the project.

Project highlights achieved so far include:

- establishment of Weed Biocontrol Research, Development and Extension Alliance
- solid progress on development of the National Biocontrol Prioritisation Framework
- assessment of nominated high threat weeds and weed biocontrol prospects to develop a National Weed Biocontrol List.

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## Project partners



Project implementation is on track, with Implementation Plans expected to be submitted to the Environment and Invasives Committee Weeds Working Group by the end 2024. Together with the support of our partners and stakeholders, we are paving the way for a more effective and coordinated approach to strategically managing invasive weeds in Australia.



Community celebrating the successful control of Hudson pear (Cylindropuntia pallida) at a Hudson pear training workshop (Lightning Ridge, Cumborah and Grawin).

Research Scientists, Dr Kylie Ireland and Dr Gavin Hunter undertake quarantine host specificity testing (Lycium ferocissimum).



Image credit: CSIRO



Image credit: QDAF

Prickly acacia gall thrips damage; Weed - Vachellia nilotica subsp. Indica.

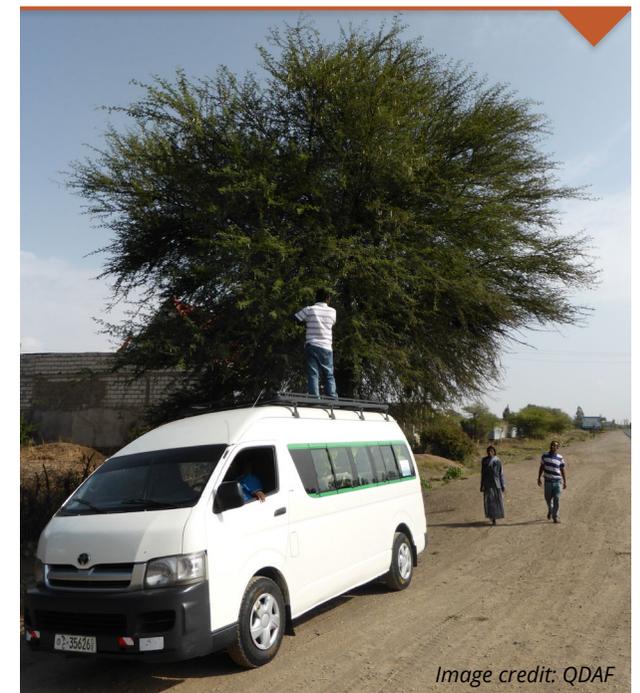


Image credit: QDAF

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Native range survey of prickly acacia in Ethiopia; Weed - Vachellia nilotica subsp. Indica.

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# 3.4 RESEARCH OUTPUTS AMPLIFYING OUR RESEARCH LEGACY

The Centre continues its distinguished contribution to the body of research supporting invasive species management in Australia. This year, our research outputs found a fresh new home with a revamp of the Centre's [online research presence](#).

The brief was to make our research content more user-friendly, engaging and impactful to serve the needs of the scientific community, stakeholders and the broader community alike.

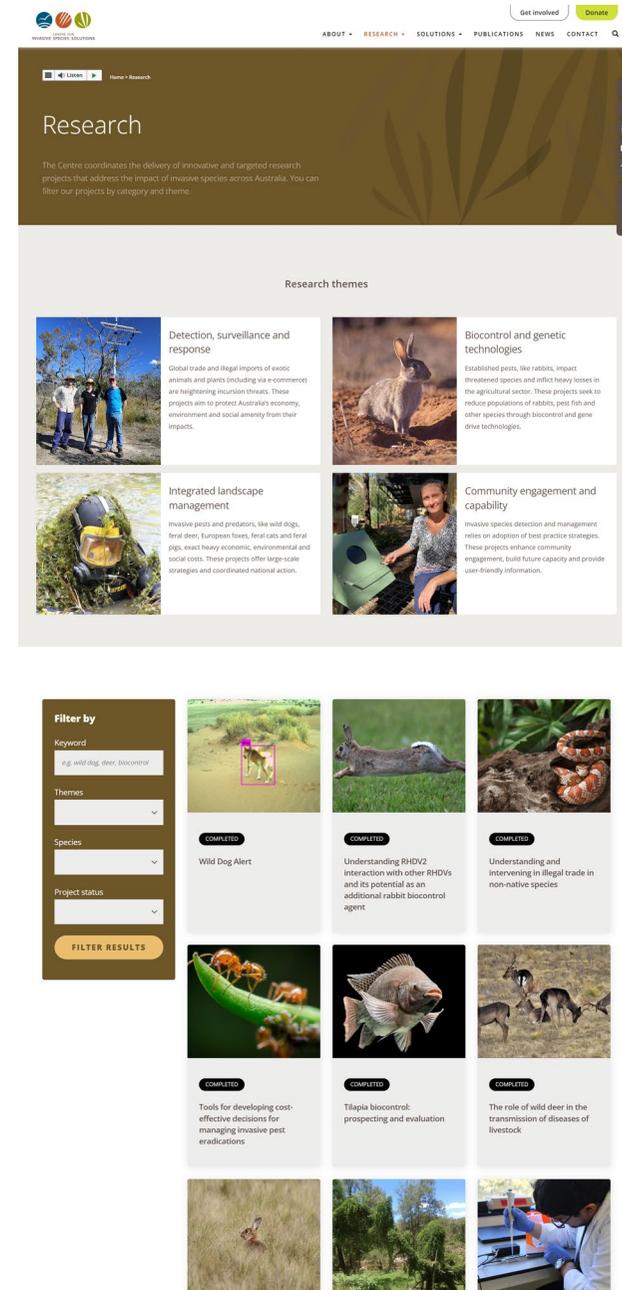
The design presents our research in a clear and accessible way, with equal consideration given to categorising our efforts by theme, species, keyword and project status. Visitors can browse the research using an array of filtered search options to peruse particular or general areas of interest.

