

Fraser Island Dingoes

Are Fraser's dingoes really wild and special?

Yes, the island's dingoes are wild and unpredictable. Fraser's dingoes are among the purest strain in Australia, having rarely interbred with domestic dogs. Scientists believe that Fraser Island is one of the only places able to protect dingoes, possibly from extinction — big enough to prevent inbreeding, isolated enough to prevent cross-breeding.



Why do they look so skinny and hungry?

Dingoes are hunters and natural scavengers, eating anything from berries to wallabies, hunting alone or in groups. Like all scavengers, dingoes are always looking for food that comes more easily and will take food from people, campsites and residences if it is not locked away. Do not be fooled by a dingo's looks and behaviour. Dingoes are naturally lean, like greyhounds.

What happens to dingoes if people feed them?

When dingoes are fed or scavenge rubbish, they often lose their hunting skills and start to depend on scraps and hand-outs. **They also lose their natural fear of humans and expect food from everybody.** Dingoes then visit camps, picnic areas, resorts and residences, follow people and tear open tents looking for food. Pups from these dingoes are not taught to hunt; instead they grow up scavenging from these areas, are no longer wary of people and often become aggressive — and on one occasion tragically killed a child.

Dingoes have bitten visitors, occasionally quite severely, and are capable of killing people. These dingoes are humanely destroyed — sadly, for habits learnt from people.

Let them grow up wild — do not feed them.

Fed dingoes become aggressive and may attack people particularly children.

Be Dingo-safe!

Make sure everyone in your group follows these simple rules.

Each small oversight makes a dingo gradually more fearless. You CAN make a difference.

Always stay close to your children, even small teenagers.

Many children are scared by dingoes. Some have been bitten by dingoes wanting food or excited by children's movements. Stay close (within 5m) to your children — dingoes move fast! Do not let your children sleep in a tent without adults.

Walk in small groups.

People walking alone have been threatened and nipped by dingoes. Stay in small groups.

Watch dingoes quietly from a distance; don't encourage or excite them.

Do not try to attract dingoes for photos, call or splash them, throw things or run near them. These behaviours are illegal (penalties apply) because dingoes become excited and may threaten you or other visitors by growling, biting or savaging.

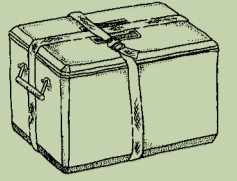
Look out for dingoes — stay calm and don't run.

Dingoes sometimes chase joggers or children playing. What appears as playful dog behaviour is actually serious dominance testing by the dingoes, which can lead to aggression. Make sure you and your children know what to do if a dingo approaches you.

NEVER feed dingoes.

Resist the urge to feed dingoes because they look hungry or because you want a photograph. Feeding encourages dingoes to become annoying. You could be attacked by aggressive dingoes if you start and then stop feeding (they usually want more!). You will be breaking the law and can be fined. Feeding dingoes is cruel and dangerous!

Lock up your food stores and iceboxes.



Dingoes will chew or tear anything when looking for food. They'll open unsecured iceboxes, snatch food from picnics and rip tents to follow a food scent! Store food and iceboxes inside the vehicle. **Take no food to the lakeshores.**

Pack away your food scraps.

Dingoes are attracted by food scraps and smells. Clean all dishes and barbecue plates and immediately put rubbish bags in secured bins or vehicles. Even inside fenced campgrounds, rubbish and food left out will attract wildlife. Do not hang rubbish bags from trees or tent poles. Be dingo-safe no matter where you camp. Around residences, lock rubbish bin lids or store bins inside.

Keep fish and bait in sealed containers or in your vehicle.

Fish cleaning in campsites is prohibited. Store bait and fish in shoulder bags or vehicles, not in beach buckets and keep berley and fish remains in sealed containers. Bury and cover your fish remains in a deep hole (50cm at least), just below high tide mark. Do this when dingoes are NOT around, to stop them associating food with people. Strong penalties apply for feeding or making food available to dingoes.

Make your tent or house boring for dingoes — keep your belongings safe.

In some areas, dingoes rip closed tents looking for food, and carry off shoes, sleeping bags or other items. Keep your camping gear and personal items in locked boxes or your vehicle, or secure your food in lockers where provided. Ensure house doors cannot be pushed open. Keep compost and rubbish in secure containers.

Tell others how to be Dingo-Safe!

If you see other visitors feed or encourage dingoes or leave food around, tell them what you know, or record details and tell a ranger. Their actions may cause you or your family to be hurt by dingoes.



If you feel threatened by a dingo

- Stand up at your full height.
- Face the dingo.
- Fold your arms and keep eye contact.
- Calmly back away.
- If in pairs, stand back to back.
- Confidently call for help.

Do not run or wave your arms.

If attacked, defend yourself aggressively

Strike the dingo with an object such as a stick, backpack or coat.

Please report any negative encounter with dingoes as soon as you can to the nearest QPWS Ranger or to:

Email: dingo.ranger@derm.qld.gov.au
Phone: (07) 5486 9966 8am–4pm



Dingoes can open iceboxes and plastic storage containers. Keep food in strong, lockable and secure containers with heavy-duty webbing straps.

Don't let your trip turn to tragedy

Driving safety

Slow down when passing pedestrians and beachgoers, especially around the Maheno wreck. Pedestrians and beachgoers often cannot hear approaching vehicles above the sound of the surf and wind. Vehicles must give way to pedestrians in shared zones.

Stay alert when driving on Fraser Island. Crashes have happened due to reckless driving or silly pranks. Passengers have suffered serious spinal injuries in vehicles travelling too fast for the road or beach conditions. If your driver makes you feel unsafe in a vehicle — say something. Slow is safe!

Seatbelts

Everyone must wear seat belts when travelling in the vehicle — it's the law! A driver (and any passenger over the age of 16) breaking these laws risks a \$300 fine and (for Australians) 3 demerit points. The driver will also have to pay an additional \$300 for every passenger not wearing a seatbelt, regardless of the passenger's age.

Walking safety

- Stay with your children at all times.
- Stay on formed walking tracks and do not shortcut.
- Wear sturdy footwear, not thongs.
- Walk in groups.
- Avoid walking in the hottest part of the day.
- Carry sufficient drinking water.
- Protect yourself from the sun.
- Look for and observe all signs.



Walk safely, walk softly

Walking over sandblows or up steep sections of tracks can be very tiring. On hot days, some people have suffered fatigue and heat exhaustion.

Long distance walking

Long distance walkers should take a map, compass, personal locator beacon, food, drinking water, appropriate clothing and first-aid kit. Plan for your own safety. Advise a reliable friend or family member of your itinerary. Be aware that this person (not rangers) is responsible for alerting police if things go wrong. Work out a contingency plan. Always check track conditions just before you start and observe any closures or track signage. Online conditions report: www.derm.qld.gov.au/fraser

Water safety

People have suffered serious injuries in water related accidents. There are no patrolled swimming areas on Fraser Island. Avoid tragedy.

- Always stay with children when near water.
- Do not swim in the ocean. It is not patrolled and there may be rips and sharks.
- Do not dive into water. Serious injuries have occurred.
- Stay away from rocks. Surf and swell can wash you away.
- Power boats and vehicles are not permitted in lakes and streams.

Bushfire safety

During high fire danger periods, total fire prohibitions will be declared. This means no campfires at all.

Be vigilant with fuel stoves, gas lights and lanterns. Bushfires can pose a threat to walkers and campers. They can occur without warning, so be aware of, and be prepared for, the dangers.

If there is a bushfire, follow the track to the nearest road, beach, lake or creek for refuge. Large logs, a ditch or burnt ground can also provide protection. Avoid areas of heavy fuel, such as deep leaf litter, and stay low to the ground where the air is coolest and contains the least smoke.

In extreme conditions, walking tracks and camping areas may be closed at short notice for your safety. Rangers also carry out planned fuel reduction burning. If you see a fire, please alert a ranger office or phone 000 as soon as possible. Report arson immediately to police.