

Wild Pig (*Sus scrofa*)

What is Ontario doing?

To prevent the establishment of invasive wild pigs in the province, Ontario has regulated pigs (*Sus scrofa*) as a restricted invasive species under the Invasive Species Act, 2015.

Ontario's Strategy to Address the Threat of Invasive Wild Pigs outlines our proactive approach to preventing the establishment of invasive wild pigs in the province.



Wild pig: domesticated pig. Photo: Jolene Daley

What makes a wild pig so invasive?

- **Highly reproductive:** Wild pigs possess one of the highest reproductive rates of any mammal and can double their population density in as little as one year. They reach sexual maturity at 6 months and can have up to two litters per year with 4-10 piglets each time.
- **Highly adaptable:** Even domesticated pigs that normally have very little hair when raised indoors can grow a dense haircoat in a matter of months to help them to survive cold winter climates.
- **Habitat generalists:** Wild pigs travel great distances and can live anywhere that provides ample shelter, food, and water, including agricultural areas, riparian areas, grasslands, and forests. Wild pigs are also capable of inhabiting cities.
- **No natural predators:** Pigs are not native to North America and therefore have no natural predators here.



Wild pig: pot-bellied pig. Photo: Ron W.

What is a wild pig?

Any pig that is found outside of a fence that is not contained or under the physical control of any person is considered a wild pig. This includes free roaming pigs that are:

- domesticated pig breeds, such as those that are commonly farmed, and pot-bellied pigs;
- Eurasian wild boar; or
- hybrids

Impacts of wild pigs

Wild pigs are recognized as one of the most invasive and damaging mammals on Earth:

- Their rooting, trampling, and wallowing behaviour can destroy the natural environment and cause extensive damage to crop and agricultural lands.
- They can spread parasites and diseases such as *E.coli* and *Salmonella* to wildlife, livestock, and humans.
- They contaminate water sources when they defecate and urinate in waterways.
- Wild pigs compete with and prey on native species.
- They are very difficult and expensive to control. In the United States alone, they cost billions in crop and equipment damage, livestock predation, and control.



Wild pigs: Eurasian wild boars. Photo: MNRF

What you can do to help

1. Report sightings of wild pigs to the ministry:

- Email: wildpigs@ontario.ca or
- Call: **1-833-933-2355**
- Please include as much information as you can.

2. Keep your pigs contained.

- It is illegal to release any pig into the natural environment. If a pig escapes or is otherwise released, owners must immediately notify the ministry at wildpigs@ontario.ca or **1-833-933-2355**.
- Owners must recapture or otherwise remove the pig from the landscape as soon as possible.

3. Do not hunt wild pigs

- Hunting pigs in Ontario is illegal.
- Hunting wild pigs is not an effective way of controlling their spread.
- For the purposes of protecting private property from damage caused by wild pigs, including maintaining biosecurity, landowners (or agents on their behalf) can scare away, capture or kill a wild pig. A person who captures or kills a pig for protection of property must immediately notify the ministry by emailing wildpigs@ontario.ca, or phoning **1-833-933-2355** and provide relevant information (such as, the location and number of pigs captured or killed).

4. Do not bring live pigs of any kind (including pets) into provincial parks or conservation reserves – it's illegal.

5. Do not keep Eurasian wild boar or their hybrids.

- Eurasian wild boar and their hybrids play a greater role in the establishment and spread of wild pigs relative to domesticated breeds (i.e., breeds of *Sus scrofa domesticus*). As such, Ontario is phasing Eurasian wild boar and their hybrids out of the province by 2024.
- As of January 1, 2022, Eurasian wild boar and their hybrids must not be imported, possessed, transported, propagated, leased, traded, bought, or sold in Ontario. For definitions on the types of pigs, please refer to *Ontario's Strategy to Address the Threat of Invasive Wild Pigs*.
- Certain people are eligible for an exemption during the phase-out period (January 1, 2022 – December 31, 2023). For more information, please visit: www.ontario.ca/wildpigs.
- **To report a natural resource violation or submit a tip, you can call: the MNRF TIPS line at 1-877-847-7667, or Crime Stoppers (anonymous) at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477).**



Wild pig: Eurasian wild boar. Photo: MNRF

Want to know more?

For more information on invasive wild pigs, including *Ontario's Strategy to Address the Threat of Invasive Wild Pigs*, visit:

www.ontario.ca/wildpigs