The page layout allows for user-friendly presentation of each project's parameters, objectives, high-level summary, outputs, outcomes and impacts, key staff and partnering organisations, project reports, videos, scientific publications and community resources, such as fact sheets and guides. These outreach materials, supported by technical information, are practical tools for land managers tackling the challenges of invasive pests and weeds Australia-wide. With the new format in place, the refreshed research hub received 3,594 views this year, up from 1,151 the previous year.

The Centre's wealth of research informs and empowers: by making our research more accessible we are fostering community adoption, which in turn amplifies the reach and impact of our impressive research legacy.

Our refreshed research hub underscores the value we delivered through our large **Portfolio No. 1** suite of research projects. Our collaborations delivered a remarkable **5.0 to 1 Benefit-Cost Ratio return on investment** over five years<sup>1</sup>.

1 Figure drawn from Portfolio No. 1 independent evaluation by ACRE Economics using a 30-year investment period after last year of investment.



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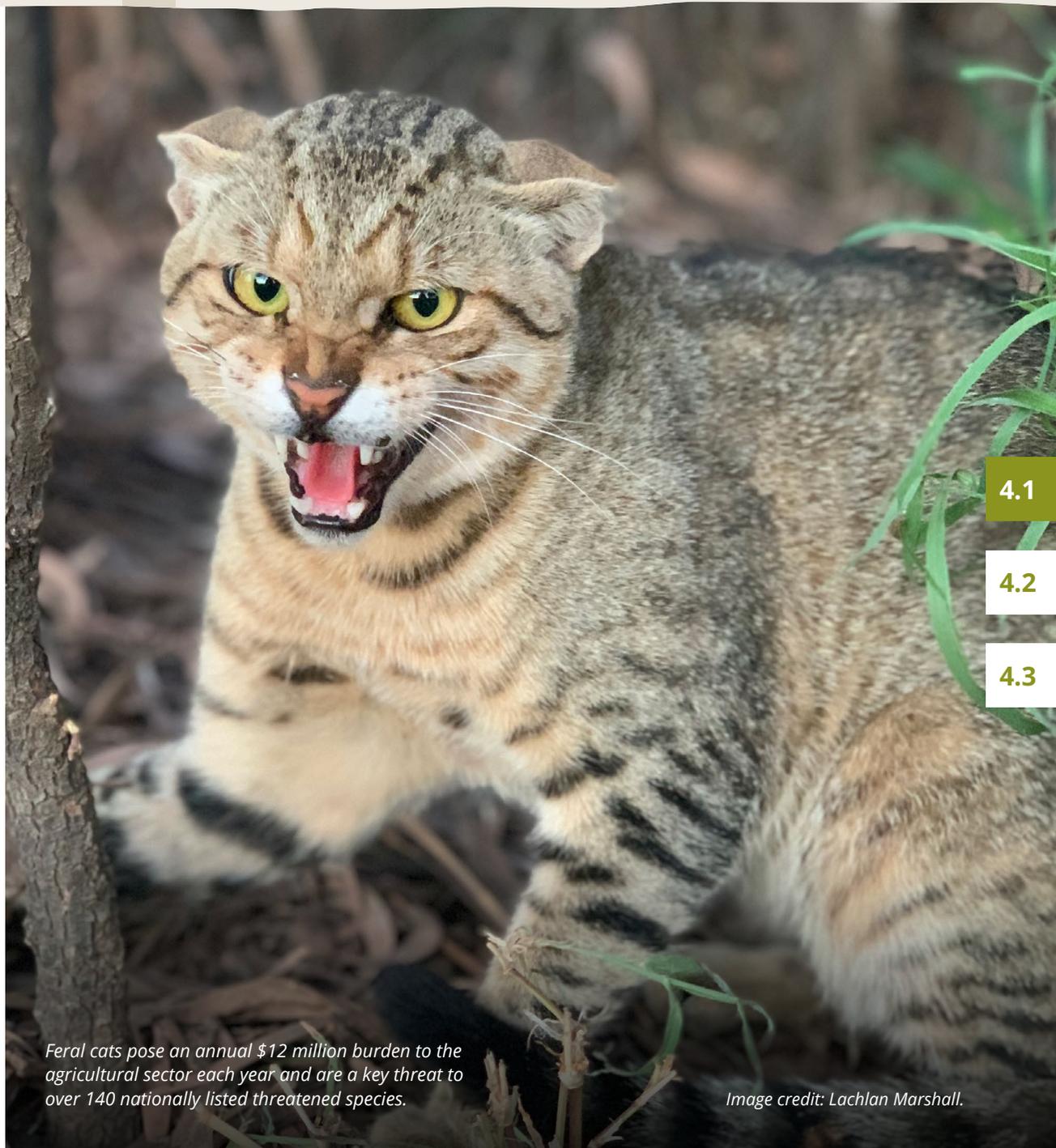
## 4.1 NATIONAL COORDINATION

### A national footprint in invasive species coordination

The Centre’s national coordinator model brings invasive species research, development and engagement to life in communities Australia-wide.

Our coordinators have a broad remit: from increasing community awareness of invasive species and their impacts to facilitating and strengthening on-ground efforts among communities, contributing to strong pest and weed management approaches at national, state and local levels to fostering the adoption of our support systems and tools.

The Centre hosts two National Coordinators: Gillian Basnett as National Feral Cat and Fox Management Coordinator and Greg Mifsud as National Wild Dog Management Coordinator.



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*Feral cats pose an annual \$12 million burden to the agricultural sector each year and are a key threat to over 140 nationally listed threatened species.*

*Image credit: Lachlan Marshall.*

# National Feral Cat and Fox Management Coordinator

Since its inception in 2021, this program, funded by the Australian Government and led by the Centre, has driven national action to curb the destructive impacts of feral cats and foxes on native wildlife, agriculture, and human health. It has made significant strides in promoting humane and effective control measures at all levels, from national strategies to local initiatives.

Its capacity was expanded this year with the addition of Dr. Thomas Nelson as the full-time Program Support and Communications Officer which has equipped the program to strengthen its outreach, including the launch of a dedicated e-newsletter which has attracted a dedicated and growing subscriber base.

