

Zoos Victoria's Priority Species

# EASTERN BARRED BANDICOOT

*Perameles gunnii mainland subspecies*

*Endangered*



The Eastern Barred Bandicoot wouldn't be here without us. In 1988 it was estimated that the mainland subspecies had dwindled down to 200 animals living in Hamilton in western Victoria. In 1991 Zoos Victoria embarked on its commitment to the Eastern Barred Bandicoot and has bred over 690 since.

**ZOOS**  
**VICTORIA**  
*Fighting Extinction*



# Zoos Victoria is committed to Fighting Extinction

We are focused on working with partners to secure the survival of our priority species before it is too late.



**Eastern Barred Bandicoots (EBB) were once widespread across the grasslands and grassy woodlands of western Victoria. These animals are now listed as extinct in the wild. Zoos Victoria has coordinated the Eastern Barred Bandicoot captive breeding program since 1991. Working closely with the Recovery Team, we also work to control introduced predators and manage habitat for reintroduction.**

## KEY PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- Maintain a captive insurance population managed to minimise loss of genetic diversity.
- Establish and enhance community support for the Eastern Barred Bandicoot.
- Achieve a population target of at least 2,500 individuals in Victoria.
- Release the EBB onto Victoria's largest islands where the habitat has been assessed as suitable.
- Trial the suitability of Maremma Guardian Dogs for the protection of Eastern Barred Bandicoots on private land.

## PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Since 1991, Zoos Victoria has:

- Bred over 690 Eastern Barred Bandicoots.
- Released captive bred animals to establish and supplement populations at fox-free sites across Victoria.
- Helped establish a free-ranging population at Woodlands Historic Park with Parks Victoria and Conservation Volunteers Australia in 2012.
- Taken part in a successful trial release on French Island. Island releases may be a key to species recovery.
- Secured \$600,000 to fence private land at Tiverton Station, western Victoria with our partners at Mt Rothwell and Tiverton Property Partnering.
- Undertaken research to improve individual fitness in the captive-breeding program through mate choice trials.
- Established a free ranging population on Churchill Island with Phillip Island Nature Parks in 2015 and Phillip Island in 2017.
- Commenced the trial use of sheep guardian dogs to support unfenced populations of bandicoots.
- Released EBBs with French Island community onto French Island in October 2019.

## THE SPECIES

The Eastern Barred Bandicoot is a small marsupial endemic to south-eastern Australia. Since European settlement, this species has undergone widespread and catastrophic decline in range and abundance on the mainland due to fox predation and habitat loss.

Eastern Barred Bandicoots have one of the shortest gestation periods of any mammal, at just 12.5 days. Females give birth to 1-4 young that remain in the backwards-facing pouch for approximately 55 days. At three months for females and four months for males they are sexually mature.

Their small population size means loss of genetic diversity is another potential threat to the Eastern Barred Bandicoot, making reintroduction to the wild all the more urgent.

## THE PLAN

The following critical next steps will enable Zoos Victoria, along with our partners to move forward knowing that we are doing everything we can to prevent the extinction of this species:

Establish and maintain a population of EBBs on French Island.	\$270,000
Assist the eradication of feral cats from French Island.	\$460,000
Support the genetic health of EBB populations.	\$20,000 p.a
Support EBB fenced reserves to maintain fox-free status.	\$60,000 p.a
Maintain Zoos Victoria's captive insurance populations.	\$850,000
Employ an EBB project officer to coordinate recovery efforts across Victoria.	\$91,000 p.a
Engage French Island community where EBBs may be released.	\$90,000
Activations at our zoos and online that aim to increase community care and knowledge of the species and generate support for the conservation projects.	\$10,000
<b>Total cost over five years</b>	<b>\$2,535,000</b>

## How can I help?

We are in a unique position to secure this species for future generations, but we still need all the support we can get. You can support our Wildlife Conservation Master Plan 2019-2024 by donating at:

[zoo.org.au/donate](https://zoo.org.au/donate)

## PROGRAM PARTNERS

Conservation Volunteers Australia  
[conservationvolunteers.com.au](https://conservationvolunteers.com.au)

Department of Environment,  
Land, Water and Planning  
[delwp.vic.gov.au](https://delwp.vic.gov.au)

Mt Rothwell Biodiversity Interpretation Centre  
[mtrothwell.com.au](https://mtrothwell.com.au)

National Trust of Australia  
[nationaltrust.org.au](https://nationaltrust.org.au)

Parks Victoria  
[parkweb.vic.gov.au](https://parkweb.vic.gov.au)

Phillip Island Nature Parks  
[penguins.org.au](https://penguins.org.au)

Tiverton Property Partnering