

# Wallabies killed by dogs

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**VICIOUS dogs have killed 10 wallabies - some even snatching joeys from the pouches - at a popular sportsground, sparking a hunt for the animals' owner and calls for tighter pet laws.**

Carcasses covered Leichhardt Soccer Club's playing pitch as wallabies with eaten necks and gutted stomachs lay strewn across the turf.

All 10 female wallabies, each carrying a joey, were killed in Monday's attack.

Cairns Regional Council rangers were yesterday interviewing witnesses and pet owners in the area, including a club committee member accused of owning the dogs.

Under local laws, the owner of the animals can be fined and the dogs destroyed.

Wildlife Care and Rescue spokeswoman Helen Jackson demanded the owner surrender the animals to be euthanased and called for tighter dog laws.

"These animals are just killing for the thrill of it," she said.

"What happens if a toddler had walked on to the football grounds?"

Pensioner Bernie Ashford said he saw two dogs with collars run from the White Rock grounds about 6.30am.

"A couple of the little tiny joeys were still alive," an emotional Mr Ashford said.

Council workers cleared all carcasses from the pitch before midday and took photos of the bodies, which were infested with flies.

Nancy Reis, who is caretaking for a property which lies next to the grounds, said she had seen two dogs hanging around the area, one with a spiked collar.

Local business owner Max Alpen, of Southside Raw Materials, said that dog attacks had spiked in the past week.

"It's been quiet for about a year but over the past week it has increased," he said.

"About a week ago, our bins were trashed."

RSPCA Far Northern inspector Cameron Buswell said White Rock was a notorious spot for dog attacks.

A council spokesman said investigations were continuing and no one had been charged.

Last year, a White Rock family lost six pets to dog attacks while donkeys, horses and cats have been killed and injured from run-ins with dogs over the years.



**Carnage:** Wallabies bodies litter the Leichhardt Soccer Club grounds after two dogs tore them apart on Monday. Picture: JAKE NOWAKOWSKI

# Our say: Pet owners have a duty

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**THE scene at the Leichhardt Soccer Club on Monday would not be out of place in a horror movie. Do think the dog's owners should be held responsible?**

It is not only distressing to see the cruel destruction of so many native animals, but even more so to hear it is by domestic pets.

Pet owners have a responsibility to look after their animals, to ensure they are kept in a secure area, and kept under control at all times.

Additionally, owners also need to make sure their pet is registered with their local council, exercised daily and properly looked after while their owner is on holidays.

If owners cannot suitably provide this basic level of care for their dog, then perhaps they may want to rethink being a pet owner.

Dog attacks are becoming an increasing problem across the Far North, an issue compounded by the sheer number of feral dogs that haunt some of our more problematic areas, such as White Rock, which the RSPCA has pointed out, is an area notorious for animal attacks.

Last year, a White Rock family lost six pets to dog attacks while a pitbull mauled a pet cat to death in front of horrified onlookers in January 2008.

The consequences of failing to properly care for pets, as the carnage at the sports ground reveals, can be severe. They may be wallabies today, but tomorrow, it could be an endangered cassowary, or even a small child that comes face to face with an unleashed, unsupervised pet.



**Shocking scenes:** butchered wallaby