

Media Release:

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Endangered Golden Bandicoot Species Expands To Three Islands

A small population of Golden bandicoots (*Isoodon auratus*) have just been translocated to a third Territory island to provide three separate island populations in the Wessel Islands, located north east of Arnhem Land.

Once again the Department of Natural Resources, Environment, The Arts and Sport (NRETAS) scientists Carol Palmer and Kym Brennan have worked alongside members of the Indigenous Gumurr Marthakal Ranger group based on Galiwinku, Elcho Island, Traditional Owners, Kakadu National Park and Northern Territory Parks and Wildlife rangers on the recent translocation.

“The overall translocation project has been ongoing for the last four years, resulting in a small number of Golden bandicoots being moved from Marchinbar to Guluwuru in 2007 and 2008,” Ms Palmer said.

“On our recent field trip it was found that the population on Guluwuru was breeding successfully and had expanded, so based on that information we were confident to translocate another small founder population from Marchinbar to Raragala Island.

“Raragala is the second largest in the Wessel group, and we’re sure this third population will thrive, thereby providing three separate island populations.”

The Golden bandicoot, listed as endangered in the Northern Territory and vulnerable nationally, once occurred across much of Australia but today is confined to a few islands off Western Australia, a small area on the far northwest Kimberley mainland, and now because of the translocation three islands within the Wessel Islands in the Northern Territory, Marchinbar, Guluwuru and Raragala.

Ms Palmer said the Northern Territory Island conservation management project has resulted in securing populations of an endangered species in the Northern Territory for the long term.

“The project reinforces the recognition of Territory islands being of critical significance to the conservation of our biodiversity, and is a great example of collaboration between Indigenous ranger groups, government scientists and park rangers,” Ms Palmer said.

The project is supported by NRETAS and Gumurr Marthakal rangers through funding from the Australian Government’s Caring for Our Country.

Ends

Media Note – for more information contact Carol Palmer on 8995 5011

Images –

- 1. Image of Golden bandicoot courtesy of John Papple**
- 2. (LR) Gumurr Marthakal rangers Matthew Atu and Desmond Wunungmurra and NRETAS biodiversity scientist Kym Brennan weigh a golden bandicoot on Guluwuru Island.**

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