



**Above** Chickens can make an easy, tasty meal for chuditch.

## Chuditch and chooks

Chuditch don't discriminate between native and domestic animals when hunting, and both are equally tasty and nutritious. Chicken coops are easy targets, and chuditch will also scavenge from dog bowls or compost with meat scraps.

Because of this, they have often been killed for raiding poultry. This illegal hunting is still a major threat to their survival.

## Chuditch-proof coops

Chuditch-proof coops will also protect your chooks from other predators. Here are some basic features to consider:

- If possible, build on solid concrete slab. If not, dig a 30cm deep trench around and line with bricks, timber, concrete or wire mesh to prevent digging.
- Use small gauge spot-weld mesh for the base and walls with a 30cm perimeter under the coop (chuditch can chew through standard chicken wire!)
- A roof is essential, ensuring there are no gaps that a chuditch can squeeze through.
- Sheets of roofing iron, buried into a depth of 30cm.
- Motion-sensing predator light to scare them off.
- Automatic coop door that closes when dark and chickens have returned to the coop.
- Electric poultry fencing.



## How can you help?

Chuditch are a unique and important part of the Western Australian landscape and there are things we can all do to protect them.

- Avoid rodenticides (particularly second-generation).
- Keep pet cats contained indoors or in a cat run.
- If you live on a property near known chuditch habitat, retain trees and connecting vegetation where possible to act as wildlife corridors and refuges.
- Avoid removing hollow logs which can be used by chuditch as dens.
- If you see a chuditch around your home let the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions know using the Fauna Report Form found on their website [dbca.wa.gov.au](http://dbca.wa.gov.au).

## Acknowledgements

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Australian Government



Department of Biodiversity,  
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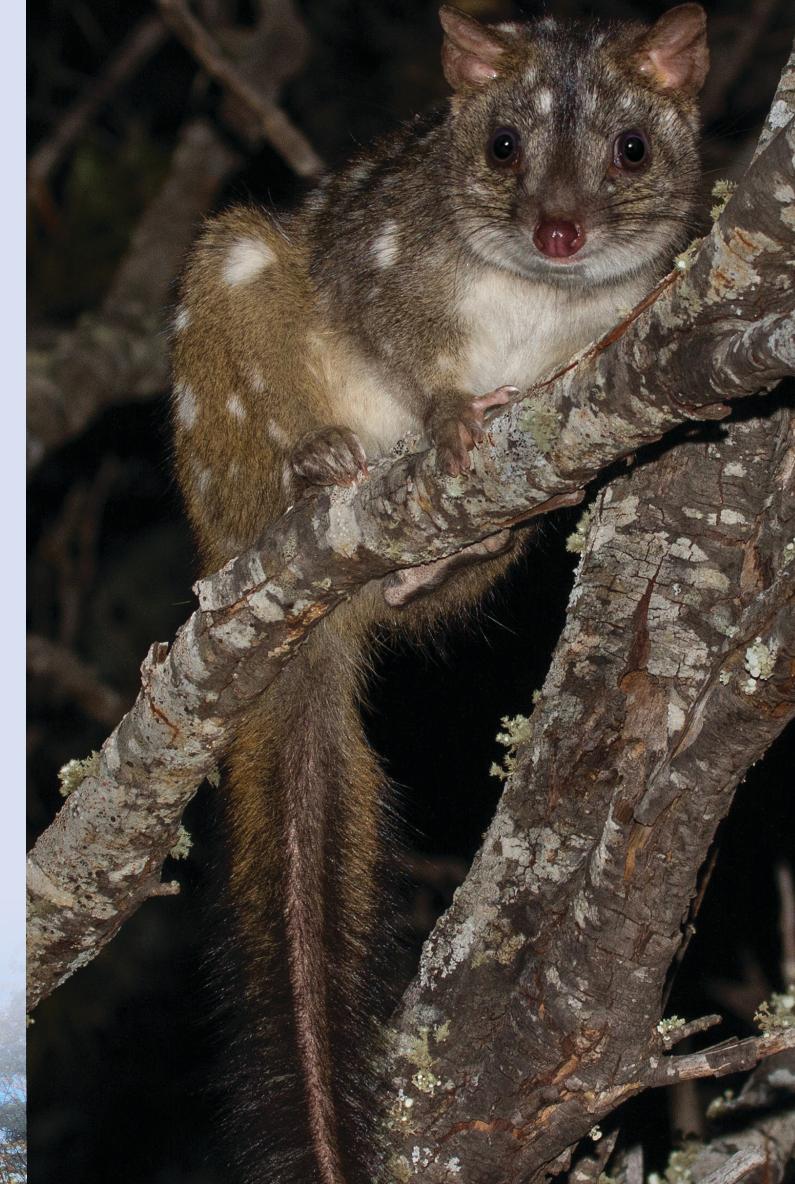
**Cover image** Chuditch are adept climbers. *Photo: John Lawson*  
**Below** Dryandra woodlands.

