Progress Report STP 2017-041 (FY 2018-2019)

Survey methods and ecology of the numbat population at the Upper Warren region

Animal Science

Project Core Team

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Project Team	granted
Program Leader	granted
Directorate	granted

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A Wayne

Progress Report

This PhD study aims to improve the understanding of the numbat population in the Upper Warren region (UWR), to inform management for the conservation of this endangered species. The objectives are to develop robust survey methods for numbat population monitoring, and to determine anthropogenic and environmental factors influencing the population.

As reported previously, earlier fieldwork established that sign surveys were most suitable for numbat detection in the UWR. For the final fieldwork component of this study, 78 sites were established within a forested area of approximately 140,000 ha. Stratified random sampling was used to explore numbat occupancy rates in different key habitats. Habitat categories consisted of areas with different timber harvest- and fire histories, fox baiting intensities and forest types (Wandoo and Jarrah). During four repeat surveys, more than 800 numbat scats were found at 65/78 sites, resulting in a naïve occupancy rate of 83%. Preliminary results show that numbats appear to be generalists with no clear preference for any key habitat. Fieldwork for this project has been completed, and several papers are being prepared for publication.