

Living with Possums

Western Ringtail Possums in backyards of the South West area

- ***Pseudocheirus occidentalis* – Western Ringtail Possum**
- **Listed as specially protected (threatened) under the Wildlife Conservation Act 1950**
- **Habitat is mainly Peppermint trees in the Busselton/Dunsborough/Margaret River area**
- **They enjoy eating a variety of leaves (mainly peppermints) including Melaleucas, Bottlebrushes and Wattle flowers**
- **Western Ringtail Possums will often live in roof cavities if they have no other habitat available**
- **Provide alternative accommodation e.g. possum nest boxes to avoid this occurring**
- **Prune trees and shrubs back from the house**
- **Block access to the roof cavity at night**
- **Backyard fences have become “Wildlife Corridors”**
- **This makes the possums vulnerable to predation**
- **Keep all cats inside at night (Busselton Shire’s Cat Strategy)**
- **Restrain dogs at night, train to leave small animals**
- **Keep dogs on leash when out walking at night (Dog Act)**

- **When Western Ringtail Possums are eating your garden plants: e.g. roses, NZ xmas trees, daisies**
- **There are repellant suggestions that you can use (these are available on the internet):**
 - **Lap Sang Souchong Tea**
 - **Indonesian Fish Sauce**
 - **Garlic Spray**
 - **White King**
 - **Camphor**
 - **Wettable Sulphur**
 - **Skunk-off ,Keep Off, Stay Off, Scat**

- **Eating garden plants - give them alternative and preferable food to eat e.g. Melaleucas, Bottlebrushes, Wattles in your garden**
- **Create your own “Wildlife Corridor” along fencelines so they have food, protection, homes and travel with their favourite plants**
- **They much prefer these and will leave your roofs and gardens alone**

Removing Western Ringtail Possums from your roof or backyard:

- Western ringtail possums are territorial and prefer their patch
- Removing or translocating western ringtails to another place is quite often difficult as they may stress or be displaced
- If you remove a possum, another possum will usually take their place if you don't block the access
- Rather than remove – wait till dark and they move from the roof
- Block off their entrance
- Make sure there is somewhere (Peppermint tree or other tree) for them to go in the yard
- Place a possum box in the tree
- The possum and you will be happy living together

