

'Stoned wallabies make crop circles'



Wallabies have been observed acting strangely in poppy fields

Australian wallabies are eating opium poppies and creating crop circles as they hop around "as high as a kite", a government official has said.

Lara Giddings, the attorney general for the island state of Tasmania, said the kangaroo-like marsupials were getting into poppy fields grown for medicine.

She was reporting to a parliamentary hearing on security for poppy crops.

Australia supplies about 50% of the world's legally-grown opium used to make morphine and other painkillers.

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We have a problem with wallabies entering poppy fields, getting as high as a kite and going around in circles. Then they crash

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Lara Giddings, government official

"The one interesting bit that I found recently in one of my briefs on the poppy industry was that we have a problem with wallabies entering poppy fields, getting as high as a kite and going around in circles," Lara Giddings told the hearing.

"Then they crash," she added. "We see crop circles in the poppy industry from wallabies that are high."

Rick Rockliff, a spokesman for poppy producer Tasmanian Alkaloids, said the wallaby incursions were not very common, but other animals had also been spotted in the poppy fields acting unusually.

"There have been many stories about sheep that have eaten some of the poppies after harvesting and they all walk around in circles," he added.

Retired Tasmanian poppy farmer Lyndley Chopping also said he had seen strange behaviour from wallabies in his fields.

"They would just come and eat some poppies and they would go away," he told ABC News.

"They'd come back again and they would do their circle work in the paddock."

Some people believe the mysterious circles that appear in fields in a number of countries are created by aliens. Others put them down to a human hoax.

Here are some of your not so serious responses.

I have seen a stoned wallaby but I don't know about them making crop circles. The one I saw was slurring his words and asking me for a dollar as he was trying to get the boat to see his brother in New Zealand - he looked in no mood to be formulating a series of complex agricultural design patterns. I could be wrong - they might have masterminded the twin tower attacks, who really knows?

Dijon, Hobart, Tasmania

This has to be the funniest headline of the year so far. Trippy Skippy.

Arcadian, Oxford

My cat Monkey, a Tonkinese cat, started to walk in circles mysteriously about two months ago. My suspicion is the radar from the two police cars parked in front of my apartment building has an effect or sonar like sound that humans cannot hear may have an effect. I was struck by this news article and had to respond.

Barbara Ann Levy, West Palm Beach, Florida

I resent this report that we are high as a kite and making crop circles! I haven't been stoned since 1971. A few young hoppers eat the wrong plant and you trash our species in the news. What's this world coming to!

Wally Baby, Australia Bush

I saw a whole bunch of them dingos going mad in my corn field only last night. I'm not sure if they were high or not but I'm pretty sure they were. One of them had a ghettoblaster and they were listening to some kind of fast electronic music. Lock 'em up and throw away the key, that's what I say!

Roger, Melbourne

I was travelling in Tasmania in the summer of last year and witnessed what I believed as dancing wallabies. I was intoxicated at the time and so put it down to the poppies I had consumed earlier that day. However after reading this article that experience made a lot of sense.

Alan Rees , Tring

Bumped into a couple o' stoned wallabies coming out the co-op up Lochgelly high street the other night. This seems to be a problem on both sides of the globe.

John Smith, Lochgelly, Fife, Scotland

I've lived in Tasmania for many years. Not only do wallabies congregate in poppy fields, but also on the local golf courses. They do this mainly at night and I can only assume they're playing several rounds of golf while avoiding greens fees. You only need to be really worried when one of the stoned wallabies gets into a golf buggy.

John Larson, Launceston, Tasmania, Australia

I want to know who sold out the wallabies? Who's the narc? My guess is the platypus, he is such an odd duck.

Chet Guest, St. Paul, Minnesota USA

Don't know about crop circles but I saw one today trying to jack a car, presumably trying to get enough together for his next fix.

Greg Corcoran, Durham, UK

The question should be whether or not those law breaking wallabies should be brought to justice for indulging in illegal substances. The law makes no exceptions for no-one no matter what their excuse is or even what species they may be. They are not setting an example for their joeys nor for any other marsupials and I fear this could become an epidemic of outback size proportions.

Phil, Edinburgh



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