Red-necked Wallaby, *Macropus rufogriseus*

**Overview**

Short description of *Macropus rufogriseus*, Red-necked Wallaby
This is a small species of kangaroo, generally dark brown in colour but with greyer cheeks and underside. Some individuals have more reddish fur across the shoulders. Nose, paws and the tips of the tail and ears are black.

Description of *Macropus rufogriseus*, Red-necked Wallaby status in GB
Small isolated populations of red-necked wallabies are currently established in Scotland and the Isle of Man, and perhaps elsewhere. Other populations have survived for several decades but ultimately died out.

Habitat summary: *Macropus rufogriseus*, Red-necked Wallaby
As a ‘scrub’ wallaby, the species lives in well-wooded areas where good grazing is available. Several introductions have been onto islands where some potential predators, such as foxes, are scarce or absent. Mortality increases during severe winter weather, but it is a hardy animal and survives well in upland regions.

**Overview table**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Environment:</th>
<th>Terrestrial</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Species status:</td>
<td>Non-Native</td>
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<td>Native range:</td>
<td>Australia</td>
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<td>Functional type:</td>
<td>Herbivore</td>
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<td>Status in England:</td>
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<td>Status in Scotland:</td>
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<td>Status in Wales:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Location of first record:</td>
<td>Lundy Island</td>
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<td>Date of first record:</td>
<td>1929</td>
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**Invasion history: *Macropus rufogriseus*, Red-necked Wallaby**

**Origin**
Red-necked wallabies introduced into GB are from the Tasmanian nominate race of the species.

**First Record**
The first imports to GB of wallabies definitely of this species were in 1865. There were reports of animals living in the wild in the Pennines and in Tring Park in the early 20th century.

**Pathway and Method**
Red-necked wallabies were first brought to GB for release into private parks and zoo enclosures. Introductions into the wild have been a mixture of deliberate releases and escapes from captivity.

**Species Status**
Red-necked wallabies are thought not to have spread far from their places of introduction. A population at large in the Peak District since 1940 built to 40–50 individuals but remained within 30 km of the sites of release. It is thought this population may now be extinct.

**Ecology & Habitat: Macropus rufogriseus, Red-necked Wallaby**

**Dispersal Mechanisms**
The species swims well and has reached the mainland shore of Loch Lomond from Inchconnachan. It appears, however, that rates of dispersal and spread are very slow. Mortality in cold winters, from road accidents and from predation apparently limits the ability of the species to spread.

**Reproduction**
Red-necked wallabies can breed when a year old. A single young is born in summer and first emerges from the mother’s pouch the following spring.

**Known Predators/Herbivores**
Young wallabies occasionally fall victim to predation by dogs and foxes.

**Resistant Stages**
None.

**Habitat Occupied in GB**
The best-known populations in GB have inhabited moorland regions and fed mostly on heather, bilberries and moorland grasses. Other groups have occupied chalk downland scrub, for example in Sussex.

**Distribution: Macropus rufogriseus, Red-necked Wallaby**
Extant colonies are known in the Loch Lomond area and on the Isle of Man, but scattered reports across GB may indicate that there may be others that are as yet undocumented. Other introduced populations are known in New Zealand, in France and on Lambay Island near Dublin. The native range is the coastal woods and forests of eastern and southeastern Australia.

**Impacts: Macropus rufogriseus, Red-necked Wallaby**

**Environmental Impact**
As a large herbivore, wallabies have the potential to alter habitats by selective grazing. There is evidence that this is occurring in the Inchconnachan colony, to the detriment of native flora and fauna. On the Isle of Man, the species may possibly have future negative impacts on the biodiversity of the Ballaugh Curraghs protected site.

**Health and Social Impact**
Potential to cause road traffic accidents.

**Economic Impact**
None known.

**References & Links: Macropus rufogriseus, Red-necked Wallaby**

**Identification**

**Biology, ecology, spread, vectors**

**Management and impact**

**General**
