

# MAMMALS OF THE A.A.L.B.G.

January, 2014

The mammals found at the Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden were recorded over the years firstly by a short survey done in February 1991, by persons unknown. This survey comprised of traversing the site on foot, observing and recording sightings of vertebrates. A line of pit fall traps was also set for one week in the chenopod plain and in the sand dune areas. Five mammal species were recorded, eleven reptile species and twenty one bird species. The mammals recorded were :-

Western Grey Kangaroo	<i>Macropus fuliginosus</i>
Rabbit *	<i>Oryctolagus cuniculus</i>
Fox *	<i>Vulpes vulpes</i>
Cat *	<i>Felis catus</i>
Dog *	<i>Canis familiaris</i>

As you can see only one native mammal is recorded at this time.

Since development work has commenced at the site more mammals have been observed and recorded. The common and some times abundant house mouse was of course noted as well as the Euro or Common Wallaroo and the Red Kangaroo. Goulds Wattled Bat also appears on the next list of animals printed for the site.

The next mammal records are of the Goat, which are sometimes observed outside of the boundary fence and have been found inside of the garden. I have actually caught one at Redcliffs lookout which was dispatched and divided up amongst a work gang on the site at the time. A Striped Faced Dunnart was dug up whilst laying a water pipe in the garden and added to the list. An unusual looking mouse was caught one day and I identified as a Sandy Inland Mouse which since has been renamed in this area to a Bolams Mouse.

Several years ago a slightly injured Echidna was released in the site, it had the spines on its back cut off by a lawn mower in Quorn but did not appear to have suffered any serious injuries. Other echidna's have been found on the site since.

A biological survey was done over a period of 5 days and 4 nights by me in March, 2006. Two pit fall trap lines were used each consisting of six pits, placed at ten meter intervals and a sixty meter fly wire fence connecting the pits. Fifteen Elliot traps and two cage traps were laid around the pit lines. A trap line was placed in the chenopod plain and another in the sandhills. Manual searching for animals and spotlighting was undertaken on three days. From this survey only four mammals were recorded, Cat, Fox, House Mouse and two Bolams Mice. The most abundant by far, at the time were the House Mice. Twelve reptile species were found, two of them new to the site. One amphibian, a new burrowing frog species and twenty eight bird species.

Recently some Striped Faced Dunnarts and Bolams Mice were caught in our work compound. They had their photos taken and then were released. I noticed that the Bolams Mouse has a tail which sheds its skin easily when held by the tail as happened to me and had already happened to another one before we caught them. I presume it is a form of escape from predators. The mouse later chewed off its tail bones that were exposed, leaving it with a stumpy tail the same as the other one.

In February I set up an Anabat listening device which records bat calls flying past it. It was set up for two nights in different locations and 879 calls were recorded. Six species have been identified, five new ones for the site. The mammals list now consists of 14 native species and 6 introduced pest species. I have included the Bottle Nosed Dolphin which was found dead on the beach at Redcliff's and sometimes seen in the gulf there. A Mitchell's Hopping Mouse was recently caught in a trap in our nursery area, unfortunately it was dead, but did prove they were on the site.

The A.A.L.B.G. mammal list now consists of :-

( \* = introduced species)

TACHYGLOSSIDAE –

Short beaked Echidna

*Tachyglossus aculeatus*

DASYURIDAE –

Striped-faced Dunnart

*Sminthopsis macroura*

MACROPODIDAE –

Western Grey Kangaroo

*Macropus fuliginosus*

Euro, Common Wallaroo

*Macropus robustus*

Red Kangaroo

*Macropus rufus*

MOLOSSIDAE –

Southern Freetail-bat

*Mormopterus planiceps*

White-striped Freetail-bat

*Nyctinomus australis*

VESPERTILIONIDAE –

Lesser Long-eared Bat

*Nyctophilus geoffroyi*

Gould's Wattled Bat

*Chalinolobus gouldii*

Chocolate Wattled Bat

*Chalinolobus morio*

Southern Forest Bat

*Vespadelus regulus*

MURIDAE –

Bolam's Mouse

*Pseudomys bolami*

House Mouse \*

*Mus musculus*

Mitchell's Hopping mouse

*Notomys mitchelli*

CANIDAE –

Dog \*

*Canis familiaris*

Fox \*

*Vulpes vulpes*

FELIDAE –

Cat \*

*Felis catus*

LEPORIDAE –

Rabbit \*

*Oryctolagus cuniculus*

BOVIDAE –

Goat \*

*Capra hircus*

DELPHINIDAE –

Common Bottlenose Dolphin

*Tursiops truncatus*

The area north and west of the garden site is a conservation area and used for training of T.A.F.E. students and some biological surveys have been done there in the past. I know that Fat-tailed Dunnarts have been caught there and are possibly in the botanic garden as well.

I hope you found this article of interest.

B.Haase.