

# Rehab Easy Reference Sheet

## Caring for Macropods

The term 'macropod' refers to the diverse range of marsupials more commonly known as kangaroos, wallabies, pademelons, bettongs etc. There are over 50 species of macropods in Australia, 10 of which are found in South-east Queensland. Macropods are mostly nocturnal. The diet of local species consists of grasses and vegetation.

### *Do I need a Permit to care for macropods?*

**Yes.** You will need a REHABILITATION PERMIT to care for macropods.

A Rehabilitation Permit can be obtained from a licensed wildlife care group such as Wildcare.

*Remember all Australian native wildlife is protected in Queensland. You cannot keep them without an appropriate Licence.*

### *Do I have to do any training to care for macropods?*

**Yes.** Macropods have specialised dietary and housing requirements. They often come into care due to illness, injury, trauma or as a result of being orphaned. You must have a good understanding of their biology, be able to recognise signs of illness and injury and be able to provide emergency care to them.

In Wildcare, you will need to complete the following training workshops in order to care for macropods:-

- Orientation Program – compulsory for all members
- Rescue and First Aid for Native Wildlife (Basic) - compulsory for all members
- Wildlife Habitat and Plant Identification
- Caring for Orphaned Mammals
- Macropods (Basic)

### *Is caring for macropods difficult?*

Caring for macropods is more demanding than caring for other mammal species. They suffer tremendously from stress and therefore do not do well in households with young children or indoor domestic pets. They develop more slowly than other mammal species with most being in care for between 8-18 months (depending upon the species).

Remember:-

- Macropods are mostly **nocturnal** - you need to be available to care for them at night.
- Most species are **herbivores** – you must be able to provide fresh grass and vegetation to them every day.
- One of their greatest **predator** is domestic pets – they cannot be housed near or have contact with domestic animals.
- Young joeys need to be fed **every 3 to 4 hours** (including through the night).
- They **need a lot of room** to develop their muscles. They must be allowed room to hop and you must have a **secure yard**.

Macropods are not suitable for everyone due to their housing requirements and their slow rate of development. They are generally a species that you would advance to once you had gained some experience with caring for other mammal species such as possums.

**Remember, we raise to RELEASE!**

**We must care for wildlife in a way that ensures their survival once returned to the wild.**

## What equipment do I need to care for macropods?

Macropods need to be housed and cared for during rehabilitation to prevent further injury, prevent escape, minimise stress and to allow them to display their natural behaviour.

A few things we must consider when housing macropods include:-

- All species require a very secure yard area free from domestic animals. Some small species (such as pademelons), will require a snake and raptor proof outdoor enclosure.
- Yards must be kept clean and provide natural shelter and including access to fresh grass and native vegetation.
- Caring for adult macropods is a highly specialised area and one that is restricted to experienced macropod carers who hold appropriate training and veterinary support.

Below is a brief overview of some of the equipment that macropods require. The Wildcare macropod training workshop and manual covers their requirements in more detail.

<b>Rescue Equipment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large, strong fabric pouches and bags</li> <li>• Hanging bags to secure pouches/bags</li> <li>• Small to medium pouches for orphaned macropods</li> </ul>
<b>Orphaned Macropods</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feeding equipment (syringes, specially made latex teats, cannulas, sterilising equipment, small feeding bowls)</li> <li>• Lots of cotton pouches (30+ each animal)</li> <li>• Small baby blankets and towels</li> <li>• Hanging macropod bags and frame</li> <li>• Specialised heating equipment (if caring for unfurred joeys)</li> </ul>
<b>Adult Macropods</b> <i>Critical Care Stage</i>  <i>Intermediate Care Stage</i>  <i>Pre-Release and Final Rehabilitation Stage</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small, secure, quiet room</li> <li>• Large quantity of blankets and towels</li> <li>• Secure macropod yard constructed with chain wire fencing</li> <li>• Fencing must be 1.8m to 2.0m in height</li> <li>• Yard must include access to native grass and vegetation and provide adequate shade</li> <li>• Sheltered area for housing bag</li> <li>• Secure yard (as above) (minimum size 40.0m L x 40.0m W x 2.0m H) with sheltered area for housing bag</li> <li>• Enclosure must have adequate amount of shade with some areas where access to sun is possible</li> <li>• Access to native grasses and vegetation</li> <li>• Adequate shelter by way of shed or similar</li> <li>• Large bowls/buckets for water and food</li> </ul>

**Critical Care Stage** - designed to reduce an animal's level of physical activity for a short period of time and to provide easy access for monitoring, treatment and feeding.

**Intermediate Care Stage** – allows sufficient space for some physical activity while enabling the animal to be readily caught for monitoring and treatment.

**Pre-Release/Final Rehabilitation Stage** – allows an animal to regain better physical condition, display natural behaviour, acclimatise to normal weather conditions and reduce human contact.

The measurements for enclosures listed above are sourced from the *Code of Practice – Care of Sick, Injured and Orphaned Protected Animals in Queensland* (EHP). In some circumstances, Wildcare's housing requirements exceed the CoP suggestions.