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Mr Jack Gough
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Emily Whittingstall
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Feral animal control by NSW National Parks and Local Land Services

2020/21 - 2022/23

Details

The Invasive Species Council has collated the following figures of feral animals culled by the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) and Local Land Services (LLS) using aerial shooting, ground shooting and trapping for the past 3 financial years (2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23).

The data is taken from information that was provided to the Invasive Species Council by the NSW Government.

Removals through baiting are not included in the data. The species are broken down into feral deer, feral pigs and others.

The data clearly demonstrates that, while aerial control of feral horses has not been permitted in Kosciuszko National Park until October 2023, it is a routine part of feral animal management for other species across the state.¹

About the Invasive Species Council

The Invasive Species Council was formed in 2002 to advocate for stronger laws, policies and programs to keep Australian biodiversity safe from weeds, introduced animals, exotic pathogens and other invaders. It is a not-for-profit charitable organisation, funded predominantly by donations from supporters and philanthropic organisations.

Inquiries

Invasive Species Council

Web: invasives.org.au

Email: contact@invasives.org.au

¹ Note: Data about removal numbers on their own are not evidence for or against the effectiveness of a particular feral animal control program as, among other factors, this is dependent on the number of removals relative to the natural rate of population growth and recruitment of animals from other regions.

Headline figures

All feral animals

- A total of 271,959 feral animals were killed across NSW using aerial shooting, ground shooting and trapping by NPWS and LLS over the financial years from 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23
- Of these, 88% were through aerial shooting (239,034) compared to 6% for ground shooting (15,378) and 6% for trapping (17,547)
- 92,543 were removed by NPWS, with 86% of these using aerial shooting
- 184,627 were removed by LLS, with 89% of these using aerial shooting
- There was a 288% increase in total removals between 2020/21 and 2022/23 (51,619 to 148,650)

Feral deer

- A total of 32,362 feral deer were killed across NSW using all three methods by NPWS and LLS over the financial years from 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23
- Of these, 84% were through aerial shooting (27,138) compared to 14% for ground shooting (4,652) and 2% for trapping (572)
- 16,600 were removed by NPWS, with 94% of these using aerial shooting
- 15,762 were removed by LLS, with 74% of these using aerial shooting
- Feral deer were 18% of total NPWS removals and 9% of total LLS removals
- There was a 148% increase in total removals between 2020/21 and 2022/23 (8,797 to 12,996)

Feral pigs

- A total of 191,952 feral pigs were killed across NSW using all three methods by NPWS and LLS over the financial years from 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23
- Of these, 91% were through aerial shooting (173,923) compared to 2% for ground shooting (3,947) and 7% for trapping (14,082)
- 39,275 were removed by NPWS, with 87% of these using aerial shooting
- 157,888 were removed by LLS, with 92% of these using aerial shooting
- Feral pigs were 42% of total NPWS removals and 86% of total LLS removals
- There was a 413% increase in total removals between 2020/21 and 2022/23 (28,763 to 118,660)

All other feral animals

- A total of 47,645 other feral animals killed across NSW using all three methods by NPWS and LLS over the financial years from 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23
- Of these, 80% were through aerial shooting (37,973) compared to 14% for ground shooting (6,779) and 6% for trapping (2,893)
- 36,668 removed by NPWS with 83% of these using aerial shooting
- 10,977 removed by LLS with 70% of these using aerial shooting
- Other feral animals were 40% of total NPWS removals and 6% of total LLS removals
- There was a 121% increase in total removals between 2020/21 and 2022/23 (14,059 to 47,645)

NPWS and LLS combined figures

Aerial shooting				
Species	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	3 year total
Feral deer	7613	8064	11461	27138
Feral Pigs	26771	39587	107565	173923
Other feral animals	12039	12964	12970	37973
All	46423	60615	131996	239034

Ground shooting				
Species	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	3 year total
Feral deer	1152	2259	1241	4652
Feral Pigs	285	431	3231	3947
Other feral animals	959	2779	3041	6779
All	2396	5469	7513	15378

Trapping				
Species	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	3 year total
Feral deer	32	246	294	572
Feral Pigs	1707	4511	7864	14082
Other feral animals	1061	849	983	2893
All	2800	5606	9141	17547

All methods				
Species	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	3 year total
Feral deer	8797	10569	12996	32362
Feral Pigs	28763	44529	118660	191952
Other feral animals	14059	16592	16994	47645
All	51619	71690	148650	271959

Aerial shooting as a percentage of total kills				
Species	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	3 year total
Feral deer	87%	76%	88%	84%
Feral Pigs	93%	89%	91%	91%
Other feral animals	86%	78%	76%	80%
All	90%	85%	89%	88%

NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service figures

Aerial shooting					
Species	NPWS Region	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	3 yr total
Feral deer	Greater Sydney	148	172	112	432
	Hunter Central Coast	1124	1234	898	3256
	North Coast	12	7	0	19
	South Coast	348	238	213	799
	Blue Mountains	99	116	162	377
	Northern Inland	142	112	100	354
	Southern Ranges	3084	2114	2138	7336
	West	704	1115	1140	2959
	Total	5661	5108	4763	15532
Feral pigs	Greater Sydney	0	0	0	0
	Hunter Central Coast	336	542	380	1258
	North Coast	0	13	26	39
	South Coast	81	152	304	537
	Blue Mountains	890	1024	1873	3787
	Northern Inland	4313	3016	6419	13748
	Southern Ranges	322	392	271	985
	West	4650	2522	6530	13702
	Total	10592	7661	15803	34056
Other feral animals	Greater Sydney	0	0	0	0
	Hunter Central Coast	400	401	276	1077
	North Coast	0	0	0	0
	South Coast	382	291	255	928
	Blue Mountains	783	651	474	1908
	Northern Inland	5320	3598	3756	12674
	Southern Ranges	225	827	421	1473
	West	3856	4589	3769	12214
	Total	10966	10357	8951	30274
All	Greater Sydney	148	172	112	432
	Hunter Central Coast	1860	2177	1554	5591
	North Coast	12	20	26	58
	South Coast	811	681	772	2264
	Blue Mountains	1772	1791	2509	6072
	Northern Inland	9775	6726	10275	26776
	Southern Ranges	3631	3333	2830	9794
	West	9210	8226	11439	28875
	Total	27219	23126	29517	79862
Ground shooting					
Species	NPWS Region	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	3 yr total

Feral deer	Greater Sydney	148	140	118	406
	Hunter Central Coast	0	0	13	13
	North Coast	45	83	55	183
	South Coast	4	38	7	49
	Blue Mountains	0	0	34	34
	Northern Inland	0	20		20
	Southern Ranges	16	15	19	50
	West	30	82	8	120
	Total	243	378	254	875
Feral pigs	Greater Sydney	0	0	0	0
	Hunter Central Coast	0	0	2	2
	North Coast	0	0	44	44
	South Coast	1	0	0	1
	Blue Mountains	0	0	0	0
	Northern Inland	23	70	51	144
	Southern Ranges	36	41	46	123
	West	129	77	49	255
	Total	189	188	192	569
Other feral animals	Greater Sydney	59	86	128	273
	Hunter Central Coast	0	17	48	65
	North Coast	9	0	0	9
	South Coast	115	71	12	198
	Blue Mountains	0	0	0	0
	Northern Inland	37	31	33	101
	Southern Ranges	87	578	284	949
	West	442	1141	1777	3360
	Total	749	1924	2282	4955
All	Greater Sydney	207	226	246	679
	Hunter Central Coast	0	17	63	80
	North Coast	54	83	99	236
	South Coast	120	109	19	248
	Blue Mountains	0	0	34	34
	Northern Inland	60	121	84	265
	Southern Ranges	139	634	349	1122
	West	601	1300	1834	3735
	Total	1181	2490	2728	6399
Trapping					
Species	NPWS Region	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	3 yr total
Feral deer	Greater Sydney	0	5	1	6
	Hunter Central Coast	0	10	2	12
	North Coast	0	0	7	7
	South Coast	0	57	81	138
	Blue Mountains	0	4	10	14
	Northern Inland	0	0	14	14

	Southern Ranges	0	0	0	0
	West	0	2	0	2
	Total	0	78	115	193
Feral pigs	Greater Sydney	1	7	0	8
	Hunter Central Coast	0	145	162	307
	North Coast	19	87	61	167
	South Coast	0	13	23	36
	Blue Mountains	279	528	369	1176
	Northern Inland	496	717	604	1817
	Southern Ranges	111	62	181	354
	West	184	375	226	785
	Total	1090	1934	1626	4650
Other feral animals	Greater Sydney	4	1	12	17
	Hunter Central Coast	6	16	25	47
	North Coast	16	11	30	57
	South Coast	67	70	36	173
	Blue Mountains	7	0	119	126
	Northern Inland	40	173	75	288
	Southern Ranges	306	85	264	655
	West	71	0	5	76
	Total	517	356	566	1439
All	Greater Sydney	5	13	13	31
	Hunter Central Coast	6	171	189	366
	North Coast	35	98	98	231
	South Coast	67	140	140	347
	Blue Mountains	286	532	498	1316
	Northern Inland	536	890	693	2119
	Southern Ranges	417	147	445	1009
	West	255	377	231	863
	Total	1607	2368	2307	6282
All methods					
Species	NPWS Region	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	3 yr total
Feral deer	Greater Sydney	296	317	231	844
	Hunter Central Coast	1124	1244	913	3281
	North Coast	57	90	62	209
	South Coast	352	333	301	986
	Blue Mountains	99	120	206	425
	Northern Inland	142	132	114	388
	Southern Ranges	3100	2129	2157	7386
	West	734	1199	1148	3081
	Total	5904	5564	5132	16600
Feral pigs	Greater Sydney	1	7	0	8
	Hunter Central Coast	336	687	544	1567
	North Coast	19	100	131	250

