

RESCUING PROTECTED ANIMALS IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

This brochure is a guide to the permit system for Rescuing Protected Animals in South Australia.

RESCUING NATIVE ANIMALS

A sick, injured or orphaned native animal may be rescued from its natural habitat so that care and treatment can be provided.

A person rescuing a protected native mammal, bird or reptile requires a rescue permit issued by the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources (DEWNR).

A rescue permit is not required in the following circumstances:

- Where the animal is an introduced species, (that is not native to Australia);
- Where the animal is classed as an unprotected native species;
- Where the animal is to be returned to the wild in the short term.

The welfare of the rescued animals is of prime importance, and suffering must be minimised. People without the necessary skills or experience to care for the animal are urged to seek advice or give the animal to an experienced carer.

To determine whether a permit is required please contact the Fauna Permits Unit of the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources on (08) 8124 4972.

HOW TO OBTAIN A RESCUE PERMIT

A Person intending to care for a rescued animal should apply for a Protected Animals Rescue Permit if the animal is unlikely to be released. Application forms are available to download from the DEWNR website: www.environment.sa.gov.au or by contacting the Fauna Permits Unit.



Rescue permits are only issued to individuals and not rescue groups or organisations. The applicant for the Rescue permit must reside in South Australia.

If an individual keeps more than one native animal or keeps an animal of a Specialist species they must obtain a permit issued pursuant to Section 58 of the National Parks and Wildlife Act in addition to a Protected Animals Rescue Permit.

Two options are available:

1. A permit to Keep Basic Rescued animals (KRA) that entitles the holder to keep any animals listed on Schedule 6 of the National Parks and Wildlife (Wildlife) Regulations, which have been taken under a section 53(1)(d) Rescue Permit. Those people wishing to keep Specialist Rescued Animals will be required to submit an application for a Specialist permit and be endorsed for those species; or

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2. A basic or specialist keep and sell permit. If a person keeps any other animal i.e. a non-rescued animal, or if a person keeps animals under a KRA that subsequently breed and produce progeny, the person will be required to obtain a Keep and Sell permit and pay an annual permit fee.

If you do not know which permit is required, please contact the Fauna Permits Unit for further information.

Each application for a Protected Animals Rescue permit will be assessed individually. Whether or not a rescue permit is issued will depend upon the circumstances; for instance, the condition of the animal, the type of animal, and availability of care facilities. Photos of enclosures are required to be submitted as a part of the application process. Applicants will be advised in writing if their application is declined.



Rescue permits for specialist species (Koalas, Wombats, Grey-headed Flying Foxes etc.) will not be issued to individuals unless those individuals hold a Specialist permit endorsed for that species. Specialist permits are only issued to individuals who meet all requirements outlined in the species guidelines. For further information on specialist permit requirements please contact the Fauna Permits Unit.

CONDITIONS OF RESCUE PERMITS

A rescue permit may be subject to special conditions (for example, it might be a requirement of permit that the holder obtain a Keep and Sell Permit). Where long-term care is required, applicants must demonstrate that they have the appropriate facilities and experience to care for the rescued animal. Applicants without relevant experience must have access to an experienced carer who can supply the necessary guidance and supervision.

A Person must not sell, give, exchange or otherwise dispose of a rescued animal, however a transfer may be allowed in some circumstances. The permit holder is required to seek approval in writing for the transfer of a rescued animal to another person. The progeny of rescued animals may be sold as long as the carer has the appropriate permit to keep and sell native animals.

ANIMAL RESCUE GROUPS

There are a number of volunteer animal rescue groups and individuals in South Australia who care for rescued animals. They arrange for early assessment of rescued animals and provide appropriate care. They will also prepare animals for survival in the wild if they are to be released (note: Rescue organisations do not hold blanket Rescue permits. Rescue permits are issued to individual carers only. The onus is on you, as a carer to ensure that you apply for and obtain the appropriate permits for the animals that you are caring for).

Anyone interested in caring for rescued native animals is encouraged to join one of the animal rescue groups in South Australia. DEWNR also encourages animal rescue groups to provide its members with appropriate training and educational material.

RELEASE OF RESCUED ANIMALS

Ideally, a rescued animal should be returned to the wild within 24 hours. After a few weeks it is likely that a rescued animal will have adapted to human contact and so may no longer be capable of fending for itself if released. The Release of long-term captive animals is rarely justified on conservation or animal welfare grounds.



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There is little conservation value in releasing a common animal back to the wild, particularly if it is behaviourally, physically or otherwise impaired. The rehabilitation and release of a rescued animal must be carefully planned and take into account environmental factors as well as the suitability of the animal for release. The survival of the animal is dependent on physical health, behaviour and the ability to adapt to the wild. An animal unlikely to survive is not to be released. This applies particularly to hand-reared imprinted marsupials and some birds.



When receiving an animal, a carer must assess whether or not it is likely to be suitable for release. This then allows for an appropriate form of treatment; for instance, an animal considered suitable for release should be fed on food which is locally available. Similarly prompt assessment might enable kangaroos unsuitable for release to be de-sexed, and permanent captive birds to be humanised.

Written permission from DEWNR is required to release a rescued animal unless the rescue permit for the animal includes a special condition allowing its release. As a general rule, a rehabilitated animal should be released within one kilometre of its rescue site. To protect the genetic integrity of native animal populations, a rescued animal must not be released if its origin is not known. The progeny of rescued animals must not be released. Such animals would usually have adapted to human contact and would be unlikely to survive (note: Koalas and Grey-Headed Flying Foxes are exempt from this statement – refer to the Grey-headed Flying Fox Intervention Policy and Koala Intervention Policy for further information).

The permission of the landholder is required to release an animal on private land. Similarly, permission is also required to release an animal on Crown Land. The release of animals onto National Parks reserves is generally not permitted.

There are many other factors to be considered before releasing a rescued animal that has been in captivity for some time (please refer to DEWNR's rescue and release standard operating procedure for further information). If a release is being considered, please contact the Fauna Permits Unit on (08) 8124 4972 for further information on how to obtain release approval.

Wildlife Rescue Organisations:

Fauna Rescue of South Australia Inc:
<http://www.faunarescue.org.au/>

Native Animal Network of South Australia Inc:
<http://www.nansa.org.au/>

Adelaide Koala Hospital:
<http://www.akawhospital.org.au/>

Australian Marine Wildlife Research & Rescue Organisation (AMWRRO):
<http://www.amwrro.org.au/>

Minton Farm:
<http://www.mintonfarm.org/>

Friends of Native Wildlife South East:
<https://www.facebook.com/fonwse>

Wombat Fauna & Rescue:
<http://wombatfaunaandrescue.com/>

Wombat Awareness:
<http://wombatawareness.com/>



The Fauna Permits Unit

FURTHER INFORMATION:

Enquiries relating to the permit system for rescuing native animals in South Australia can be made to the DEWNR Fauna Permits Unit on phone (08) 8124 4972, fax (08) 8124 4939 or email: DEWNRFaunapermitsunit@sa.gov.au or by visiting our website at:

http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/managing-natural-resources/Plants_Animals/Permits_licences/Native_animals_in_the_wild/Rescue_Permits

