

Native marsupial helping revive urban bushland in Perth's north

March 26 2019



Credit: CC0 Public Domain

A native marsupial population that was successfully relocated to a pocket of urban bushland in the northern suburb of Craigie is now helping to regenerate the bush.

Dr. Leonie Valentine, a research fellow with UWA's School of Biological Sciences, is leading the research project to monitor and assess the quenda, a species of bandicoot endemic to south-western WA. Quenda numbers have historically declined due to [habitat loss](#) and predation by feral and domestic animals.

Dr. Valentine said the project involved working with WA's Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions to relocate 43 quenda in 2013 after the City of Joondalup installed a predator-proof fence around Craigie [bushland](#) in 2010. Funding was provided by the National Environmental Science Programme: Threatened Species Recovery Hub.

"We've been monitoring the quenda to assess their [health](#) and measure the population and what we've found is that from the original 43 individuals, the numbers have grown and we've identified an extra 120 quenda. They're all in excellent health and they seem to be breeding well," she said.

Dr. Valentine said the quenda's digging was able to change the nutrient composition and microbial activity of the soil.

"Quenda have very long, sharp claws and they're known for their digging and fossicking habits. What we've also found is that they're digging up a lot of the soil and really changing the micro-habitat in Craigie bushland and we're fascinated to see what that might mean down the track."

Dr. Valentine said one of the most enjoyable parts of the research had involved talking about the project with local people who used the bushland for recreation.

"While we're trapping, monitoring and examining the quenda population we get to interact with all sorts of people," she said. "A lot of people come up to us while we're working and talk to us about the quenda

they've seen and they're very interested in looking for them, which is great."

Provided by University of Western Australia

Citation: Native marsupial helping revive urban bushland in Perth's north (2019, March 26) retrieved 23 June 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2019-03-native-marsupial-revive-urban-bushland.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.