

# Dog aware fact



## Avoiding wild dog problems

Wild dogs are found in grazing land, cropping areas, rural-residential estates, bushland, and on the fringes of urban areas. They are common in populated areas where people inadvertently, or sometimes deliberately, dump or neglect dogs, which must then attempt to satisfy their basic requirements for food, water, living space and cover. Domestic dogs can behave like wild dogs if they are allowed to wander and roam.

### What attracts wild dogs?

#### **Food**

Dogs are attracted to live prey, refuse, carrion and waste. Live prey can include livestock, pets and wildlife such as domestic ducks or unprotected animals such as goats.

#### **Disturbance**

Disturbances attract wild dogs as they are keen to take advantage of any opportunity to secure an easy meal. Natural disturbances may be associated with injured animals or provide improved opportunities to catch prey. For example, if a tree falls, a wild dog may look for baby birds in a hollow limb, or small insects in loosened soil. Fires may also attract dogs searching for animals that have been killed or injured.

#### **Water**

Ponds or dams may attract thirsty dogs or those hoping to kill prey that comes to drink.

#### **Other dogs**

Dogs are territorial, so a wild dog may try to drive away, or even kill a domestic dog that enters its territory. Female domestic dogs that have not been desexed may attract male wild dogs when they are on heat.

## Preventing problems

You can prevent unwanted encounters with wild dogs by becoming aware of your landscape and understanding the behaviour and requirements of wild dogs. If you live in an area with wild dogs:

- manage livestock correctly to reduce opportunities for attack
- confine pets so they are not vulnerable
- don't feed dogs, either deliberately or unintentionally
- control food sources such as rubbish, pet food or compost
- dispose of dead livestock by burning or burial.

## Dog problem audit

Factors that are likely to increase problems with dogs can be identified and audited. As you examine an area, refer to the list below and enter a 'Yes' or 'No' for each item.

Mostly 'No' scores indicate that the factors you have assessed are *not likely to be major contributors* to dog problems.

Mostly 'Yes' scores indicate that the factors you have assessed may be contributing to *current dog problems*, or they may *contribute to problems in the future*. The completed table will enable you to identify these factors.

<b>Uncontrolled food</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>
Easy access to home refuse	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Easy access to commercial refuse	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Available food in public areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Open compost heaps	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pets fed outside	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inappropriate disposal of dead livestock	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Access to public refuse tip/bins	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Evidence of deliberate feeding in area	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Road-killed animals common	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**How did you do?**

**Are uncontrolled food sources a problem?**

### **Animal management practices**

Free-ranging domestic dogs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unprotected pets, non-commercial livestock	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unprotected vulnerable livestock	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pets off-leash in 'dog active' area	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unwanted pets dumped in the area	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**How did you do?**

**Are animal management practices a problem?**

### **Landscape factors**

Wild dogs known to be in the area	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Small rural blocks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Large farms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dense crop cover (e.g. sugar cane)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Patches of dense non-crop vegetation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Permanent water	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**How did you do?**

**Is this a good area for wild dogs to live in?**

## **If you are dog aware:**

**You know how to identify and fix factors that might attract wild dogs.**