

Camera survey for fallow deer Eaglehawk Neck, Tasman Peninsula 2023



Fallow Deer were introduced into Tasmania in the 1830s and the Tasman Peninsula in the 1980s and '90s for deer farming purposes. Deer farming was a new and attractive enterprise at the time and several deer farms were established on the Tasman Peninsula. These have contributed to the establishment of a wild deer population on the peninsula. The Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania (NRE Tas) is working with Tasman Council and the local community to establish a control program to ensure deer don't become an ongoing issue to the community and local environment.



Camera-trap Survey

Among the prerequisites for the effective management of wildlife populations is an understanding of the number of animals in the population and where they are, this allows appropriate management actions to be determined.

A camera trap survey was undertaken to provide an understanding of the size and distribution of the local deer population. The survey involved a grid of game-monitoring cameras being deployed across the project area, which were left in place for three months.

The Results

Between March and June 2023, 39 camera traps were in the Eaglehawk Neck and Taranna area and took over 50,000 images. The information collected was analysed by experts at the Queensland University of Technology. The following is a summary of the results:

- No deer were observed to the north of Eaglehawk Neck
- 310 individual observations of deer were recorded in the south, mostly around Doo Town and The Neck.
- Estimated population of deer = 62 deer.
- The deer displayed a preference for forested habitat, tending to avoid scrub-heathland-coastal vegetation.

Conclusions

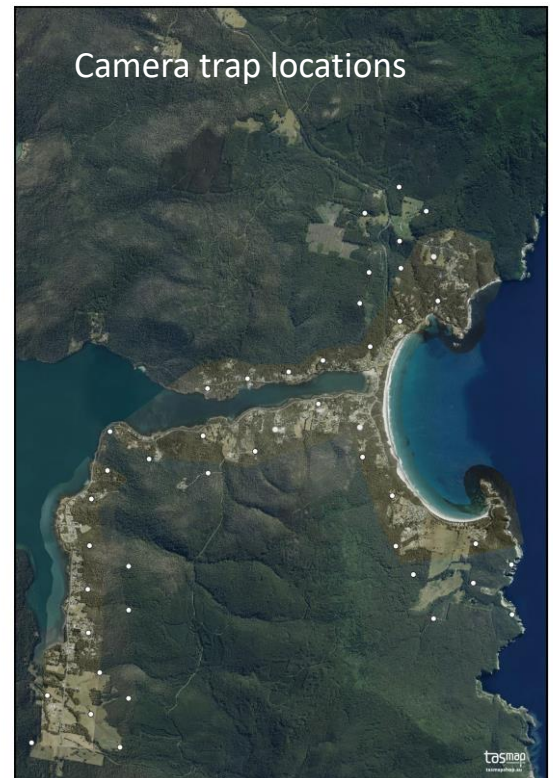
The population appears to be low, and eradication is still a feasible goal if control occurs cross-tenure.

It will take time, commitment and collaboration.

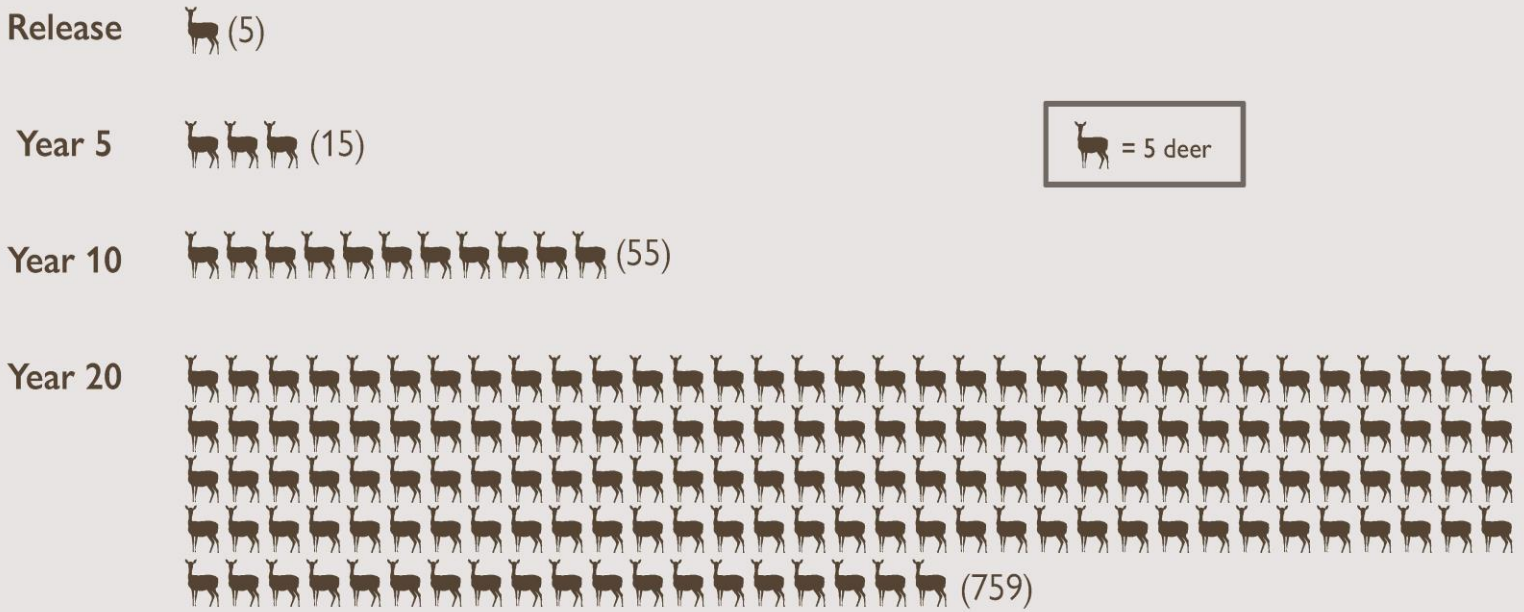
The goal of eradication is consistent with the 2022 Tasmanian Deer Management Plan's aims for deer on the Tasman Peninsula.

