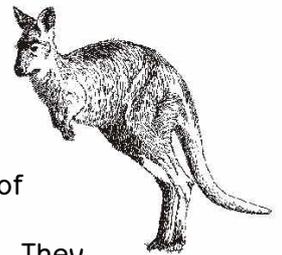


# NT Nature Notes

Junior Ranger

## NT KANGAROOS & WALLABIES

*Macropod* is the name used to describe the kangaroos and their relatives. It comes from two Greek words and means that they are 'great-footed', that is they have powerful back legs with long feet.



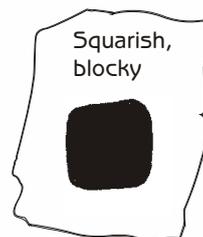
More than 50 different kinds of animals are grouped together in two kangaroo families. The large kangaroos include red kangaroos and gray kangaroos, wallabies, pademelons, and the Quokka; they belong in the family *Macropodidae*. The other family, *Potoroidae*, is made up of assorted smaller species, such as various rat-kangaroos, bettongs, and potoroos.

Kangaroos are marsupials, a type of mammal that gives birth to undeveloped young, called 'joeys'. They are pink, blind and hairless and only the size of a jellybean when they are born. In kangaroos and many other marsupials, the young are carried and looked after in a special pouch on the mother's body.

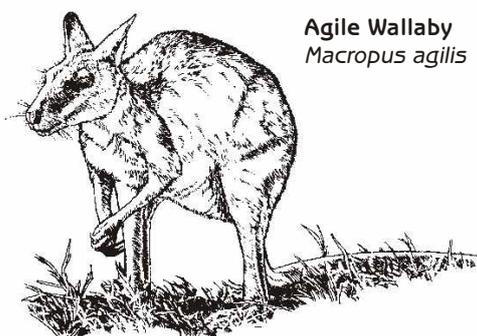
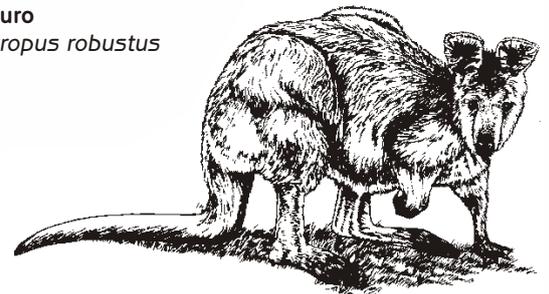
### WHAT ROO POO IS THAT ?

You may not spot many kangaroos during the daytime. But you can tell what roos are around by their poos. Look for the droppings (*scats*) of these animals as you explore the bush. Don't be afraid of touching them! Kangaroos and wallabies are good at conserving water. So their droppings are mostly dry, chewed up grass.

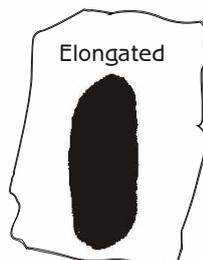
If you see a kangaroo leaping in rocky, hill country it's most likely a Common Wallaroo or Euro. They're stocky and well muscled and are excellent climbers. Unlike the Red Kangaroos, you're likely to see this one alone rather than with a mob.



