

# What does the SSAA do for the environment?

You may be surprised to learn that the Sporting Shooters' Association of Australia (SSAA), along with its states and members, has introduced many beneficial and long-lasting conservation and wildlife projects in Australia, including:

- a koala habitat in Queensland
- the reintroduction of the western quoll and the protection of the yellow-footed rock-wallaby in South Australia
- assisting with a Tasmanian devil breeding program in New South Wales
- raising community awareness about pest animals in Western Australia.

The SSAA has worked alone and in collaboration with government and environmental organisations for decades - all in the name of conserving Australia's rich and varied wildlife.



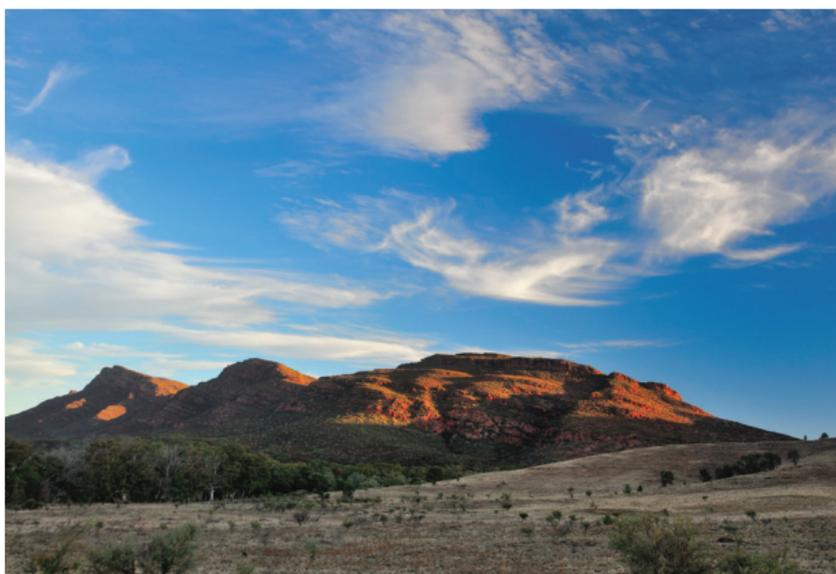
[ssaa.org.au](http://ssaa.org.au)

## What is the SSAA?

Established in 1948, the SSAA is Australia's premier shooting organisation, representing more than 180,000 members interested in recreational shooting, hunting and wildlife management.

### The SSAA:

- has official Non-Government Organisation status with the United Nations
- assists in and coordinates research projects
- established award-winning SSAA Conservation & Wildlife Management (CWM) groups that have assisted in the recovery and reintroduction of Australian native flora and fauna for more than 20 years
- pioneered a Farmer Assist program, which connects individual landholders with responsible SSAA members to help with wildlife management issues, giving landholders professional-like services at no cost.



## Koalas

Images of a sprawling nature sanctuary, thousands of young tree saplings and waterbirds flitting about a lagoon don't often spring to mind when one pictures a shooting range, but SSAA Queensland's Shooting Complex Stewartdale is the rare exception.

This 1000-hectare range:

- is Queensland's largest state-funded koala habitat restoration project
- provides eucalyptus leaves to the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection so it can feed sick or injured koalas at the Moggill Koala Hospital.

Ducks, shovellers and other birdlife also seek refuge at the sanctuary. Birdlife Australia, the country's largest independent not-for-profit bird conservation organisation, has been surveying the area since 2005.



## Western quolls

The successful reintroduction of western quolls (*Dasyurus geoffroii*) in South Australia's Ikara-Flinders Ranges has proved environmental wrongs can be righted with the correct mix of science, funds and passion. The species was wiped out in the area by historic farming practices and the spread of their main predator, feral cats.

There are far fewer cats nowadays, thanks to the dedication and work by SSAA members, the SA Government and the jointly operated 1990's Operation Bounceback, which saw the shooting of tens of thousands of feral cats, goats, donkeys, rabbits and foxes in the Ranges.

More recently, the SSAA donated \$60,000 towards the quoll reintroduction program led by the Foundation for Australia's Most Endangered Species (FAME) and the South Australian Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources (DEWNR).



## Tasmanian devils

SSAA NSW has joined forces with Devil Ark, a registered charity organisation dedicated to ensuring the survival of the endangered Tasmanian devil. The iconic species is at serious risk of extinction from the highly contagious devil facial tumour disease (DFTD). The population of this species has plummeting by more than 90 per cent since the first case of DFTD was discovered in 1996.



## Our mascot – Trigga the Koala

The SSAA has its own mascot – a plush koala we call ‘Trigga’. Wearing a SSAA logo shirt, Trigga is instantly recognisable as ‘Australian’ to our international friends.

Staff, volunteers and members can use Trigga as a way to introduce the benefits of managing introduced species to conserve our distinctly Australian flora and fauna.



## **Pest management**

In many states SSAA has partnered with various government departments, private landholders and other stakeholders to manage pest species. Pest management conducted in parks and State Forests not only protects native animals and birdlife, but also provides the natural landscape with the opportunity to rejuvenate and flourish.

SSAA has sponsored the development of a humane cat trap, which now also receives funding from the Federal Government and endorsement from the Threatened Species Commissioner.

In WA, the SSAA has, both directly and financially, helped increase collective participation in Red Card for Rabbits and Foxes – a community pest awareness and control program.

The reality is:

- direct economic impact of pest animals is \$743.5 million per year (Gong et al, 2009).
- feral cats are implicated in more than 20 extinctions and put direct pressure on 124 other native species.
- foxes are considered a threat to terrestrial mammals under 5.5kg.
- thousands of damaging donkeys, camels and wild pigs have been removed in the NT by the SSAA.

## **Research**

The SSAA regularly participates in research and environment promotion, including:

- collecting samples for universities
- undertaking track and fire trail maintenance and weed mapping and control.

The SSAA was a major supporter of the 2016 Conservation through Sustainable Use of Wildlife Conference, which brought together 200 delegates from universities, government, industry and key stakeholders to reflect on past and present wildlife management practices. The Association also supports university students through its a academic bursary program.