

Extinction wrapped 2025



AUSTRALIAN
CONSERVATION
FOUNDATION

Nature
needs us,
now

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of Country and their continuing connection to land, waters and community. **We pay respect to their Elders past and present** and to the pivotal role that First Nations Peoples continue to play in **caring for Country across Australia.**

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Cover. Endangered Northern quoll in Port Hedland Western Australia, Pilbara *Photo.* Adam Brice / Shutterstock

Right. Bulldozed land in Yarrawitch, NSW

Introduction

Australia is a world leader in bulldozing forests and sending animals to extinction. But that can change.

This analysis looks back at federal government project approvals in 2025. It shows an alarming rise in the amount of Aussie bush the government has approved to be bulldozed.

In 2025, the Albanese government gave the green light for the destruction of more than twice as much habitat for threatened species than it did in 2024.

This destruction approved in 2025 outstripped every year since our analysis began in 2011.

Threatened animal species in Western Australia had more of their homes approved to be bulldozed than any others.

This was in the same year Australia's Parliament finally passed new laws to protect nature.

The growing number of hectares approved to be bulldozed underlines the need for these new laws to be implemented and enforced across all industries.

At present, the amount of government-sanctioned bulldozing is eclipsed by the vast swathes of habitat for threatened species that are bulldozed without an approval or even an assessment.

The updated laws address bulldozing for agriculture. To be truly effective, farmers and landholders will need help to understand their responsibilities.

The government has put forward a package it says will protect nature. The onus is now on the government to make sure it does.

If the laws are underpinned by clear rules for what can and can't be done to nature and administered by a well-resourced environmental protection agency, they present an enormous opportunity for Australia to better protect and restore health to the forests, rivers and reefs we all depend on.



Key findings - by the numbers

In 2025

57,199
hectares

of threatened species
habitat were approved by
the government to be
bulldozed.

**That's an area ten times
the size of Sydney
Harbour, and more than
twice the amount in
2024 and five and a half
times more than in 2023.**



The #1

worst impacted
threatened species was the
northern quoll.

7,643
hectares

of its habitat were approved
to be destroyed.

**That's an area bigger than
seven Sydney Airports, and
more than for any other
threatened species.**

**The top 5
threatened
animal
species**

to lose the most habitat to
approved bulldozing were
all from Western Australia's
Pilbara region.



42

**new plants
and animals**

were added to Australia's
threatened species list.

5

**plants and animals
were moved to a
category closer
to Extinct.**

98%

of the bulldozing rubber
stamped by the federal
government was in just three
states: Western Australia,
Queensland and
New South Wales.



**The total amount of
Aussie bush bulldozed for
agriculture is unknown.***

*Recent changes to Australia's national nature law mean
bulldozing for agriculture will now be assessed and quantified.

