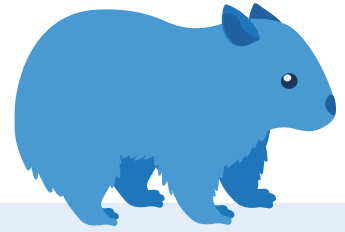


Marsupial pouch checking guide



This is a basic guide for checking the pouch of a dead marsupial for a baby or joey, and what to do if you find one.

1 Always ensure your own safety and that of others

Make sure your car is well off the road. Use your headlights and hazard lights to stay visible to other cars, and put on your high-vis vest. If the animal is on the road, move it off the road if it's safe to do so. To do this, grip the animal about halfway along the tail and drag it off the road.

2 Check if the animal is female or male by checking for testicles

Males should be spray painted with a large cross so other wildlife rescuers know they don't need to stop.

3 Locate the pouch

Most female marsupials have a small pouch opening at belly button level on the abdomen. Position your towel at the entrance of the pouch so joeys can't escape.

4 Open the pouch

Open by pinching the fur or skin between your hands, then lifting to stretch the opening of the pouch so that you can see inside.

5 Use a torch to look right to the bottom of the pouch

Newborn joeys can be very small. Some species may have more than one joey.

6 If there is no joey, check the teats of the mother

If one teat is longer than the other she may have been nursing and there may be a joey nearby. Safely scout the area to check. If you find a deceased female, stay very quiet and still for 10 minutes or so and listen for a joey calling their mum – it sounds like a squeaky or clucking noise. If safe and possible to do so, move the deceased body well off the road to prevent scavenging wildlife from also being hit by vehicles.

7 Do not give food or fluids

Don't give any food or fluids including water, unless on vet, Bonorong or trained wildlife carer advice.

Removing a joey from pouch

Important – the method for removing a joey from a pouch depends on the age of the joey.

Very young joeys (hairless/pink)

The mouth of a very young joey may still be fused to its mother's teat. Removing the joey from its mother can cause serious injury.

If the joey is attached, it is best to transport the whole body of the mother for assistance. If this isn't possible, immediately call Bonorong Wildlife Sanctuary on 0447 264 625, so they can talk you through the process of removing the joey. You'll need to cut the teat as close to the mother's body as possible so you can remove the joey from the pouch with the teat still in its mouth.

Older joeys (furred/velvet)

Older joeys will have fur and won't be attached to their mother's teat. You can gently and carefully remove these joeys from the pouch.

Never force the joey. If the pouch is too tight you may need to cut the pouch entrance open a little with round tipped scissors. Be careful to shield the joey from the scissors to avoid injury.

Don't worry if the joey cries or hisses. This means they are alive and aware of what is happening.

Never pull a joey out of the pouch by any limb or tail! Place your hand in the pouch and perform a scooping motion with your palm along the joey's back.

Put the joey into your makeshift pouch immediately. If there's someone else with you, use their body heat to keep the joey warm. Body warmth is safest for the joey but blankets or a cotton/flannelette pillow case can also be used.

Take the joey to the nearest vet or call your local wildlife carer for advice on where to go. Make sure the journey is warm, dark and quiet to minimise stress.



Make your own pouch check list

Have I got:

Hi-vis vest

Hand sanitiser

Torch

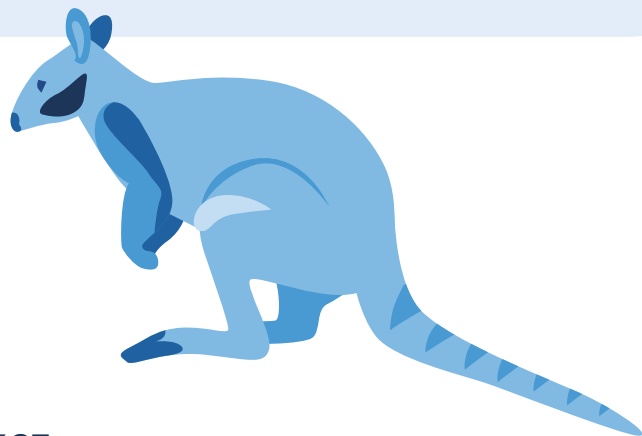
Disposable gloves

Antiseptic wipes

Scissors

If you find an injured or orphaned animal:

- Call Bonorong hotline immediately on 0447 264 625
- Keep animal warm (not hot) - your body heat is best
- Keep animal quiet - whisper, turn car radio off
- Keep animal dark - in a pouch or pillowcase
- Wildlife are easily stressed so keep handling to a minimum
- Don't give food or drink



For assistance and support:
Bonorong Wildlife Sanctuary
bonorong.com.au
24/7 rescue hotline: 0447 264 625