*The first edition of the program's newsletter hit inboxes in February.*

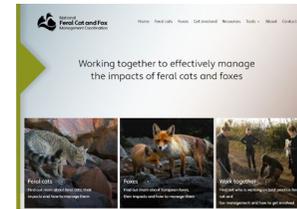


The formation of an Advisory Committee at the beginning of 2024 has drawn experts from across sectors including government, industry, research and the community. Its members provide strategic direction and support and ensure the program's actions align with best practice management and research.

The program team achieved significant success strengthening on-ground action through support for key projects. This included joining a consortium to back Project Platypus's 'Guarding Gariwerd' initiative to support a successful Victorian government Partnership Against Pests grant application.

The team's presence across Australia has added value to numerous workshops, forums, and conferences across the country. Through these activities, the team has not only facilitated training but fostered stronger collaborations among communities, researchers, and policymakers in feral cat and fox management.

Responding to a frequently expressed need, the program developed a central hub for easily accessible and clear information on feral cat and fox legislation, management techniques, resources, up-to-date research, community involvement, and case studies of collaborative feral cat and fox management across Australia.



The new website at [feralcatandfox.com.au](http://feralcatandfox.com.au) attracted media interest and plenty of visitors and will be continually updated with new information.

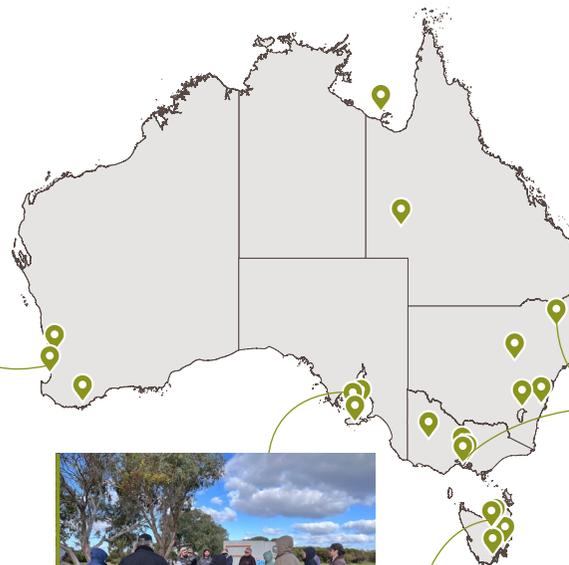


## WA Feral Cat Working Group Collaboration, February 2023, Perth

The program continues its work with the Group to support its feral cat management activities in Western Australia.

## Feral cat and fox information and training workshop, September 2023, Yorketown

The event, held in partnership with Northern and Yorke Landscapes Board and Landcare Association of South Australia, attracted landcarers and on-ground staff from the region.



## Queensland Parks and Wildlife Pest Forum, March 2024, North Stradbroke Island

Provided a national feral cat and fox management perspective.



## Fox Expert Elicitation Workshop, May 2024, Melbourne

Attended a 2-day workshop, led by the University of New England, in Melbourne, to develop an online national fox management decision tool.

## AgFest Tasmania, May 2024, Carrick

'Ezekiel,' a 7kg feral cat removed from Tasmania's north, was displayed at Agfest to educate some of the 50,000 visitors about the significant environmental and agricultural impacts of feral cats.



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# National Wild Dog Management Coordinator

The National Wild Dog Management Coordinator continued his leadership in community-driven wild dog management, a stakeholder engagement role he has held since 2007. This involved implementing the National Wild Dog Action Plan (NWDAP) to advance integrated best practices in wild dog management to mitigate their impacts on agriculture and biodiversity.

Community engagement and capacity-building featured prominently this year, with initiatives reaching over 550 stakeholders through 14 workshops and field days. These activities lifted local capacity for wild dog management, particularly in vulnerable agricultural regions.

The NWDAP's team, supported by communications consultancy, Three60 Consulting, promoted the program's agenda via media campaigns and online content published on its website and social media channels.

 **2 television interviews:**  
**Landline and 7.30**

 **70 print or online articles**

 **18 radio interviews**



The National Coordinator continued to address key challenges in relation to wild dog management, including changes to the status of dingoes in Victoria and whether dingoes aid in controlling feral cat populations.

In the first instance, the National Coordinator engaged with stakeholders, including the relevant state ministers, landholders, and livestock industry representatives, to maintain protection for

dingo populations on public lands while advocating for balanced wild dog and dingo control measures within a pre-existing three-kilometre livestock protection buffer to manage the risk of predation on neighbouring properties.

The year concluded with an unforeseen end to wild dog control in northwest Victoria: in response the National Coordinator engaged landholders to develop a radio tracking project to better understand dingo behaviour – including attacks – around livestock near protected areas and continued to advocate that the government consult broadly with landholders as part of a review on wild dog management underway during the reporting period.

Meanwhile, the National Coordinator also contributed to the Threat Abatement Plan for feral cats by highlighting that control of wild dogs, dingoes, feral cats and foxes is crucial to reducing predation pressure on endangered species, challenging claims that dingoes aid in managing feral cat numbers.



**Queensland Rural Lands Officer Group meeting, November 2023, Longreach**

National Coordinator, Greg Mifsud, pictured right, discussing on-ground management plans.



**Beef Week Expo, May 2024, Rockhampton**

National Coordinator, Greg Mifsud, was joined by Dr Heather Channon, the National Feral Pig Management Coordinator.

