

Quoll surveys in the eastern and southern Atherton Tablelands.

The ultimate aim of our project is to improve the status and distribution of Spotted-tailed Quolls on the Atherton Tablelands.

To measure this we used hair tubes (at right) to detect the presence of quolls on nine transects at three sites in the eastern and southern Atherton Tablelands, at Topaz, Mt Bartle Frere and Gadgarra. At each of the three sites, three one kilometer transects were set in (i) deep forest, (ii) edge forest and in (iii) forest fragments.



A hair trap. Double-sided tapes are raised on sections of garden hose inside each end of the trap where they catch the hairs of mammals pushing inwards after chicken mince held in the tea-leaf infuser in the center of the trap.



Volunteers check for quoll hairs while retrieving hair traps from the Mt Bartle Frere area.

Volunteers and our project officer Scott Van Barnevald set and retrieved these hair tubes over a one week period.

About half of the 54 hair tubes collected hairs, which were identified by Barbara Triggs. None contained any quoll hairs, even in sites where spotted-tailed quolls are sometimes seen. The hairs retrieved belonged to Bush rats, *Rattus fuscipes*, White-tailed rats, *Uromys caudimaculatus*, and Water rat, *Hydromys chrysogaster*.