

Changes in macropodoid communities and populations in the past 200 years, and the future

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This paper presents tables which summarize probable changes in populations of Australian Macropodoidea, and probable causes, since white settlement. Of 50 species, 30 have suffered declines in range and/or numbers and 14 are thought to have increased or remained essentially stable. Six species have declined to extinction and an additional four are extinct on the mainland. Only about half, 28 species, remain common where they now occur. Habitat changes are likely to be the major causative agents of change, whether positive or negative; the most important are the clearing of forests, pastoralism and grazing. Feral animals may have been significant in the decline of five species. Despite the losses, the full range of macropod genera is still well represented, by good luck rather than good management. Tree-kangaroos, Hare-wallabies and Naitail Wallabies are most in need of active conservation if diversity is to be preserved.