

Western Ringtail Possum



The Western Ringtail Possum (*Pseudocheirus occidentalis*) or Ngwayir is a small to medium sized arboreal marsupial. They commonly forage, rest and socialise in the forest canopy.

Ringtail Possums were found throughout the forests and woodlands of South Western Australia until the early twentieth century but have since declined from most of their original range.

As a result, Ringtails are now listed as Critically Endangered.

As urban development expands Ringtail habitat fragments further, requiring them to go to the ground more often in order to move between remnant patches.

This puts them at increased risk of being hit by cars and predation from cats, foxes and dogs.

This fauna rope bridge reconnects two key areas of Ringtail habitat and provides safer passage between them.

Ringtails are active at night, feeding mostly on the leaves of peppermint trees. During the day they sleep in nests known as dreys made of leaves and twigs; in tree hollows or in Grass Tree (*Balga*) skirts.

In urban areas, Ringtails sometimes nest in house or shed rooves when there are suitable openings for them to enter.

Ringtails are sometimes mistaken for the Common Brushtail Possum, also found in the area. However, Brushtail Possums are larger, with pointy ears and have longer fur and a bushy tail, distinguishable from a Ringtail's long, skinny tail.

How you can help!

- Plant local native species in your garden, particularly Peppermint trees (*Agonis flexuosa*), to provide habitat and food for Western Ringtail Possums and other native wildlife.
- Prevent injury and death by controlling domestic pets and driving with care at night.
- Assist with monitoring the possums and other wildlife in your local area.
- Report your observations to the City of Mandurah Environmental Services.

Take a torch and explore!

This project is supported by Peel-Harvey Catchment Council, through funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Program and the City of Mandurah.

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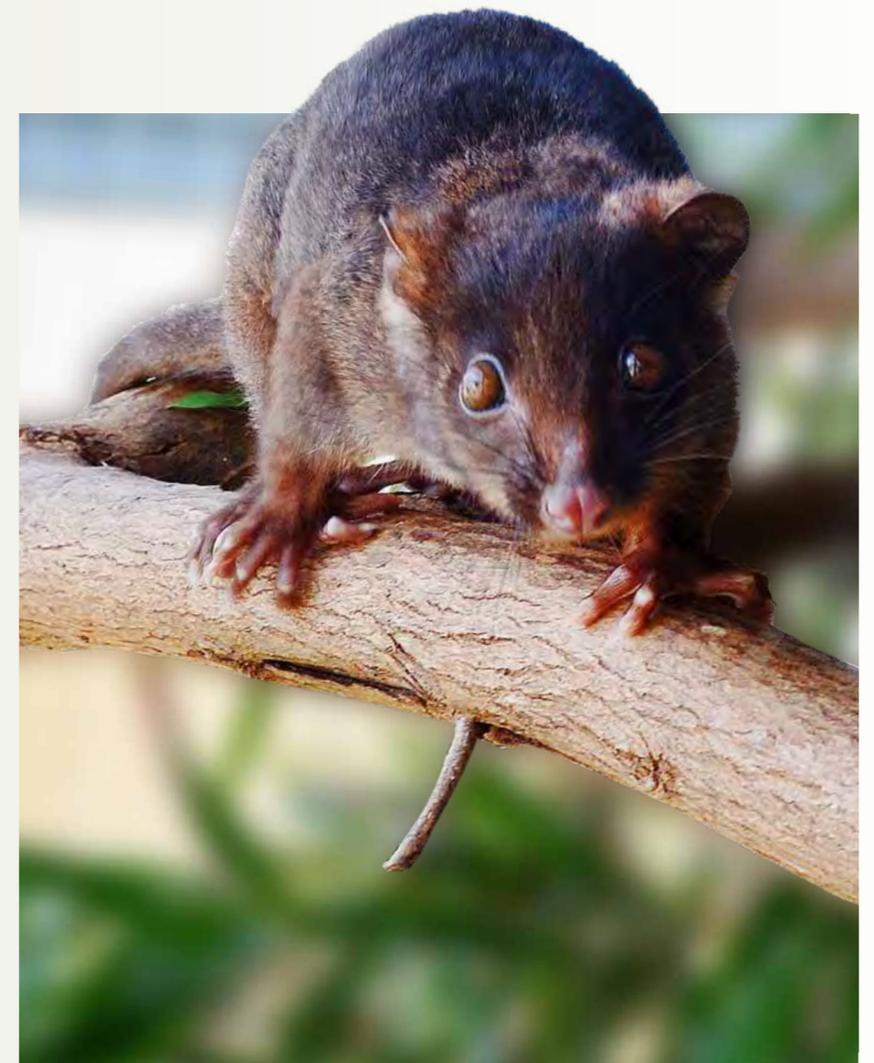
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Western Ringtail Possum
Pseudocheirus occidentalis



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This area provides habitat for the Western Ringtail Possum or Ngwayir (*Pseudocheirus occidentalis*) which is listed as a Critically Endangered species by both the state and federal governments.

Ringtails rely heavily on Peppermint trees (*Agonis flexuosa*) for food and habitat.

The planting of Peppermint trees in this corridor has been carried out to improve the connectivity of their habitat. When there are gaps in the tree canopy, Ringtails become vulnerable to attacks by cats, foxes and dogs as they are forced to go to the ground to move around.

Please help to conserve this threatened species by:

- Driving carefully at night;
- Keeping domestic pets under control;

- Retaining and planting Peppermint trees in your garden; and
- Avoiding chemicals and baits which harm possums.

If you see someone damaging a council verge tree, report it to the police or City of Mandurah 9550 3777, or www.mandurah.wa.gov.au

If you find a dead or injured Ringtail or think you have a possum living in your roof, contact the Department of Biodiversity Parks and Attractions **24 hour Wildcare Helpline** on **9474 9055** or www.dbca.wa.gov.au



Western Ringtail Possums (*Pseudocheirus occidentalis*) (above left) can be easily distinguished from Brushtail Possums (*Trichosurus vulpecula*) (above right) by their long thin white-tipped tail, short pointed ears and rounded 'teddy bear' face.