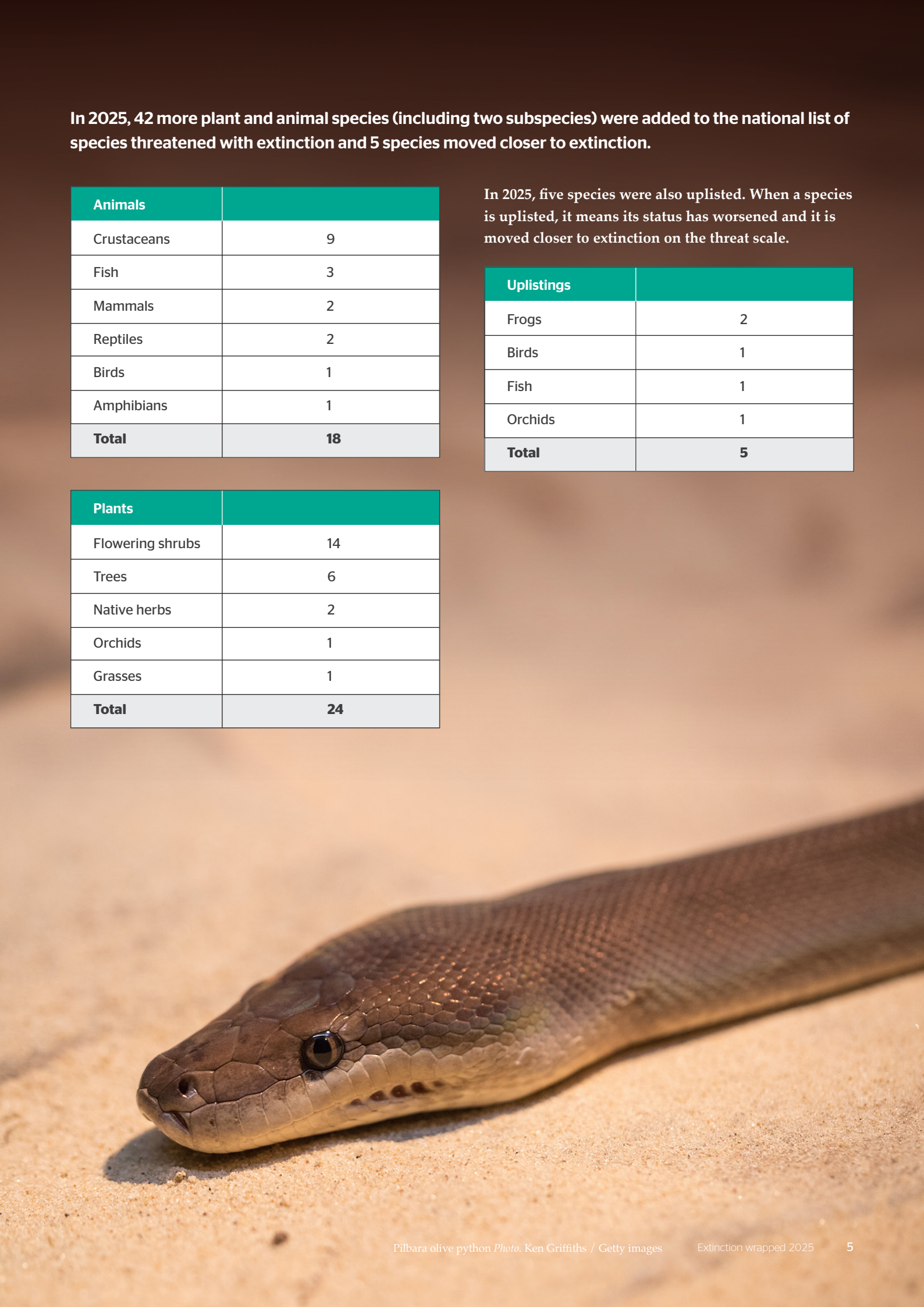
In 2025, 42 more plant and animal species (including two subspecies) were added to the national list of species threatened with extinction and 5 species moved closer to extinction.

Animals	
Crustaceans	9
Fish	3
Mammals	2
Reptiles	2
Birds	1
Amphibians	1
Total	18

Plants	
Flowering shrubs	14
Trees	6
Native herbs	2
Orchids	1
Grasses	1
Total	24

In 2025, five species were also uplisted. When a species is uplisted, it means its status has worsened and it is moved closer to extinction on the threat scale.

Uplistings	
Frogs	2
Birds	1
Fish	1
Orchids	1
Total	5



In 2025, the Albanese Government approved the bulldozing of 57,199 hectares’ worth of threatened species habitat to make way for 56 projects.

Alarminglly, this figure is more than double the amount approved to be destroyed in 2024 (25,769 hectares) and increased *more than five-fold* from the amount approved to be destroyed in 2023 (10,426 hectares).

Of the forests, woodlands, grasslands and shrublands given the tick of approval to be levelled, the habitats of the following animal species faced the greatest destruction.

Threatened species	National status	Hectares of habitat approved to be destroyed
1. Northern quoll	Endangered	7,643
2. Night parrot	Critically endangered	6,198
3. Ghost bat	Vulnerable	6,188
4. Pilbara leaf-nosed bat	Vulnerable	6,157
5. Pilbara olive python	Vulnerable	5,649
6. Koala	Endangered	4,511
7. Squatter pigeon (southern)	Vulnerable	3,146
8. Grey Falcon	Vulnerable	1,754
9. Greater glider (northern) Greater glider (north-eastern Queensland)	Vulnerable	1,591
10. Greater bilby	Vulnerable	1,108

***The top 5 worst impacted animal species in 2025 are all from Western Australia’s Pilbara region.** The Federal Government approved the destruction of more threatened species habitat in Western Australia than in any other state. 34,752 hectares were approved to be bulldozed, a large portion of which (26,750 hectares) was for a single iron ore expansion project at West Angelas.