	South Coast	82	165	327	574
	Blue Mountains	1169	1552	2242	4963
	Northern Inland	4832	3803	7074	15709
	Southern Ranges	469	495	498	1462
	West	4963	2974	6805	14742
	Total	11871	9783	17621	39275
Other feral animals	Greater Sydney	63	87	140	290
	Hunter Central Coast	406	434	349	1189
	North Coast	25	11	30	66
	South Coast	564	432	303	1299
	Blue Mountains	790	651	593	2034
	Northern Inland	5397	3802	3864	13063
	Southern Ranges	618	1490	969	3077
	West	4369	5730	5551	15650
	Total	12232	12637	11799	36668
All	Greater Sydney	360	411	371	1142
	Hunter Central Coast	1866	2365	1806	6037
	North Coast	101	201	223	525
	South Coast	998	930	931	2859
	Blue Mountains	2058	2323	3041	7422
	Northern Inland	10371	7737	11052	29160
	Southern Ranges	4187	4114	3624	11925
	West	10066	9903	13504	33473
	Total	30007	27984	34552	92543

Aerial shooting as a percentage of total kills					
Species	NPWS Region	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	3 yr total
Feral deer	Greater Sydney	50%	54%	48%	51%
	Hunter Central Coast	100%	99%	98%	99%
	North Coast	21%	8%	0%	9%
	South Coast	99%	71%	71%	81%
	Blue Mountains	100%	97%	79%	89%
	Northern Inland	100%	85%	88%	91%
	Southern Ranges	99%	99%	99%	99%
	West	96%	93%	99%	96%
	Total	96%	92%	93%	94%
Feral pigs	Greater Sydney	0%	0%	#DIV/0!	0%
	Hunter Central Coast	100%	79%	70%	80%
	North Coast	0%	13%	20%	16%
	South Coast	99%	92%	93%	94%
	Blue Mountains	76%	66%	84%	76%
	Northern Inland	89%	79%	91%	88%
	Southern Ranges	69%	79%	54%	67%
	West	94%	85%	96%	93%
	Total	89%	78%	90%	87%

Other feral animals	Greater Sydney	0%	0%	0%	0%
	Hunter Central Coast	99%	92%	79%	91%
	North Coast	0%	0%	0%	0%
	South Coast	68%	67%	84%	71%
	Blue Mountains	99%	100%	80%	94%
	Northern Inland	99%	95%	97%	97%
	Southern Ranges	36%	56%	43%	48%
	West	88%	80%	68%	78%
	Total	90%	82%	76%	83%
All	Greater Sydney	41%	42%	30%	38%
	Hunter Central Coast	100%	92%	86%	93%
	North Coast	12%	10%	12%	11%
	South Coast	81%	73%	83%	79%
	Blue Mountains	86%	77%	83%	82%
	Northern Inland	94%	87%	93%	92%
	Southern Ranges	87%	81%	78%	82%
	West	91%	83%	85%	86%
	Total	91%	83%	85%	86%

