

HOW TO INSTALL THE NEST BOX

You'll need a ladder and a hammer.

1. Select a mature tree with plenty of leafy coverage and sturdy branches. Evergreen trees are ideal as they do not shed leaves in winter. Avoid placing the box in exposed or bare areas of the tree.
2. The box should be placed 2.6 to 3 metres (8.5 to 10 feet) from the ground as a safeguard against predators and to provide a quieter, more private environment.
3. The post should lie against the main trunk, and the hole face southeast or as much away from the afternoon sun as possible.



4a) Hammer in the top nail at a 45 degree angle leaving 5 cm sticking out.



4b) Climb carefully with the box to hang it on the nail.



4c) Hammer in the second nail, positioning it at the top of the slot.

5. Alternatively, if you expect more tree growth, thread a bungee cord through the lower slot to strap the box to the tree. Test to ensure the box is securely fastened to the tree and will not shift in strong winds.

BE SAFE!

Have someone help you by holding the ladder securely. The box weighs more than 8 kg so climb the ladder with care. Don't try to climb higher without the aid of the ladder. Don't attempt this when it is dark. Take all necessary precautions.

ATTRACTING THE POSSUM INTO THE BOX

- If you have a possum in your shed or house, here's how to lure it out and into your nest box: as night falls, open a window or door so the possum has an exit. Leave a trail of small pieces of apple or banana for the possum to follow to the exit and to the base of the tree where the box is. Try to attach a piece of fruit near the entrance of the box (don't put it in the box). Once the possum is out, check for holes or gaps in your shed or house through which the possum may have originally entered, and seal them.
- Secure your pets to prevent them attacking the possum while it is on the ground.
- If the possum doesn't move into the box that same night, remove the fruit trail in the morning to avoid attracting other animals. Leave a new trail in the evening.
- You can provide nesting material if you wish. Ideal material includes soft dry leaves, straw or wood shavings. Pet stores sell such material for hamster and rabbit cages.



If there are possums in the area, they'll quickly be attracted to your nest box!

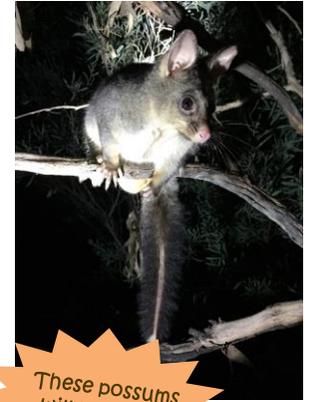
INTERESTING POSSUM FACTS

- There are 30 species of possums in Australia; 13 of those can be found in Victoria.
- They are marsupials, like kangaroos and koalas, and they carry their babies in their pouches.
- They use their prehensile tails like a 5th limb for climbing and grasping.
- You're likely to see two common species around your home – the Brushtail and the Ringtail.



THE BRUSHTAIL POSSUM

- Long bushy black tail like a feather duster.
- About the size of a cat.
- Large pointed ears and a bright pink nose.
- One joey per year, although they can have an independent sub-adult with them and a baby in the pouch at the same time.
- They usually live in tree hollows, but in the absence of those, will adapt to roofs of houses and sheds in suburban areas.



These possums will love your nest box!

THE RINGTAIL POSSUM



- Long slender tail with a white tip.
- Body length of about 30cm.
- Small rounded ears.
- One to four joeys per litter (sometimes twice a year depending on conditions) as well as having multiple sub-adult joeys.
- They build several leafy communal dreys (spherical nests) in trees within their territory range.

Both species are nocturnal, arboreal (tree-dwelling) and eat native leaves and blossoms. Brushtails also include native fruits and insects in their diet. In the absence of native food, they will adapt to non-native plants.



Both species are territorial; removing a possum from its home simply paves the way for others to move in. Providing a nest box is the best solution – you keep them out of your house, and prevent other possums from moving in!

DOS AND DON'TS

- Don't put towels, fabrics or newspapers in the nest box as these trap urine and water which can lead to infections.
- Don't peep into the box frequently. If there are joeys in there, you could frighten them and cause the family to move out of the box to find elsewhere to live.
- Don't feed the possums; they will search for food by themselves. Pieces of apple or banana can be used just for the purpose of luring a possum out of your house, but as these fruits are not what the possums naturally eat, we don't advise feeding them.
- If you have a cat, ensure that it does not climb up to the box and endanger the possums. We recommend that cats be kept indoors or provided with an enclosed cat run for the safety of wildlife and your cats.
- A couple of times a year, check that the box is still firmly attached to the tree. If the tree continues to grow, the nails may be pulled loose.

Leave the box in your tree even if the possum has left; it won't be long before another possum moves in!



POSSUM INJURIES

If your dog or cat injures a possum or brings you a possum, please transport the possum to the [nearest vet clinic or contact Wildlife Victoria \(13 000 94535\)](#). Most vets will treat native wildlife for free.

A possum injured by a cat will need veterinary assistance as soon as possible even if there are no visible signs of harm. Cats carry nasty bacteria in their claws and teeth, and the smallest scratch can cause a deadly infection for possums if not treated. Tell the vet the possum may have come into contact with a cat.

A BIG THANK YOU!

Many thanks to the members of the Victorian Men's Shed Association for their help in making these wonderful possum nest boxes! Their contribution to the protection of wildlife is gratefully acknowledged.

These eco-friendly boxes are built from recycled timber that would otherwise have gone to landfill.

To find out more about the Victorian Men's Shed Association, please visit www.vmsa.org.au



ABOUT WILDLIFE VICTORIA



Wildlife Victoria provides an essential service to the community. Through our **Wildlife Emergency number 13 000 94535 and online form**, our team is ready to provide professional advice, education and a rescue service for injured, sick and orphaned wildlife.

Our wildlife emergency response service responds and cares for over 40,000 animals annually.

Wildlife Victoria is a charity solely dependent on volunteers and donors who give selflessly to help native animals in distress. We do not receive any ongoing government funding. To enable us to continue our rescue service, and enhance our education programs, please support us by donating at www.wildlifevictoria.org.au/donate.

We, and the wildlife we help, thank you!



ABN: 27 753 478 012

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ON CALL TO HELP
13 000 94535

How to set up your
Possum Nest Box

