



AUSTRALIAN
CONSERVATION
FOUNDATION



BE A WILDLIFE HERO

How to help native
animals & birds
in bushfires,
heatwaves &
storms

Save the number of your local
wildlife rescue hotline in your phone.
You can call them for advice, or to have
the animal rescued.

NSW WIREs 1300 094 737
WA Wildlife Helpline (08) 9474 9055

VIC Wildlife Victoria 1300 094 535

QLD RSPCA Qld 1300 264 625

ACT RSPCA ACT (02) 6287 8100
Wildcare (02) 6299 1966

SA RSPCA SA 1300 477 722
Fauna Rescue SA (08) 8289 0896

TAS Bonorong Wildlife Hospital & Rescue 0447 264 625
(0447 ANIMAL)

NT Wildcare 0408 885 341

One thing nearly all Australians share is a love for our native birds and animals.

But as we face increasing threats from climate damage, our wildlife suffers. They may face water shortages, habitat destruction, heat stress and injuries.

Extreme weather — bushfires, heatwaves, drought, storms, floods and cyclones — destroys natural homes and **can leave many animals injured and with less food.**

Australia's wildlife already faces an extinction crisis with more than 1,800 species under threat.

And 46 per cent of threatened animals can be found living among us in urban areas. The pockets of habitat we create in our neighbourhoods will help more of our unique animals and birds thrive.

Even in a city, nature is all around you — your local reserve or kids' playground is likely full of plants loved by native animals and insects. Birds, bees or even a possum might be dropping into your suburban garden or balcony.

You can be a wildlife hero. This guide shows you how.

URBAN WILDLIFE

Help urban wildlife thrive over summer in your city or town

1. Put water out for wildlife

- Place a non-metal container full of clean water in the shade and away from predators, pets and people.
- Put sticks and rocks in the water to stop small critters and insects drowning.
- Keep the water clean and fresh.

2. Garden with wildlife in mind

- Keep native trees or plants in your garden (or leave remnants of dead trees for hollows) and let them grow to increase canopy cover.
- Place a native insect hotel or bee waterer in your outdoor area.
- Make a frog bog in whatever space is available to you — balcony planter, backyard, nature strip or community garden.
- Create micro-habitats for native insects, birds and bees on your balcony using plant boxes or hanging plants.

3. Install nest boxes.

Find out what species live near you and build or buy suitable boxes they can make into a home, especially in places where there are fewer trees.

4. Ask for more native plants in your area.

Contact your building management or local council to see if gardens and nature strips can include more native plants.

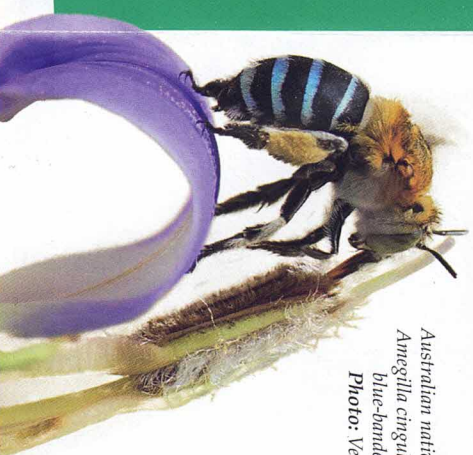
5. Secure your pets.

Conflict with our cats and dogs can cause injury to urban native wildlife. (Dogs on lead when outdoors and cats indoors, especially at night.)

A roof over their head

Nest boxes can provide a home for native species where trees and hollows are scarce. This is especially common in cities, where hollows are in high demand or where trees are still getting established. Find out what species live near you to determine which type of nest box would be best.

Try the websites of your state government, Birdlife Australia, RSPCA or local businesses like Hollow Log Homes and FauNature for nest box tips.



Australian native bee,
Amegilla cingulata or
blue-banded bee.
Photo: Venjolis

2 BUSHFIRES

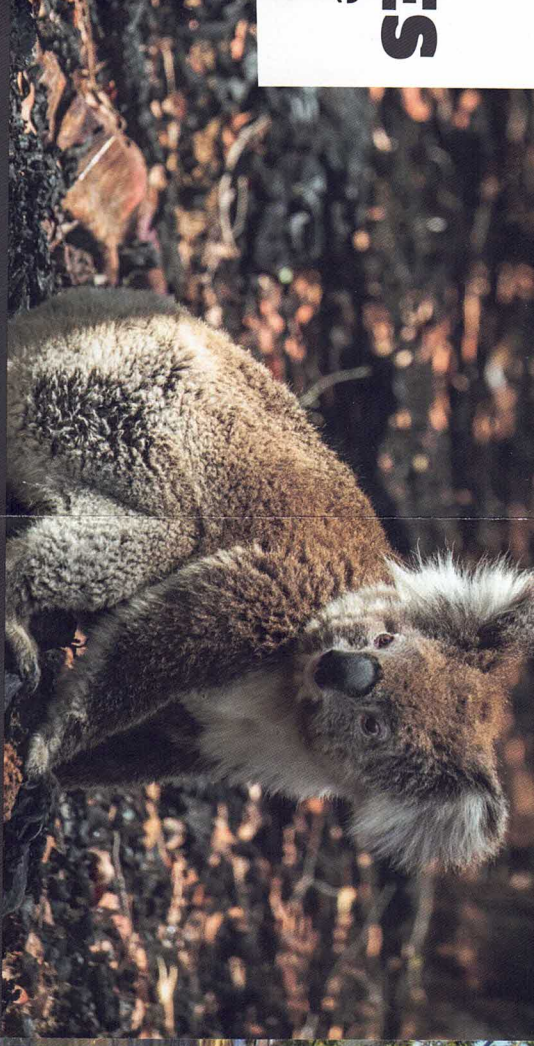
How to spot injured wildlife after a bushfire



