Rainforest CRC Cooperative Research Centre for Tropical Rainforest Ecology and Management

PROJECT 6.2.2
Diet and trapping strategies of feral pigs in the WHA
Project Leader: Dr Jim Mitchell (DNRM)

Diet
Feral pigs are regarded as a significant threat to the conservation values of the WHA. Feral pigs are perceived to threaten rare and endangered animal and plant species, however little quantified data is available. This project will quantify the diet of feral pigs and specifically examine their effects on threatened species. This will add additional data to the "Ecology and Management of Feral Pigs in Rainforest" project now completed.
Small-scale trails in this project have quantified the potential of feral pigs to distribute weed seeds, hymenachne and pond apple through gut passage. A component of this project has also establish if conditioned avoidance of foods technique can be used to protect rare and threatened species from pig predation.

Trapping Strategies
Management techniques for feral pigs in rainforest environments are poorly developed and restrictive in scope. Trapping is considered the most effective technique for controlling pig populations. This project aims to further enhance this control technique by increasing the capture rate, target specificity, encounter rate, and envelope of control and by decreasing trapping effort and associated costs. A trapping strategy will be developed which will examine components of a trap baiting package i.e. carrier material, attractants, presentation and delivery systems.
Additional information on all aspects of feral pig ecology is vital for the continued development of management plans.

POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS
David SMORFITT (JCU) PhD
Economic cost of feral pig control