



Biosecurity alert: California quail

(Callipepla californica)

The pest and its impacts

California quail are prohibited declared pests in Western Australia due to their potential to quickly establish populations in the wild. California quail eat seeds and foliage and when in high numbers can damage grape and grain crops and threaten native quail by competing for food and nesting sites.

California quail originate from North America, but the species has established in Chile, Argentina and New Zealand. In Australia introduced California quail populations can be found in New South Wales, Victoria and on King Island and Norfolk Island.

In Western Australia, the California quail is a prohibited declared pest and is not approved for keeping due to its potential to readily establish populations when at large.

In 2016, the quail was detected on several properties in the Gidgegannup area by vigilant landholders, who quickly reported the incursion to the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development.

The department carried out surveillance and subsequently trapped and removed many California quail from various locations within Gidgegannup. By June 2017 a total of 31 quail had been removed.



LOOK for this pest

- California quail are a stout, mostly grey bird 27cm in height with a distinctive black teardrop-shaped crest and brownish white speckled belly and wings.
- Males have a chestnut crown and black throat both edged with white.
- usually found in a group
- prefer to remain on the ground and only fly when necessary
- have a distinctive call
- California quail have a very different appearance to WA native quail.



The California quail has distinctive markings



California quail are usually found in a group



REPORT suspected sightings

- Be aware of any new or unusual birds
- Note the date, time and location of the bird
- Take photographs, if possible



Report your observations

MyPestGuide® Reporter
via app or online
mypestguide.dpird.wa.gov.au

Pest and Disease Information Service
(08) 9368 3080
padis@dpird.wa.gov.au

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