

HUME CITY COUNCIL
Living with wildlife
KANGAROOS







Kanagroos (*Macropus* sp.) are a protected native Australian species. There are six kangaroo species in Australia, with three of these found in Victoria. Since European settlement some kangaroo populations have declined, while species like the Eastern Grey have benefited from the clearing of trees, an increase in pasture and the provision of water sources for stock.

The presence of kangaroos in rural areas is a contentious issue; while many landowners enjoy their presence, others view them as a pest. As urban development expands, kangaroo habitat will increasingly overlap or intereface with rural and urban environments, and human encounters with kangaroos will increase.

Problems

Kanagroos are usually docile but when feeling threatened can attack causing injury to humans or pets, especially when surprised. Kangaroos can sometimes become trapped within suburban areas and become panicked and disoriented and must be carefully captured and relocated by a wildlife rescuer.

In rural and urban areas kangaroos can attempt to cross roadways, which can result in injury or death for the animal and sometimes injury to humans and damage to vehicles.

In rural areas, kangaroos can damage fences, graze on crops, seedlings and native or introduced pastures competing with stock when resources are low. In gardens they can chew down fruit trees and ornamental plants.

Council's advice

Kangaroos should not be approached or fed, and a safe distance should be mainatined at all times. Do not allow your dog to approach a kangaroo and keep dogs on leashes in parks that are inhabited by kangaroos.

If you accidently hit a kangaroo while driving or encounter an injured or deceased kangaroo, Council encourages residents to contact Wildlife Victoria, an organisation of trained animal rescuers and carers, on 8400 7300 or Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) on 136 186.

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Driving Safely

When driving on rural roads people need to exercise caution to avoid kangaroos.

• Slow down during the dusk and dawn periods when kangaroos are most active and feeding.

• Be alert while driving - keep an eye on road verges for any signs of kangaroos. If you see one kangaroo then there are likely more nearby.

• Observe kangaroo warning signs in high activity areas and slow down.

• If you find a kangaroo on a busy road that is causing a traffic hazard, call 000.

• If you come across a dead kangaroo that has been spray painted, this means that a wildlife rescuer has checked the pouch for joeys.





Rural landowners

Council encourages rural landowners to exercise tolerance to kangaroos on their land and to use methods of exclusion (such as fencing around plants). A repellent can be purchased from hardware stores to spray on new seedlings to deter browsing.

A swing gate system can be installed to existing fences to limit the damage to fencing. The gate allows kangaroos through with ease but sheep and cattle will generally not use these gates. The benefits of installing a swing gate system are:

- cost and time required for construction is minimal.
- saves time and money on repairing damaged fences.
- if installed in the appropriate positions, kangaroos will learn to use the gates limiting damage on farm fencing.

To reduce the likelihood of kangaroos damaging fencing, and getting injured, the top wire of farm fences can be changed to an elastic product. The elasticity of the wire softens the impact when kangaroos mistakenly make contact with the fence and allows them to easily untangle themselves.



For more information about living with wildlife contact Hume's Coordinator, Land and Biodiversity on 9205 2200 or visit www.hume.vic.gov.au/Living_with_Kangaroos

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