

Manly's Little Penguins need our help if they are going to survive

By Nicole Year 2

Take a look as we explore the current situation facing these little blue and white guys.



The Little Penguin population has dropped significantly so the best way to see them at Sydney Aquarium. Photograph: Mrs Mussone

There used to be close to 500 Little Penguins in the wild but over the last few years the population had changed because of pollution introduces species and loud noises. "Manly's penguins population has dropped significantly, with only 100 left in the wild," said Emily a

keeper at Manly's SeaLife Aquarium. They are now classed as an endangered species in Manly.

The Little Penguins are being pushed off onto island off the coast. This is because they are easily scared by the noise from people and dogs barking around Manly. "The Little Penguin's population is one of the last mainland populations in Australia," said Emily.



14 Little Penguins were attacked at Melbourne Zoo in November, 2015. Photograph: Lorinda Taylor

Foxes are a major threat to the Little Penguins because foxes like to hunt for birds and once they get the taste for something they keep going back for more. "Probably the top three are foxes, cats, [and] dogs," said Emily. In November of this year, 14 Little Penguins

were attacked by a feral fox as they slept in their enclosure Melbourne Zoo. In the morning when zookeepers checked on the Little Penguins they found dead bodies lying all over the ground.

The Little Penguin attack at Melbourne Zoo is one of many devastating losses these birds have faced. Manly's Little Penguins have also been attacked by foxes. "We had a big problem with foxes so we had our volunteers looking after the penguins at Collins Beach," said Eira, a Volunteer Penguin Warden at Manly.

In Manly they have a Volunteer Penguin Warden Program to keep an eye on the Little Penguins. The Penguin Warden Program started in 2005 because they were worried about unleased dogs and people getting too close to the Little Penguins.

The 20 to 25 penguin wardens take turns looking after the Little Penguins every sunset. When they arrive they close the gates along the wharf. Next the wardens wait for the Little Penguins to come in from ocean where they were fishing. "We have to record what time they come in," said Eira.