

Greens Perverse Policies Push Native Fauna to Extinction

The Greens Party and their supporters have built much of their political success on the back of numerous campaigns to protect the environment from the ravages of natural resource industries. In the run-up to every election for over 20 years, the Greens have campaigned to stop the harvesting of natural forests to save Australia's threatened species from extinction.

With a range of holocaust images of recently harvested native forests, this simple solution is promoted by the Greens, many environmental charities and activist groups. However, the details of other Green policies can potentially bring perverse biodiversity outcomes and rather than save bird, mammal and reptile species the policies, listed below, have the potential to push many species to extinction.

While the Greens conservation/animal welfare policies may appear to be reasonable, when looked at collectively, they run counter to common sense conservation and potentially lead to perverse conservation outcomes.

As predation by introduced carnivores has resulted in a number of extinctions and other, once common species are now threatened with extinction, the mish mash of Greens policies that will protect, rather than eradicate these introduced predators, are examined below.

How Will the Greens Protect Native Wildlife From Cats and Foxes?

The Tasmanian Greens Environment Policy had the following commitment concerning cat management: <http://greens.org.au/policies/tas/environment>

The Tasmanian Greens will work towards:

"Requiring the microchipping, registration and de-sexing of domestic cats as a first step in a comprehensive feral cat management plan;

Developing a public education process to further protect and control the domestic cat population and to reduce the feral cat population."

Feral Cat Kills a Major Mitchell Cockatoo



Photo courtesy Australian Geographic

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As usual, there are no details on how these policies will be implemented and what will be done to stop the death of over one million birds, mammals and reptiles feral and domestic cats kill every day of the year across Australia.

Further examination of other Greens policies reveal what can and can't be done to control introduced feral predators.

Let us look at the Victorian Greens Animals Policy: <http://greens.org.au/policies/vic/animals>

First the motherhood statements:-

Victoria's biodiversity, including native wildlife and its natural habitat, is of immense value, and must be maintained and enhanced.

The protection of native wildlife, their right to live freely in their natural environments, and the protection, restoration and extension of remaining wildlife habitat.

So how will the Greens Party maintain and enhance our biodiversity and their right to live freely in their natural environments?

The effective control or elimination of populations of feral and pest animals by the most humane methods feasible.

The end of cruel methods of animal control, including the use of leg-hold traps and poison baits such as 1080.

Significantly increased funding for research and adoption of available non-lethal methods, such as exclusion fencing and fertility control, for the management of introduced species.

So the use of 1080 poison will be banned. What will that mean for our native birds, mammals and reptiles? In south east NSW and eastern Victoria, the effective use of 1080 poison baits over the past 10 years to control foxes and wild dogs has resulted in a significant increase in populations of some critical weight range (35 grams to 5.5 kilograms in weight) mammals. Listed threatened species including Southern Brown Bandicoots and Long-footed Potoroo are among the species that have benefited from the use of 1080 poison. The Greens want to push these species back to the brink of extinction.

Ending the use of 1080 poison will allow fox and wild dog numbers to again increase to decimate currently increasing populations of Southern Brown and Long-nosed Bandicoots and Long-footed and Long-nosed Potoroo.

Fox Killing a Long-nosed Bandicoot



Photo Courtesy of the Sporting Shooter Magazine



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World Environment Day 5 June 2016 and the Queensland Greens are again touting their care for the environment. The press release states in part *“Our native wildlife is under more pressure than ever before, due to global warming and damaging developments, including coal and gas mines, which also threaten agriculture.”*

Their failure to mention predation and mega-fire impacts on biodiversity underlines their fundamental ignorance of two of the major threats to Australia’s biodiversity. The two page wildlife plan, *“Protecting Our Native Wildlife”* mentions “Protect, Protection, Protected or Protecting twenty one times, without mentioning predation or mega-fires.

While the Greens have paid some political attention to the containment of domestic cats, their animal welfare policies run counter to sensible conservation management and highlight the danger Greens Party policies pose to Australia's biodiversity.

Feral Fox Killing an Egret



Photo Courtesy Mary Anne Addington

