

The Great Poo Hunt 2014

APPLICATION PACKAGE FOR VOLUNTEERS

PREDATOR SCAT SURVEY

Eastern Tasmania
March – June 2014

DPIPWE's Invasive Species

Branch (ISB) is calling for volunteers to help with field work for a landscape survey of predator scats known as 'The Great Poo Hunt'.

The survey collects important information about the distribution of animals in Tasmania. This allows us to better manage invasive species and wildlife conservation programs.



GET INVOLVED!

Do you have what it takes to join the Poo Crew?

Why would I want to volunteer?

There are many reasons to volunteer, here are just a few:

- Be part of a small team working with scientists and ecologists
- Get off the beaten track on Tasmania's east coast
- Gain field experience in wildlife surveys
- Help in an innovative research and conservation project
- Meet interesting people and make new friends

Who can volunteer?

Anyone with an interest in the outdoors, good observation and concentration skills, and a good level of fitness can volunteer.

The minimum age is 16 but volunteers under 18 years of age must have written permission from a parent or guardian.

What will volunteers do?

Volunteers will be teamed up with a staff member from the ISB or a research student from the University of Canberra to carry out field surveys. There will be two teams per vehicle.

Surveys involve searching for and collecting predator scats within a survey unit. Two survey units are searched per day and each takes 2 hrs 30 min.

How much time do I need to commit?

Due to training requirements, preference will be given to people that are available for at least 5 days work (but this doesn't need to be continuous).

On a standard day, you will start at a base location at 8am and be returned by 6pm. Volunteers are needed for survey work during the week and on some weekends.

Where survey sites are more remote, overnight stays may be required in which case all food and accommodation will be provided.

What do I need to bring?

The survey will be carried out in autumn, a time when weather can be variable. It is recommended that volunteers bring clothing to suit a range of weather conditions.

You will be provided with sunscreen and bottled water. When operating on day trips, you will need to bring all meals and snacks.

What training will I receive?

DPIPWE will conduct induction and training sessions before you start the field work.

You will receive training in field techniques, and use of GPS units and other field equipment, as required.

When and where will the surveys be carried out?

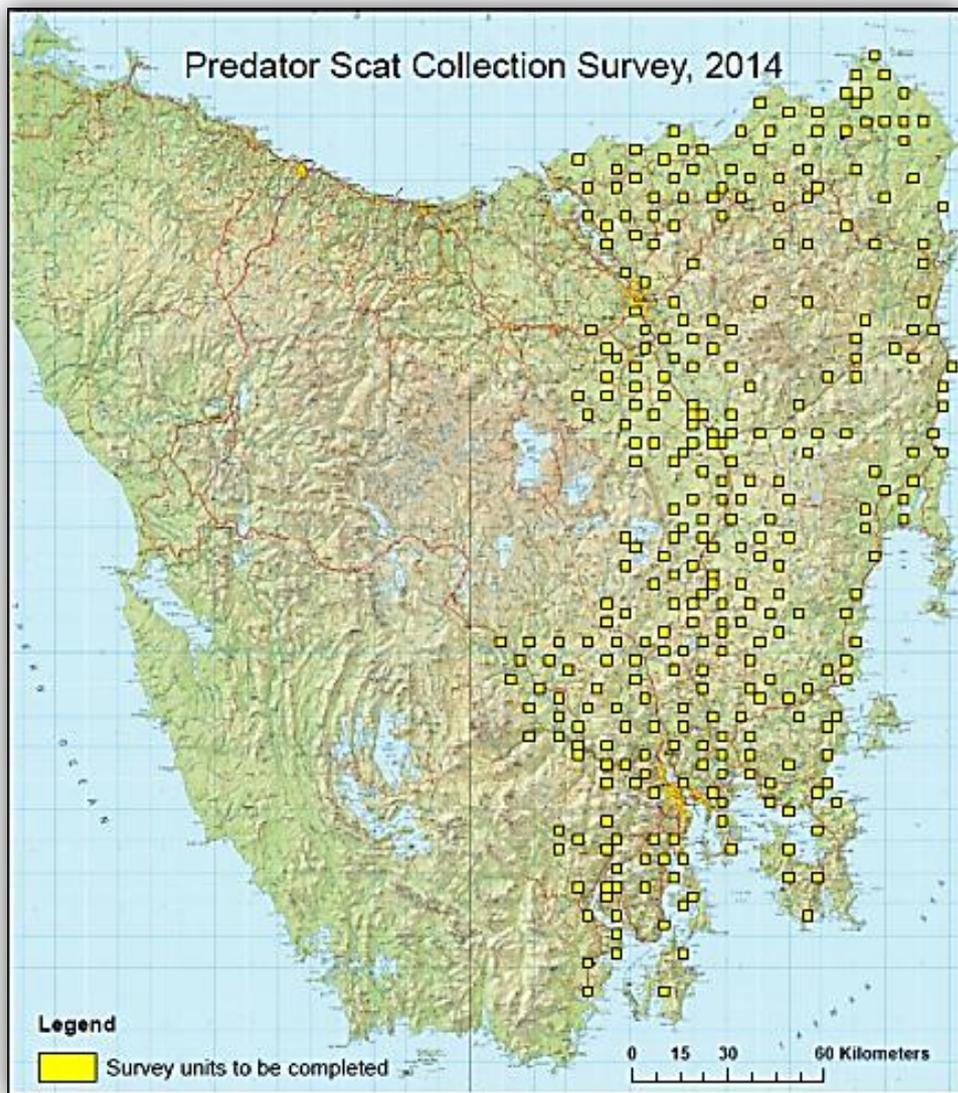
Between 200 and 300 units will be surveyed in eastern Tasmania between March and June 2014.

