

Feral Goats

We have identified feral goats as non-statutory problem animals in our Animal Pest Management Strategy. This means we recognise they are an undesirable animal in our Region and we will work to control them in important areas of native bush and wildlife habitat. Where required, we will help to control these animals in other areas, but on a user pays basis.

Why are they a pest?

- Goats browse the forest floor, destroying regenerating seedlings and opening up the forest floor so pests like possums can move through it more easily.
- On steeper country close cropping by goats destabilises the soil, causing erosion.
- They carry parasites and diseases which are easily passed onto stock.
- They breed very rapidly. A herd of 30-40 animals can double their population in 2 years. Females, known as nannies, begin breeding as early as six months old and twins are common.

Control

Shooting is one of the best methods of control for private landowners.

Any of the common centre fire rifle calibres will kill goats with well placed shots, although the smaller high velocity calibres such as .222, .223 and .243 are probably the most practicable due to their lower noise, recoil and cost. They will humanely kill goats if hit in the chest or shoulder area. Where goats are living in open or semi-open country the shooter should be positioned in an area that will cover all escape routes.

The herd will usually have a leader, normally an old nanny. By shooting this leader first, followed by any others which appear to be leading, the herd will become confused and may not move as far or as fast. If the coloured animals are shot first the remaining white goats are much easier to see. In heavy cover such as native bush, goats can be stalked to within quite close range. Often their smell or their bleating will give away their location. Always stalk upwind towards goats as they have an acute sense of smell. They also have very good eyesight, which should be taken into account especially in more open country.

Neighbours should be informed of where and when any intended shooting is to take place.

Contact us on free phone 0508 800 800 if you would like more information