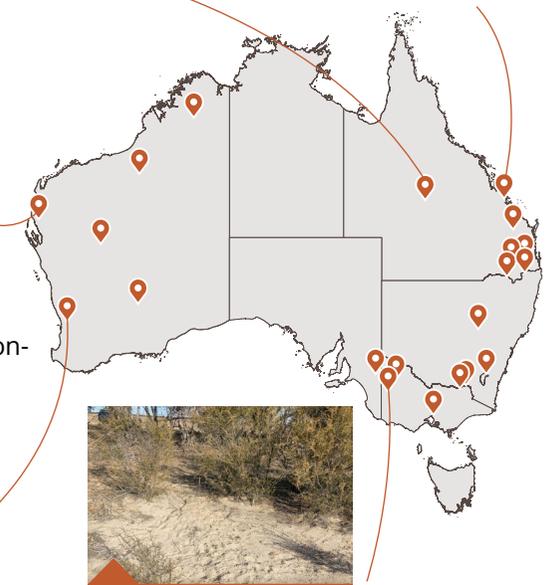


**Supporting Recognised Biosecurity Groups (RBGs), ongoing State-wide**

Continuing to support communication and information-sharing with RBGs across the State following a three-day workshop in March 2023.

**Best practice resources deployed, September 2023, Perth**

The program supported delivery of the National Wild Dog Action Plan with resources like the Glovebox Guide for Managing Wild Dogs.



**Yanac-Broughton Landcare Group, June 2024, Yanac**

A radio-collaring presentation and Big Desert National Park field trip provided opportunity to capture evidence of dingo movement onto adjacent properties suffering livestock attacks.

## 4.2 NATIONAL DIGITAL PLATFORMS

The Centre’s reputation as the source of best practice management information, tools and resources for invasive pests and weeds has established over many years. Our PestSmart and Weeds Australia websites house these materials and foster adoption while our FeralScan and WeedScan reporting and monitoring platforms support community action at a national scale.

### PestSmart goes from strength to strength

Since its 2021 re-launch, our [PestSmart website](#) receives hundreds of thousands of visitors and page views annually.

Reinvigorating its content to offer Australian land managers the most current pest animal management information in compelling and easy-to-understand ways remains our focus.

As part of this effort, we developed pest animal snapshots for seven [major vertebrate pests](#) and video functionality to add training and other videos to provide further depth and better deploy the Centre’s video asset library.

Meanwhile, as the repository for nationally agreed practices and procedures, the Centre also coordinated the release of the latest, standardised and endorsed management information.

Each of the National Standard Operating Procedures (NATSOPs) and Codes of Practice (COPs) for the 12 pest species on the site, together with general NATSOPs, were updated this year. This update delivers on PestSmart’s mission: to equip land managers with the most reputable invasive species’ information to plan, manage and evaluate their control efforts with confidence.

Together, these innovations have cemented PestSmart’s online presence with

**286,000**  
active users\*

**469,000**  
page views

over the financial year—up from the previous year’s 277,719 users and 442,982 views.

\* Active users is the number of people who engaged with the website in the specified date range.



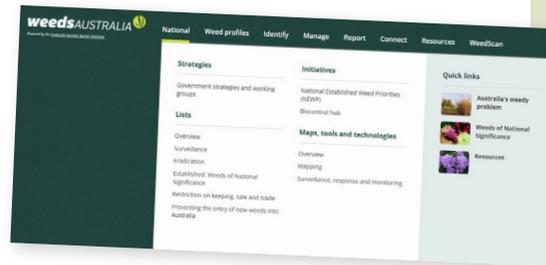
## Weeds Australia expands its national reach

Enhancing users' search experience for both weed profiles and resources on Weeds Australia was among the enhancements to the platform this year. However, the most significant development was the creation of a dedicated 'national' weeds information portal.

A new 'national tab' was introduced to the site's main menu to streamline access to crucial information for effectively managing invasive weeds across the country. It provides a significant uplift for national information relating to nationwide initiatives and strategies as well as a one-stop shop for maps, tools, technologies and lists. The site, and its new-look national portal, have played an important role in national weeds management by hosting the nomination processes for weed candidates under two significant national weed initiatives.

Meanwhile, the Centre has continued to work closely with the Atlas of Living Australia to ensure weed profiles are accurate and stable with ongoing efforts to strengthen data sharing between the platforms.

Weeds Australia continues to be a vital resource, with



**216,000**  
active users

**522,000**  
page views

this year year—a big jump from last year's 87,555 users and 278,429 views.

Diver entangled in submerged aquatic weed, Cabomba caroliniana.

Image credit: CSIRO



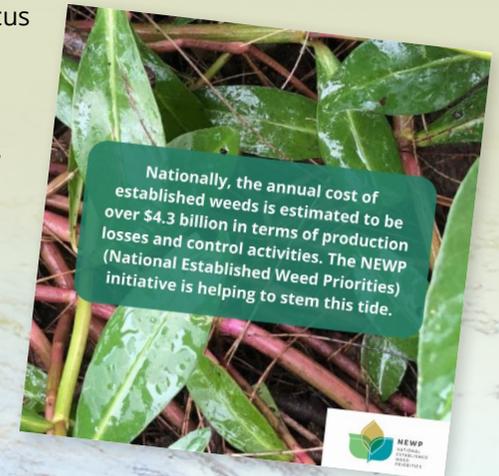
## National Established Weed Priorities process for new WONS nominations

The National Established Weed Priorities (NEWP) process, initiated via Weeds Australia in August 2024, plays a crucial role in identifying new Weeds of National Significance (WONS).

In this collaborative effort, stakeholders from weed societies, farmers' associations, local councils, landcare groups, catchment management authorities and government agencies, participated in nominating weed species that threaten Australia's biodiversity, agriculture, and communities.

Over 180 weeds nominations were made, showcasing interest from around Australia in safeguarding our precious environment.

Nominated weed species undergo a rigorous evaluation based on their impact, distribution and management potential. This process ensures the nation's focus remains on the most pressing weed threats, driving coordinated management strategies across the country.



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# COMMUNITY MONITORING AND MANAGEMENT

## FeralScan empowers local communities

FeralScan is a critical tool in the fight against invasive species, empowering communities across Australia to contribute to pest management. With over

**52,000**  
registered and private users

**470,000+**  
records and photos

this national platform enables real-time monitoring of feral animals such as foxes, rabbits, and wild dogs. Today, FeralScan is Australia's largest community developed pest animal database.

The platform's success is driven by its ability to connect individuals—whether landholders, community groups, or government agencies—with valuable data to inform local and national control efforts.

