

Collared Delma Project

Lockyer Valley & west Brisbane



An Australian Government Initiative

This project received grant funding from the Australian Government Saving Native Species Program and is a partnership between Lockyer Uplands Catchments Inc., Pullen Pullen Catchments Group Inc. and Kholo Creek Catchment Group.

Project background

This community-led recovery project builds on earlier conservation efforts in western Brisbane (2022–23) and has now expanded into the Lockyer Valley (2024–25). Funded by the Australian Government, it combines community engagement, on-ground habitat restoration, and scientific research to protect and restore populations of the threatened Collared Delma.

Project actions:

- Survey and protect known and potential habitats.
- Restore habitat through weed control.
- Investigate species distribution, habitat use, and population dynamics.
- Trial innovative approaches, including detection dog surveys and easement management.
- Share knowledge and practical guidance to support long-term conservation.



Collared Delma

(*Delma torquata*)

Pygopodidae:Squamata:Reptilia:Chordata:Animalia

Listed as Vulnerable (EPBC & NCA)

- A small grey/brown pygopod with bold black bands • Snout-vent length 50-70mm
 - Total length 170mm
 - Weight 1.5 grams
- Habitat—open woodlands with a grassy understory and loose surface rocks
- Endemic to Queensland
- Threatening processes
 - Habitat loss and fragmentation
 - Inappropriate fire regimes
 - Weeds (habitat modification), pest animals (predation)



Project to date

Project sites:

- 38 expressions of interest from landholders to participate in the project
- 25 properties and 6 reserves selected across three catchments within Brisbane and the Lockyer Valley, based on C. delma habitat suitability or historic records

Community engagement:

- 3 community field days
 - Educational presentations
 - Interactive C. Delma play
 - Scent detection dog demonstrations
 - Wildlife shows

Surveys:

- 38 ecologist surveys across Brisbane and the Lockyer Valley
- 11 scent detection dog surveys with more to come!

Weeding:

- 20 properties received weeding works for C. Delma habitat enhancement
- Over 80 days of weeding works over the 20 properties

Key learnings:

- Place-driven conservation
- Local community = 'corporate' knowledge
- Connecting landscapes, sharing learning
- Parallel initiatives, not one size fits all
- Adaptive management, adapting delma?
- Regular meetings — all & catchment team
- Science-based & delivering new science
- Cost-effective (esp. Danny), robust outcomes
- Outcomes 'live' within community

Timeline

2
Year project

Dec 23 - Jun 24

1. Grounding the project

Engaging catchment communities
Expert surveys (new and historical)
Assessment of habitat condition at 15 new survey sites
Delma detection dog training
Initiate student research projects

Jan 25 - Jun 25

3. Maintaining recovery actions

Habitat restoration - initial works
Monitoring (repeat) surveys
2024 Research projects concluded
Community field days

Learn More
lockyeruplandscatchmentsinc.org.au
pullenpullencatchments.org.au
facebook.com/kholocreek

Jul 24 - Dec 24

2. Initiating & expanding conservation actions

Property plan development
Contracted on-ground action
Community field days
Easement management pilot
Detection dog and surveys

Jul 25 - Nov 25

4. Project completion & reporting

Habitat restoration completion
Survey outcomes reported
Detection dog and surveys completed
2025 Research projects concluded
Supporting project participants - site visits & feedback request
Community field days
Leaving a legacy - publications
Grant acquittal and reporting



Get Involved

Look for C. Delma on your property
If you reside in south-east Queensland, you may have C. Delma on your property.

Determine if your property contains C. Delma habitat and microhabitat.

Search the area while being mindful to limit any disturbance.

If you find C. Delma, do not try to pick it up. Please take a photo & let us know.

2 Record sightings on the iNaturalist website or app
Scan the QR code for instructions on how to use iNaturalist.

Let us know!
LUCI can upload your sightings to the government recognised WildNet database for informed decision making.

4 Adjust land management for C. Delma conservation
Scan the QR code to find out how you can help conserve the species through implementing actions suggested in the 'mitigation approach' section.

Research:

In collaboration with 



- Comparing artificial habitat (carpet) vs active searching
- 16 sites across Lockyer and Brisbane since October 2024
 - Detected 8 delmas (3 under carpet, 5 active searching)
 - Detected an additional 44 reptiles from eight species



- Comparing before/after weed management
- Surveys to determine 'before' abundance
 - Weeding (primarily creeping lantana)
 - Further surveys to determine 'after' results



- Investigate genetic connectivity
- Tail clips from each individual
 - Genetic analysis