

Deer and Goat Control Program

Grampians (Gariwerd) National Park

April 2024

Deer and goat control will commence in April 2024

Parks Victoria is conducting a conservation program to improve the health of the Grampians (Gariwerd) National Park through the Victorian Government's Protecting Biodiversity Program. The Program aims to reduce deer and feral goat populations.

When will control operations take place?

Deer and feral goat shooting operations are planned to commence in April 2024 and will continue for the remainder of 2024. Further programs are planned in 2025.

The most effective method for controlling deer and feral goat populations is shooting. Deer and feral goat control programs are carried out under strict conditions designed to ensure safe, effective, and humane practices are implemented. Contractors and volunteers are expert marksmen and experienced shooters who have been through an assessment process prior to selection for Parks Victoria operations.

The program has been designed to limit the impact on park users, with control operations taking place late afternoon and evening. However, some short-term closures may apply in the operations area.

Why control deer and goat populations?

Deer and goats are not a natural part of the Australian environment. They are one of our most serious environmental, cultural, and agricultural threats. Victoria's deer population is now estimated to be over a million animals.

In 2021, the Victorian Government established the *Victorian Deer Control Strategy* to provide a clear and coordinated approach to deer control in Victoria.

Parks Victoria has a legal obligation to control deer and goats on its estate and is one of the many partners delivering on this strategy.



Introduced Red Deer

The "deer" cost

Listed on the National Heritage list, Grampians (Gariwerd) National Park is known to have the most significant representation of Aboriginal rock art in eastern Australia; it is one of the most important botanical reserves with close to 970 plant species (40 of which are found nowhere else in the world). The park also provides habitat for at least 300 native animal species, 40 of which are listed as rare or threatened.

Within the National Park, deer and goats browse on small trees and woody shrubs within Herb Forest and Woodland, trampling and destroying plants and ring-barking young trees. They foul waterholes, cause erosion and spread weeds reducing the diversity and regeneration of the shrub layer. A 140kg Red Deer can eat 8 kilograms of vegetation daily. This is roughly equivalent to 3 metric tonnes of plant material per individual deer every year!

Frequently Asked Questions

What's involved in aerial and ground deer and goat control operations?

Parks Victoria uses a combination of ground and aerial control programs (involving shooting), to manage the deer and goat population to protect and preserve other important park values.

All Parks Victoria's invasive animal control programs are informed by science, are thoroughly planned and implemented under strict protocols and oversight, and ensure that operations are safe, effective, humane and meet obligations of all relevant legislation, Codes of Practice and Standard Operating Procedures.

Who will be conducting the deer and goat control?

The program will use contractors and experienced volunteers from the Sporting Shooters Association of Australia and the Australian Deer Association, overseen by Parks Victoria staff. These experienced volunteers have the required licences and accreditations to participate in the program.

Will you shoot anything other than deer?

Shooting operations may also include other invasive species including foxes and feral goats if they are encountered and when safe to do so.

What will happen to the deer and goat carcasses?

Standard practice is to leave a carcass where it falls, as it would be if the animal had died by natural causes. Carcasses may be removed in circumstances where leaving the carcass where it falls poses a health or safety risk or would impact on returning visitors. Some carcasses may be harvested. Harvesting animals will be in line with Prime Safe game meat harvesting standards and guidelines.

At what time of the day will the deer control take place?

The shooting operations will be carried out during both daylight hours and also between dusk and dawn under strict conditions designed to ensure safe, effective, and humane control of target pest animal species.

Exactly where will the shooting happen?

Deer and goat control will be confined to targeted operational areas based on the presence of known populations (please see control operations map).

How will you ensure no one is in areas where shooting occurs?

Parks Victoria is notifying neighbours, local businesses, licensed tour operators, schools and park visitors of this operation. Signage will be located at campgrounds and visitor sites and along main entryways to provide guidance to visitors. Parks Victoria staff will also be patrolling the operation area (as required).

Will you shoot near picnic or camping areas or walking tracks?

Yes. Camping areas within the operation area will be closed to the public. The area will also be surveyed by Parks Victoria staff and/or program participants prior to the commencement of operations to ensure public safety.

