

ABC South West Morning Program with Stan Shaw – 28/11/2025

Saving Native Species in Wellington National Park

Stan Shaw

Now residents living around the border of Wellington National Park are experiencing that excitement of spotting native wildlife for the first time in years. Thanks to a predator control program.

It's an 18-month program by the South West Natural Resource Management Group. They are the region's peak (non-Government) environmental body. Working on controlling introduced predators on private properties, and it seems to be working. Linda Metz is the Acting CEO of South West NRM and joins me. G'day Linda.

Linda Metz

G'day, Stan, how are you?

Stan Shaw

Very good. How does this work?

Linda Metz

Well, how it works is that we are very fortunate to have had a good, expression of interest process where we've engaged with a number of landholders that surround the Wellington National Park. And the reason why that's important is Wellington National Park's got some really amazing natural native animals there.

So things like the chuditch, western ringtail possum and the quokka. And some of those are critically endangered, and vulnerable. So we want to try and work with landholders to try and protect those animals from predators. So things like the European Fox, cats and also feral pigs.

Stan Shaw

And so how do you control these things? What does the mechanism look like?

Linda Metz

So what we did through the program was set up a number of remote cameras initially across the area to try and gauge what kind of activity we had of both native and non-native animals to sort of see what we were up against, really... And what that identified is there was quite a lot of activity of cats foxes, and also pigs in particular. And so what we then did is work with the landholders.

And this is a project in conjunction with Leschenault Catchment Council, and also Leschenault Biosecurity Group. And we sort of joined forces and our collective sort of knowledge to work with the landholders to educate them about what control methods they can use. So those are things like for foxes shooting and trapping. For cats its largely trapping. And for pigs it's using specific baiting program

called, Hoggone boxes, and all of these are proven to be effective methods at controlling non-native animals.

Stan Shaw

And I read 165 pigs were removed. Is that how many feral pigs there are in the Wellington National Park.

Linda Metz

I know. It's surprising. And I think this really shows the value of this program is often because particularly a lot of activity can be happening at night, you don't really know what's going on.

And once you get those cameras out there, they really expose the reality of the situation and how real those threats are. The pigs were I think surprising to some. For some landholders they would have seen evidence on of them on their property. Pigs can be very destructive. So they leave a big sort of mark, you know where they've been, they can really churn up the ground.

So the land holders, I think the great thing about this is we've empowered them and enabled them to learn techniques. Learn processes, learn about the law. So what they can do what they can't do but also give some really practical tips and methods to help themselves which will in the end also help our native animals.

Stan Shaw

I love that. We've got to go to news. But I understand you're expanding the program where other landholders can get hold of a booklet with the 101 on what to do.

Linda Metz

That's exactly right. So we produced a digital resource. Uh, it's on our website and yes, you can find information there about the program, but also, some more detailed information about the control methods of each of those sort of three, groups of feral animals. And also, some general tips for landholders.

So, things like, don't leave your pet food out at night. Keep your domestic animals in and secured. Um, keep you're bins covered, things like that, but practical tips.

Stan Shaw

All right. Good on you Linda. Great work. Head to the South West Natural Resource Management, website for that book and more information. Let's get some local news.

It is 7 30.