Mouse Forecast

March 2026

House mouse abundance across Australian grain-growing regions

Overview

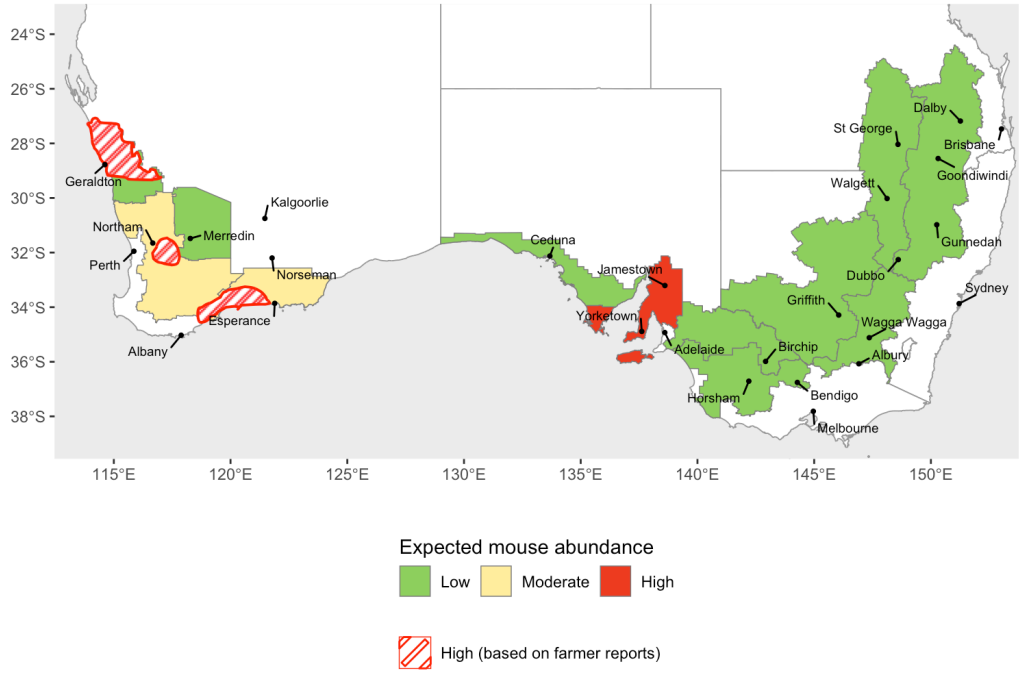
In short

- Geraldton, Central Wheatbelt, Esperance (WA): **PREPARE TO ACT AT SOWING**
- Adelaide Plains & Yorke Peninsula (SA): **WATCH AND ACT AT SOWING**
- Southern QLD: **WATCH**

In detail

- *Western Australia*: we are receiving concerning reports of very high mouse numbers, suggesting outbreaks could be under way across the (1) Mid West coast around Geraldton, (2) Central Wheatbelt around Merredin, and (3) Esperance region on the south coast (shown by red hatching in the map below). Recent rapid assessment monitoring suggests this likely also extends to the Kwinana West region.
- *Adelaide Plains and & Yorke Peninsula (SA)*: strong evidence of moderate-high and increasing population densities from recent survey data. There is some potential for an outbreak here depending on future conditions.
- *Northern NSW and southern QLD*: Generally low activity, although moderate activity seen across Goondiwindi and northern Darling Downs with recent rapid assessment monitoring.
- *Victoria, southern & central west NSW*: mouse numbers likely remain low.

Map



Results of recent mouse monitoring: proportion of sites within each GRDC agro-ecological zone with mice presence (Low = mice detected at 33% of sites or less; Moderate = mice detected between 33 – 67% of sites, High = mice detected at more than 67% of sites). GRDC agro-ecological zones are broad regions of the Australian grain belt defined by similar climate, soils, and farming systems. Monitoring data shows mouse activity to be **high** in SA Midnorth-Lower Yorke Eyre. Monitoring data shows mouse activity to be **moderate** in WA Central and WA Sandplain.

Management recomendations

1. Monitor mouse activity by walking through paddocks and searching for active burrows (chew cards could also be used). Two or three active burrows per 100 square metres are cause for concern prior to sowing.
2. Where you have identified high mouse activity, consider applying mouse bait at seeding to prevent damage to the freshly sown crop. Monitor mouse activity following baiting after application to assess effectiveness of the application. ZnP25 is the only currently registered bait available; use in accordance with the label instructions and report any adverse effects (including a lack of efficacy) via the APVMA website.
3. Reduce available mouse food (e.g., spilt grain) where possible. High rates of background food directly reduces the effectiveness of poison baiting (as mice are less likely to consume the baits).

About

Mouse forecasts are enabled through a GRDC and CSIRO investment via the Rodent Pest Management team. Forecasts will be updated seasonally or as new data comes available. We are actively developing new statistical models to improve mouse forecasts, and working on their presentation. This will soon include a new website with live-updates and interactive maps.

Monitoring data

Mouse population surveys are conducted 2 - 3 times a year at each of the ~170 long-term monitoring sites. Mice are surveyed through active burrow searches and chewcards. To calibrate this data against more robust population density measurements, we conduct live-trapping at 3 sites (Adelaide Plains SA, Northern Mallee VIC and Central West NSW).

Mouse monitoring data is collected by CSIRO, NSW Local Land Services, NSW Department of Primary Industries and Rural Development, Central West Farming Services, Birchip Cropping Group, & Farmanco. We particularly thank NSW DPIRD who generously provide additional live-trapping survey data. Further live-trapping data is also occasionally supplied through the GRDC / CSIRO Mouse Ecology 2024-2029 project.

Report mice activity

We also receive reports from farmers, agronomists and other community members. This is key information we consider given we cannot feasibly survey across the entire grain growing region.

You can quickly report sightings — and importantly, lack of sightings — of mice on your farm at https://feralscan.org.au/mousealert.

We also receive reports from the National Mouse Group, a grower-led network of farmers, industry representatives, state government, GRDC and CSIRO. The group meet three times a year to update local reports of the current mouse situation, review management recommendations and determine research priorities.

Contact

Seen mice? Want to be involved in the National Mouse Group? Contact Steve Henry steve.henry@csiro.au

Questions about the project or forecast? Get in touch with Dr Matthew Rees matt.rees@csiro.au

We value your feedback.

NSW GOVERNMENT

CSIRO

GRDC GRAINS RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION