

# Spotted-tailed Quoll

*Dasyurus maculatus*

## At a Glance...

### Size:

Males: 38-76cm in head and body length with additional 37-55cm in tail length. Weigh up to 7kg.

Females: 35-45cm in head and body length with additional 34-42cm in tail length. Weigh up to 4kg.

### What It Eats:

Possums, rodents, rabbits, reptiles and invertebrates.

### Life Span:

Four to five years in the wild.

### What Is a Spotted-tailed Quoll?

Also known as a Tiger Quoll, the Spotted-tailed Quoll is the largest marsupial carnivore on mainland Australia. They are generally solitary animals that live in low numbers as they occupy large home ranges. The home range of a male may cover the territories of several females.

Spotted-tailed Quolls are recognised by conspicuous white spots over the body and tail. As their name suggests, other quoll species in Australia don't have a spotted tail. Their fur colour ranges from light to very dark brown, and they can also be identified by their relatively large head with a wide jaw gape and long curved canine teeth.

In the breeding season, male Spotted-tailed Quolls may emit a slow, deep growl and a loud, explosive spitting sound (like that of a cat, but much



louder). The female's call is not quite as loud. These calls may have given quolls their 'tiger' reputation.

### Where Does a Spot-tailed Quoll Live?

Spotted-tailed Quolls live throughout eastern Australia including Tasmania.

A forested habitat is the preferred home of the Spotted-tailed Quoll. This can include lowland, foothill and montane moist and dry forests and woodlands. They seem to favour areas with a dense over storey and understorey and with abundant rocks, large hollow-bearing trees, rocky escarpments and/or fallen logs for den sites.

Den sites, where Spotted-tailed Quolls shelter and rear their young, include caves, rock crevices, hollow logs, tree hollows, rabbit and small wombat burrows.

### What Does a Spotted-tailed Quoll Eat?

Spotted-tailed Quolls are carnivorous and will prey upon a wide range of mammals (including possums, rodents

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and rabbits), birds (including chickens), reptiles and invertebrates. They also scavenge the carcasses of larger animals such as wombats, wallabies and dogs. Being a good climber, the Spotted-tailed Quoll frequently hunts prey in tree hollows and in the canopy. Although generally nocturnal, they sometimes also hunt during the day.

### A Spotted-tailed Quoll's Family Life

When in captivity, female quolls can breed at one year of age and most females breed every year. In the wild, female Spotted-tailed Quolls generally do not breed until two years of age, and some females breed only every second year.

Mating occurs during winter. After a gestation period of about three weeks, an average of five young quolls are born. By 18 weeks the young quolls are independent and they mature by one year.

#### Fascinating Facts:

Captain Cook collected quolls along the east coast in 1770 and recorded 'quoll' as an Aboriginal name for these animals.

Quolls share communal latrine (toilet) sites which are located in open spaces and may have up to 100 droppings piled up. The sites appear to be used for territory marking and may perform other social functions.

### Threats

The Spotted-tailed Quoll, whilst not having many predators in the wild (although foxes and wild dogs may prey on young quolls) face other threats including land clearing and poisoning from baits used to control fox and wild

dog numbers. Due to these threats the Spotted-tailed Quoll is considered "Threatened" in Victoria.

The life-span of a Spotted-tailed Quoll in captivity averages 5-6 years, whilst in the wild their life-span decreases to 4-5 years.

### Some Parks Where Spotted-tailed Quolls Can Be Found?

Great Otway National Park, Wabba Wilderness Park in the foothills of the Great Dividing Range, Mount Eccles National Park.

### Want to Know More?

<http://www.deh.gov.au/biodiversity/threatened/publications/tiger-quoll.html>

<http://www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/threatened/species/tiger-quoll.html>