Through FeralScan, users collectively strengthen the country's ability to manage invasive species and protect native ecosystems.



## Otway's community harnesses FeralScan to tackle invasive species

Across 215,000ha of Victoria's Otway Ranges, landholders were seeing evidence of feral pigs as well as deer. The Conservation Ecology Centre invited the community to report observations through FeralScan.

Workshops and training in FeralScan brought many organisations and the community together. This FeralScan data identified both priority areas for control activities and a clear need for collaboration.

FeralScan has equipped the community to identify feral animals and their impacts so it can stay on the front foot in managing the threat of invasive species.

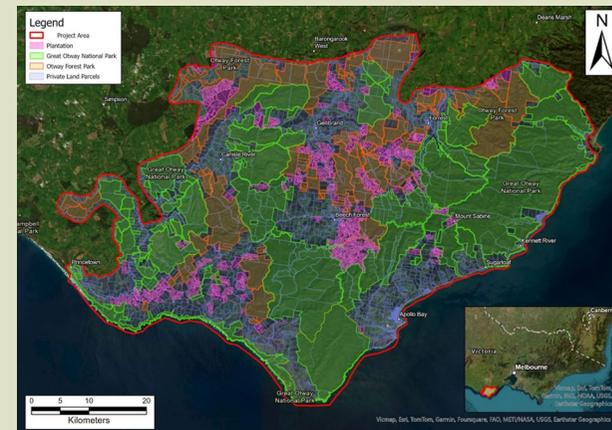


Image credit: James Templeton



Image credit: Conservation Ecology Centre



Image credit: Michael Mackenzie



Image credit: Gary Summers

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Clockwise from above: Satellite imagery showing a patchwork of land uses; feral pig damage; camera trap image of deer and attendees at a FeralScan community workshop.

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# WeedScan app an Australian first

In December 2023, the Centre launched the WeedScan app: an Australian-first harnessing the power of artificial intelligence in the fight against invasive weeds choking the nation's landscapes.

The Centre was joined in this effort by Australia's national science agency – CSIRO, NSW DPIRD and the South Australian, Queensland and Victorian Governments. WeedScan was funded by the Australian Government's National Landcare Program.

Since launch, the app has attracted

**19,441**  
downloads

**8,000**  
weed records

Early assessment of the app confirmed the AI model is robust and reliably identifies weeds it knows with an 85% accuracy rating for records it assesses with a confidence score of 90% or above.

As the sister app to FeralScan, the interest in the app since launch has been strong and plans are underway to further develop its capabilities with the addition of an expanded set of weeds profiles, more group functionality, human verification of records and formalised user training to boost skills and adoption.



## Fears of 'weed highways' as summer rains spread invasive plants through rural Australia

Floods and extreme weather causing greater spread of seeds, buds and roots, while weed spraying interrupted by rain and wind

- Sign up for the Rural Network email newsletter
- Join the Rural Network group on Facebook to be part of the community



NSW's 'most wanted' weeds (clockwise from top left): St John's wort (Hypericum perforatum), mother-of-millions (Bryophyllum species), blackberry (Rubus fruticosus species aggregate) and sticky nightshade (Solanum sisymbriifolium). Composite: Guardian Design/ NSW Weedwise website

The Guardian, 18 January, 2024.

WeedScan's launch was also covered in the ABC Gardening Australia Magazine (bottom left) and The Australian Women's Weekly (below).

### NEWS



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### WEEDING OUT INVADERS

A collaboration of state and federal organisations and government bodies, funded by the National Landcare Program, has resulted in an Australian first – an app that can identify more than 450 priority invasive weeds country-wide, from Afghan melon (Citrullus lanatus) to Yorkshire fog (Holcus lanatus). WeedScan harnesses AI (artificial intelligence) to identify weeds, then records your findings for you to use or share with the relevant authority. Some 120,000 images were captured by CSIRO weed botanists to train the AI algorithm, so that users can take photos of weeds on their phone and identify them on the app. This is a game-changer for farmers, rangers, community groups or anyone interested in protecting or regenerating native habitat. Download the app at [weedsan.org.au](http://weedsan.org.au)

**A green solution**

With invasive weeds posing a problem across the country – from farms to your own backyard – CSIRO has trained a tool to change the tide.

WeedScan ([weedsan.org.au](http://weedsan.org.au)) is a free mobile and web-based AI weed identification and management app. It identifies over 450 weeds accurately, helping users eradicate harmful species posing a threat to our waterways, native animals and degrading the environment.

## E-COMMERCE SURVEILLANCE

### Digital surveillance of illegal trade in non-native species

Australia's biosecurity surveillance and management systems struggle to keep pace with our love of exotic animals and a growing demand in online wildlife and plant trade.

Enter E-commerceSCAN\*: a cutting-edge digital surveillance tool combating illegal online trade in both wildlife and plants. Developed in collaboration with the University of Adelaide, this system scans 93 e-commerce platforms as it seeks to detect and prevent this trade.

When the platform transitions to the Centre in late 2024, it will continue to provide biosecurity officers with valuable information on illegal plant and animal trade on e-commerce platforms.

E-commerceSCAN is a rich example of how collaboration via technology can protect biodiversity and combat the growing threat of illegal wildlife sales in the digital era.

\* Formerly called the Digital surveillance of Illegal Wildlife Trade (DIWT) platform.



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Beautiful but toxic: the Arum Lily is a garden escapee.

Image credit: Jacob Maher

The corn snake poses a risk to Australia's biosecurity.

# 4.3 TRAINING AND COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

## National rabbit forum

The 2024 National Rabbit R&D Webinar in March 2024 was a milestone in fostering collaboration and knowledge-sharing across Australia's rabbit management community. Hosted jointly by the Centre for Invasive Species Solutions and Rabbit-Free Australia, the forum brought together an impressive lineup of the country's top researchers and on-ground practitioners.

Participants gathered virtually to delve into the ecological impact of rabbits, exploring their interactions with invasive predators and the promising future of biocontrol technologies. This dynamic exchange not only offered cutting-edge insights but also strengthened the community of practice committed to mitigating the challenges posed by Australia's most destructive vertebrate pest.



