

Native fauna: percentage declining



South Australia's environmental trend and condition report cards 2023

Biodiversity | Terrestrial



Trend
Getting worse



Condition
Unknown

☆☆☆ Reliability
☆☆☆ Poor

STATE

Trend

The percentage of terrestrial native fauna species declining is getting worse, but this trend has poor reliability.

This assessment is based on results for 523 of 752 terrestrial native fauna species. Notable examples include warru (black-footed rock-wallaby), malleefowl, pygmy copperhead, burrowing frog and glossy black cockatoo. This report card includes analyses of unstructured data to try to maximise the number of species able to be assessed. The low reliability score reflects potential biases and limitations of this approach, which was still only able to assess 69.5% of species. Note that this assessment does not include any invertebrates.

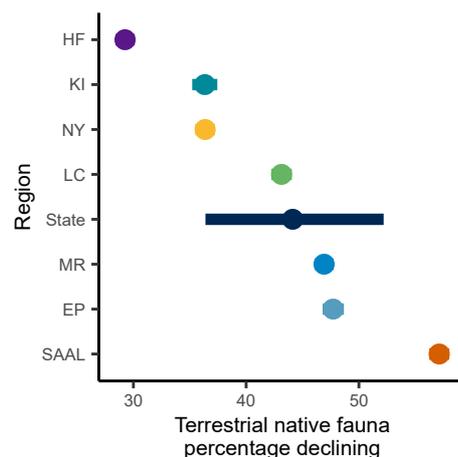
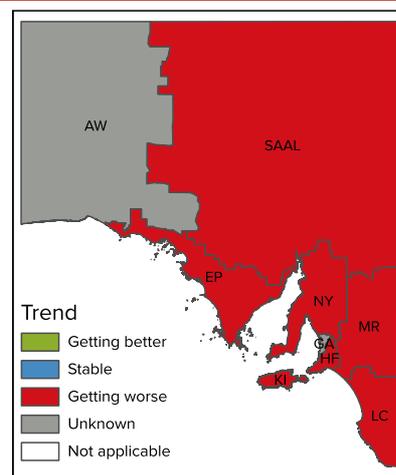
When compared to a 2002 baseline, this 2022 assessment indicates the percentage of species showing a declining trend is getting worse in 7 regions (Hills and Fleurieu (HF), Eyre Peninsula (EP), Kangaroo Island (KI), Northern and Yorke (NY), South Australian Arid Lands (SAAL), Murraylands and Riverland (MR) and Limestone Coast (LC)) and unknown in 2 regions (Alinytjara Wilurara (AW) and Green Adelaide (GA)) (top figure).

Condition

The estimated percentage of terrestrial native fauna species declining is 44.1%, however the condition is rated as unknown as there are no agreed benchmarks.

Species were defined as 'declining' if the rate at which they were recorded showed a greater than 90% chance of a reduction, between 2002 and 2022. An estimated 44.1% of terrestrial native fauna are declining in South Australia. At the regional level, estimates are 29.3% for HF, 36.3% for KI, 36.4% for NY, 43.1% for LC, 46.9% for MR, 47.7% for EP and 57.1% for SAAL (bottom figure).

The percentage of terrestrial native fauna species declining is getting worse, but this trend has poor reliability.



Why are terrestrial native fauna important?

Terrestrial native fauna is an integral part of First Nations cultures and an important part of South Australia's biodiversity. Species such as Australian magpie, red kangaroo and sleepy lizard are iconic, and many other species are found nowhere else on Earth. The state's terrestrial native fauna improves ecosystem and agricultural health through pollination, predation, herbivory and soil turnover. Collectively, native fauna helps people connect with nature, contributing to physical and mental wellbeing.

What are the pressures?

Terrestrial native fauna is impacted by land clearance that leads to habitat loss, degradation and fragmentation.

Land clearance is usually accompanied by a suite of other pressures such as changed grazing and fire regimes; changed communities of insects, diseases, pest plants and pest animals; and increasing salinity. Climate change adds a further pressure to native fauna if they cannot disperse or adapt.

What is being done?

Terrestrial native fauna and their habitats in South Australia are protected by national and state legislation. Terrestrial native fauna is also managed through activities such as reintroduction, revegetation, managing access through fencing, managing grazing and fire regimes, controlling pest plants and animals, and through threatened species recovery initiatives.

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



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Government of South Australia