Common Wallaroo  
or Euro  
*Macropus robustus*



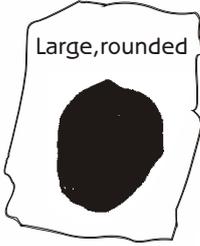
Agile Wallaby  
*Macropus agilis*



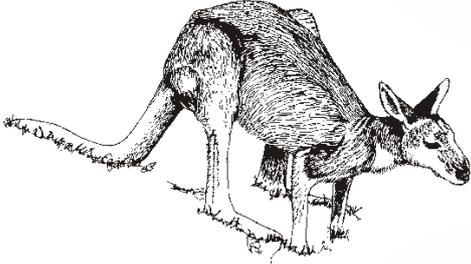
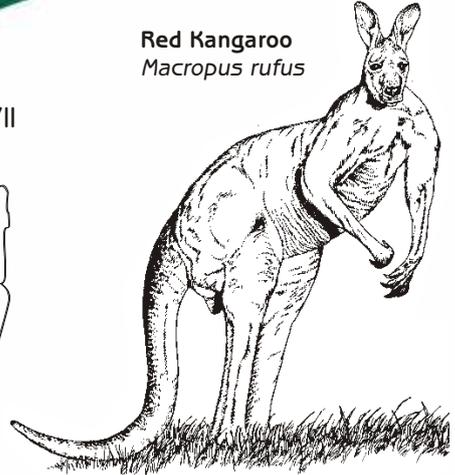
The Top End's most common kangaroo is the Agile Wallaby. It has distinctive white stripes on its cheeks and hips. You may see groups of them ('big mobs') around burnt areas after fire. It's droppings are similar to those of a Red Kangaroo but usually more elongated.



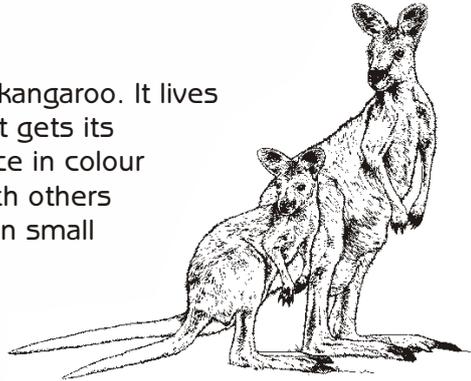
This is the big red of the open plains. You'll see it in Central Australia, in grasslands, savannas, and open woodlands, but not the Top End. It's Australia's biggest and most numerous roo, often seen in large mobs (groups). It can stand up to 2 m tall and weigh up to 90 kg. It is also the world's largest living marsupial. You may see it laying down under the shade of a tree to escape the daytime heat. They eat when it is cooler, mostly at night.



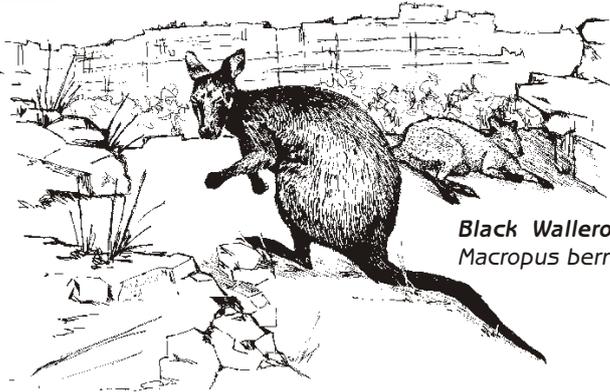
**Red Kangaroo**  
*Macropus rufus*



The Antilopine Walleroo is a truly tropical kangaroo. It lives in the grassy woodlands of the Top End. It gets its common name from its close resemblance in colour and fur to antelopes. They appreciate each others company because they are usually seen in small groups.



**Antilopine Walleroo**  
*Macropus antilopinus*



**Black Walleroo**  
*Macropus bernhardus*

The Black Walleroo is a rare animal found only in a small area of the rocky country of the Arnhem Land escarpment. It is shy and difficult to see or approach, as when disturbed it will quickly flee. It is also mostly nocturnal. If you are lucky enough to see one it may be alone or in twos or threes.

Adult male kangaroos are given a special name. Complete this quiz and the answer will be revealed in the boxes.

1. Joeys are the size of what when first born?
2. Euro pooh is what shape?
3. Black Walleroos are found in what type of country?
4. The word *Macropod* comes from which language?
5. Kangeroo pooh consists mostly of dried what?

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Want to learn more about Kangaroos?  
Check out the reference books *Kangaroos* by Terry Dawson, *The Mammals of Australia* edited by Ronald Strahan and *A Field Guide to the Mammals of Australia* by Menkhorst and Knight.

