

Guidelines for the Issuing of Scientific Permits - Fauna

Updated December 2023

A scientific permit (or authority) to take and possess wildlife, or wildlife products, is required for most research involving the investigation and study of protected wildlife in Tasmania or, to disturb wildlife on reserved land. Permit applications should be made to the Environment Division, Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania (NRE Tas) using the required forms and with all associated information.

Scientific permit applications are subject to a two-week public comment period on the NRE Tas website. A one-page electronic summary (300 words maximum) must be submitted with all new applications, detailing the research aims and methods involved. The names of individual researchers will not be made public.

Where research involves disturbance to living vertebrate wildlife or higher invertebrate wildlife, the researcher must obtain Animal Ethics Committee (AEC) approval from an institution licensed under the Tasmanian *Animal Welfare Act 1993* (See [NRE Tas Scientific Permits - Fauna website](#)).

i. Legal obligations

Permits will have conditions attached that are a legal obligation for the permit holder. Breaches of these conditions may incur penalties including permit cancellation and fines. A standard requirement of all permits is mandatory reporting, including a copy of fauna records collected during the research. Reports must be received by the designated date otherwise new or continuing permits may not be issued. Guidelines for reporting are provided with the permit.

ii. How to apply for a scientific permit

1. Complete the **Scientific Permit Application Fauna** form (see NRE Tas [Scientific Permits - Fauna website](#)). In the case of students, applications should be completed under the supervisor's name.
 - **Land tenure** of the proposed study sites should be included in the Scientific Permit Application form, including any land parcel identifications (e.g. address, PID, reserve names) and identifying where covenants exist on private land. This information can be obtained from the Tasmanian Government's LISTmap (<https://maps.thelist.tas.gov.au/listmap/app/list/map>) by adding the 'Land Parcel and Property' layers from the menu on the right.
2. Provide a **Scientific Permit Application - Project Summary** form, for listing on the Scientific Permit Applications for Public Comment webpage (a copy of the form can be downloaded from the [NRE Tas Scientific Permits - Fauna website](#)).
3. If your research involves vertebrates or higher invertebrates, attach a copy of your **Animal Ethics Committee** (AEC) application *and* approval, including any conditions. Note that a

permit application can be submitted with the AEC application pending approval. However, a scientific permit will not be issued until the research is approved by the AEC.

- If your AEC institution is not based in Tasmania, provide confirmation that the Animal Ethics Committee approval is from an institution that holds a current **Tasmanian Animal Research Institution License**. If you are unsure whether your AEC institution has a current Tasmanian Animal Research Institution license, please contact:

Executive Officer
Animal Ethics Committee, NRE Tas
executiveofficer.AEC@nre.tas.gov.au
Ph: (03) 6165 3144

4. Email the **signed application form**, project summary and any AEC documents required to Scientific.Permits@nre.tas.gov.au

- **Allow 4 weeks for permit processing** time from receipt of all application documents.

5. Note that an additional permit is required to **export** specimens, samples and other products of protected wildlife from Tasmania (both interstate, and internationally). More information about interstate export permits can be found on the [NRE Tas – Wildlife Exports webpage](#).

Additional permits may also be required from **local councils or other land managers**. You should discuss with the relevant authorities any requirements they may have for working in reserves under council jurisdiction etc.

iii.Guidelines for assessing scientific permit applications

These guidelines apply to all categories of wildlife scheduled under the *Threatened Species Protection Act 1995* (a list of threatened species is available on the [NRE Tas website](#)), *Nature Conservation Act 2002* (e.g. specially protected, protected and partly protected, check www.thelaw.tas.gov.au for schedules), and all fauna on land reserved under the *Nature Conservation Act 2002* or the *Crown Lands Act 1976*.

The following guidelines set out considerations that need to be satisfied for a permit or authority to be granted to undertake research on native wildlife in Tasmania.

1. Relevance of research

The research must have scientific merit and demonstrably have one or more of the following outcomes:

1. assist conservation of the native species, and/or
2. assist management of the species, and/or
3. increase understanding of human health, and/or
4. increase understanding of Tasmania's ecology

If the research aims are to assist conservation or management of native species or ecosystems then this must be clearly demonstrated in the application. Minimal numbers should be used and wherever possible the same or similar research questions should be answered using captive-bred animals. Removal of animals from the wild will only be approved where the research meets one or more of the above outcomes to a high degree.

