



Wildlife Rescue Procedures And Equipment List

Healing Hands Wildlife Care
(Great Southern WA) Inc

EMAIL:
healinghandsgreatsouthern@mail.com



1. Always wear Hi Vis vest and check for danger. OHS
2. Ensure your own safety first, e.g. Park in an appropriate place, use hazard lights if appropriate, protective clothing if necessary. Scan area for any hazards (OHS First)
3. Have appropriate rescue equipment in car wherever possible (be prepared)
4. If call out is to an injured kangaroo (includes joey) always take a second person with you. Never attend alone
5. All seriously injured wildlife must be taken to a vet (preferably Dog Rock or Nullakai Vet) within 24 hours of coming into care. Vet directions, advice and guidance must ALWAYS be followed and adhered to.
6. In the first instance the rescuer may become the rehabilitator (after discussion and approval from your mentor or a member of the committee)
7. After the animal has been allocated to a rehabilitator it is the responsibility of the rehabilitator to contact their mentor to make a plan for rehabilitation and release.
8. Fill in Carer form <https://www.formpl.us/form/30496001>

***If Wildlife has come to you as a result of phone call and cannot immediately be transferred to a rehabilitator, please contact your mentor for advice on care till it can be transferred.
A general rule is to keep warm, quiet, dark and comfortable for 24 hours. Animal will be in shock.
You may now need to either keep the wildlife or place the wildlife with an appropriate person***

Wildlife Rescue Kit

Florescent vest. HHWC still has some available. Please ask if you don't already have one. The most important thing you'll need to remember, before you rescue any animal, is your safety.

There's been a couple of sad incidents lately where someone stopped to help a wild animal in need and ended up in hospital

themselves. Please be careful around moving traffic. A Fluro vest will ensure cars can see **you so that you can rescue the animal safely.**

Torch. Most animals are hit between dusk and dawn, so having a torch on hand is a must.

It's much easier to search for an injured animal with a torch rather than your car headlights.

Protective Gloves. Animals have mouths and they can bite. Some can bite very hard. Remember that a rescued animal is at its most vulnerable and defending itself if something it will do, if it can. You'll thank me if you ever have to pick up parrot or anything with spikes. (Jane)

Rubber gloves. Recommended for more gruesome rescues

Towel/ blanket. Once you find the injured animal, and if it's still mobile, you'll need to catch it. Throw it over the animal and quickly grab it.

A towel can also be used to protect your hands if you haven't got any gloves. You can use to maintain some warmth in your box or carrying case.

Heat pad. Not essential but always handy you can pick up cheap heat pads from discount shops.

Different size pouches or Pillowcase. Pillowcases are an excellent way to restrain and transport small animals. Make sure you have some string or rubber bands to secure the pillowcase end too. You do not want a little critter loose in the car while you're driving!

First aid Kit. Despite your best efforts to reduce the risk to yourself, wild animals can be very determined to get away by any means necessary. You may still get scratched or bitten. It's always good to have a basic first aid kit on hand just in case. You can make your own basic one

Pliers. This is not essential, chances are you'll probably not use it, but having some pliers in your kit would be very handy if you find an animal stuck on an object like a fence or barbed wire.

Scissors. See information on Joey rescue

Box. Secure containers of different sizes Boxes are another great way to secure a sick or injured animal. They can also be used to gently scoop up an animal, creating a good safety barrier between you and your patient.

Be sure to sure your box is properly closedl once the animal is inside.

Important phone number list. Rather than having to search contact numbers on your phone, have a list of the important phone number you'll require if you do pick up a sick or injured animal. It's so much easier just to have them on hand.

You could print them out and keep them in the box.

A few important tips before rescuing a sick or injured animal

- Do not attempt a rescue an animal unless you are confident that you will not be harmed in the process.
- Wild animals become stressed when being chased or handled. Please seek expert advice before chasing or handling any injured animal.
- Please **don't pick up snakes**. Always call an expert.
- Never touch bats. An expert, with the lyssavirus vaccination must attend the rescue. (Call Sue Gleave on 0428984 445)
- Try to keep the animal calm by minimising the noise and interaction with people. Only handle if absolutely necessary.
- Do not try to give the animal food and water. That's the last thing the animal needs right now. It needs specialised care.
- Please don't keep the animal and try to treat it yourself. unless you are experienced, or you have contacted your mentor, who can support you through the process. You're doing the wildlife a disservice by not handing it over to a specialised carer with the important knowledge and training.
- Always check dead animals too, as they may have surviving young with them (e.g. in a pouch) or near them.