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# Living with chuditch



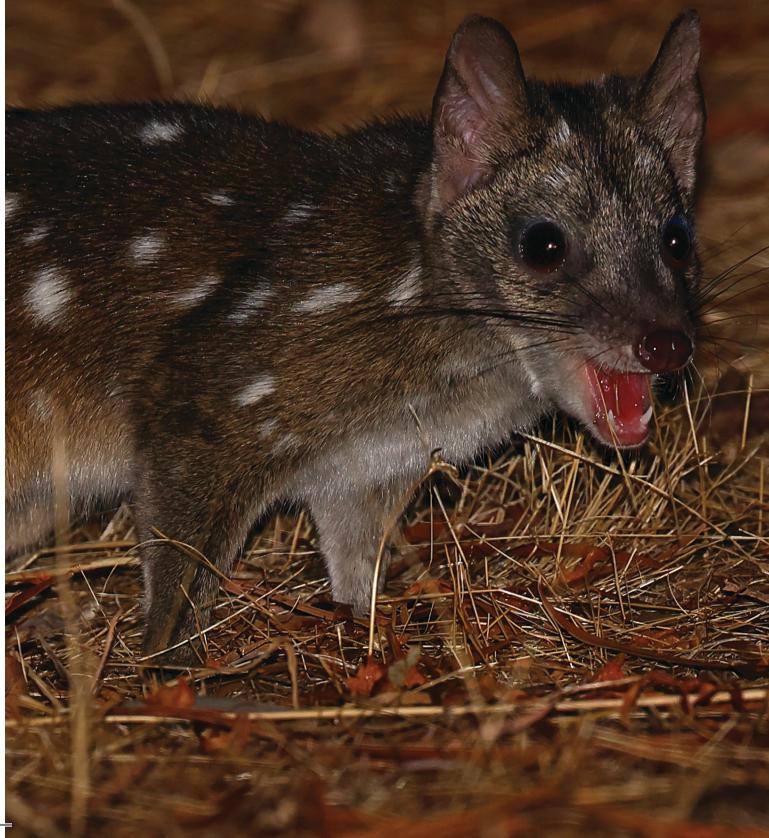
Department of Biodiversity,  
Conservation and Attractions



The chuditch (*Dasyurus geoffroii*) is the largest native marsupial predator in Western Australia, and one of four quoll species in Australia.

Once found across about 70 per cent of the Australian mainland, it is now restricted largely to the south-west of Western Australia. It has a distinct look with white spots on rufous-brown fur and a black brush tail.

Chuditch are currently threatened with extinction and are listed as Vulnerable within Western Australia.



**Left** Chuditch have a distinct spotted appearance. *Photo: Rob McLean*

**Above** Chuditch are WA's largest native marsupial predator. *Photo: DBCA*

## Biology

Chuditch are nocturnal, have a short lifespan of about one to three years, and only weigh about 1.5kg. Being predators, they have sharp teeth and claws that they use for hunting and climbing.

## Diet

Chuditch are opportunistic predators that aren't picky about what they eat. While about 70 per cent of their diet is made up of invertebrates, they will also hunt small birds, mammals and reptiles. Largely foraging on the ground, they aren't opposed to working for their food; traveling up to 5km in a single night or readily climbing to reach prey.

## Habitat

Chuditch are most common in the jarrah forest, but are found in low numbers in the Midwest, Wheatbelt and South Coast regions. Female chuditch den in hollow logs and burrows and have been recorded in tree hollows and cavities.

## Threats

The biggest threats that chuditch face are habitat destruction and fragmentation, and predation by feral cats and foxes. Recently, second-generation rodenticides have been identified as a possible cause of death as a result of second-hand poisoning from chuditch eating poisoned rats/mice.

## Spotted helpers

Chuditch are a threatened species, and it's illegal to harm them—so it's important we learn to live alongside them. Fortunately, they can actually be quite helpful around your home!

As natural predators, chuditch feed on large invertebrates like grasshoppers, cockroaches, spiders, and scorpions. They also help control pest populations by eating rats and mice.

Some rodenticides cause secondary poisoning when the rat/mouse is eaten by a predator. Care should be taken to avoid using these rodenticides to protect native pest controllers like chuditch.

## Western Shield

Western Shield, WA's largest conservation program, aims to protect native species (primarily small and medium-sized mammals and some ground-nesting birds and reptiles) that are vulnerable to predation by introduced predators like foxes and feral cats.

Foxes and cats are managed through baiting, targeting areas that need it most, with the methods reviewed and adjusted over time. And it works! After successfully decreasing fox and cat numbers in the south-west, a recovery was seen in native species including the woylie, chuditch and numbat!

More information can be found on the DBCA website [dbca.wa.gov.au](http://dbca.wa.gov.au)

## Farmers for Fauna

PHCC has been working with landholders surrounding Dryandra Woodland National Park since 2017, providing them with support to control feral cats and foxes on their properties.

If you would like further information regarding the work PHCC are conducting around Dryandra Woodland or would like support controlling feral cats and foxes on your property, visit [peel-harvey.org.au](http://peel-harvey.org.au) email [admin@peel-harvey.org.au](mailto:admin@peel-harvey.org.au) or phone 61 8 6369 8800

**Below** Chuditch are natural rodent control. *Photo: Perth Zoo*