Directly compete with native wildlife for food and shelter and degrade the land.



Selectively graze on native tree and shrub seedlings, preventing regeneration of these species.



Reduce crop and pasture yields and spread weeds.



In peri-urban and urban areas, rabbits can damage sacred sites, lawns and cemeteries, gardens, golf courses, sportsgrounds and regional parkland reserves.



Can be a host to both animal and human parasites and diseases.

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One pair of rabbits may become 184 rabbits in just 18 months with no control in good conditions.

## National Feral Deer Action Plan training sessions

In August 2024, the National Feral Deer Workshop and Research Conference in Canberra provided the setting for the launch of the [National Feral Deer Action Plan](#). Co-hosted with South Australia's Department of Primary Industries and Regions, these training sessions united a diverse group of stakeholders – from government agencies to landholders – who deepened their understanding of feral deer management.

Through hands-on workshops, expert presentations and collaborative discussions, participants explored the latest research, practical control methods and strategies to curb the increasing threat of feral deer. These training sessions served as a powerful tool in building a community of practice, empowering participants to apply new approaches to safeguard Australia's landscapes from the environmental and agricultural damage caused by these invasive species.



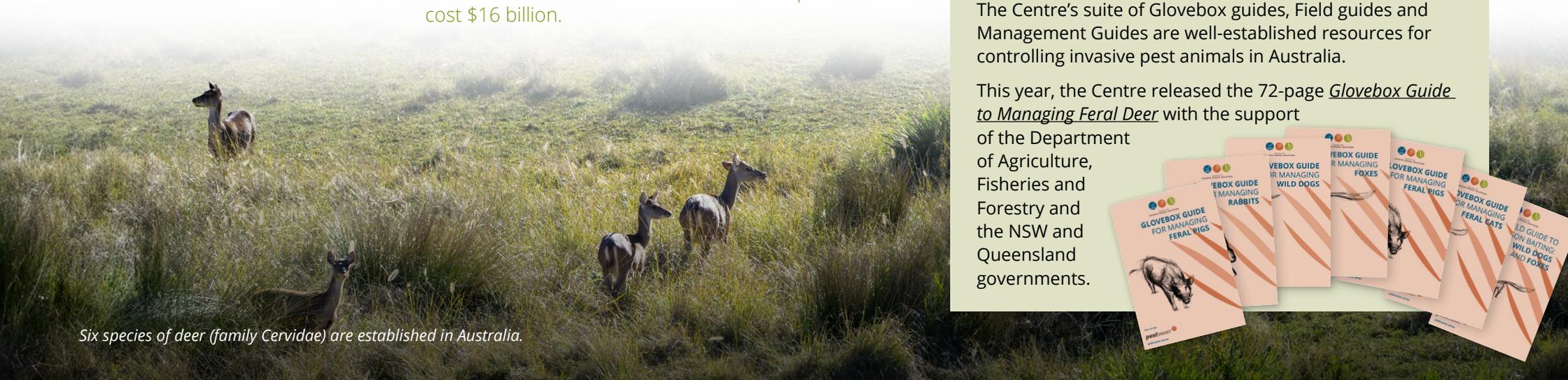
Deer are the 4th most commonly hit animal in Australia, and the number of collisions is increasing each year.



A small Foot and Mouth Disease outbreak, controlled in 3 months, could cost Australia around \$7.1 billion, while a large 12-month outbreak would cost \$16 billion.



A fallow deer eats 1.8 to 2.3 times as much as a sheep (Dry Sheep Equivalent). A red or rusa deer eats 2.8 to 3.6 times as much as a sheep.

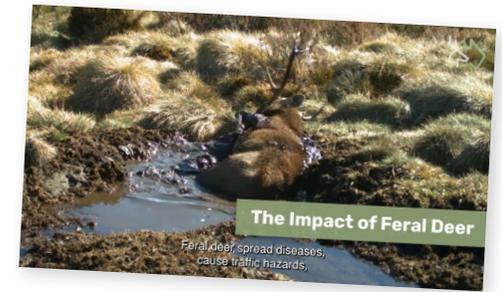


Six species of deer (family Cervidae) are established in Australia.

## Impact videos

We engaged producers, landholders, and community groups affected by invasive species, focusing on wild dogs, feral foxes, rabbits, feral pigs, and feral deer. Through short, impactful videos compiled for AVPC, we captured their personal stories, emphasising the devastating effects on livestock, mental health, and the environment.

One farmer shared his struggles with livestock losses and the emotional toll on his family, while another highlighted the ecological disruption caused by feral deer. Each 1 to 2-minute video was crafted to raise awareness and inspire collective action against these invasive threats in our communities.



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## Glovebox guides

The Centre's suite of Glovebox guides, Field guides and Management Guides are well-established resources for controlling invasive pest animals in Australia.

This year, the Centre released the 72-page [Glovebox Guide to Managing Feral Deer](#) with the support of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and the NSW and Queensland governments.



4.3

## Research excellence and information hub

These academic outputs bring the total of peer reviewed scientific publications for the reporting period to 11.

Bengsen A, Comte S, Parker L, Forsyth D and Hampton J (2024) Site fidelity trumps disturbance: aerial shooting does not cause surviving fallow deer (*Dama dama*) to disperse. *Wildlife Research* **51**(9), WR24098 <https://doi.org/10.1071/WR24098>

Bunting M, Godahewa G, McPherson N, Roberson L, Gierus L, Piltz S, Edwards O, Tizard M and Thomas P (2024) Investigating the potential of X chromosome shredding for mouse genetic biocontrol. *Sci Rep* **14**, 13466. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-024-63706-4>

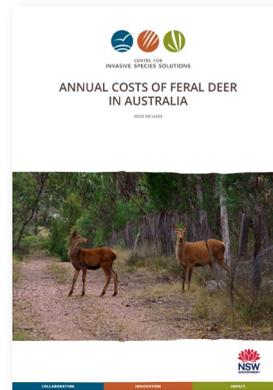
Menon et al. (2024) Ecological factors influencing invasive predator survival and movement: insights from a continental-scale study of feral cats in Australia. *Biol Invasions* **26**, 1505–1520. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10530-024-03254-0>

McFarlane G, Polanco J and Bogema D (2024) CRISPR-Cas guide RNA indel analysis using CRISPResso2 with Nanopore sequencing data. *BMC Res Notes* **17**(1) 205. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13104-024-06861-1>

McLeod LJ and Hine DW (2024) Understanding wild dog reporting behaviour of rural landholders: identifying options for behaviour change. *The Journal of Agricultural Education and Extension* pp 1–21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1389224X.2024.2339808>

View our [publications](#).