Survey units have been selected from those used during the first predator scat survey, which was carried out in Tasmania during 2008-2010.

The first survey was an important part of monitoring work for the Fox Eradication Program. All sites in which fox positive scats were located during the first survey will be resurveyed in 2014.

Why are we collecting scats?

Scat surveys are one of the most effective ways of detecting elusive animals when they are in low numbers. Scat surveys have become a key component in many invasive and endangered species monitoring programs.



The threat of invasive species

With the decline of Tasmania's natural top order predator, the Tasmanian devil, there is a high risk of invasive species such as feral cats and foxes establishing or increasing in abundance.

Feral cats are thought to be present throughout Tasmania and have negative impacts on native wildlife and livestock through predation, competition, and disease transmission. They have been implicated in the decline of a number of Australian native animals, especially on islands and in isolated populations, and have been a contributing factor to the failure of some endangered species reintroduction programs.

An accumulation of physical evidence collected since 1998 also indicates widespread fox activity in Tasmania. The European red fox poses a significant threat to Tasmania's wildlife, agriculture, tourism and economy. It would be a total disaster if foxes were allowed to establish in Tasmania.

DPIPWE's Invasive Species Branch was established to monitor and respond to the threat of invasive species in Tasmania. Scat collection and analysis is one of the most effective ways to detect elusive animals at low density and has become a key component in monitoring for signs of invasive species in Tasmania. A predator, such as a fox, may deposit six scats per day in the environment. These scats can last (with viable DNA for identification) for up to three months or more, providing a far greater opportunity for detection than methods which require sighting or trapping what are often cryptic and elusive animals.

Further information about invasive species in Tasmania is available from www.dpipwe.tas.gov.au/invasivespecies

Program partners:



APPLICATION TO VOLUNTEER FOR THE POO CREW

Thank you for your interest in volunteering for ISB's Predator Scat Survey in 2014. Please include all relevant information below. If you have any queries about completing this form, contact Elise Dewar on 0447 914 626.

APPLICANT DETAILS

Title:		
Surname:		
Given names:		
Address:		
Contacts:	Home:	Mobile:
	Email:	
Date of birth:		Sex: Male / Female

Is there any reason why your volunteering work may be restricted? This includes medical conditions or physical disabilities. If yes, please describe.

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Please list the dates that you would be available to volunteer between 3 March and 6 June 2014.

March:
April:
May:
June:

Do you hold any of the following?

Drivers Licence	Yes / No
First Aid Certificate	Yes / No
4WD Course/Experience	Yes / No

Please return the completed forms to:

Elise Dewar
Invasive Species Branch
PO Box 44
HOBART TAS 7001
E: Elise.Dewar@dpipwe.tas.gov.au

