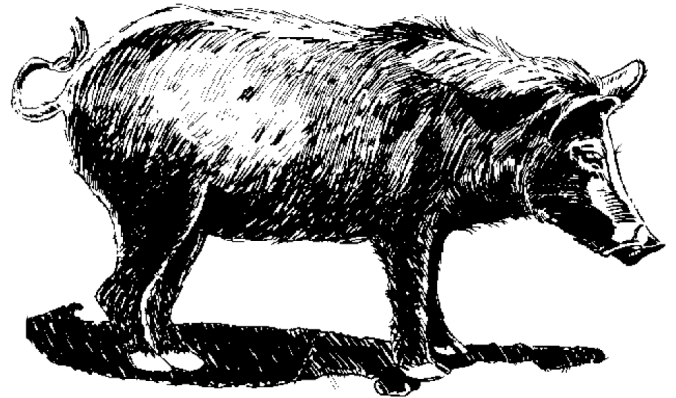


Tropical Factsheets

Feral animals

- Feral animals are usually introduced to Australia from overseas but may also be Australian species which have moved outside their natural range.
- They may be domestic animals that have gone wild or exotic animals that were introduced to control pests or for recreational hunting.
- Most feral invertebrates were stowaways in transport containers or in imported crops and produce.
- Feral animals may:
 - compete with native species for food and habitat
 - eat native species and farm animals
 - degrade habitat and destroy crops
 - carry diseases and weeds.
- Ways of controlling feral animals include fencing, trapping, shooting and poisoning. The type of control method depends on the species and the environment. It's important that the methods used don't kill native species as well.
- Many feral animals such as pigs and cane toads are widespread and removing them all isn't possible.
- Invertebrates such as the crazy ant, fire ant, European bee, fruit fly, palm leaf beetle and spiralling white fly are potential threats.
- Tilapia, guppy and gambusia fish have huge potential to dominate aquatic systems.
- Stocking large predatory native fish such as barramundi and sooty grunter can also cause extinctions in local fish populations. For example, the introduction of mouth almighty and sooty grunter to Lake Eacham resulted in the local extinction of the endangered Lake Eacham rainbow fish.
- Redclaw crayfish have also been extensively stocked in the Wet Tropics which have affected native crustaceans and aquatic plants.



Feral pig



What can we do?

- Prevent new arrivals of feral animals.
- Control new outbreaks of feral animals before they become established.
- Focus on feral and exotic animals which threaten endangered ecosystems.
- Monitor outbreaks of feral deer, goats, cattle, foxes and rabbits and eradicate them where possible.
- Target feral pigs with baiting, trapping and shooting, particularly in dry months when pigs congregate near water.
- Protect endangered plants with pig exclusion fencing.
- Ban domestic pets such as cats and dogs in residential areas beside the rainforest.
- Prevent introduction of feral fish through aquarium suppliers and domestic aquariums.
- Restrict fish stocking to places where it has already been undertaken.
- Research the effects of feral animals on native species and processes.
- Research improved baits and new technologies for use in feral pig control.
- Research biological controls for established animals such as pigs and cane toads.
- Investigate the impacts and options for control of introduced fish and crustaceans.
- Educate the public about the consequences of fish stocking.
- Educate the public about their responsibility to control domestic pets and farm animals which can become feral.