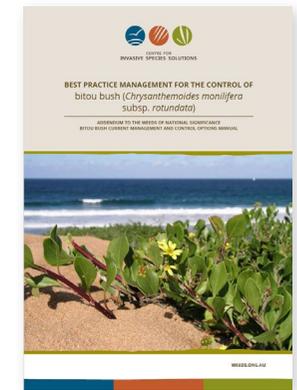
## Selected Centre reports



Annual Costs of Feral Deer in Australia – Technical Report



Using Exclusion Fencing to Manage Feral Deer – Technical Report



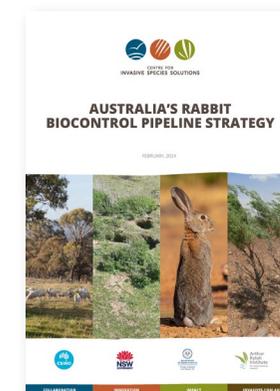
Best Practice Management for the control of bitou bush (*Chrysanthemoides monilifera subsp. rotundata*) – Community Resource

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The status of biological control research for 27 Weeds of National Significance: A summary of past and current biological control research, and directions for future work – Technical Report



Australia's Rabbit Biocontrol Pipeline Strategy – Technical Report

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# Corporate Communications

The Centre's corporate communications strategy this year initiated a series of media spotlight campaigns to drive public awareness of the challenges posed by invasive species, while promoting solutions.

These campaigns secured long-form coverage in mainstream national media outlets and allowed invasive species threats to join the national conversation and establish a closer dialogue between the Centre's mission and the wider community.

## In the media spotlight

Greg Mifsud, the Centre's National Wild Dog Action Management Coordinator, was featured on [ABC Landline](#) in March. The segment offered a balanced perspective on the wild dog/ dingo debate, with Greg effectively presenting the position of the National Wild Dog Action Plan. This was followed by print coverage relating to the dingo unprotection order in northwest Victoria. Meanwhile the National Feral Cat and Fox Management Coordinator aired on ABC radio, discussing control efforts for these species.

Key media moments also resulted from a series of high-profile launches and research breakthroughs.

In July, a media piece revealed the **\$90 million annual economic damage** caused by feral deer as highlighted by the Centre's research. In September, the Centre developed the feral deer theme with the introduction of our [new guide](#) to combating the growing feral deer problem.

These stories were complemented by further coverage on initiatives and tools to tackle the **invasive weeds crisis**, such as management information and the pioneering, Australia-first **AI-powered WeedScan** app, which debuted in December, offering a transformative solution for [weed management](#). Both cued several radio interviews with the Centre's Chief Executive. Further spotlights shone on the [genetic biocontrol research breakthrough](#) announced in November, signalling progress in the fight against invasive species at a molecular level.

Several launches bolstered the Centre's media presence in early 2024, such as the **PAPPutty™ welfare-positive lethal trap device** for wild dog and fox control, unveiled in May, and the March release of a compilation of resources to help manage [feral deer](#). These initiatives culminated in the introduction of a groundbreaking biocontrol strategy targeting one of **Australia's most destructive pests—the rabbit** in May. Each campaign solidified the Centre's role as a leading voice in invasive species management.

# Social media

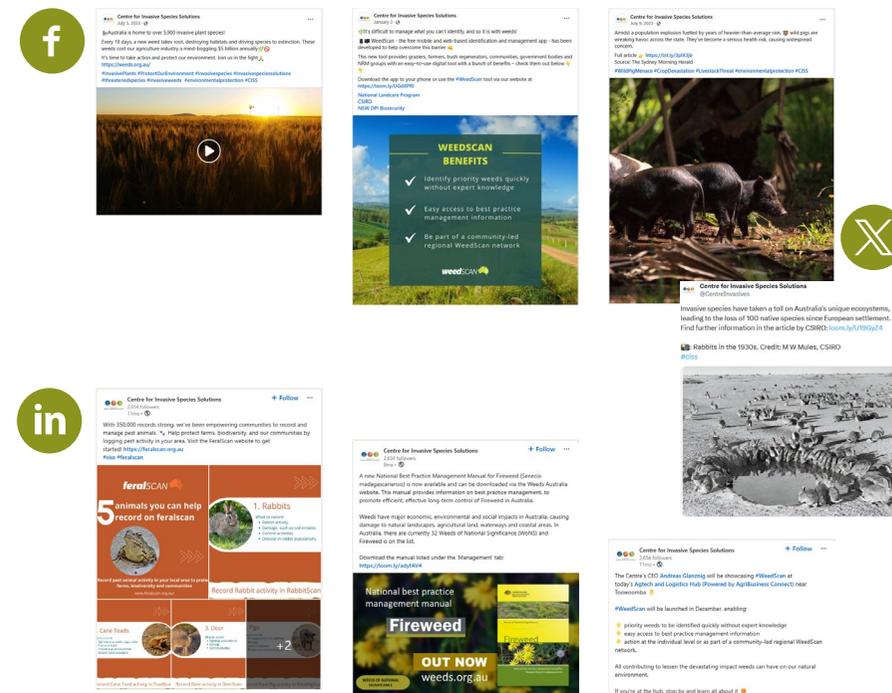
The Centre continued to leverage social media to expand its engagement. Across [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#), and [X](#) (formerly Twitter), the Centre shared updates, research and practical solutions for managing invasive species. These platforms not only amplified public awareness but connected with key stakeholders, including land managers, researchers and policymakers.

