

# Bendeela Wombat Treatment Program

Program update – June 2023

The Bendeela Recreation Area is home to a large Bare-nosed Wombat (Common Wombat) population. Some of the wombat population at Bendeela suffer sarcoptic mange; a condition which causes a wombat lose fur and develop sores on their skin, eyes and ears and may result in sickness or death.

Since 2017, WaterNSW has been working closely with National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS), the University of Tasmania (UTAS) and other stakeholders on the Bendeela Wombat Treatment Program to find a long-term and sustainable treatment solution.

## The Bendeela Wombat Treatment Program is complete.

The program started in late 2020 and was completed in early 2023, following delays to the program caused by COVID and flooding.

An independent Final Report, written by Scott Carver, Associate Professor of Wildlife Ecology UTAS, highlights the outcome of the program including the extent of sarcoptic mange at Bendeela and identifies recommendations and long-term treatment options for WaterNSW to implement into the future.

The report can be viewed at [www.waternsw.com.au/nsw-dams/greater-sydney-dams/bendeela-recreation-area](http://www.waternsw.com.au/nsw-dams/greater-sydney-dams/bendeela-recreation-area).

### Program aim

- > Survey bare-nosed wombats to understand the extent of mange disease affecting wombats.
- > Use leading research and findings from the survey to develop a sustainable management plan.
- > Consult with stakeholders on the findings and proposed plans.
- > Recommend strategies for the treatment of wombats into the future.

## Key findings from the six month treatment plan



UTAS carried out a monthly plan to treat mange between April 2022 and September 2022, which **reduced the severity of mange in wombats by more than 55%**. The program involved jabbing wombats with a dose of Bravecto (a commonly used flea and tick treatment). Bravecto was applied using a long pole which enabled a syringe to be applied to the skin and fur. The wombats at Bendeela are typically comfortable interacting with people and the treatment process did not stress the animals.



**761 wombat observations and health assessments were made.**



**The program reduced the severity of mange infections by more than 55%.**

**3%**

**of wombats showed signs of mange.**

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## Recommendations and next steps

- ✓ WaterNSW will continue the treatment plan trialled during the Bendeela Wombat Treatment program. This will include carrying out surveys and treatment every three months, and treatment of any animal identified with mange as necessary. The frequency of survey and treatments will be reviewed and adapted, based on results.
- ✓ WaterNSW field teams are now trained in wombat disease management, including identifying mange and applying Bravecto. We delivered the first survey and treatment session under supervision of Associate Professor Scott Carver in March 2023.
- ✓ WaterNSW have applied for a Biodiversity Conservation Licence for ongoing treatment, to ensure ongoing treatment complies with best-practice and legislation.
- ✓ WaterNSW has purchased jab sticks to allow for safe and effective application of Bravecto.
- ✓ Increased public engagement at Bendeela about the local wombat population, sarcoptic mange, and disease management.
- ✓ WaterNSW will continue to work with NPWS and other organisations to ensure our work supports the NSW Government's Curb Wombat Mange program.
- ✓ The treatment data will be recorded and made publicly available.



*The team setting up the jabsticks.*

### What is the Curb Wombat Mange Program?

The NSW Government has committed \$2.8 million to deliver a two year program between 2022 to 2024. The program provides targeted funding and grants aimed at investigating and implementing mange control methods. The WaterNSW-funded program compliments this work. We thank WIRES for the provision of Bravecto.

### Stay informed

For more information on the completed treatment program including the Final Report, visit [www.watensw.com.au/supply/visit/bendeela-recreational-area](http://www.watensw.com.au/supply/visit/bendeela-recreational-area).

For more information on the NSW Curb Wombat Mange program, including future data on wombat treatment at Bendeela Recreation Area, visit [www.environment.nsw.gov.au/topics/animals-and-plants/native-animals/rehabilitating-native-animals/curb-wombat-mange-program](http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/topics/animals-and-plants/native-animals/rehabilitating-native-animals/curb-wombat-mange-program).



*Bendeela Recreation Area, west of Kangaroo Valley, Shoalhaven NSW.*



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