

## Genetics may save animals

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GENETIC diversity could be the reason one group of animals can survive an infectious disease while others are wiped out.

In a finding that could have a major impact on conservation of animals or isolated populations, scientists found a lack of genetic diversity increases the risk of dying from infectious disease.

Studying tammar wallabies, Teena Browning from Macquarie University examined the gene responses involved in fighting infection.

The genes and immune responses occur in all vertebrates.

She told the Genetics Society of Australia conference in Melbourne yesterday that the group of genes were an indicator of what was going on within the whole genome.

Ms Browning said although the research was in its early stages, it could have implications for managing Australian native species.