

imagine

namadgi



expand your horizons

Dingoes and wild dogs

Spot the dingo!

Can you tell the difference between a dingo and a wild dog? The fact is, pure dingoes cannot be distinguished from part dingoes in the field so they are managed as a single entity—wild dogs. In Namadgi National Park, the wild dog population can best be described as dingo with a small proportion of domesticated dog genes. The domestic dog genes came from animals that have escaped, or been released over the last 200 years and have bred with dingoes in the wild.

Naturalised after 4000 years

For around 4000 years, dingoes have been performing the role of higher order predator in Australian ecosystems. Before dingoes, the Thylacine did this but of course is now extinct. Dingoes influence other animal populations, particularly the ones they prey on, including both native and non-native species. It is thought they also help suppress other predators such as the introduced red fox and cat, thus playing a role in maintaining biodiversity.

It's wild life—don't get physical!

If you encounter a wild dog in Namadgi National Park, remember it is a wild animal that is not used to humans. Use the binoculars or your camera zoom to get a closer look but do not physically approach an animal or try to feed it.

If a wild dog approaches you then face the animal, fold your arms whilst keeping eye contact and calmly back away. Never run as this may excite it into closer contact. In the unlikely event of threatening behaviour, strike the animal with a stick or backpack. Report any threatening encounters to Canberra Connect or the Namadgi Visitor Centre.



Dog control

Since early settlement, dingoes were a threat to sheep in this area. Some pastoralists at Gudgenby ran only cattle while others shepherded sheep by day and penned them at night. The remains of a netting dingo fence can still be seen at Orroral. Today wild dogs are controlled in areas adjoining rural properties in order to protect livestock. However, in core areas of Namadgi National Park such as the Gudgenby Valley and the Cotter Catchment, they are protected.



1080 poisoned baits (left), rubber jawed traps (above) and M44 ejector baits are used to manage wild dogs. Baits are buried to minimise impacts on scavenging birds and quolls. On-farm measures also involve fencing and the use of guardian animals such as maremma dogs and llamas.

Dingoes in Namadgi National Park. You can't tell a pure dingo just by its looks. Genetic testing has shown that both pure and part dingoes come in a variety of colours from the classic sandy yellow to black, white and brindle. Their tails may be short or long and bushy.

Further Information
Canberra Connect: 13 22 81



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