

PROTECTING DINGOS ON COUNTRY

This is a *Healthy Dogs, Healthy Communities* message from Roper Gulf Regional Council Vet Service

Dogs moving into the bush are putting wild dingos at risk. Dingos are sacred animals and it is important that we all do what we can to protect them. But experts say that by 2050 there may not be any pure dingos left in Australia because of baiting and inbreeding with dogs.

Every dog owner that lives near the bush or hunts with their dog can make a difference. You can do your bit to protect dingos on your country.

Even though dogs look and act like dingos they are not dingos, especially when it comes to the way they breed up.

The way dingos breed is well suited to the Australian bush. They do not overbreed like dogs do.

A dingo will only have pups once a year. She will only have between 3 and 5 pups. The boss female is the only dingo in the pack that will have pups. If any other female dingo has pups the boss female will kill those pups. This means for every dingo pack there are only 3-5 newborns per year.

Dogs breed differently. Dogs in the wild will breed two times every year. Each time they will have about 7 pups. Also every female in a dog pack will have pups. This means that a dog pack might have more than 50 newborns per year.

If dogs breed with dingos over time they turn into wild dogs not dingos. They build up in number. This means more strain on the bush to feed them. It also means more wild dogs for local stations to deal with. This means stations are more likely to lay baits, which also kill dingos.

To help keep dingos and country strong you can

- Keep your dogs with you and well fed. Dogs left alone and hungry go into the bush or go to the dump to find food. They meet up with dingos and breed with them. Give your dogs' good reason to stay home with you. Love and food will keep them at home.
- Desex your dog. The operation stops dogs breeding. If a desexed dog ends up lost in the bush while they are hunting or roaming the dingos will still stay safe.

Healthy Dogs, Healthy Communities, Healthy Country