2. Ecological sustainability

Removal and/or disturbance of native animals from the wild should be ecologically sustainable, i.e. it will not threaten the species viability or genetic integrity, or threaten rare, restricted or localised populations. Research objectives should be achieved through similar research on more common native species.

3. Ethics

Animal Ethics Committee approval by an institution licensed under the Tasmanian *Animal Welfare Act 1993* is a requirement for any research involving disturbance to living vertebrate wildlife or higher invertebrate wildlife. Research objectives should be achieved through the least destructive, stressful or intrusive methods possible.

4. Species of special significance

Projects involving species of special significance (e.g. localised endemic species, species of conservation significance or high public profile species such as the Tasmanian bettong, platypus, etc.) should meet research outcomes 1 and 2 to a high degree, before authorisation will be given for their removal from the wild.

5. Collection on reserved land

Minimal impact research on reserved land is encouraged where it adds to knowledge of a species and/or assists with management. Research on reserved land, particularly in nature reserves, national parks and world heritage areas (Tasmanian Wilderness and Macquarie Island, which involves the removal of wildlife, is discouraged and approved only where there is substantial justification.

The collection of invertebrates may be given special consideration in recognition of the existing knowledge gaps and the reproductive capacity of invertebrates.

6. Secretary's discretion

The research must meet any other condition that may reasonably be imposed by the Secretary of NRE Tas according to the circumstances of the research.

iv. Guidelines for issuing scientific permits for threatened wildlife

The following guidelines set out considerations which must be satisfied for permit approvals to undertake research on animals listed on the Tasmanian *Threatened Species Protection Act 1995*. These guidelines are to be read in conjunction with those for protected wildlife (section iii above;

guidelines for assessing scientific permit applications) and are to be applied in addition to the provision of those guidelines.

Scientific permits may be issued if the Secretary is satisfied that:

1. the proposed research contributes to the development or implementation of an approved recovery plan **and** the research is to be undertaken in accordance with approved code of practice **and** has been approved by a licensed Animal Ethics Committee if it involves interference of vertebrate animals;

or

2. the proposed research makes a substantial contribution to the conservation management of the species or its ecosystem without causing undue harm to the population or status of the species **and** the research is to be undertaken in accordance with procedures approved by a licensed Animal Ethics Committee if it involves interference with vertebrate animals;

or in the case of vulnerable or rare (Schedule 4 and 5) species;

1. the proposed research advances biological knowledge **and** will not cause undue harm to the population or status of the species **and** the research is to be undertaken in accordance with procedures approved by a licensed Animal Ethics Committee if it involves interference with vertebrate animals;

The Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania website has a [list of National and State listed threatened species](#).

v.Availability and use of research results

Reporting is a condition of all scientific permits. The data collected as part of your permit must be provided in the appropriate format for uploading to the Tasmanian Natural Values Atlas (NVA) database, within 28 days of the permit expiry. A reporting template and NVA data template can be downloaded from the NRE Tas [Scientific Permits website](#) to assist with reporting.

Research results should be published in scientific literature and more widely whenever possible and, contribute to public scientific knowledge. A copy of any published material, including research theses, relating to a scientific permit should be forwarded to Scientific.Permits@nre.tas.gov.au.

vi.Macquarie Island research

Research on Macquarie Island is usually carried out under the auspices of the Australian Antarctic Division (AAD). The application process and timetable are set out on the AAD's website at www.aad.gov.au/science. Prior to submitting a written application to the Division it is strongly recommended that the project be discussed with NRE Tas staff. Research involving vertebrate wildlife and higher invertebrate wildlife must be approved by the Antarctic Animal Ethics Committee, (see AAD website). Scientific permits to take wildlife are issued by the Environment Division, NRE Tas.

Contact:

Executive Officer (Macquarie Island)

macquarie.island@parks.tas.gov.au

Ph: (03) 6165 4051