During this period, significant posts highlighted major events such as the launch of WeedScan and breakthroughs in genetic biocontrol. LinkedIn fostered professional dialogue and media showcases, driving engagement around initiatives like the FeralScan program. On Facebook, the Centre fostered a sense of community through success stories and educational content, while X provided real-time updates on national coordination efforts for feral cat and fox control. Through these targeted communications, the Centre enhanced its public reach, fostered collaboration, and furthered its mission to protect Australia's environment from invasive species.

4.1

4.2

4.3



# Events

Throughout the year, the Centre participated, hosted or co-led a range of high-profile events, each contributing to our mission of improving pest management and biosecurity across Australia.

This included the National Feral Deer Workshop and Research Conference in Canberra, marking the launch of the National Feral Deer Action Plan. This significant milestone brought together researchers and practitioners to tackle the growing issue of feral deer in Australia.

The Centre also joined in the launch of the Parliamentary Friends of Biosecurity at Parliament House. Along with our Decade of Biosecurity partners, we were pleased to see strong support from the parliamentarians who came along and especially acknowledge the support of co-chairs Senator Linda White and Minister Andrew Willcox in advocating the critical role biosecurity plays in protecting Australians' way of life.

Also in October, the Vertebrate Pest Management Symposium in Dubbo provided a platform for discussing pest management strategies. March 2024 saw the Centre co-hosting the Rabbit R&D Webinar, an online event featuring Australia's top rabbit researchers and practitioners. The Centre continued its outreach at Beef Week and Agfest in May 2024, further expanding its impact across agricultural communities.



## Collateral

The Centre produced its monthly *CISS Chronicle* e-newsletter throughout the year to a subscriber base of 5,027. The Centre also offered the new *National Weed Biocontrol e-Update* to subscribers in support of the ongoing National Weed Biocontrol Pipeline Strategy initiative.

4.1

4.2

4.3

National Coordinators in Dubbo. From left: Heather Channon, Gillian Basnett, Annelise Weibkin and Greg Mifsud. Image credit: NFPAP.

# 5.1 PROFIT FOR PURPOSE: A YEAR OF TRANSITION

This financial year, the Centre continued the transition away from a 'block funding' model to a 'project-by-project' funding approach. The Centre progressed delivery of impactful RD&E outcomes with a balance between vertebrate and invertebrate pest and invasive plants.

Total cash and in-kind revenue achieved in the 2023-24 year was \$8.4 million, primarily driven by funding from member (88%) and non-member (12%) organisations, including in-kind contributions totalling \$3 million. Active management of cash, using term deposits, generated interest revenue of \$0.5 million.

During this transition, the Centre returned a modest surplus of \$5,652. This reflected careful management of expenditures associated with the change in business model, such as additional business development costs, compliance costs and recruitment in the 2023-24 year. This surplus was a reduction from 2022-23 of \$162,817.

During 2023-24, new projects totalled \$2.2 million and looking ahead to 2024-25, the Centre forecasts a significant increase in revenue flowing from new projects in the expanded vertebrate animal control services. The Centre will also continue to work with members to secure additional funding to support specific member priorities as outlined in our 14 core National Priority Key Output Areas.

The Centre's supportive workplace culture, fostering an environment in which our team can thrive, again attracted recognition this year. The Centre's ongoing commitment secured both an ACT Health Workplace Silver Award and an XREF Best Workplace Award.

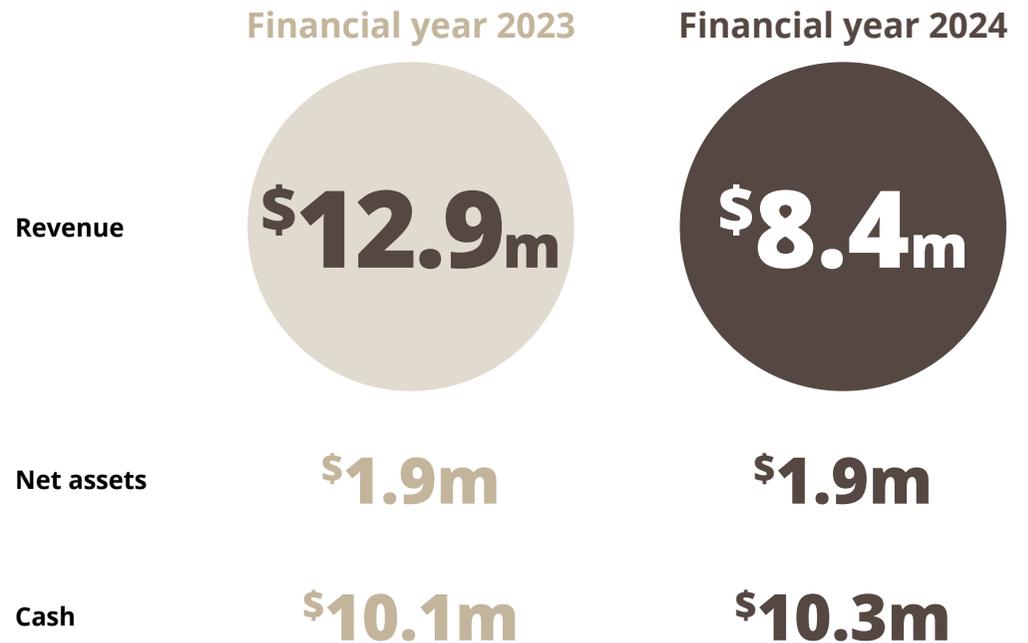


## Resources applied 2024

	\$million	
Governance and Employee Costs*	\$1.5m	18.5%
Research Projects and Implementation	\$6.3m	74.7%
Admin, Travel, Meetings, Intellectual Property	\$0.4m	4.7%
Communications	\$0.2m	2.1%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$8.4m</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*Includes business development costs.

## Operating Summary (million)



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