1. How to rescue an orphan Joey.

- If you see a kangaroo on the side of the road, and if it is safe to do , please check the pouch. There may be a joey inside that has survived. A joey can survive some 6 to 48 hours inside
- The Mum's pouch , once its mother has passed away.
- If you need to take the joey out of the pouch, Do so very gently and with great care. It's not as easy as it sounds. Very young Joey maybe permanently attached to the Mother's teat. In which case you may need to use scissors to cut the teat.

Removing a joey that is attached to the mother's teat.

- Position the mother said the pouch is open towards your body.
- Keep your hand between the joey and the scissors. On some occasions it may be necessary to cut the pouch for easier access.
- Insert your hand into the pouch and feel around for the teat at the end of the Joeys nose, again insuring your fingers are between the scissors and the joey's nose, cut the teat as
- far as you can towards the mother. Remove the joey with the teat still in its mouth(It will fall out within a couple of hours, so don't try and pull it out)

- Wrap the Joey in something warm, anything soft, and if it is small enough put it inside your jacket or up your jumper.
- If you're unsure on where to take it telephone the wildlife rescue number. (0475 442 202)
- If you're not an experienced wildlife rehabilitator, then do not try to raise the Joe yourself.
- They require specialist treatment and food.
- Talk to your mentor who will advise you.
-

2. How to rescue a possum.

Possums are nocturnal and are not usually seen during the day. If you see is sick, injured or orphan possums, if you find a possum out during the day please call your mentor or the wildlife emergency phone. (0475 442 202)

Adult possums are very likely to bite and scratch.

Possums require a different type of milk /and or vegetation. The wrong type can be fatal.

Ringtail possum are smaller than Brush tail possums and they have a white tip at the end of their tail.

If you find an orphaned baby ringtail please look carefully to see whether you can see any others needing rescue as well, as ringtail possum commonly produced twins and occasionally triplets.

If you are able to safely contain the possum, you can keep it quiet and in a warm place e.g. wrapped in a warm soft material or box (Remember ventilation holes) with a Secure lid while you transport it.

Brush tales and ringtail possum are the most likely possums you will see.

Western Ringtail Possums are critically endangered due to habitat loss

Possum are known to resort to living in chimneys and the roof cavities of sheds and houses.

3. Handling/ rescuing turtles.

Turtles have sharp claws and strong legs. They are difficult to hold. The safest way to hold a freshwater turtle is to grip the top of shell (called the carapace) behind the neck and support the base of shell with the other hand. Allow legs and arms to move freely.

The second way to hold a freshwater turtle (this technique is better for larger turtles but the handler is more at risk of being scratched) is to grip the turtle by the bridge of the shell .

Baby turtles (hatchlings): Need to be brought into care to give the best chance of survival from predation, injury or disease. Watch for further hatchlings or eggs. Eggs may have been dug up by predators. If the lake dries up or is overcrowded the turtles will evacuate and move to a nearby lake or dam. Always report any mass evacuations of turtles to a Wildlife Retaliator It is important not to interfere with this process as it is a natural cycle that must unfold on its own.

Transport to the turtle in a secure box with ventilation

and call Sue Gleave on 0428984 445 or contact your mentor Western Australia is home to very few freshwater turtle species. The two most common include the Oblong (long-necked turtle) and the Western Swamp Turtle. The Western Swamp Turtle is an endangered species. Oblong turtles will make up the majority of turtle rescues and are found across the south west of Western Australia in a variety of fresh water sources.

The Oblong Turtle: has a very long, thick neck. Its shell is pale to dark brown or black and usually covered with algae, making it difficult to see in water. This turtle gets its name from the oblong shape of its shell, which can grow up to 40 cm in length.

4. Rescuing reptiles

For those new to wildlife rescue, developing good hygiene practices is often low on the list of priorities. When rescuing with reptiles it is essential to remember that reptiles are very common carriers of Salmonella and strict hygiene practices are essential to the health and safety of you and the animals you may rescue.

Do not eat or drink without thoroughly cleaning hands. If your clothing becomes soiled with reptile faeces or other contaminant such as spoiled food, spray clothing with a veterinary grade disinfectant and change clothes immediately. Soak clothes in diluted bleach water (1:20 ratio) or F10 solution (1:250 ratio) for 30 minutes before washing. If you become ill or develop flu like symptoms contact your general practitioner (GP) and advise them that you have contact with reptiles.

Teeth

All reptiles can bite but not all have teeth. Bobtails have redundant stumps used for grasping and tearing food which is swallowed whole, not chewed. They de-shell snails like birds de-husk seed and reduce strong men to tears. Turtles have no teeth but can bite down hard with strong jaws at lightning fast speed.

Monitors have sharp teeth that are replaced when they fall out .

Shock

Shock kills native wildlife. The injured animal has already been through the trauma of an accident.