HOLLOWES & HIDEOUTS

More than 300 Australian native animal species rely on some kind of hollow to make a home. Where it's safe to do so, leave tree hollows, logs and little hiding spaces for native wildlife in rocks and leaf litter.

When trees have to be cleared, replant native trees to replace them. This will help more native animals survive.



Even months after a fire, injured animals can still be found. They may have burns to their paws or tails that are not immediately obvious. They could also be suffering from infection, smoke inhalation, dehydration or starvation.

Six signs to look for:

1. Animals are **easier to approach** than normal.
2. They **appear lethargic, lazy and tired**.
3. They **move slowly** or appear to be in pain (salivating/panting).
4. Kangaroos **not moving away** when approached.
5. Koalas, flying-foxes and other wildlife commonly seen in trees **staying on the ground**.
6. Possums or wombats **out during daylight**.

How to help injured or sick wildlife

- **Check the area** for other threats to you and the animal. Don't put yourself or wildlife in further danger.
- **Do not approach wildlife.** Assess the animal from a distance to help keep them calm and safe. Unless you are trained and confident in handling injured or sick wildlife you can harm them further.
- **Secure the scene** without approaching the animal. For example, lock up pets and place cones near the roadway.
- **If it is a flying-fox or bat, call a vaccinated bat carer** right away. Your state animal rescue will have contact details.
- **Call your regional wildlife rescue hotline** to provide assistance and additional rescue advice.

Above left, a pair of rainbow lorikeets in a tree hollow.

Photo: Annette Ruzicka/MAP group

Top, a koala sits on the burnt ground after a bushfire in Victoria this year.

Photo: Doug Gimesy

3 HEATWAVES & DROUGHT

Tips for helping wildlife survive extreme heat and drought



There are key signs an animal may be suffering from heat stress.

They might be seeking shade, and appear lethargic, unresponsive and open mouthed (salivating or panting).

How to help heat-stressed wildlife

- **Secure your pets** (dogs on lead when outdoors and cats indoors, especially at night).
- **Put water out.** If an animal is showing signs of heat stress, place water nearby and consider leaving them access to a sprinkler or mister for a short period.
- **Do not approach wildlife.** This can stress them further.
- Monitor recovery from a **safe distance.**
- If recovery signs are not evident within a few hours **call for wildlife rescue and advice.**



Left, an echidna.

*Photo: Melanie Thomas
Above, Christopher
Burns*

Below, brushtail possum.

Photo: Andrew Mercer

Feeling the heat

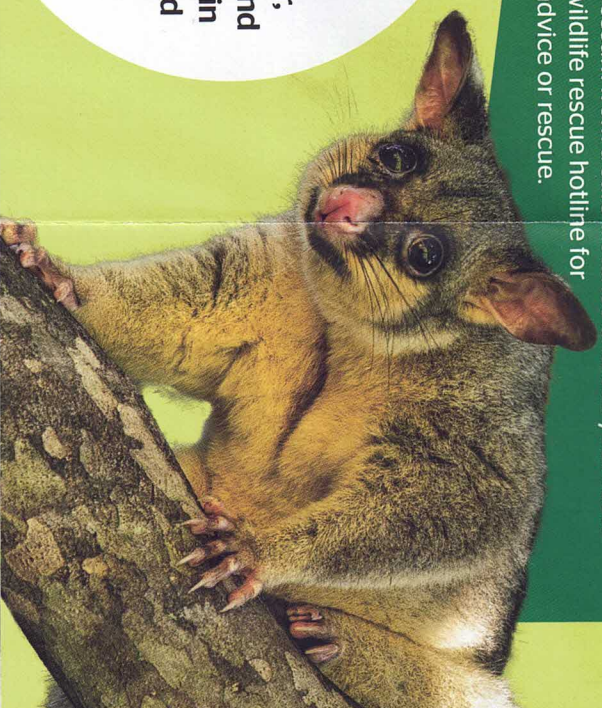
Possums are particularly vulnerable to heat stress. If they are struggling, they may come out from their hollows or roof cavities and appear lethargic or unresponsive.

If you see possums out during the day, it could be heat stressed, injured or orphaned. Monitor the possum from a safe distance and call your local wildlife rescue hotline for advice or rescue.



