**Introduced Animals - Wild Dogs**

It is thought that dingoes arrived in Australia about 4000 years ago and domestic dogs arrived with Europeans from 1788 onwards.



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“Wild dogs” refers to both dingoes and feral domestic dogs because they have been interbreeding for so long.

However, pure dingoes are protected in protected areas such as National Parks.

**Description:**

* A top predator
* Can be any colour from white to black and everything in between.
* mostly short-haired
* Variety of sizes and weights
* Usually weigh between 11-24kg
* Have been known to weigh up to 60kg
* Often hard to distinguish between wild dog and dingo on external appearance alone.

**Behaviour:**

* generally, most active at dawn and dusk
* activity can occur day and night
* intense activity such as hunting
* exploratory activity involves moving over larger areas
* average distance covered per day is 15km
* take frequent short rests during day
* social animals, form packs at times to defend resources, feed, raise pups
* Howl. Dingoes cannot bark. Domestic feral dogs can do both.

**Food:**

* Use a range of hunting techniques.
* ****Hunt individually and in packs
* Diet consists of kangaroo, wallaby, rodents, birds, brushtail possum, wombat, bandicoots, wallabies.

**Habitat:**

* Live in a range of habitats from deserts to alpine areas.
* Have adapted to urban habitats as well
* Mostly shelter in dens which can be enlarged rabbit warrens, wombat holes, logs, caves, rock ledges, grasses, debris

**Breeding:**

* Breeding occurs usually once a year, with an average of 5 pups a litter
* Two-thirds of pups usually die in the first year from disease or preyed on by foxes and eagles.
* Lifespan averages 5-7 years

**Effects on wildlife and habitat**

* They carry many different kinds of diseases that can be passed on to livestock and humans.
* Prey on livestock, injuring or killing them.
* They are a great threat to our endangered animals. Endangered species with small populations are more vulnerable to predation than larger populations which are more resilient.
* They will sometimes approach and attack people and pets.

<https://agriculture.vic.gov.au/biosecurity/pest-animals/priority-pest-animals/wild-dog-dingodog-hybrids-feral-or-wild#:~:text=Most%20wild%20dogs%20are%20short,dingoes%20on%20external%20appearance%20alone>.

Government of Victoria: Department of Agriculture. Wild dogs