Monitoring mice in Australia – August 2025

Summary

- **There is high mouse activity in parts of the Queensland Darling Downs and Roma (QLD) and moderate activity in isolated locations in Adelaide Plains (SA), Wimmera (VIC), and Albany & Geraldton (WA)** (Figure 1)**.** Mouse activity is very patchy (moderate in one field, but low in the next). Growers should remain vigilant. Moderate to high numbers will lead to damage as winter crops mature. **Consider management well before grain fill**.
- **Mouse activity is low in all other areas.** Low numbers of mice are unlikely to cause significant crop damage.
- **Growers should actively monitor mouse activity** (mouse chew cards are useful at this time of year, and active burrow counts can be useful if plant biomass is not too high). There is always a chance of isolated patches of higher mouse activity, particularly where background food is high.
- Please report and map mouse activity using *MouseAlert* (www.mousealert.org.au) so other growers can see what mouse activity is being observed in their local area. Follow on X using *@MouseAlert*.

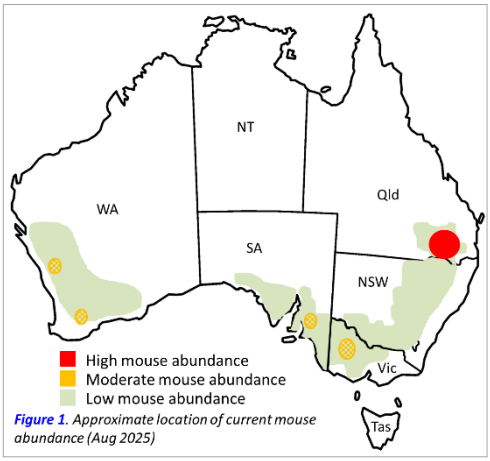


Figure 1. Approximate location of current mouse abundance (Aug 2025)

Management recommendations

Mouse numbers are moderate to high in many areas (highly patchy). There have been excellent conditions in areas of southern Queensland (Darling Downs) and mouse numbers remain moderate to high, with damage likely to maturing winter crops or newly planted summer crops. There has also been good in-crop rainfall in South Australia, Victoria and southern NSW after a prolonged dry spell, but mouse activity is relatively low and increasing. However, given breeding will commence shortly, mouse numbers will only increase from now, and could be a problem as crops mature or at sowing in 2026. If concerned, **consider management before crop comes into head**. See GRDC Mouse Control website for more details about control options.

1. **Monitor**: Actively gauge mouse numbers by walking through paddocks (mouse chew cards and active burrow counts are useful tools at this time of year).
2. **Bait**: If mouse damage is evident in maturing crops, **apply zinc phosphide mouse bait** (adhere to label/permit instructions and be aware of the 14-day withholding period before harvest). Once grains have developed on heads, mice may not go for zinc phosphide baits, so, if need be, **bait well before grain fill**.
3. **Only ZnP25 baits are currently available**. As with use of any agricultural chemical, use the product in accordance with conditions on the label, and report any adverse or off target effects via the APVMA website.
4. **Ensure a clean harvest** so that there is minimal mouse food available.

Current situation

Mouse numbers are generally low, but there are some areas of high activity in southern Queensland (particularly Darling Downs), and patches of moderate activity in Adelaide Plains, SA, and Wimmera of Victoria (as a result of grain loss after hailstorms at harvest). Because of patchy activity between paddocks, growers are advised to monitor across multiple paddocks to gauge mouse numbers to inform management decisions. Focus on paddocks that had grain loss (particularly barley) (please report on *MouseAlert* www.mousealert.org.au).

- **South Australia: Generally low, but some sites with moderate or high activity.** Eyre Peninsula: low activity. Adelaide Plains: nil activity from 5 sites, low activity on 3 sites, moderate on 1 site and high on 1 site: 10 mice were caught on trapping grids at Benchmark site at Mallala (3% trap success), which is low (Figure 2) with low densities (5-15 mice/ha). Yorke Peninsula: nil on 8 sites, low on 3 sites, moderate on 1 site.

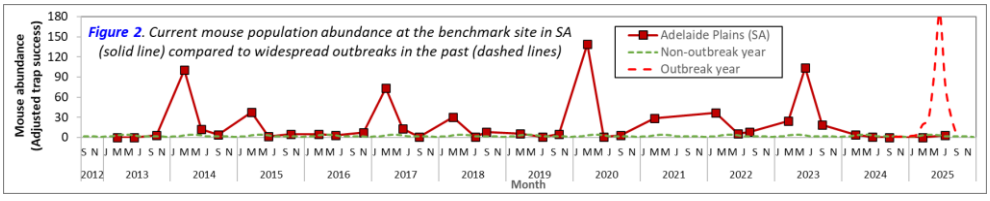
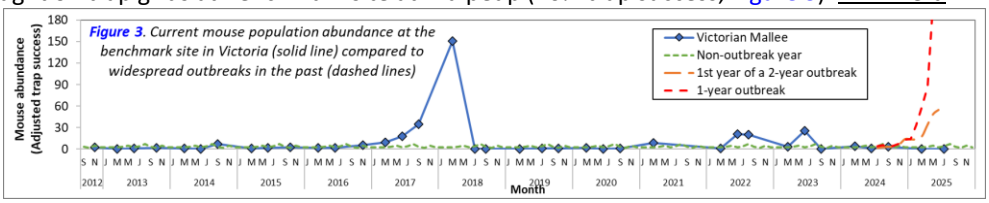
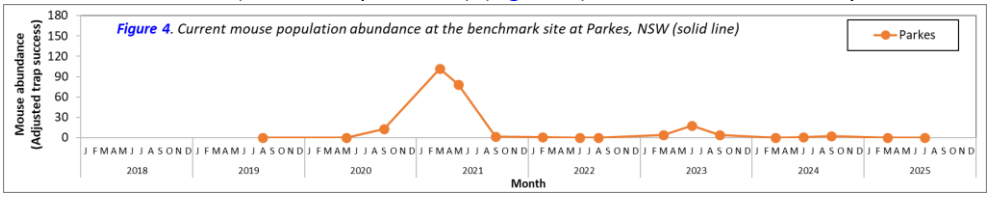


