



28 October 2019

Guy Barnett, Minister for Primary Industries and Water

Protecting Tasmania's penguins

The Hodgman majority Liberal Government takes the protection of our unique wildlife seriously, and we are acting swiftly to bring on stronger penalties for dog attacks on wildlife.

Today I met with the Tasmanian Penguin Advisory Group, to discuss a broad range of actions to enhance protections for little penguins, including legislation to make owners accountable for their dog's actions.

Following public consultation, we tabled the Dog Control Amendment Bill in parliament earlier this month and will be debating it shortly.

Changes include a new offence for instances where a dog injures or kills any sensitive wildlife in any area specified by the Minister, with offenders incurring fines up to \$5,040, liability for a range of other costs incurred and may have their dog destroyed.

In addition, the penalty for taking a dog into a prohibited area containing sensitive habitat for native wildlife will also increase to \$3,360. This approach will support local governments wishing to prohibit the entry of dogs into ecologically significant areas, such as penguin colonies.

We are committed to ensuring these amendments are in place ahead of the peak breeding season for little penguin over the summer months.

We are delivering our long-term plan, which is working. Unlike Labor, who have no plan, we have already taken action, directing significant resources towards research, education and mitigation to help enhance protections for penguins including:

- Working with Cradle Coast National Resource Management (NRM), in collaboration with key stakeholders, to develop a community-based penguin survey methodology to coordinate monitoring and management of penguins across the state;
- Working with community and NRM groups to enhance penguin habitat through weed removal, vegetation rehabilitation and the establishment of artificial nesting boxes on both reserved and private land;
- Communicating best-practice penguin watching guidelines; and
- Deployment of Discovery Rangers over the summer months at popular penguin rookeries to provide education services and protect birds.