

Guidelines for the Issuing of Scientific Permits

April 2003

A scientific permit to take and possess wildlife is required for any research involving the investigation and study of protected wildlife in Tasmania. Permit applications must be made to the Nature Conservation Branch, Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment (DPIWE) using the required pro-forma and with all associated information requested attached.

All new scientific permit applications are subject to a two week public comment period on the DPIWE web site. An electronic summary (300 words maximum) must be submitted with applications, detailing the research aims and methods involved. The names of individual researchers will not be divulged to the public.

Where research involves disturbance to living vertebrate wildlife, the researcher must obtain Animal Ethics Committee approval from an institution licensed under the Tasmanian *Animal Welfare Act 1993*. This approval (with any associated conditions) must accompany the permit application.

A permit application may be rejected if the research does not meet the guidelines for scientific research in Tasmania.

Legal obligations

Permits will have conditions attached which 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 that of mandatory reporting. Reports must be received by the designated date otherwise new or continuing permits will not be issued. Guidelines for reporting are provided with the permit.

How to apply for a scientific permit

- Complete the Scientific Permit application form (see DPIWE web site). In the case of students, applications must be completed under the supervisor's name.
- Attach a copy of your research project including any endorsement of a recognised institution.
- Attach a copy of your Animal Ethics Committee approval including any conditions.
- Provide confirmation that the Animal Ethics Committee approval is from an Institution that holds a current Tasmanian Animal Research Institution License
- Provide an electronic summary of the research proposed for listing on the Web seeking public comment.
- Send (post or fax) a **signed application** form to Scientific Permits Officer, Nature Conservation Branch. Allow 4 weeks for processing time.

Guidelines for assessing scientific permit applications

This includes all categories of wildlife scheduled under the *Nature Conservation Act 2002* (e.g. specially protected, protected and partly protected, check

<http://www.thelaw.tas.gov.au> for schedules) and all wildlife on land reserved under the *Nature Conservation Act 2002* and the *Crown Lands Act 1976*.

These guidelines set out considerations which need to be satisfied in order for a permit to be granted to undertake research on native wildlife in Tasmania.

1. Relevance of research

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

- assist conservation of the native species, and/or
- assist management of the species, and/or
- increase understanding of human health, and/or
- 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. 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 of native animals from the wild must 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 is required for any research involving disturbance to living vertebrate wildlife. You or an institution you belong to must be licensed under the provisions of the Animal Welfare Act 1993 to undertake research on vertebrate wildlife in Tasmania. To apply for an Animal Research Institution license, see <http://www.dpiwe.tas.gov.au/inter.nsf/WebPages/CPAS-5JH6QT?open>.

Research objectives should be achieved through the least destructive, stressful or intrusive methods possible.

Wildlife kept in captivity must be maintained in a humane and healthy environment. A draft code of practice for keeping wildlife is available from the Nature Conservation Branch, DPIWE.

4. Species of special significance

Projects involving species of special significance (i.e. localised endemic species, high public profile species such as Tasmanian devil, Tasmanian bettong, platypus, etc) should meet criterion 1 and criterion 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 the World Heritage Area, that 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 DPIWE according to the circumstances of the research.

Availability and use of research results

Research results should be published in scientific the literature, and more widely whenever possible, and contribute to public scientific knowledge. A formal written report to the Secretary may be acceptable at the discretion of the Secretary. Reporting is a condition of all scientific permits.

Guidelines for issuing scientific permits for threatened wildlife

These 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 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 an 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 harm to the population or status of the species **and** the research is to be undertaken in accordance with an approved code of practice **and** has been approved by a licensed Animal Ethics Committee if it involves interference of vertebrate animals;

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

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

The Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment web site (<http://www.dpiwe.tas.gov.au>) has a list of National and State listed threatened species.

Macquarie Island research

Research on Macquarie Island is usually carried out under the auspices of the Australian Antarctic Division (AAD). The application process (which takes over 18 months) and timetable are set out on the AAD's web site at <http://www.aad.gov.au/science>. Prior to submitting a written application to the Division it is strongly recommended that the project be discussed with staff of the Tasmanian Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment and the Parks and Wildlife Service. Research involving vertebrate wildlife must be approved by the Antarctic Animals Ethics Committee, (see AAD web site). Scientific permits to take wildlife are issued by the Nature Conservation Branch, Tasmanian Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment.

Obtaining Animal Ethics Committee approval

If projects involve any interference with vertebrate wildlife then Animal Ethics Committee approval is required before applying for a permit.

Contact: Secretary, Animal Ethics Committee, DPIWE, 134 Macquarie Street, Hobart, ph 03 62 33 6556.

Research on Macquarie Island is reviewed under the Australian National Antarctic Research Expeditions (ANARE) Animal Ethics Committee process. Check the web site <http://www.aad.gov.au/science> for guidelines and more details.