

Established invasive species abundance and distribution

Biodiversity | Terrestrial



South Australia's environmental trend and condition report cards 2023



Trend
Stable



Condition
Fair



Reliability
Poor

PRESSURE

Trend

The trend in the abundance and distribution of terrestrial established invasive plants and animals in South Australia is stable.

This trend is based on an assessment of the abundance and distribution of 23 established weeds and pest animals in the state between 2018 and 2022 (top and bottom figures). Most of these nationally important weeds and pest animals are considered stable across South Australia except for feral deer and Chilean needle grass.

Feral deer is the only pest with a trend in abundance that is getting worse on a statewide scale. Feral deer numbers have increased in the Limestone Coast (LC), Hills and Fleurieu (HF), Murraylands and Riverland (MR), Green Adelaide (GA), Eyre Peninsula (EP), and Northern and Yorke (NY) landscape regions. Since 2019, landholders have been required to destroy all feral deer in an effort to reduce associated environmental, economic and social impacts.

Chilean needle grass is the only species that is getting better across the state.

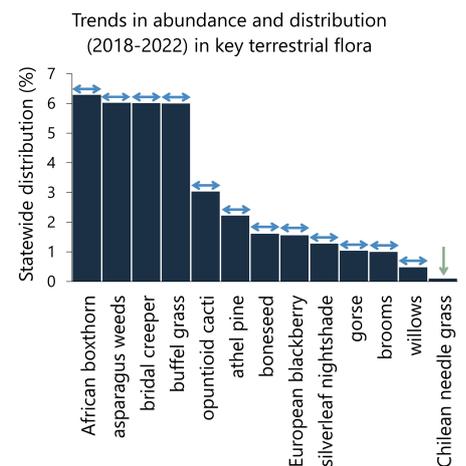
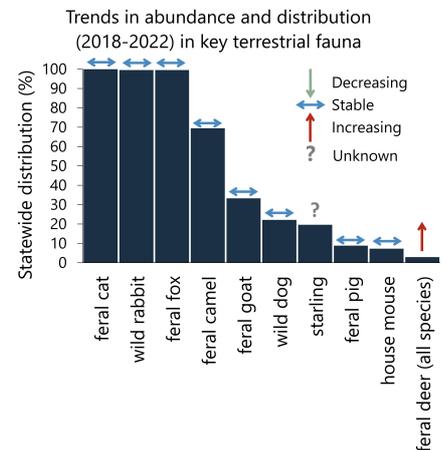
Condition

The statewide condition of the terrestrial environment due to established invasive species is rated as fair.

Invasive species have a moderate impact on the environmental, social and economic values of natural resources. The degree of impact varies depending on the species, environment and land use and management.

Five out of the 9 landscape regions were rated as having a 'fair' condition (GA, LC, MR, SA Arid Lands (SAAL) and NY). Kangaroo Island (KI) was the only region rated as 'poor', mainly due to the impact feral cats have on the environment and economy. Alinytjara Wilurara (AW), HF and EP regions were rated as 'good'.

Abundance and distribution of established terrestrial invasive species is stable in South Australia.



Why is managing terrestrial invasive species important?

Invasive species kill and compete with crops, pasture, livestock, and native flora and fauna; carry and spread diseases; reduce the value of our natural and built areas, including areas of cultural significance; and impact the structure and function of ecosystems and biodiversity.

Since 1960, invasive species have cost Australia more than \$389 billion in impacts and management. Each year landholders spend on average more than \$11,000 on weed and pest animal control.

What are the drivers?

Weeds and pest animals have dispersed beyond their natural range and become established. Human activity is the main driver of this dispersal, and several factors enable these species to become established.

The distribution and abundance of established invasive species can change in response to the availability of resources (food, water and shelter), climate, fire, land clearance, and land management practices.

What is being done?

Management and control methods are tailored for each species in line with current threats and opportunities. Methods may include community education and support, coordinated shooting or removal of pest animals, and treatment of weeds.

Regional programs seek to manage established terrestrial invasive species. South Australia is currently undertaking a feral pig eradication program on Kangaroo Island and a feral deer eradication program on the mainland.

For further information see: [technical information](#)



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