

5.32 Wallabies (Family Macropodidae)

Why are they a threat?

Wallaby species known to occur in New Zealand within the Family Macropodidae include (but are not limited to) the following species:

- Bennett's wallaby (*Macropus rufogriseus rufogriseus*)
- Dama wallaby (*Macropus eugenii*)
- Parma wallaby (*Macropus parma*)
- Brush-tailed rock wallaby (*Petrogale penicillata*)
- Swamp wallaby (*Wallabia bicolor*)

At high densities in New Zealand, wallabies can have significant adverse environmental effects. These include the prevention of

regeneration of native bush, depletion of forest under-storey and possible impacts on water quality. Wallabies also damage tall tussock grasslands, including the inter-tussock vegetation that can become depleted with a consequent increase in bare ground and increased risk of soil erosion. Economic effects include damage to pasture with anecdotal evidence of complete clearance of cover in places. There is evidence of wallabies grazing on green feed crops particularly where these border suitable cover.

Wallabies also damage exotic forests, particularly at the establishment stage, with damage being more serious in areas bordering native bush or scrub areas.

The majority of the Marlborough district is highly suitable habitat for wallabies. This ranges from the regenerating scrub/forest ecosystems in the Marlborough Sounds (Dama wallaby) to the extensive short tussock grasslands and scrub of South Marlborough (Bennett's wallaby). If programmes to contain or manage the Bennett's wallaby in South Canterbury continue, threat from overland natural dispersal is unlikely. However, the immediate threat is wallabies that have been raised as pets from joeys then escape or deliberately released to create new hunting opportunities.

Objective

Over the duration of the RPMP, prevent the establishment of wallabies (Family Macropodidae) in the Marlborough district to prevent future impacts on economic wellbeing, the environment and enjoyment of the natural environment.

Intermediate Outcome:

Exclusion	Eradication	Progressive Containment	Sustained Control	Site-led
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Principle measures to achieve the objective

1) Council Inspection and Service Delivery

Inspection by Council may include staff or contractors:

- Delivering a service to respond and investigate sightings of wallabies in Marlborough.
- Delivering a service to control wallabies if required, in liaison with the occupier.
- Visiting properties or doing surveys to determine whether pests are present.
- Monitoring effectiveness of control.
- Carry out control using administrative powers of the Biosecurity Act 1993, if necessary.



2) Requirement to Act

Land owners and/or occupiers or other persons may be required to act where rules or statutory obligations dictate

- a) The presence of pests is to be reported.

3) Advocacy and Education

Council may:

- a) Encourage land owners and/or occupiers and other persons to report any pests they find.
- b) Facilitate or commission research.

Rules

Rule 5.32.2.1

All persons are required to notify Council of any suspected wallabies (Family Macropodidae) observed within 5 working days of the initial observation.

A breach of this rule will create an offence under section 154N(19) of the Biosecurity Act.

Rule 5.32.2.2

No person shall have in their possession or keep in captivity on a place they occupy, any live wallabies (*Family: Macropodidae*).

Note: This rule does not derogate in any way from the statutory obligation of persons under section 52 and 53 of the Biosecurity Act 1993.

A breach of this rule will create an offence under section 154N(19) of the Biosecurity Act.

Explanation of the rule:

The purpose of Rule 5.32.2.1 is in accordance with section 73(5)(a) for the entire community to assist Council with surveillance. Requiring people to notify Council of sightings, in addition to Council's own surveillance, will assist Council in achieving the objective of the programme. Any animal(s) released or being kept illegally within the district can be found and managed appropriately to prevent establishment.

The purpose of Rule 5.32.2.2 is in accordance with section 73(5)(e) in that the possession of, and keeping of wallabies is seen as an activity that can affect measures taken to implement the Plan by attempting to introduce new animals to the Marlborough district, or increase the risk of captive animals escaping.

Council as the management agency will administer these rules.