



Dingo, Warrigal *Canis lupus dingo*

What do they look like? Well known, large dog with ginger (rarely white or black) fur and white 'points', though occasionally black or white. Pure bred Dingos have a white tipped, brush-like tail and do not have dewclaws on their hind legs. Animals with a dark line down the back or speckling are likely to be hybrids with escaped domestic dogs.

Where do they live? Dingos occur in all land and vegetation types. Caves, hollow logs and trees are used as lairs.

What do they need to live, eat and breed? The size of a Dingo's territory depends on availability of prey and terrain. They have strong cooperative instincts and tend to live and hunt in packs, communicating with a distinctive yelp or howl. They do not bark like domestic dogs. Very adaptable, they feed on a wide variety of animals from insects to mammals and may occasionally eat fruits. Common mammalian prey is rabbit to wallaby sized. Breeding season is usually May/June, and unlike domestic dogs, Dingos reproduce once annually.

When might I see (or hear) them? Mostly seen alone and usually quite wary of humans. Characteristic howling, heard at night or early morning, particularly during winter months. Dingo prints along station tracks are also a common sign.

What management actions affect this species? Human control measures affect the dingo. Although it is a native animal, the Dingo is also classified as a pest species because of its impact on domestic stock. Baiting, shooting and trapping control measures have eliminated Dingos from parts of south east Australia. Cross-breeding with domestic dogs is one of the biggest threats to Dingo survival.

How do they benefit the land I manage? Dingos are Australia's key mammalian predators, and as such they play a critical role in moderating populations of small mammals and wallabies, their preferred prey. Studies suggest that Dingos can also control feral cat, fox and pig numbers, delivering a huge conservation benefit to native fauna.