Local Land Services figures

Aerial shooting					
Species	LLS Region	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	3 yr total
Feral deer	Greater Sydney	0	19	0	19
	Hunter	289	369	934	1592
	North West	0	7	3340	3347
	Northern Tablelands	901	1015	863	2779
	Western	0	57	35	92
	Riverina	153	77	89	319
	Murray	90	605	827	1522
	South East	519	807	610	1936
	Central Tablelands	45	180	390	615
	Central West	167	230	285	682
	North Coast	0	0	0	0
	Total		1952	2956	6698
Feral pigs	Greater Sydney	0	0	0	0
	Hunter	3101	6875	10792	20768
	North West	1942	1228	17192	20362
	Northern Tablelands	1509	7444	11167	20120
	Western	113	3091	18948	22152
	Riverina	3601	3381	10139	17121
	Murray	1644	246	1045	2935
	South East	589	4003	2502	7094
	Central Tablelands	1136	1046	3389	5571
	Central West	2544	4612	21799	28955
	North Coast	0	0	0	0
	Total		16179	31926	96973
Other feral animals	Greater Sydney	0	0	0	0
	Hunter	93	216	272	581
	North West	143	210	1120	1473
	Northern Tablelands	0	94	639	733
	Western	71	22	413	506
	Riverina	381	341	660	1382
	Murray	74	32	45	151
	South East	219	1590	594	2403
	Central Tablelands	58	54	62	174
	Central West	34	48	214	296
	North Coast	0	0	0	0
	Total		1073	2607	4019
All	Greater Sydney	0	19	0	19
	Hunter	3483	7460	11998	22941
	North West	2085	1445	21652	25182
	Northern Tablelands	2410	8553	12669	23632
	Western	184	3170	19396	22750

Riverina	4135	3799	10888	18822
Murray	2484	8491	12075	23050
South East	332	4738	19577	24647
Central Tablelands	3812	3512	10290	17614
Central West	2668	5265	22840	30773
North Coast	519	807	610	1936
Total	19204	37489	107690	164383

Ground shooting					
Species	LLS Region	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	3 yr total
Feral deer	Greater Sydney	11	139	295	445
	Hunter	11	8	7	26
	North West	0	0	0	0
	Northern Tablelands	0	0	0	0
	Western	0	0	0	0
	Riverina	0	0	0	0
	Murray	86	0	0	86
	South East	801	1734	685	3220
	Central Tablelands	0	0	0	0
	Central West	0	0	11	11
	North Coast	0	0	0	0
	Total		909	1881	987
Feral pigs	Greater Sydney	3	0	0	3
	Hunter	32	11	8	51
	North West	0	0	44	44
	Northern Tablelands	0	0	0	0
	Western	48	34	73	155
	Riverina	0	24	12	36
	Murray	0	0	0	0
	South East	13	174	190	377
	Central Tablelands	0	0	23	23
	Central West	0	0	2689	2689
	North Coast	0	0	0	0
	Total		96	243	3039
Other feral animals	Greater Sydney	0	53	110	163
	Hunter	51	42	51	144
	North West	0	0	18	18
	Northern Tablelands	77	48	22	147
	Western	0	33	1	34
	Riverina	65	215	327	607
	Murray	12	0	0	12
	South East	5	304	230	539
	Central Tablelands	0	160	0	160
	Central West	0	0	0	0
	North Coast	0	0	0	0

	Total	210	855	759	1824
All	Greater Sydney	14	192	405	611
	Hunter	94	61	66	221
	North West	0	0	62	62
	Northern Tablelands	77	48	22	147
	Western	48	67	74	189
	Riverina	65	239	339	643
	Murray	12	0	0	12
	South East	53	338	303	694
	Central Tablelands	0	184	12	196
	Central West	86	0	2689	2775
	North Coast	801	1734	685	3220
	Total	1215	2979	4785	8979

Trapping					
Species	LLS Region	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	3 yr total
Feral deer	Greater Sydney	1	0	0	1
	Hunter	0	0	0	0
	North West	0	0	0	0
	Northern Tablelands	0	0	0	0
	Western	0	0	0	0
	Riverina	0	0	0	0
	Murray	0	0	0	0
	South East	27	0	0	27
	Central Tablelands	4	0	0	4
	Central West	0	0	7	7
	North Coast	0	168	172	340
	Total	32	168	179	379
Feral pigs	Greater Sydney	31	108	109	248
	Hunter	176	405	1113	1694
	North West	0	0	68	68
	Northern Tablelands	58	1622	571	2251
	Western	0	0	764	764
	Riverina	168	15	0	183
	Murray	77	44	103	224
	South East	2	0	52	54
	Central Tablelands	0	0	237	237
	Central West	0	0	2660	2660
	North Coast	105	383	561	1049
	Total	617	2577	6238	9432
Other feral animals	Greater Sydney	19	27	33	79
	Hunter	202	199	109	510
	North West	0	25	0	25
	Northern Tablelands	149	93	109	351
	Western	65	59	26	150

	Riverina	1	0	1	2
	Murray	0	0	0	0
	South East	0	0	0	0
	Central Tablelands	0	0	0	0
	Central West	0	0	0	0
	North Coast	108	90	139	337
	Total	544	493	417	1454
All	Greater Sydney	51	135	142	328
	Hunter	378	604	1222	2204
	North West	0	25	68	93
	Northern Tablelands	207	1715	680	2602
	Western	65	59	790	914
	Riverina	169	15	1	185
	Murray	58	1622	571	2251
	South East	0	0	764	764
	Central Tablelands	168	15	0	183
	Central West	0	0	2660	2660
	North Coast	240	473	700	1413
		Total	1193	3238	6834

