

Get started!

Become a Volunteer Wildlife RESCUER

What is a Wildlife Rescuer?

- Wildlife rescuers respond to calls for sick, injured and orphaned wildlife as well as wildlife in immediate danger.
- You should be confident and comfortable in handling the animal, retrieving it if it is trapped and securing it in a suitable container.
- Once the animal is contained, the rescuer assesses its condition and then transports it to a vet clinic, wildlife hospital or another wildlife carer, either directly themselves or with the assistance of a wildlife transporter.
- Sick, injured and orphaned wildlife require appropriate care and treatment as soon as possible to ensure they have the best possible chance of survival – **wildlife rescuers are vital in ensuring this happens.**

What do you need?

- **A reliable vehicle** with air-conditioning and room to store a basic rescue kit (including transport carriers and cardboard boxes). A standard hatchback, sedan or SUV is sufficient. Animals may not be transported in the enclosed boot of a sedan or in the tray or canopy of a ute; they must be transported in the cab, so they don't overheat. Noise must be kept to a minimum (no radio or loud talking) and do not allow pet dogs in the vehicle whilst transporting wildlife.
- **Basic rescue supplies:** the Rescue and First Aid for Wildlife manual (available at the Orientation / Rescue and First Aid for Wildlife workshop) includes a detailed list of helpful rescue equipment. Basic equipment needed to get started includes:
 - Cardboard boxes of various sizes – A4 photocopying paper boxes are a great size for most birds
 - Plastic rescue baskets are great for transporting birds and orphaned joeys
 - Pet carriers – available cheap through Facebook Marketplace, Gumtree or donated from other wildlife carers.
- **Miscellaneous supplies:**
 - Second-hand linen such as bath mats, pillowcases, for lining and covering transport carriers and several thick towels of various sizes for handling animals. (items donated to Wildcare are often available at workshops and at the Wildcare storage shed)
 - Gloves, safety glasses, and covered shoes, long sleeved shirt and pants and a personal first aid is recommended.
 - A fishing landing net (optional but very handy), for partially flighted birds and mobile small mammals
 - Notebook and pen/pencil for marking boxes and completing paperwork
 - Packing/sticky tape to secure cardboard boxes and to affix paperwork to the animal's carrier
 - Wildcare Rescue Record Book (optional)
 - Current Wildcare Contact Lists (Wildlife Emergency Contacts and Species Coordinators)
- **Specialised transport carriers:** sturdier, more expensive transport carriers are used for transporting some species such as koalas, possums and reptiles. You won't need these initially, but they are something you can add to your rescue kit as you go. Wildcare has some specialised equipment which we loan to members.

How do I get started?

- **Become a Wildcare member** – join online at <https://wildcare.org.au/help-us/join/>
- **Register for and attend an Orientation / Rescue and First Aid for Wildlife workshop** (all training workshops are free for Wildcare members) – current Education Calendar is available at <https://wildcare.org.au/education-training/>. Attending this introductory workshop is compulsory to ensure you are covered by Wildcare's insurance
- **Get your basic supplies ready** – see above, or refer to your Rescue and First Aid for Wildlife training manual
- **Submit a Rescue/Transport List Application Form** – complete the online [Rescue List Application Form](#). You can specify the days/times that you are available.
- Join the Wildcare members-only Facebook groups: [Wildcare Wildlife Transport Facebook group](#)
[Wildcare Community Facebook group](#)
- **Don't panic!** You will never be asked to attend a rescue you aren't confident with, or one for which you do not have the correct equipment. Our Hotline operators will only refer easy rescues to you to start with. In fact, most rescues are pretty easy – sick and injured wildlife are generally fairly easy to capture and contain.

Then what?

- The Wildcare Hotline will call you to rescue wildlife in your local area – keep your phone handy.
- Turn the notifications on in the Wildcare Wildlife Transport FB group and keep an eye out for opportunities to help.
- Keep us up to date with your contact details so we can get in touch quickly and easily.
- Continue to attend training workshops so you become familiar with rescue techniques for a wide variety of species.