Control options are now being planned.

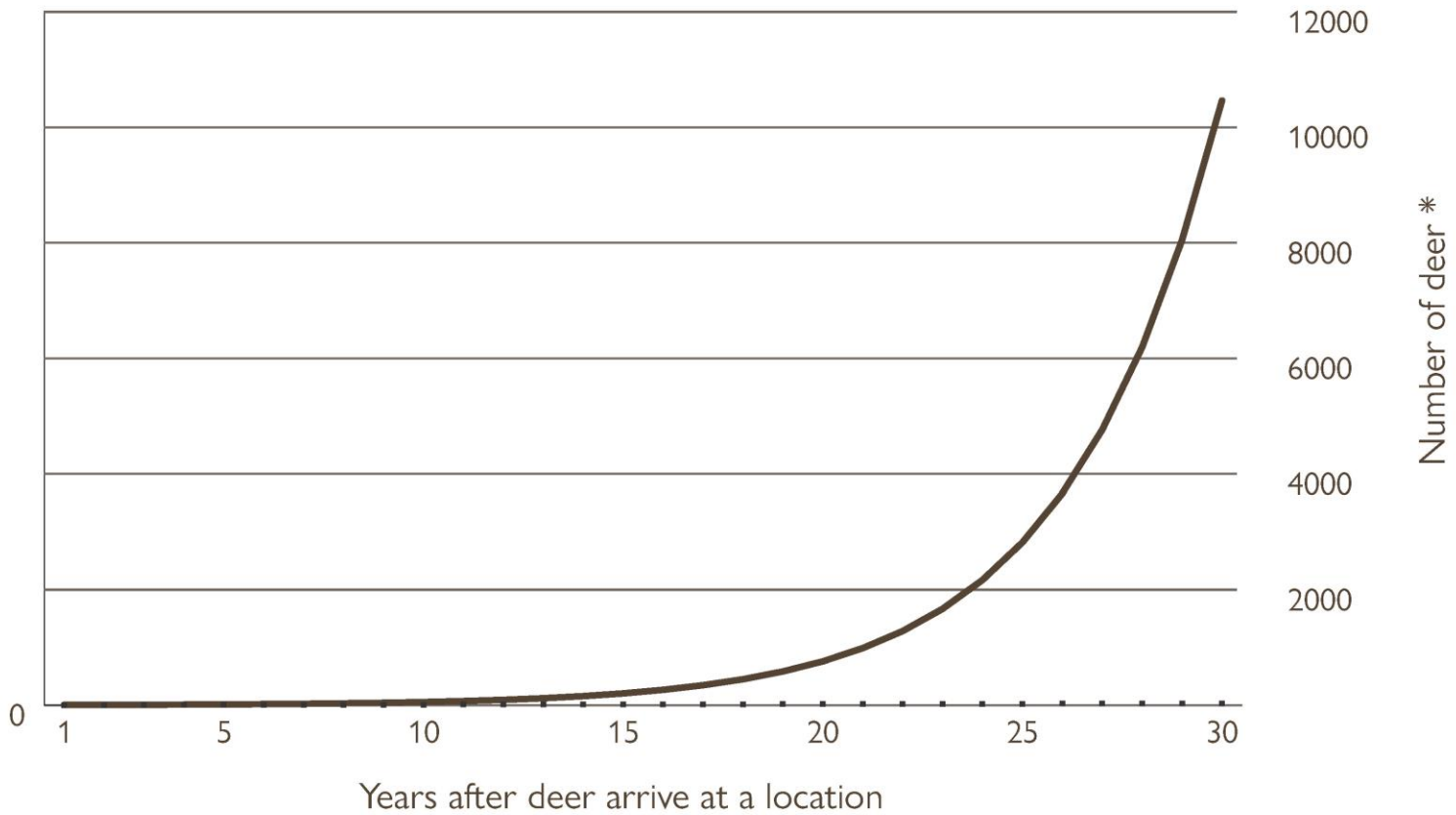
Camera trap locations



What happens if you leave 5 deer to do their thing.



Projected population growth for fallow deer



* assuming two of the original five animals were does which successfully bred in the first year and the population continues to increase at 35% per year