

# Media Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Combined forces in feral fight

The Great Ocean Road Coast Committee and Surf Coast Shire are partnering to boost fox control programs in an effort to protect native coastal wildlife.

The Surf Coast Shire has contributed \$3000 to GORCC's current program which has already seen \$4000 in GORCC funds invested this financial year.

GORCC CEO Richard Davies said the funding would boost GORCC's ongoing efforts and help to protect native fauna including the vulnerable Hooded Plover.

"Many native species are under threat from these introduced predators and beach-nesting shorebirds such as the Hooded Plover are particularly vulnerable.

"With only 2.5% of Hooded Plover chicks currently surviving until they fledge, every effort we make is vital to their existence.

We thank the Surf Coast Shire for their generous support of this vital work," he said.

Foxes are thought to have been involved in the deaths of one or more of the three adult Hooded Plovers and one chick killed over the past month.

There are estimated to be four or more foxes per square kilometre on the coast, with each fox travelling up to 10km a night.

GORCC Conservation Supervisor Georgie Beale said foxes are biologically wired to prey on animals within the weight range of 500g to 5kg, making numerous species of bird, marsupial and lizard (many of them threatened) a target.

"Foxes are instinctive, opportunistic 'surplus killers' that prey on animals even if they don't require them as food, or can't digest them.

"We continually find numerous native animal carcasses close to fox dens on the coast including shorebirds, small marsupials and lizards," she said.

GORCC's programs have seen an overall reduction in the number of foxes sighted on the foreshore but Ms. Beale said work needed to be ongoing to have any impact.

"Foxes continually move into vacated dens and it's a long term battle. We see a high density of foxes in the Surf Coast Shire as urban areas and wetlands are able to support large numbers," she said.

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*Caring for the coast and community*

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