Figure 2. Current mouse population abundance at the benchmark site in SA (solid line) compared to widespread outbreaks in the past (dashed lines)

- **Queensland: Mouse activity is highly variable with high activity at some sites on Darling Downs.** Darling Downs: nil activity on 7 sites, low on 5 sites, moderate on 2 sites (~10% chew card activity or 50-100 active burrows/ha), high on 6 site (>200 active burrows/ha). Goondiwindi: nil on 7 sites, low on 2 sites.
- **Western Australia: Reports of patches of moderate mouse activity in Albany and Geraldton, otherwise generally low.** Albany: nil activity on 2 sites, moderate activity on 2 sites and high activity on 1 site. We thank Farmanco for monitoring.
- **Victoria: Moderate isolated activity in parts of Wimmera, but otherwise generally low**. Mallee: nil activity on 13 sites, low on 1 site. Nil mice were caught on trap grids at Benchmark site at Walpeup (=0% trap success, Figure 3). Wimmera: nil on 9 sites, low on 2 sites. Wimmera East (new sites): nil activity on 6 sites, low on 2 sites and moderate on 1 site. We thank BCG for mouse monitoring.

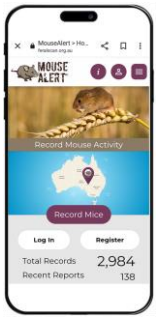


- **New South Wales (Northern, Central & Southern): Mouse activity low**. Parkes: nil activity at 8 sites, low at 4 sites. One mouse was captured at Benchmark site at Parkes (0.3% = trap success) (Figure 4). Condobolin: nil activity on 7 sites. Coonamble: nil activity on 2 sites, low on 1 site. Northern Moree: nil activity on 7 sites, low on 1 site. Gin Gin: no reports. Liverpool Plains: nil on 8 sites, and low on 1 site. Southern (Coleambally): nil on 4 sites. Riverina: nil on 7 sites, low on 2 sites. We thank North West Local Land Services, Central West Farming Systems and NSW DPIRD for mouse monitoring.



The 'Mouse Forecast'

New mouse forecast models are being developed and will be run once data have been collected from the spring 2025 (September) mouse monitoring. A new set of forecast maps are being developed – watch this space! The traditional mouse forecast models will be run once April-October rainfall is available.



MouseAlert Smartphone app →
www.mousealert.org.au

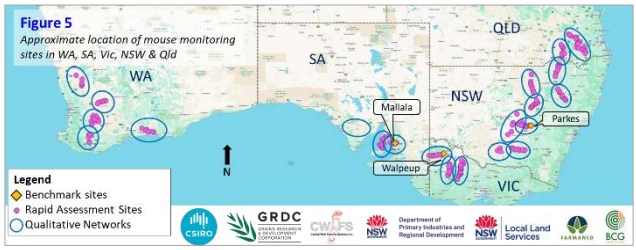
Future activities

The next scheduled monitoring is set for September 2025 in all regions. Please continue to report mouse abundance on your farm (presence and absence!) using ***MouseAlert*** (*www.mousealert.org.au*). Download the ***MouseAlert*** App from iTunes app store or Google play (click on hyperlink to download). You can also follow progress on **X** (formerly Twitter**)** (*@MouseAlert*). Instructions on how to use ***MouseAlert*** are available here.

Background

These *Mouse Updates* are put together through consultation with the National Mouse Group (NMG), a grower-led group made up of 20-30 members who meet 3x a year to discuss the current mouse situation and develop management recommendations. The NMG comprises grower representatives, state government staff and industry reps from grain growing states, plus GRDC and CSIRO. These *Mouse Updates* are made possible through GRDC's investment in CSP2501-006RTX (*Mouse surveillance and monitoring to inform leading practice*). Monitoring data is collected 3x a year (Figure 5; in collaboration with NSW DPIRD, NSW LLS, CWFS, BCG, & Farmanco) is used in the forecast models and and is summarised in these *Mouse Updates*.

- **Benchmark sites (◆)**: live trapping data collected for use in models in SA, Vic, and NSW.
- **Quantitative rapid-assessment sites (●)**: mouse chew cards & active mouse burrow counts (190 transects, 20 areas).
- **Qualitative monitoring networks (○)**: from farmers and agronomists in 21 local areas.



Further information & handy resources

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❶ GRDC Mouse Control website: https://grdc.com.au/resources-and-publications/resources/mouse-management
❷ *MouseAlert* (hosted by FeralScan): https://www.feralscan.org.au/mousealert/
❸ Dept of Ag., Fisheries & Forestry (DAFF): https://www.agriculture.gov.au/biosecurity-trade/pests-diseases-weeds/mouse-infestation
❹ CSIRO rodent management: https://research.csiro.au/rm/