

Feral Pigs in Urban and Peri Urban Areas

Peri urban areas around our region provide excellent areas for feral pigs to live. They like moist areas that can provide adequate food and water and enough shelter to protect against extreme temperature.

Their movements are affected by weather conditions and the availability of food, as natural food and water sources become scarce, they will move to residential yards. This is why, generally, we see an increased presence during dry seasons.

Feral pigs eat a wide variety of plants and animals including

- Succulent green vegetation
- Fruit
- Grain
- Roots
- Bulbs
- Fungi
- Frogs
- Fish
- Reptile
- Birds
- Small mammals

Pigs will readily swap between food sources so that excessive movement is not required. Even if disturbed, feral pigs will not move far and will readily return to their home range to feed.

Most people observe feral pigs at night, because they restrict their activity to cooler parts of the day.

Impact

Feral pigs disturb the natural environment and peoples yards through rooting up soils, grasslands and forest litter and consuming a range of native plants.

Is it a pig?

You may notice the following around your property if feral pigs are active in the area:

Direct observation: Pigs can be detected directly by you, usually at night.

Rooting: Feral pigs use their snouts and teeth to dig for underground food. This result in selective uprooting of specific types of plants or the creation of extensive areas resembling ploughed paddocks in your yard. During dry weather, watered gardens are attractive to pigs for because the land is softer and easier to dig.

Fence damage: Pigs will push through fences, usually next to a post or picket and these holes are then used by other animals. Mud or coarse bristly hair on the wire or post indicates feral pigs.

Tracks: Feral pigs leave hoof-prints in any soft surface.

What you can do

You can take a number of steps to reduce the potential for feral pigs to impact them by:

1. Fencing your property to ensure that pigs are unable to enter(electric fencing subject to Local Laws).
2. If fencing a property is not possible, fence small areas of your gardens of high value or which are being impacted by the pigs.
3. Pigs are attracted to already overturned soil, fencing newly turned soil or areas where compost has been added to the ground. They are lazy they will let you do the work to find underground food.
4. Talk to your neighbours and ensure everyone is undertaking the same actions. You may keep moving the problem between yourselves if you don't work together.
5. Call Council's Pest Management Unit on 4932 9000 or 1300 22 55 77 to report any feral pig sighting or damage to your property
6. Report sightings of feral pigs at feral scan to support nationwide mapping of feral pigs at www.feralscan.org.au

What Council can do

Council may intervene in certain situations to minimise the risk to public health and safety, this will be assessed on a case by case basis. In suitable situations Council may:

- Work with you to control the impact of the pigs.
- Educate affected residents on the impacts of pigs and how they can reduce the attractiveness of their property to the animals.
- Install monitoring cameras to determine the extent of the issue and to track where the pigs may be coming from. This also assists in confirming that feral pigs are causing the impact on you.
- Install traps to capture pigs, however once a pig has found a palatable food source it is difficult to change to an introduced source as would be in a trap.

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