



A project to reintroduce locally extinct mammals to Sturt National Park in NSW

Wild Deserts is an exciting new partnership between the University of New South Wales, Ecological Horizons and the Office of Environment and Heritage, with a vision to understand, restore and promote desert ecosystems.

The project aims to bring back seven extinct mammals to the NSW corner country, using large fenced exclosures and a range of innovative predator control and research techniques in Sturt National Park.

Wild Deserts will exclude feral predators and herbivores such as cats, foxes and rabbits, before reintroducing mammals that were once widespread in NSW but have not been seen for over a century.

Wild Deserts is a partnership between:



Photo Hugh McGregor

Bilbies are delicate desert survivors. Their diggings for insects, seeds and plant roots help water and carbon infiltrate the soil.



Photo Andrew Freeman

Burrowing Bettongs live in warrens. Their diggings make them an important ecosystem engineer, improving soil health and mixing organic matter. One bettong can shift three tonnes of soil in a year!



Photo Hafiz Stewart

The **Stick-nest Rat** builds barrel-sized nests from sticks where it shelters from predators and the elements and raises its young.



Photo Ben Parkhurst

Australia's smallest bandicoot, the **Western Barred Bandicoot**, escaped total extinction by surviving on two predator-free islands in Western Australia.



Photo Judy Dunlop

The **Golden Bandicoot** is also a great digger, moving between grass clumps to dig for insects, roots and tubers.



Photo Katherine Moseby

A formidable native cat-sized carnivore, the **Western Quoll** preys on small animals up to the size of a rabbit. Females have a pouch and can have up to six joeys.



Photo Reece Pedler

The **Crest-tailed Mulgara** is best described as a miniature Tasmanian devil – a ferocious micro-predator that eats almost anything smaller than itself!

Specialised **netting fences** will be used to exclude rabbits, cats, foxes and wild dogs from the project area. These include a buried foot netting to stop digging under and an overhanging 'floppy top' to keep out climbing predators.



Photo Rebecca West



The site is located in the north-west corner of New South Wales at Sturt National Park, where New South Wales, South Australia and Queensland meet.

Contact us

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