

Threatened Species of the Northern Territory

DESERT BANDICOOT

Perameles eremiana

Conservation status

Australia: Extinct

Northern Territory: Extinct

Description

The desert bandicoot was a small to medium-sized (body mass about 250g) species, similar in appearance to the barred bandicoots. It was generally orange-brown above and white below, with one or two dark bands on the hindquarters.

Distribution

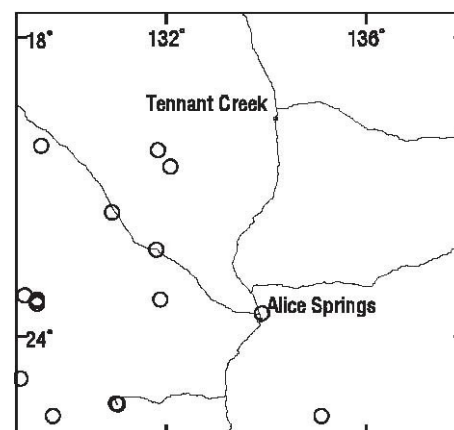
The desert bandicoot formerly occurred in southeast Northern Territory, northeast South Australia and across north central Western Australia. In the NT, it extended as far north as the Tanami desert (Johnson and Southgate 1990).

Conservation reserves where reported:

None (although it formerly occurred in areas that are now included within Uluru Kata-Tjuta National Park and West MacDonnell National Park).

Ecology

The desert bandicoot occupied sand plain and dune environments that supported either hummock or tussock grassland (Burbidge *et al.* 1988).



Known locations of the desert bandicoot.
○ = pre 1970; ● = post 1970

Conservation assessment

The last specimen was obtained in 1943 and it appears to have become extinct in the Northern Territory during the 1960s, following a broad-scale decline extending over at least the previous 50 years (Finlayson 1961; Parker 1973; Burbidge *et al.* 1988; Johnson and Southgate 1990).

Threatening processes

The decline and extinction of the desert bandicoot is attributed to a range of factors including predation by cats and foxes, and habitat alteration due to the impacts of exotic herbivores and to changed fire regimes.

Conservation objectives and management

The species is presumed extinct. No conservation management plan can offer further help.

Complied by

Chris Pavey
[May 2006]

References

- Burbidge, A.A., Johnson, K.A., Fuller, P.F., and Southgate, R.I. (1988). Aboriginal knowledge of animals of the central deserts of Australia. *Australian Wildlife Research* **15**, 9-39.
- Finlayson, H.H. (1961). On central Australian mammals, Part IV. The distribution and status of central Australian species. *Records of the South Australian Museum* **41**, 141-191.
- Johnson, K.A., and Southgate, R.I. (1990). Present and former status of bandicoots in the Northern Territory. In *Bandicoots and bilbies* (eds J.H. Seebeck, P.R. Brown, R.L. Wallis and C.M. Kemper.) pp. 85-92. (Surrey Beatty & Sons, Sydney.)
- Parker, S.A. (1973). An annotated checklist of the native land mammals of the Northern Territory. *Records of the South Australian Museum* **16**, 1-57.