An introduction to reptiles

Reptiles form a large and fascinating group of animals. These are the most likely that you may come across.

Testudines

Are the chelonians (turtles, tortoises and terrapins) and there are nearly four hundred species in this group.

Squamata

Is the largest group - contains lizards and snakes, with nearly ten thousands species included in both.

This might help with identification.

When rescuing, knowledge of the species and its behaviour as well as physical and psychological requirements is helpful, but not essential.

- Rehabilitation should not be attempted unless experienced or under the guidance of an experienced mentor**

The Bobtail: is one of the most well-known and commonly recognised lizards in Australia, reaching average total lengths up to 45cm. They have a very robust body, a large triangular shaped head, a short, rounded and quite blunt ended tail and their scales are large and wrinkly with a dull gloss. They have a heavily armoured body and colours vary from location to location; they are seen in black, caramel, brown and also some stunning red and orange specimens with irregular pale to cream bands on the body and tail. It has a short, wide, stumpy tail that resembles its head and may confuse predators. The head is often lighter in colour and can have orange flecks on the top and sides.

The Gould's Monitor: also known as the "Racehorse Goanna" or "Sand Goanna" is a large monitor, reaching total lengths up to 140cm. Body colour varies considerably in colour and pattern.

The back varies from brown to greenish-grey to almost black, with scattered flecks and spots of lighter colours. These spots are arranged in irregular bands. Sometimes it has light cream or yellow ocelli markings (round spots with a darker centre). Usually has a black stripe on the side of the head edged above and below with cream or white. The tail is light brown or black with white or yellowish tip.

Handling a bobtail/monitor:

Using a towel or gloves, slowly approach from behind and grasp the lizard at the back of the neck, keep your fingers between

the neck and front legs. With your free hand support the body from underneath the abdomen. Be mindful they could have an injury or are “gravid” (pregnant – live birth).

Personal protective equipment (PPE): Use of towel or gloves is essential – wash your hands thoroughly after handling. Salmonella (bacteria) may be present on the animal’s skin.

5. First contact with birds.

Stress can and does KILL

All wild birds in captivity will be highly stressed. Levels of stress in wild birds are up to 500 times greater than that experienced by pet birds.

Handling

Do no harm to the bird and don’t let the bird harm you

To minimise stress:

Keep noise levels as low as possible and reduce handling to a minimum.

Approach the bird slowly.

When catching/ handling, cover the bird with a dark cloth, especially the head.

Small birds

- These birds move quickly and are escape risks.
- Use a small cloth to cover the whole bird and prevent escape.
- Move your hand under the cloth to grasp the bird in your hand.
- The bird’s head can be gently held between your index and 2nd finger.
- Nestle the bird’s body in the palm of your hand which you close around it like a cage; the bird can breathe and wriggle but not escape.
- Press feet and legs gently into your palm
- When finished, release your hold when the bird is inside the hot box or cage and all escape holes are blocked with a towel.

Small parrots

- Using a hand towel grasp the bird’s head from behind with your thumb and index finger placed on the side of the face - immobilise the beak.
- Wrap the towel around the bird to keep the wings close to its body
- Support the feet with your other hand.

Large parrots

- Use a larger, thick towel to restrain the head as with the small parrot.

- Wrap the towel around the body to contain both wings and feet.

- Heavy leather gloves may be used to avoid biting

Darters, herons and egrets

- A combination of long, retractable necks, sharp pointy beaks and lethal accuracy present a real threat to your eyes; always wear **SAFETY GLASSES** when handling these birds.

Water birds

- Pelicans, ducks, swans and Ibis frequently pass very smelly, fluid faeces in order to lighten their bodies for flight. Face the bird's vent away from your body.
- Tuck the bird's head under your armpit, hold the powerful wings close to the bird's body, wrap your arm around the bird and grasp the legs underneath, support the bird against your body. A large pelican only weighs 7Kg.
- Always grasp the beak closer to the bird's face, never at the far end as it will break.
- Protect your eyes.

For water birds please contact

Carol at Seabird Rescue (0427 513496)

Penguins – this is a specialized area and the only person registered is Carol (0427 513496)

Emus

- Most emus that come into care are young - handle similarly to a duckling.

Never attempt to handle an adult wild emu; the powerful legs and central toe are a very real danger- life threatening!

Raptor .

If you are inexperienced , please call for help immediately, Raptors can play dead ,and if they are not they are a are a very real danger- life threatening! They can pretend that they're dead, and often do.

Call your mentor or the wildlife emergency phone.

Provide a quiet darkened area where the bird can relax its preservation reflex in order to rest and repair

Transport the bird in a secure box, or pet carrier with ventilation