



Sharing with our wild neighbours

Love the neighbours but ...

Many of us love having wild kangaroos sharing our environment as a reminder of the Australian bush. It's educational for the kids and they are pretty good lawnmowers too!

But not everyone is a fan of kangaroos in the garden, and even if you enjoy seeing them around there are good reasons for keeping these delightful but wild native animals from sharing yard space with your children and pets.

As urban areas encroach on native animal habitat there is more potential for conflict between kangaroos and people, cars, and pets. Kangaroos are mostly docile but can be unpredictable when feeling threatened.

At parks, golf courses and playing fields too, kangaroos are both an attraction and a potential concern.

When out and about, consider modifying your routine to avoid close contact with kangaroos. For example, when walking, consider a route where kangaroos are not present or choose a time for walking when kangaroos are not active in the area.

... like to limit the interactions?

This brochure suggests ways you can begin to understand kangaroo behaviour and harmlessly restrict kangaroo access to areas where they are not welcome.



Be aware!

Kangaroos are often portrayed in the media as friendly and cuddly Australian cultural icons. However, they can hurt people.

The risk of being attacked by a kangaroo is very low. Several thousand people seek medical attention each year for injuries from domestic pets, while fewer than five people in NSW are treated for kangaroo-related injuries.

The greatest risk is in areas where people have altered kangaroo habitat and feeding patterns and where kangaroos have lost their instinctive fear of humans because people have fed or handled them. People may not understand ways in which kangaroos behave and can unintentionally provoke them into aggression.

Supervise your children closely in areas where kangaroos occur and teach them what to do if a kangaroo displays aggressive behaviour towards them.



Get to know your local mob

Kangaroos readily adapt to surroundings with consistent food and water resources, shelter from sun and wind and wide open views. Small mobs of eastern grey kangaroos move around their local area in established daily routines.

Get to know where kangaroos in your area move, graze and rest. Observe their behaviour from a safe distance and try to understand them. Watch and learn about the relationships between individual animals (e.g. which females have young, which males are dominant). Monitor their favourite spots so you can move around without startling them.

Be able to recognise some of the early warning signs of aggressive behaviour: sparring or fighting, growling or clucking, slow stiff-leg walking on toes and tip of tail, back arched while standing erect on the hind toes and 'staring' you down, scratching the ground or grass tussocks with forelimbs, or rubbing chest on vegetation.

Find out which features and areas of your property kangaroos use and why.

Steps you can take to live safely with kangaroos

- Modify or remove resources around your home that attract kangaroos such as water points, sheltered areas and food. Keep the areas of mown, fertilised grass, and large shade trees to a minimum - these attract kangaroos.
- Backyard barriers such as plantings, hedges, garden furniture and other obstacles can be effective in discouraging kangaroos from hanging out in the high use areas close to your home.
- Some fencing is appropriate if you need to exclude kangaroos from your living space. You don't have to fence the entire property - fence off small secure areas kangaroos cannot access where children can play. Small-scale exclusion fencing within your larger property boundary allows kangaroos to feed and move freely through rural-residential areas.
- Maintain good visibility around your property so you do not mistakenly run into kangaroos during the day or night. Try to avoid creating choke points where a kangaroo might move through at speed.
- Slow down on the roads when kangaroos are likely to be moving about (peak time 3-6pm).
- Work with the local community to understand and manage kangaroo issues.
- **Look inside this brochure for more design and landscaping suggestions.**



Remember, kangaroos are protected animals and it is an offence to injure or kill them.

If you encounter injured animals, contact WIRES on 13000 WIRES or 1300 094 737.

Useful resources

Coffs Harbour Kangaroo Management Plan, keeping dogs safe, and dog ownership responsibilities:

Coffs Harbour City Council

www.coffsharbour.nsw.gov.au. Search dogs in public places and kangaroos.

T: 02 6648 4000 E: coffs.council@chcc.nsw.gov.au

Kangaroo behaviour and how to avoid risks; protection of kangaroos; report an incident:

Office of Environment and Heritage

www.environment.nsw.gov.au

Search Living with kangaroos

T: OEH Information 1300 361 967

E: info@environment.nsw.gov.au

Creative ideas for landscape design

Supervise your children closely in areas where kangaroos occur and teach them what to do if a kangaroo displays aggressive behaviour towards them.

There are many options for fencing style and cost - be creative and adapt existing fences. Chainmesh fencing allows distant views and pool fencing offers attractive options near houses. Remember kangaroos can easily climb through wire strand fences.

Perimeter fencing is not recommended as it reduces kangaroo habitat and movements, and exacerbates kangaroo density issues for your neighbours.

Planting a broad, low, dense hedge can provide an effective barrier.

Keep water features inside your fenced area.

Sprinklers can deter kangaroos from crossing a grassy area.

Allow your local kangaroos some space in one end of your block and watch them graze safely or enjoy a rest under a few shady trees.

Paved or gravel surfaces are useful to break up large grassy areas.

Landscaping plants such as graceful native grass-trees and narrow-leaved matrush tussocks are less likely to be nibbled by kangaroos.

To deter kangaroos try home-made sonic deterrents or install motion activated security lights which may discourage night time grazing.

Keep the areas of mown, fertilised grass and large shade trees to a minimum - these attract kangaroos.

Hardy groundcover native grevilleas with tough foliage can be used to create colourful mounded gardens which do not attract kangaroos.

When designing your exclusion fence, include a gate to allow escape of any animals that might accidentally be let in.

Do not feed kangaroos. Unnatural food sources often create unbalanced kangaroo numbers, and cause aggressive behaviour and sickness.

Fence off an area for children and dogs to play, with room for the clothes line and a vegie garden.

Kangaroo exclusion fencing also helps keep domestic pets in, so they can't chase kangaroos and risk injury.