All methods					
Species	LLS Region	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	3 yr total
Feral deer	Greater Sydney	12	158	295	465
	Hunter	300	377	941	1618
	North West	0	7	3340	3347
	Northern Tablelands	901	1015	863	2779
	Western	0	57	35	92
	Riverina	153	77	89	319
	Murray	176	605	827	1608
	South East	1347	2541	1295	5183
	Central Tablelands	49	180	390	619
	Central West	167	230	303	700
	North Coast	0	168	172	340
		Total	2893	5005	7864
Feral pigs	Greater Sydney	34	108	109	251
	Hunter	3309	7291	11913	22513
	North West	1942	1228	17304	20474
	Northern Tablelands	1567	9066	11738	22371
	Western	161	3125	19785	23071
	Riverina	3769	3420	10151	17340
	Murray	1721	290	1148	3159
	South East	604	4177	2744	7525
	Central Tablelands	1136	1046	3649	5831
	Central West	2544	4612	27148	34304
	North Coast	105	383	561	1049

	Total	16892	34746	106250	157888
Other feral animals	Greater Sydney	19	80	143	242
	Hunter	346	457	432	1235
	North West	143	235	1138	1516
	Northern Tablelands	226	235	770	1231
	Western	136	114	440	690
	Riverina	447	556	988	1991
	Murray	86	32	45	163
	South East	224	1894	824	2942
	Central Tablelands	58	214	62	334
	Central West	34	48	214	296
	North Coast	108	90	139	337
	Total	1827	3955	5195	10977
All	Greater Sydney	65	346	547	958
	Hunter	3955	8125	13286	25366
	North West	2085	1470	21782	25337
	Northern Tablelands	2694	10316	13371	26381
	Western	297	3296	20260	23853
	Riverina	4369	4053	11228	19650
	Murray	2554	10113	12646	25313
	South East	385	5076	20644	26105
	Central Tablelands	3980	3711	10302	17993
	Central West	2754	5265	28189	36208
	North Coast	1560	3014	1995	6569
	Total	21612	43706	119309	184627

Aerial shooting as a percentage of total kills					
Species	LLS Region	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	3 yr total
Feral deer	Greater Sydney	0%	12%	0%	4%
	Hunter	96%	98%	99%	98%
	North West	#DIV/0!	100%	100%	100%
	Northern Tablelands	100%	100%	100%	100%
	Western	#DIV/0!	100%	100%	100%
	Riverina	100%	100%	100%	100%
	Murray	51%	100%	100%	95%
	South East	39%	32%	47%	37%
	Central Tablelands	92%	100%	100%	99%
	Central West	100%	100%	94%	97%
	North Coast	#DIV/0!	0%	0%	0%
	Total	67%	59%	85%	74%
Feral pigs	Greater Sydney	0%	0%	0%	0%
	Hunter	94%	94%	91%	92%
	North West	100%	100%	99%	99%
	Northern Tablelands	96%	82%	95%	90%
	Western	70%	99%	96%	96%

	Riverina	96%	99%	100%	99%
	Murray	96%	85%	91%	93%
	South East	98%	96%	91%	94%
	Central Tablelands	100%	100%	93%	96%
	Central West	100%	100%	80%	84%
	North Coast	0%	0%	0%	0%
	Total	96%	92%	91%	92%
Other feral animals	Greater Sydney	0%	0%	0%	0%
	Hunter	27%	47%	63%	47%
	North West	100%	89%	98%	97%
	Northern Tablelands	0%	40%	83%	60%
	Western	52%	19%	94%	73%
	Riverina	85%	61%	67%	69%
	Murray	86%	100%	100%	93%
	South East	98%	84%	72%	82%
	Central Tablelands	100%	25%	100%	52%
	Central West	100%	100%	100%	100%
	North Coast	0%	0%	0%	0%
	Total	59%	66%	77%	70%
All	Greater Sydney	0%	5%	0%	2%
	Hunter	88%	92%	90%	90%
	North West	100%	98%	99%	99%
	Northern Tablelands	89%	83%	95%	90%
	Western	62%	96%	96%	95%
	Riverina	95%	94%	97%	96%
	Murray	97%	84%	95%	91%
	South East	86%	93%	95%	94%
	Central Tablelands	96%	95%	100%	98%
	Central West	97%	100%	81%	85%
	North Coast	33%	27%	31%	29%
	Total	89%	86%	90%	89%