

Trapping possums

What kind of trap can I use?

The recommended possum trap is a wire mesh box trap with mesh less than 19mm square. A trap with larger mesh can cause injury to possums.

The trap should have a spiral bait holder or foot treadle with a spring-activated door. Traps with bait hooks can cause serious injury to possums contained within the trap.

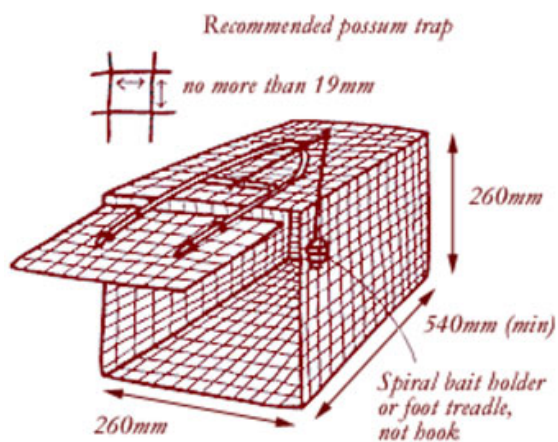


Illustration: Courtesy of Department of Sustainability and Environment, Victoria

Where can I get a possum trap?

You must obtain a trap and release permit from the Department for Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) before you trap a possum.

Your local council may loan or hire possum traps. You will be asked to show your permit to the Council officer before you can take a trap. Please note there may be a waiting period of 2-3 weeks to access a trap.

Please see our document, Hiring out possum traps to residents, available under Plants and Animals > Living with wildlife > Possums on our website, www.environment.sa.gov.au

Also, check the Yellow Pages under pest control, traps or equipment hire.

What should I do with a possum after it's caught?

Keep the possum in the trap and release at sunset on the day of capture, on the same property, within 50 metres of the capture site. Possums must be released within 24 hours of capture.

The trap must be covered with a breathable cloth, such as a hessian bag, and kept in a quiet place until sunset. It should also be protected from domestic pets, other wildlife and weather.

Do not release possums during the day because it increases their stress and puts them at risk of being attacked and injured by domestic pets or feral predators.

Possums are wild animals and may look scared or frightened in the trap. Keep children away and do not be tempted to place your hand inside the cage as they will defend themselves.

Can I destroy a brushtail possum myself?

No. The only acceptable means of killing possums in the greater Adelaide metropolitan area and the Mount Lofty Ranges is by the use of carbon dioxide or by barbiturate overdose. This can only be administered only by a registered operator.

The humane destruction of common brushtail possums can be carried out by:

- registered veterinarians
- the Animal Welfare League
- animal research facilities that hold a current scientific permit and animal ethics approval.

Possums can only be destroyed if a destruction permit has been issued by DENR.

Pest controllers are not issued with a permit to trap and destroy (destruction permit). Pest controllers can, however, arrange for the destruction of possums on behalf of a landholder in situations where the landholder has obtained a trap and destroy (destruction) permit from DENR.

Please note that a permit to trap and destroy possums will be granted only if the applicant has tried all other means of resolving the situation.

What should I do if I accidentally trap a ringtail possum instead of a brushtail possum?

As applies to common brushtail possums, keep the possum in the trap and release at sunset on the day of capture, on the same property, within 50 metres of the capture site. Possums must be released within 24 hours of capture.

Only under extenuating circumstances will DENR issue a permit to destroy common ringtail possums.

I have a wild possum in my roof. When will DENR come and collect it?

DENR does not provide this service.

Possums are part of the urban environment. Houses have replaced some of the natural habitats that have been lost through urban development.

Having a possum in your roof may mean that there are building maintenance issues requiring your attention. Removing the possum from its territory will not address your building maintenance issues and if you don't address the issues, possums are likely to return.

Pest Controllers

Are pest controllers licensed? If so, by whom?

Pest controllers providing a possum removal service require a permit from DENR. This permit grants approval for a pest controller to trap and release possums on behalf of the landholder onto the landholder's property within 50 metres of the capture site.

Pest controllers can arrange for the destruction of possums on behalf of the landholder only in situations where the landholder has obtained a trap and destroy (destruction) permit from DENR.

How do I know if a pest controller has a possum permit?

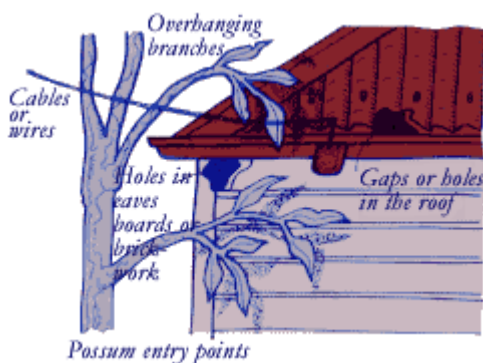
Not all pest controllers hold a permit to trap and release possums. Ask the pest controller to show you a copy of their permit or ask for their permit number. Should you wish to verify their permit, please contact the nearest DENR Ranger office and quote the pest controller's permit number.

