

# DINGO



## Description

Dingos are a dog-like wolf. They have a long muzzle, erect ears and strong claws. They usually have a ginger coat and most have white markings on their feet, tail tip and chest. Their bushy tail is 25–37 cm long.

## Diet

Dingos are **carnivores** and prey on a variety of animals, ranging in size from insects to rodents, lizards to geese, wallabies and kangaroos to buffalos. Packs of dingos have greater success hunting larger animals like kangaroos whereas individuals are better at hunting smaller prey like rabbits. The dingo often assists keeping pest populations of rabbits and pigs down.

## In the wild

Dingos are often seen alone but many belong to a pack and meet every few days. When they do, there is a lot of howling and scent-marking. The pack's territory size varies depending on the availability of prey so if there is a lot of food available their territory is smaller. Dingos are solitary hunters when small prey is abundant but hunt in packs when larger animals are available.

## Threats

Dingos are under threat from interbreeding with domestic dogs. There are very few pure-bred dingos left in Australia. They may also be persecuted by farmers as they are sometimes seen as a threat to livestock or accidentally poisoned when they eat baits left for feral dogs.

## At Perth Zoo

Perth Zoo's Alpine Dingos, Mirri and Daku, arrived on 30 April 2011. They can be seen in the **Australian Bushwalk**.

## Scientific Name

*Canis lupus dingo*

## Conservation Status

Extinct

Extinct in the Wild

Critically Endangered

Endangered

Vulnerable

Near-Threatened

Least Concern

Data Deficient



**Body Length:** 86–100 cm

**Weight:** 12–24 kg

**Gestation:** 63 days

**Number of young:** 3–4 pups



Distribution ■

**Distribution:** Australian mainland

**Habitat:** All habitats except built up urban areas

## Did you know?

Dingos arrived in Australia some 3500–4000 years ago and eventually occupied all of the Australian mainland including some islands except Tasmania.

While dingos belong to the same family as dogs, there are differences. Dingos do not bark, they only breed once a year and they lack the distinctive 'dog smell' of domestic dogs.