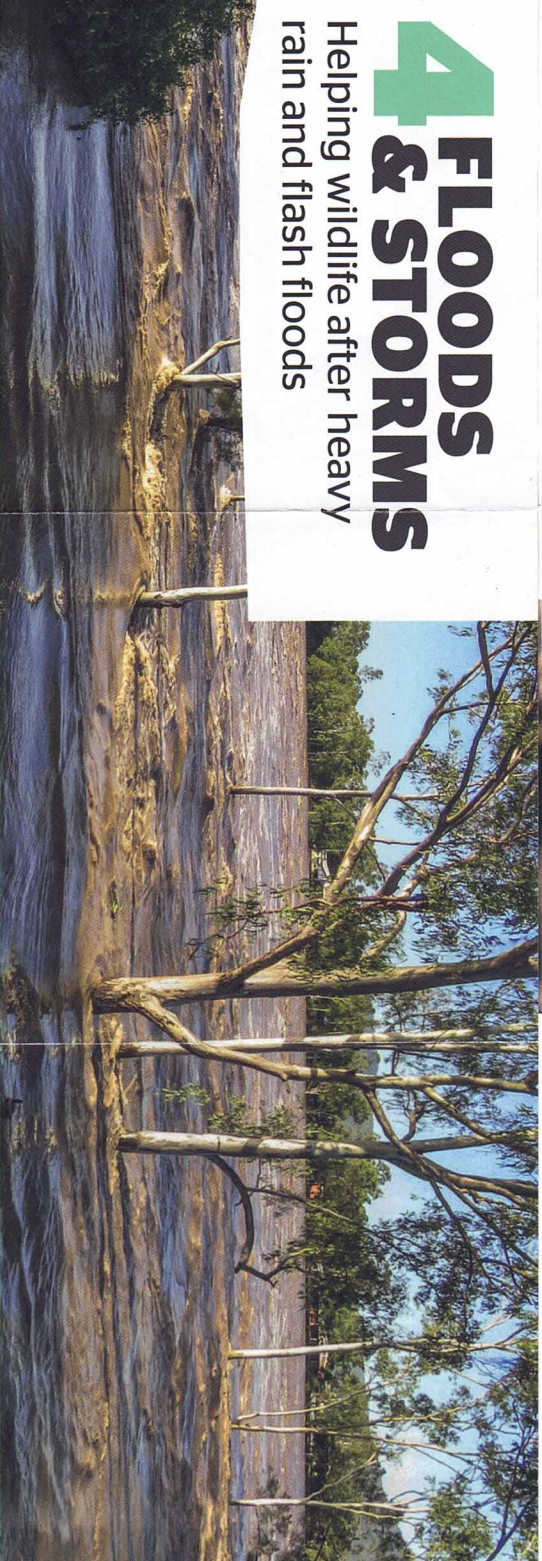
TIP!

Carry a torch, hand sanitiser, gloves, towels, pillow cases and cardboard boxes in your car in case you need to help injured wildlife and rescue responders.



4 FLOODS & STORMS

Helping wildlife after heavy rain and flash floods



Bird rescue after storms

It's common for birds to fall out of nests during storms and bad weather. If the bird is injured, call your local vet or wildlife hospital for advice on how to collect the bird for treatment. You can provide makeshift nests using gardening pots or hanging baskets. RSPCA and Birdlife Australia have guides to help you make these.

→ **Hatchlings** (birds without feathers) should be taken immediately to a vet for care.

→ **Fledglings** (birds with some fluffy feathers) can be watched from a distance while you look for its parents and see whether it's just learning to fly. If you can locate the nest, safely place it back in the nest wearing gloves to minimise contact with the bird. Monitor the bird for 24 hours to ensure parents return to the nest and resume care.

→ If the bird is young (has downy feathers) it's probably a **nestling**. If you can't place the bird back in its nest using gloves, then create a makeshift nest for it. Monitor for 24 hours to ensure parents return.

→ Be aware when returning to flood-affected areas. Watch

for ground-dwelling species that may seek shelter in trees (snakes, spiders and others) following flood events and be wary, as snakes can turn up in unexpected places.

→ Check inside and under your vehicle and roof cavities for wildlife. Your car engine is

often warm, dry and looks safe to animals. Report any injured or sick wildlife. Call licensed professionals to help relocate snakes or possums.



→ Look for injured or orphaned possums and other tree-dwelling species (Koalas and flying-foxes) after a big storm. If

you suspect an animal is injured report it for rescue.

→ Reduce your speed when driving and watch for wildlife on the roads. Use headlights even during the day.

→ Secure pets and livestock to allow fleeing wildlife safe passage. If evacuating, take all pets and domestic animals with you whenever possible.

→ Got a pool? Native animals can drown in the pool. Tie rope/s to a nearby structure and place them across pools to allow wildlife the chance to climb out. Place stones or logs on pool steps for smaller animals and a plank across one corner of the pool (particularly if you are in a koala area).

Left, a young tawny frogmouth.
Photo: Penny Ash.