In 2025, 98% of Federal Government-approved bulldozing of threatened species habitat was concentrated in just three states - Western Australia, Queensland and New South Wales.



Mining accounted for **68.5%** of all threatened species habitat destruction approved in this year - by far the leading industry - at 39,202 hectares’ worth. Followed by renewable energy generation and supply, agriculture and forestry, and commercial and residential developments.

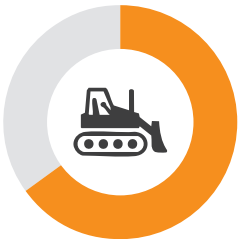
Federal Government-approved bulldozing of threatened species habitat by state in 2025		
State	Sum of hectares of threatened species habitat approved to be destroyed	Percentage of approved destruction
Western Australia	34,752	60.76%
Queensland	10,958	19.16%
New South Wales	10,525	18.40%
Tasmania	655	1.15%
South Australia	188	0.33%
Victoria	121	0.21%
Grand Total	57,199	100%



This represents an ongoing trend: since 2011, successive federal governments have approved the most bulldozing of threatened species habitat in Western Australia, Queensland and New South Wales.

Federal Government-approved bulldozing of threatened species habitat by state 2011-2025		
State	Sum of hectares of threatened species habitat approved to be destroyed	Percentage of approved destruction
Western Australia	173,720	42.19%
Queensland	138,502	33.64%
New South Wales	89,879	21.83%
South Australia	3,484	0.85%
Northern Territory	2,661	0.65%
Victoria	1,711	0.42%
Commonwealth Marine	737	0.18%
Tasmania	710	0.17%
Christmas Island	239	0.06%
Australian Capital Territory	112	0.03%
Norfolk Island	-	0.00%
Grand Total	411,756	100%

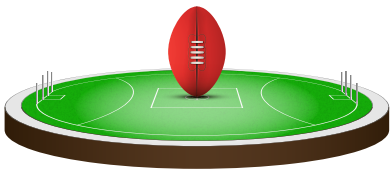
Since 2011, the mining sector has accounted for **65%** of all approvals for the bulldozing of threatened species habitat.



This amounts to an area of **267,527 hectares**, nearly **2.5 times the size of King Island**.



The threatened species habitat approved for bulldozing since 2011 equals a football oval



cleared every



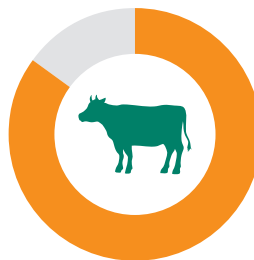
But the amount of habitat bulldozed without assessment or approval is *much* bigger than the numbers opposite.

ACF analysed **176 cases** of habitat destruction that occurred between 2019 and 2025 and found an area the size of the ACT (excluding national parks) had been bulldozed in that time.



85% of this destruction was for agriculture, and almost all of it was not assessed or approved by Australia's national nature protection law.

The Queensland Government reported that of the 332,015 hectares of woody vegetation that was destroyed in that state between 2022 and 2023 (that's an area twice the size of K'gari / Fraser Island),



A whopping **86%** of it was to make way for beef production. Bulldozing for agricultural purposes has, until recently, been exempt from assessment under Australia's nature protection law.



The Queensland Government also reported that **44%** of this destruction occurred in the Great Barrier Reef catchment areas.

The extent of bulldozing we've outlined here represents a small part of the picture, but times are changing.

Thanks to satellite imagery and some states' monitoring, we know that agriculture, particularly for beef, is the greatest driver of deforestation in Australia.

We also know parts of Queensland, including areas within the Great Barrier Reef catchment, are deforestation hotspots.

Changes to Australia's national nature protection law made on 28 November 2025 mean that, the bulldozing of threatened species homes for agriculture and in the Great Barrier Reef catchment zones will finally be subject to environmental assessments and rules.

This welcome change means no more free passes for destroying the forests and bush we all rely on for clean air, drinking water and a healthy, stable climate.

ACF urges the Albanese Government to ensure these updated laws are accompanied by a well-resourced environmental protection agency. This agency must support farmers and landholders, make independent expert decisions about proposed activities that affect nature and ensure big business complies with the rules.

This will help put Australia on the pathway to not only protect but also restore to health the irreplaceable forests and waterways that communities, businesses and future generations need.

Because when nature is healthy, so are we.

Nature needs us, now

Australian Conservation Foundation

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