

Tasmanian devils reintroduced to mainland Australia

An animal that has not lived on the Australian mainland in over 3,000 years is back. The creature is the Tasmanian devil. Conservation groups in the state of New South Wales on Australia's east coast released a group of 26 of the mammals. They put them in a large nature reserve north of the city of Sydney. The Tasmanian devil is the size of a small dog. It feeds on large birds and household waste. It has been an endangered species for decades after dingoes (an Australian wild dog) wiped them out on mainland Australia. The devil gets its name from its high-pitched squeal and the fierce way it fights for food. Despite its scary-sounding name, experts say it is not a danger to humans.

The conservation group Aussie Ark worked with other animal protection groups on the project to release the Tasmanian devils. The animals are on a nature reserve to help keep their chances of survival high. They have been left to find their own food and survive by themselves. Tim Faulkner, president of Aussie Ark, told National Geographic: "They are free. They're out there. We've got some basic means of keeping an eye on them, but essentially, now it's over to the devils to do what they do." He was hopeful about the future of the devils, saying: "This release of devils will be the first of many. We are talking about something monumental, a true landmark in history." (3)

TRUE / FALSE

1. The article said the Tasmanian devil is 3,000 years old. T / F
2. Conservationists released 260 Tasmanian devils into the wild. T / F
3. The Tasmanian devil is about the size of a small dog. T / F
4. The Tasmanian devil is very dangerous to humans. T / F
5. A conservation group put the Tasmanian devils on an ark. T / F
6. The released Tasmanian devils must find their own food. T / F
7. The conversation group will keep an eye on the Tasmanian devils. T / F
8. The conservation group wants to build a landmark to the devils. T / F

CONSERVATION: How important is it to conserve these things? Complete this table.

	How Important Is This?	Conservation Efforts - What can be done to help?
A building		
A dying language		
A flower		
A beach		
A tradition		
A local area		