

## **Progress Report SP 2012-025**

# **Barrow Island Threatened and Priority fauna species translocation program**

**Animal Science**

### **Project Core Team**

<b>Supervising Scientist</b>	Keith Morris
<b>Data Custodian</b>	Keith Morris
<b>Site Custodian</b>	Keith Morris

### **Project status as of July 5, 2016, 11:49 a.m.**

Approved and active

### **Document endorsements and approvals as of July 5, 2016, 11:49 a.m.**

<b>Project Team</b>	granted
<b>Program Leader</b>	granted
<b>Directorate</b>	granted

# **Barrow Island Threatened and Priority fauna species translocation program**

K Morris, N Thomas, AH Burbidge, J Angus, S Garretson

## **Context**

Barrow Island nature reserve is one of Australia's most important conservation reserves, particularly for mammal and marine turtle conservation. It has also been the site of a producing oil field since 1964. In 2003 the WA Government approved the development of the Gorgon gas field off the north west of Barrow Island, and associated LNG plant on Barrow Island, subject to several environmental offset conditions. One of these was the threatened and priority fauna translocation program that provides for the translocation of selected Barrow Island fauna species to other secure island and mainland sites. This will assist in improving the conservation status of these species, and also allow the reconstruction of the fauna in some areas. It was also an opportunity to examine the factors affecting translocation success, and improve these where necessary. Targetted species are the golden bandicoot, brushtail possum, spectacled hare-wallaby, boodie, water rat, black and white fairy-wren, and spinifexbird.

## **Aims**

- Successfully translocate selected mammal and bird species from Barrow Island to other secure island and mainland sites.
- Reconstruct the fauna in areas where these species have become locally extinct.
- Ensure ongoing appropriate management at the translocation sites, particularly introduced predators.
- Develop and refine protocols for fauna translocation and monitoring.

## **Progress**

- Golden bandicoots from the captive population within the enclosure at Matuwa (Lorna Glen) were translocated outside the enclosure in September 2015 and appear to have established following an intensive feral cat and dog control program.
- Golden bandicoots and boodies translocated from Barrow Island to the fenced enclosure at Matuwa in 2010 were monitored and continue to maintaining good body/reproductive condition.
- Golden bandicoots introduced to Doole Island from Barrow Island in 2011 were monitored and found to now occupy most of the island.
- A camera trap array was used to estimate the occupancy of spectacled hare-wallabies on Hermite island and showed that the hare-wallabies have continued to expand and now occupy most of the island.
- Black-and-white fairy-wrens and spinifexbirds translocated from Barrow Island to Hermite Island in 2010/11 were monitored. Both species have shown strong increases in population size and spinifexbirds have self-dispersed to six additional islands.
- The Barrow Island fauna translocation strategy was finalised.
- An annual report on progress was provided to Chevron.
- A draft Montebello Islands Conservation Park Management Guideline was prepared by the Pilbara Region.

## **Management implications**

Arid zone rangelands fauna reconstruction and conservation techniques developed by this project will have broad state and national application. The outcomes of the project will contribute to the management of Parks and Wildlife rangeland properties and provide guidance for future fauna reconstruction, e.g. Dirk Hartog Island. It will also contribute to an improvement in the conservation status of several threatened fauna taxa. The draft management guidelines for the Montebello Islands Conservation Park identify that the Pilbara Region will assume responsibility for monitoring fauna on the Montebello Islands after 2023, when current Gorgon funding ceases.

## Future directions

- Continue to implement the Barrow Island fauna translocation strategy.
- Develop and implement the fauna translocation plan based on outcomes from March 2015 workshop.
- Research into the effectiveness of feral cat baiting at Cape Range to be undertaken in 2016/17 so that an integrated fox/cat baiting regime can be developed to support the locality becoming a possible reintroduction site.
- Ongoing monitoring of the translocated mammals and birds at all the release sites.
- Continue to plan for an expanded fenced enclosure at Matuwa in the context of a joint management agreement for the Indigenous Protected Area with Martu traditional owners.