

## Conservation Advice

This Conservation Advice is based on the best available information regarding the conservation status and threats to this species at the time of listing. However, it should only be used as a guide for identifying priority conservation actions for this species, and is intended only as an interim measure prior to the development of a Recovery Plan.

**The actions in this Conservation Advice have been recommended by the Devil Disease Project Team and are endorsed by the Threatened Species Scientific Committee.**

The Tasmanian Devil is the world's largest surviving marsupial carnivore. The species has a black coat with variable patches of white on its chest, shoulder and rump, and a stocky frame with the fore legs longer than the hind legs.

Tasmanian Devils are found in a wide range of habitats, from sea level to all but the highest peaks of Tasmania as well as in forestry plantations and pasture. Open forests and woodlands are preferred, while tall or dense wet forests are avoided. The distribution of the species across Tasmania appears to be continuous, and the species occurs in all three Natural Resource Management Regions in the state (North, South and Cradle Coast). However, population densities are lowest in the buttongrass plains of the south west and highest in the dry and mixed sclerophyll forests and coastal heath of Tasmania's eastern half and north west coast.

The key threats to the Tasmanian Devil are Devil Facial Tumour Disease and, to a lesser extent, deaths from road collisions. Devil Facial Tumour Disease (DFTD) was first reported in 1996 at Mount William National Park and has now been confirmed at 38 locations across central and eastern Tasmania. Local population declines of up to 80% having been documented.

The priority recovery and threat abatement actions required for this species are to:

- Secure and manage wild-sourced captive insurance populations under strict quarantine conditions to increase and maintain long term genetic diversity and disease-free status of captive populations.
- Advise Wildlife Park operators on biosecurity measures to minimise risk of DFTD entering captive populations.
- Trial disease suppression as a management tool in a large area that can be physically isolated, with the goal of eradication and creation of a disease-free wild population.
- Design and implement landscape-scale adaptive management trials in disease control and conservation management of wild populations.
- Monitor Tasmanian Devil populations to quantify impact and rate of spread of DFTD and accumulated impacts of DFTD and other threats.
- Do preparatory work for island introductions (detailed Environmental Impact Statements for suitable islands, test release methods using surplus orphaned devils from diseased mothers) in case wild population decline indicates serious concern of extinction.
- Mitigate local threats to wild populations (roadkill, persecution) where these are likely to adversely affect key populations (e.g. populations in National Parks).
- Develop spatial mathematical models, using monitoring data, to express current best understanding of the impact and spread of DFTD and to identify other key threats, and thus guide future management work.

This list does not encompass all actions that may be of benefit to this species, but highlights those that are considered to be of highest priority at the time of listing.

**Priority for the development of recovery plan:** High. In response to the impact of Devil Facial Tumour Disease on the Tasmanian Devil, a Devil Disease Project Team has been established. This team includes veterinary pathologists, wildlife biologists, and management specialists and will monitor the wild population, undertake diagnostic investigation into the disease, and develop management strategies.