Should pest controllers who 'possum proof' buildings hold any other licences?

Pest controllers who provide a possum proofing service that involves altering, repairing or improving a building or house must hold a Specified (Restricted) Builders Licence under the *Building Work Contractors Act 1995*.

Possum proofing your house

Ensure that all possible entry points are blocked off - possums can gain entry through loose roof tiles and holes the size of a tennis ball in timber or bricks.

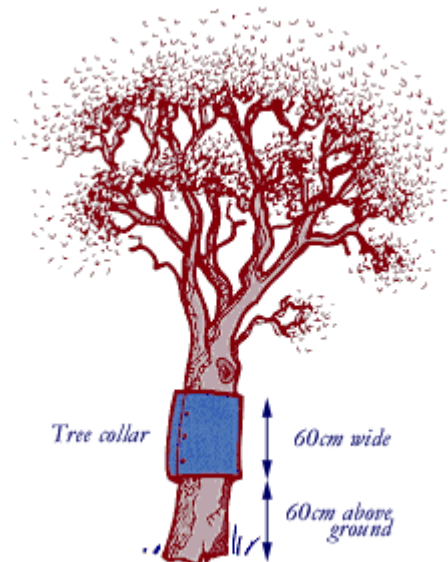


Illustrations courtesy of Department of Sustainability and Environment, Victoria

Observe possum movement from your roof space after dark. This is the time that the possum will leave the roof space to forage for food.

Block off all entry points after the possum has left the roof space. Trim any branches that overhang the house – this will prevent possum access.

Place sheet metal collars (60cm wide and 60cm above the ground) around any tree trunks providing possum access to your roof. This will also protect your fruit trees.



Illustrations courtesy of Department of Sustainability and Environment, Victoria

Provide an alternative home for the possum - install a possum box in a suitable sheltered position, at least 4 metres from the ground.

Spread quassia chips in the roof space to repel possums. You can buy them at hardware stores.

Use blocks of camphor or mothballs in the roof space. Blocks of camphor or mothballs in the

roof space may repel possums from your roof space.

DO NOT use camphor and mothballs at the same time as they react chemically with each other.

Possum nest boxes

I'm interested in installing a possum nest box in my backyard. Where can I obtain one?

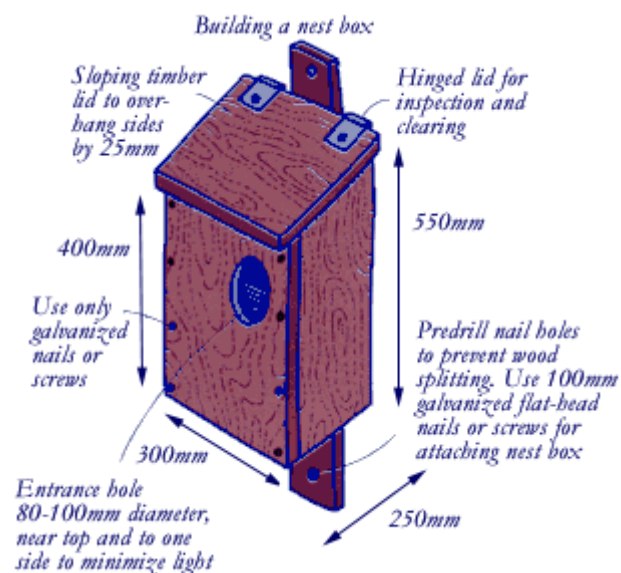


Illustration: Courtesy of Department of Sustainability and Environment, Victoria

You can get nest boxes from:

- veterinarians specialising in the care of native wildlife
- local councils
- pest controllers
- garden shop/plant nurseries
- pet shops
- hardware stores

You can also buy nest boxes online. Try the following:

Gould League
www.gould.edu.au/shop

FauNature
faunature.com.au/wildlife-education/nesting-boxes

Nest boxes for natives
<http://www.nestboxesfor natives.com.au>

Disclaimer: Reference to any company, product or service above should not be taken as a department endorsement of the company, product or service.

You can also build your own possum box. Refer to the following sites for more information.

Native Animal Network Association
<http://www.nana.asn.au/>

Disclaimer: The information in this fact sheet is based on the knowledge and technology available at the time of publication and may need to be varied in the light of new knowledge. While reasonable efforts have been made to ensure the contents of this publication are factually correct, we make no representations and accept no responsibility for the accuracy, completeness or fitness for any particular purpose of the contents and shall not be liable for any loss or damage that may be occasioned directly or indirectly through the use of, or reliance on, the contents of this publication.



Government
of South Australia