

## **Progress Report SP 1996-008**

# **Gilbert's potoroo recovery plan**

**Animal Science**

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Approved and active

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**Project Team**

granted

**Program Leader**

granted

**Directorate**

granted

# Gilbert's potoroo recovery plan

A Friend

## Context

Gilbert's potoroo is one of the world's rarest marsupials. The *Gilbert's Potoroo Recovery Plan 2003–2008* provides a list of actions to improve the conservation status of this Critically Endangered species. This project involves, or has involved collaborative arrangements with DEC, South Coast and Warren Regions, South Coast NRM, Murdoch, Edith Cowan and Adelaide Universities, the Royal Zoological Society of South Australia, the Foundation for Australia's Most Endangered Species (FAME), private sponsors and the Albany-based Gilbert's Potoroo Action Group to implement conservation actions.

## Aims

- Implement and update the *Gilbert's Potoroo Recovery Plan*.
- Increase the numbers of individual Gilbert's potoroos known to be alive in the wild and increase the number of locations in which they occur.

## Progress

- A census of the Mount Gardner population of Gilbert's potoroos is conducted three times a year. Numbers have remained stable since 2001 when this regime was introduced. Sixteen potoroos were known to be alive in November 2012.
- The translocated population on Bald Island has grown rapidly from the founder number of ten. Between 60–70 potoroos are known to be alive, and about another 50 have been removed since 2008 and translocated to the enclosure at Norman's Beach, Waychinicup National Park.
- A further nine animals were transferred from Bald Island to the enclosure at Waychinicup National Park. Monitoring of the population in the Waychinicup enclosure by trapping, radio-tracking and motion-activated cameras has shown that the potoroos use vegetation types other than that occupied at Two Peoples Bay, and that breeding and recruitment are occurring (five independent young have been recorded so far). At least 28 potoroos are known to be alive in the enclosure.

## Management implications

- Results of the Bald Island translocation and subsequent monitoring indicate that a new self-sustaining population has been established at a site unaffected by introduced predators and lacking most native predators. This new population will provide better security for the species in the face of the greatest threat to its survival, wildfire at Two Peoples Bay. It also provides a source of potoroos for future translocations to secure sites.
- Establishment of potoroos at the Waychinicup enclosure in vegetation types different from those used at Two Peoples Bay implies that a wider range of potential translocation sites may be available than previously believed.

## Future directions

- Continue to monitor the Mount Gardner, Bald Island and Waychinicup National Park (enclosure) populations. Continue to monitor the enclosure for incursion by cats or foxes. Implement structured trapping to determine habitat use.
- Undertake trials of Eradicat® cat bait on non-target species at Two Peoples Bay and Waychinicup National Park.
- Evaluate further translocation sites, both on the mainland and on other islands.

- A paper on the population dynamics of Gilbert's potoroo at Two Peoples Bay will be submitted for publication.