

Rescuing Wildlife



What to do if you encounter injured or orphaned wildlife in the Northern Territory

What should I do if I find injured or orphaned wildlife?

The basic information outlined below is applicable to most wildlife rescue situations. It is important to bring any injured or orphaned animal to your nearest vet or wildlife rescue group as soon as possible. Please remember Wildlife Care groups are mostly staffed by volunteers who also work full time jobs and may not be able to answer the phone on the first call.

Remember, your safety always comes first!

- Ensure the animal needs rescuing.
- If working near roadways, be aware of traffic hazards.
- Minimize handling.
- Keep pets and children away from wildlife.
- Minimize Noise. Turn the radio off and keep voices down.
- Do not try to feed injured wildlife. Providing water is OK, but do not force an animal to drink.
- Try and move any road kill at least 10m off the road.
- Check dead kangaroo and possum pouches for joeys.
- Bring the animal to the nearest Veterinarian or Wildlife care group.
- Wildlife can carry a variety of diseases. Where possible wear gloves and always wash your hands after handling wildlife.



Who is my local wildlife rescue organisation?

Darwin Wildlife Sanctuary - 0473 992 581

Katherine Wildcare Inc - 0412 955 336

Alice Springs Wildcare Inc - 0419 221 128

Or visit www.dwsnt.com.au or www.wildcareasp.org.au for more information.

Alternatively local vets are affiliated with care groups and you can drop wildlife off during business hours at the following locations:

Darwin Area:

All Pets Vet Hospital - Rapid Creek - (08) 8948 0056

Ark Animal Hospital - Yarrowonga - (08) 8932 9738

Darwin My Vet Service - Wulagi - (08) 8927 3657

Darwin Wildcare Inc - 0408 885 341

Howard Spring Veterinary Clinic - Howard Springs - (08) 8983 1458

Humpty Doo Vets – Humpty Doo – (08) 8988 3340

Litchfield Veterinary Hospital - Coolalinga - (08) 8983 2838

Parap Veterinary Hospital - Parap - (08) 8981 9767

Paul Arnold Bush Photos - Darwin - (08) 8941 6062

Territory Wildlife Park - (08) 8988 7200

University Ave. Veterinary Hospital - Durack - (08) 8931 0455

Katherine Area:

Katherine Vet Care Centre - (08) 8972 2752

Katherine Veterinary Clinic - (08) 8972 2893

Tennant Creek Area:

Barkly Veterinary Practice - 0447 471 399

Alice Springs Area:

Alice Springs Reptile Centre - (08) 8952 8900 - reptiles only

Alice Springs Veterinary Centre - (08) 8952 4353

Alice Springs Veterinary Hospital - (08) 8952 9899

Desert Oaks Veterinary Clinic (08) 8953 4936

Parks & Wildlife Commission of the Northern Territory

Head Office - Darwin
Level 1 JHV 2,
Jape Homemaker Village
356 Bagot Rd, Millner, NT, 0810
Ph: (08) 8999 4555

Regional Offices
Alice Springs - Arid Zone Research Institute
Sth Stuart Hwy, Ph: (08) 8951 8250
Katherine - Giles St, Katherine
Ph: (08) 8973 8888



Rescuing Wildlife

Caring for wildlife requires specialised knowledge and experience.

Wildlife care groups are always looking for volunteers and are able to provide mentorship and training for new wildlife carers. All wildlife in the NT is protected under law, and rescued wildlife may not be kept permanently. In order to become a wildlife carer, you must obtain a permit from the NT Parks and Wildlife Commission.

Please contact your local wildlife care group for more information, or visit www.parksandwildlife.nt.gov.au



Bird Rescue

Birds come into care for a number of reasons; often they have been hit by cars or attacked by domestic pets. If you find an injured bird follow these steps.

1. Try to determine what sort of bird it is and any potential risks to you before handling it. Talons and beaks can cause serious injury if birds are not handled correctly.

2. If the bird is young, and appears to be having trouble flying, it may be a fledgling bird that is learning to fly. Before approaching, look for adult birds that may be nearby as they are likely still caring for the young. Only rescue the bird if there are immediate threats present such as dogs, cats or traffic. If a nest is visible and within reach, you can try placing the bird back in the nest or on a branch nearby.

3. If the bird needs to be rescued, to restrain a bird, place a towel or shirt over the bird's head. This helps calm the bird and may prevent it from biting. Wrap the towel around the bird securing the wings to its side. Place the bird in a cardboard box with air

holes, or in a pet carrier. Drape a towel over the box to keep it dark. Bring the bird to the nearest veterinarian or Wildlife care group as soon as possible.

Bat Rescue

All bats are potential carriers of Australian Bat Lyssavirus disease, so it is important that *only people vaccinated for the disease handle bats*. If you are scratched or bitten by a bat, you should seek advice from a doctor immediately. Contact a wildlife care group for assistance with rescuing bats.

Mammal Rescue

Mammals such as Kangaroos, Wallabies, Possums, Gliders and native rats come into care primarily as victims of road accidents, attacks by domestic pets, or as orphans.

Many Australian mammals such as Kangaroos, Wallabies and Possums are marsupials, which mean they carry their young (joeys) in a pouch. If you find a joey, put it in a pillowcase or a pouch fashioned from breathable material. Place some padding inside which will also act as insulation. A furred joey should be kept at around 28 – 30°C, furless joeys should be kept at around 32 – 34°C. Keeping it close to your body can provide that heat, or you can place a warm (not hot) water bottle in the pouch, provided it is not in direct contact with the joey.



Most mammals have sharp claws and teeth and will bite and scratch in defence. Handling should be quick, as they stress easily and can overheat during the heat of the day. Small mammals can be scooped up in a large thick towel or blanket and placed in a

ventilated box. Large macropod joeys should be handled/picked up from the base of the tail.

Rescuing a full grown adult macropod requires specialised training and equipment as they can be very dangerous. Call the wildlife care group nearest you, who can arrange a rescue.

Reptile Rescue

Often reptiles that are found near the roadways do not need rescuing at all. Many reptiles lay motionless on the road to absorb the sun's heat or heat from the roadway. If the reptile doesn't have any visible wounds, and it is able to move on its own, it likely does not need any help. Simply encouraging it to get off the road may be all that is required.



If a lizard is visibly wounded, take care when handling it. Larger lizards like monitors can cause injury and wounds can become infected. Grip the lizard firmly at the base of the head and grab the base of the tail where it meets the body with the other hand. Place the lizard inside a well ventilated box. Secure with a lid as many lizards can climb and possibly escape.

For smaller or medium lizards, the same techniques as above are useful. Alternatively you can try scooping them into cupped hands or picking them up directly by the body. They can then be placed in a box or crate.

If you come across a snake, leave it alone. Pick up the phone not the snake. Local snake collectors can be contacted at:

Darwin: 1800 453 210

Katherine: 1800 453 210

Tennant Creek: 0418 856 969

Alice Springs: 1800 453 210