

Mange-affected wombats 'disappear' after private land clearing, group says

By [Damian McIntyre](#), 21 Nov 2017

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-11-20/wombat-warning-after-15-animals-disappear-after-burn-off/9167908>



PHOTO: The Wombat Warriors group posted a picture of a dead wombat found on the road near to the gorse clearing operation.

(Supplied: Facebook)

A Tasmanian wombat rescue organisation is calling for more education to help protect the habitat of at-risk wombats after it is claimed a number of burrows were destroyed in northern Tasmania.

Wombat Rescue Tasmania claims the burrows were buried on private land as part of a gorse burn-off on a property at Kelso.

One photo, which appeared on the rescue group's Facebook page, purports to show a dead wombat found burnt near the clearing operation.

The group's northern co-ordinator, Beatrice Mayne, said the area had already been hit hard by sarcoptic mange.

"He's quite entitled to clear it, but I thought maybe he could leave a small patch down the front, because it was full of wombat burrows," she said.

"[They were] wombats that we had treated for the last year [for mange] and were responding really well.

"He dozed the lot, and obviously buried them.

"We used to see 15 out at any given time, and now there are none.

"They've all just vanished overnight."

The group wants further protection for the species.

"I'd like DPIPW [Parks and Wildlife] to step in, and maybe give them some ideas about how they can get rid of gorse without having to bury the wombats," Ms Mayne said.

The group hopes to buy land to protect the wombat population.

"They've got a right to clear gorse — it's a notifiable weed — but it's just the manner that we object to," Ms Mayne said.

A DPIPW statement said an inquiry was underway, and at present there was no evidence to indicate a landholder's actions had killed any wombats.

It said a landholder had been contacted and provided with information about the decline in the local wombat population.

DPIPW said the gorse removal was in line with approved methods, and fire permits were in place.

Recent research showed just a dozen wombats were left in the Narawntapu National Park in the state's north, and almost half of those animals had mange.