

# Dirk Hartog Island National Park

# Wirruwana

# Island Protection



## Return to 1616 Ecological Restoration Project

Department of **Biodiversity,  
Conservation and Attractions**

**PARKS AND  
WILDLIFE  
SERVICE**



DIRK HARTOG ISLAND  
RETURN TO 1616



**SHARK BAY**  
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**Above** DBCA staff releasing a banded hare-wallaby. *Photo – Richard Manning*

## **Return to 1616 – Ecological Restoration Project**

Dirk Hartog Island is Western Australia's largest island. When visited by Dirk Hartog in 1616, the island was in pristine condition with a rich mammal fauna and flourishing vegetation. Since this first European landing on Australian soil, introduced plants and animals have degraded the island causing the local extinction of native species. *Return to 1616* is an ambitious project helping to restore the island's natural ecosystems. Introduced sheep and goats have been removed because their grazing and trampling damages native plants and reduces the food and shelter available for native animals. Feral cats are efficient hunters and have been eradicated from the island to make it safe for native animal species that are gradually being returned. These are the Shark Bay bandicoot, dibbler, chuditch, brush-tailed mulgara, greater stick-nest rat, desert mouse, Shark Bay mouse, heath mouse, woylie, boodie and western grasswren. In addition, rufous and banded hare-wallabies, have been included to improve their long-term survival. These animals are in need of conservation protection. Some are threatened and others extinct on the mainland. To find out more about the project, visit [www.sharkbay.org/restoration](http://www.sharkbay.org/restoration).

**Below** Shark Bay bandicoots were returned to the Island in 2019.





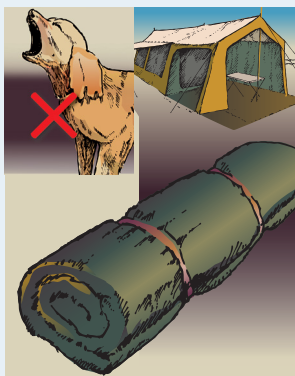
**Above** Reintroduction of dibblers bred at Perth Zoo began in 2019. *Photo - Perth Zoo*

## Island Protection – before you leave home

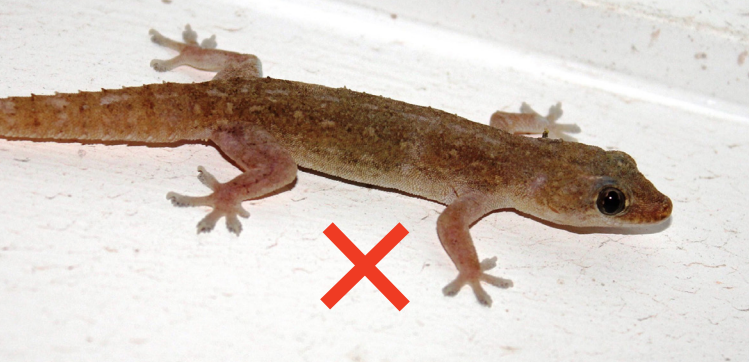
Insects, weed seeds and pests including the Asian house-gecko and other small reptiles can infest camping gear while in storage and can hitch a ride with you when you travel. Bringing non-native species to Dirk Hartog Island can harm native plants and animals. The following tips will help to prevent pest species becoming established on the island.

### Pack for the trip with care

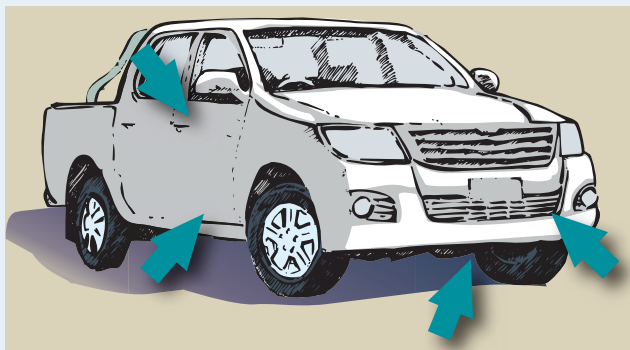
- Don't bring any animals including pets to the island.
- Remove insects, soil, seeds, spiders and other animals from your camping gear, footwear and clothes.
- Don't bring firewood to the island.
- Pack equipment for a final vehicle clean at the barge site.
- Pack food in clean, sealed, plastic or metal containers instead of cardboard which can harbour pests.
- Ensure fresh food is free of soil, insects and snails.







