Managing wallabies on King Island

MANAGEMENT THAT WORKS

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King Island

- Flat landscape
- **Moderate climate**
  - Summer av. 20°C
  - Winter av. 8°C
- **Reliable rainfall**
  - 1150mm/year
  - 215 days/year
- **Modified landscape**
  - Closed forest
    - 14% (16 300 ha)
  - Shrubby pasture
    - 20% (21 600 ha)
  - Dairy and beef pastoral
    - 56% (61 800 ha)
Agriculture

- Grazing 1855 – 1860
- Re-established 1869
- 1901 grazing on dunes
- 1900’s dairy industry expansion & increased grazing areas
- Valued at > $30 million
- Beef & dairy
Wallabies

- Partly protected
- Similar behavioural characteristic
- Browsing animals

Bennetts wallaby (Grey roo)

Tasmanian pademelon (Rufous)
History

- **1929**: thought to be extinct
- **1995**: 250,000 Bennetts
- **2008**: 440,000 Bennetts & 250,000 Pademelon
- Agriculture & climate lead to increases
- Increased survival & breeding potential

King Island News, 28 August 1929
Management

- **2013**: Wallaby management co-ordinator
  - Develop control measures, education & engagement
- **Aims**: reduce population densities & browsing pressure
- **Actions**: integrated management
  - Fencing, shooting, neighbour cooperation, 1080
Population monitoring

• Since 2010: Spotlight surveys
• 1100 km$^2$
• Index of population density
• Trends over time
Population trends

- Bennetts higher than state-wide average

**Bennetts:**
- Decreased 66%
- 200/km² – 69/km²

**Pademelons:**
- Decreased 57%
- 23/km² - 10/km²
Management outcomes - culling

- 80 CPPs
- 31 properties
  - $3 per wallaby
- Peaked 2013 – 2015
- Decreased 36%
- ~ 71 600 culled annually

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### Wallaby Crop Protection Permits

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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Issued</th>
<th>Active</th>
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### Wallaby harvest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financial Year</th>
<th>Number of Wallaby harvested</th>
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<tr>
<td>2012/2013</td>
<td>80 000</td>
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<td>2017/2018</td>
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Management outcomes - fencing

- 240 kms
- 21 properties
Results

• Decreased population density
• Increased agriculture production
Results – long-time managing

‘Wongi’
- 15 years
- Fencing, shooting, 1080
- First to pay shooters
- > 28 000 culled
- Pastures & stocking rates increased
Results – short time managing

‘King Island Cattle Company’
• 2 years
• Increased DM kg/ha
• **2016:** 1600/month
• **2018:** 175/month
• Extended grazing periods
• Growth of re-seeded pastures
Conclusion

- Integrated management
- Cooperation
- Reduced population densities
- Provide relief
- Increased agricultural production
- Healthier population
- Application elsewhere
Grazing equivalents - wild animals to domestic stock

- Forester kangaroos
- Bennett's wallabies
- Pademelons
- Wombats
- Brushtail possums

1 dry sheep equivalent (DSE)
(50 kg wether)
• Measured 10ha then using star steel posts with reflectors on top I placed them 200m out from bush and 500m in length.

• 1st property has had no Management program at all, first night 209 were counted second night 221 this giving an average of 215 = to 21.5 wallaby Ha.

• 2nd property has had shooting program for 8yrs first night 57 second night 32, average 44.5 = to 4.45 Ha.

• 3rd property has had Fencing and Shooting program for 6yrs, first night 17 second 11, average 14 = 1.4Ha.