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NSW Natural Resource Commission  
Submission lodged via [nrc@nrc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:nrc@nrc.nsw.gov.au)

## **Submission on invasive species management in NSW**

BirdLife Australia is Australia's largest bird research, bird watching and conservation organisation. For more than 100 years BirdLife has been a leading advocate for native birds and for those who value them. We are independent and not-for-profit, with over 300,000 supporters nationally.

### **Impacts of invasive species on the environment**

We are concerned about the impacts of invasive species right across NSW. For too long, invasive species have been worsening and concerted action is needed to reverse this.

Australia's unique avifauna has suffered from more than 200 years of widespread habitat loss and degradation. Invasive species compound this. Non-native plants can alter habitats so that they are no longer suitable for birds that used to thrive. Exotic grasses such as buffel grow more densely, out-compete native grasses that birds feed on and burn hotter in a wildfire.

Many of Australia's birds are highly vulnerable to predation by cats and foxes. Species that are most vulnerable are small birds that feed and roost close to the ground, like fairy-wrens, and ground-dwelling birds like malleefowl (listed as Vulnerable under the EPBC Act and Endangered in NSW) and plains-wanderer (listed as Critically Endangered under the EPBC Act and Endangered in NSW). Both ground-dwelling species rely on ongoing suppression of predators to prevent a slide towards extinction.

### **Issues and opportunities**

Inconsistent and short-term funding are barriers to effective invasive species management. We urge long term and strategic funding including an increase in well-trained frontline staff.

We urge increased funding for feral cat reduction as a priority. The Felixer grooming trap has recently been approved by federal authorities for feral cat management. We would like to see it used widely in NSW where high-value threatened native wildlife species are found.

There is a need for invasive species to be managed across the whole landscape, regardless of land tenure. Improved enforcement will encourage private landowners and public land managers in responsible management.

Australia must do better in rapid response if we are to prevent future threats and eliminate newly emerging ones before they become uncontrollable.

Conservation Subcommittee, BirdLife Southern NSW