**Above** The Asian house-gecko is a pest species. Ensure your camping gear is cleaned and free of any animals before leaving home. *Photo - Gary Hearle*



### Clean your vehicle/camper trailer

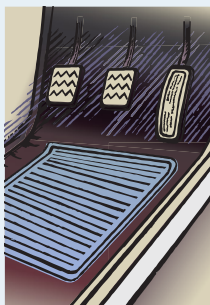
Spaces underneath and inside vehicles accumulate soil and seeds that can spread disease and weeds if allowed to hitch a ride.

Clean your vehicles:

1. before packing and leaving home; and again
2. before driving onto the barge to travel to the island.

Ensure you clean:

- the underside of your vehicles including tyres, sump, radiator and gearbox guard plates.
- inside vehicles including seat crevices, floor and under floor mats.

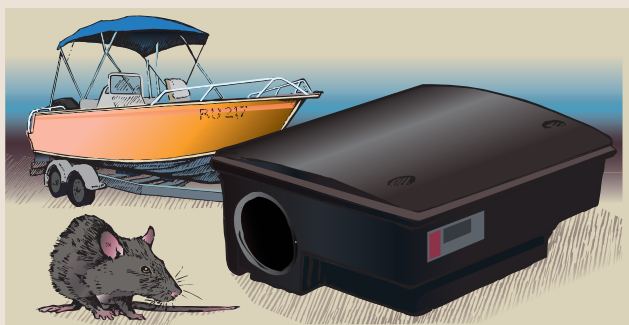




**Above** A survivor, the knob-tailed gecko is now thriving after the removal of pest species.

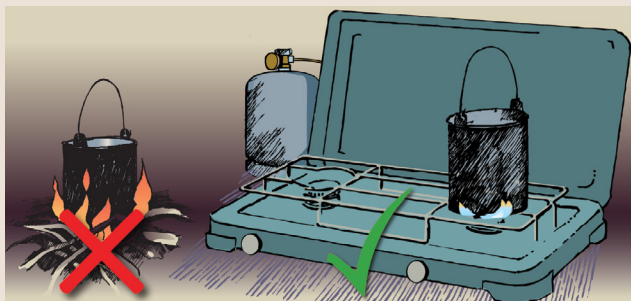
### Boating to the island

Follow the previous advice on how to pack carefully for your trip. When visiting the island by boat, install and check rodent bait stations on your vessel. Maintain bait potency by replacing as per manufacturers advice.



## Island Protection – during your stay

- Fires are not permitted within the national park.
- Keep to existing tracks and camp at designated campsites to avoid damage to native vegetation.
- Bag all your rubbish and remove it from the island when you leave.
- Secure and store all rubbish away from animals.
- Make sure human waste is covered immediately, buried to at least 30cm and located at least 100 metres away from your campsite.
- Native wildlife is protected by law and should not be disturbed in any way.





**Above** A predator, the chuditch will be the last animal species returned to the island. *Photo – Babs and Bert Wells*



Take care to avoid native animals at all times when driving on the island. Please note:

- Animals often use vehicle tracks to move from place to place.
- Native mammals are most active from dusk to dawn.

Please take extra care when driving between these times.

## More information

### Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions Parks and Wildlife Service

Shark Bay District

61–63 Knight Terrace, Denham WA 6537

Ph: (08) 9948 2226

Email: [sharkbayenquiries@dbca.wa.gov.au](mailto:sharkbayenquiries@dbca.wa.gov.au)

[www.sharkbay.org/restoration](http://www.sharkbay.org/restoration)



**Front cover** (clockwise from top) Banded hare-wallaby, greater stick-nest rat, dibbler, chuditch, western grasswren, Shark Bay bandicoot, and brush-tailed mulgara.

*Illustrations – Ian Trapnell, Kristy Day, Parks and Wildlife.*



Department of Biodiversity,  
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This publication is available in alternative formats on request.