Concept Plan SP 2017-001

Understanding and reducing python predation of the endangered Gilbert's potoroo

Animal Science

Project Core Team

Supervising Scientist	David Pearson
Data Custodian	David Pearson
Site Custodian	

Project status as of Jan. 3, 2019, 3:53 p.m.

Approved and active

Document endorsements and approvals as of Jan. 3, 2019, 3:53 p.m.

Project Team	granted
Program Leader	granted
Directorate	granted

Understanding and reducing python predation of the endangered Gilbert's potoroo

Biodiversity and Conservation Science Program

Animal Science

Departmental Service

Service 6: Conserving Habitats, Species and Communities

Aims

To determine the most effective ways to locate, trap and remove carpet pythons from in and and around Gilbert's Potoroo populations and so significantly reduce the current level of python predation.

Expected outcome

Reduced python predation of the critically endangered Gilbert's Potoroo, to prevent its extinction within the Waychinicup enclosure and so that recruitment is improved and more potoroos are available for translocations to other sites.

Since carpet pythons are important predators of a number of threatened mammals, the project would have applications beyond potoroo conservation and could assist with reducing python predation in other enclosures and even in field situations with wild populations if required.

Strategic context

The project will have immediate benefits in reducing python predation. Various techniques will be trialled to locate pythons that will have value in the future both for ecological work on pythons but also in curtailing python predation of threatened mammals (or birds, or reptiles) in other situations. Consequently, the information could be used by other researchers/ managers with predation problems within enclosures or in wild populations both in WA and elsewhere.

Techniques to locate pythons will be trialled and transfer of this information to operations staff will occur directly during the project. Information collected will be reported in refereed scientific journals and in internal reports and flyers to staff.

Expected collaborations

The project would involve working with South Coast regional staff, Department of Defence environmental staff (for trials of capture boxes on Garden Island) and amateur herpetologists/ volunteers who would be recruited to help locate pythons.

Proposed period of the project

March 27, 2017 – June 30, 2019

Staff time allocation

Role	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Scientist	0.2	0.2	0.2
Technical	0.2	0.2	0.2
Volunteer	0.1	0.1	0.1
Collaborator	0.1	0.1	0.1

Indicative operating budget

Source	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Consolidated Funds (DPaW)	20 000	14500	15000
External Funding	0	0	0