



A formula *for helping*

Tassie devils

Australia Zoo has teamed up with Formula One driver Mark Webber in the race to save the endangered Tasmanian devil from the contagious Devil Facial Tumour Disease (DFTD). The Mark Webber Foundation has made a substantial donation to help improve our Tassie devil enclosure.



This will ensure Australia Zoo's continuing and vital role in a conservation breeding program that is growing an insurance population free of the disease. Australia Zoo has successfully bred 14 devil joeys since 2002, including five in the past year!

With predictions the devil could be extinct within 10 to 15 years due to consequences from DFTD, the Zoo's head of native mammals, Tammy Forge, said every birth was a positive for the species.

"DFTD is a debilitating cancerous sarcoma threatening wild populations, and is highly contagious among devils; tumours appear on

the Tasmanian devil's face and neck and the devil dies of starvation within three to six months of infection," Tammy explained.

"Every joey is hugely important to keep the Tasmanian devil insurance population on the increase, as well as to introduce new genetics into the pool."

Australia Zoo's native mammals keepers are now excited about the possibility of breeding of more joeys! Visit our devils soon or book an Animal Encounter with a devil to discover the beauty of these gentle and shy animals.



DID YOU KNOW?

Tassie devils have 12 different vocalisations.

Culling won't halt disease: study

Culling has ended as a way of controlling the spread of DFTD among Tasmanian devils, thanks to research showing it doesn't halt the spread of the disease.

Nick Beeton of the University of Tasmania and Professor Hamish McCallum of Griffith University devised models that concluded culling doesn't work.

The latest results confirm the view now held by the Save the Tasmanian Devil Program to end culling.

Efforts to save the devil now centre on: setting up insurance populations, finding genetic resistance, and developing a vaccine.

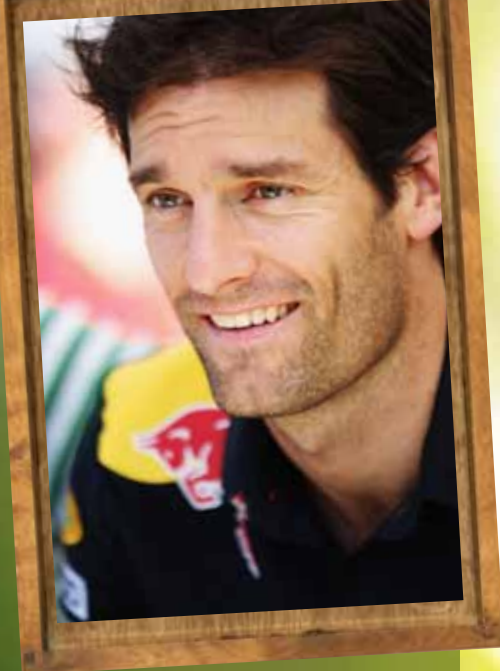
Professor McCallum is one of a team of researchers who have discovered that in some devils immunisation with tumour cells leads to an immune response which provides encouragement that vaccination is achievable.



**AUSTRALIA ZOO
WILDLIFE
WARRIORS**

Australia Zoo Wildlife Warriors celebrates Black and White week with activities at Australia Zoo every May, with the aim of educating people on the plight of the Tasmanian devil, and raising funds for ongoing conservation efforts.

Mark Webber takes a pit-stop to share his passion for saving Tassie devils.



Why did the plight of the Tasmanian devil grab your attention?

Tasmania is an area of the world which I have been fortunate enough to spend a fair bit of time since we started the Mark Webber Tasmania Challenge in 2003. The Challenge course has been held over some of the most amazing terrain in the country and it happens that many of these places are the natural habitat of the Tasmanian devil. Talking with the locals, we have come to understand the battle that these guys face for survival and the incredible efforts by organisations, such as the Save the Tasmanian Devil Appeal and Australia Zoo, to try and make a difference.

Why does Tasmania have a special interest for you?

I've been fortunate enough to travel around the world and experience a lot of different places in my life, but there is nowhere in the world like Tasmania. It is still one of the most spectacular and unspoilt landscapes on the planet and I love going there. The Tassie devil is one of the most prominent symbols of the state and epitomises the fight and courage of Aussies. Throughout my career, and in particular with the Swisse Mark Webber Tasmania Challenge, I have been given a huge amount of support from the people and government of Tasmania, so it is important to me to be able to give back.

How much money has the Mark Webber Tasmania Challenge raised for Tasmanian devils?

So far we have raised over \$60,000 for the Tasmanian Devils and this year we started a new initiative for the Swisse Mark Webber Tasmania Challenge. We gave people the chance to get a small taste of the action with an adventure run through the streets and the Domain in Hobart on December 4. We used this opportunity to do further fundraising for the Tasmanian Devils.

What's your message for drivers with regard to wildlife road kill, particularly devils?

It is not really a fair fight between a car and native wildlife on the roads. These accidents are not always avoidable but it is important to always remain vigilant and attentive when driving, especially at night.

Do you have an interest in other wildlife and animals?

I am definitely a big fan of animals and at home in the UK, we have a couple of dogs that rule the roost not to mention, a cat, some chickens, three alpacas and a rescue donkey.

Why is Australia Zoo's role in breeding an insurance population of Tasmanian devils important?

Australia Zoo has had one of the most successful breeding programs on record. Their commitment to increasing the captive-bred population will hopefully ensure the survival of the species.