Please report any deer and goat sightings

Parks Victoria encourages community members to report any sightings of deer and goats on private or public land through Feral Scan. Feral Scan is a free resource that anyone can use to record sightings of deer, report the damage (or problems) they cause, and record control actions. [FeralScan](#)



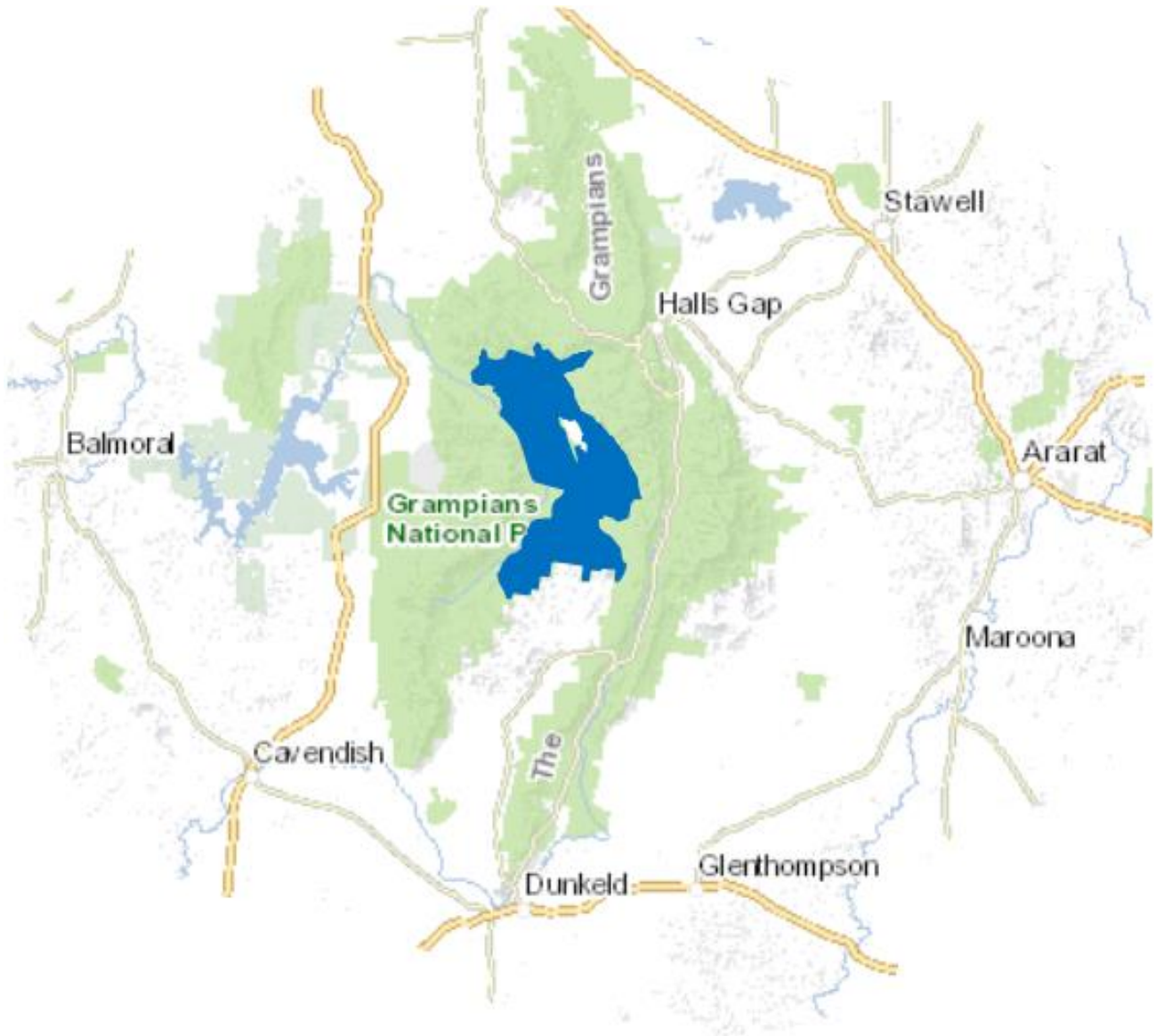
Red Deer in Grampians (Gariwerd) National Park

Stay updated

For further detail please refer to the map attached or visit <https://www.parks.vic.gov.au/places-to-see/parks/grampians-national-park>

For more information regarding Parks Victoria's deer control programs, please visit www.parks.vic.gov.au or call us on 13 1963.

Control Operation Area - Grampians (Gariwerd) National Park



 Control Operation Area

 Parks and Reserves