

# FAUNA FACTS

## Rakali

**Conservation Status:** Priority Four

**Scientific Name:** *Hydromys chrysogaster*

**Location:** In Western Australia, it is found in fresh, brackish and marine water in the south-west, and along the coast up to the Kimberley.

### What do they look like?

Rakali are a secretive species and so they can be hard to spot. They are a large native rodent with black, brown or grey fur. They have a long, thick tail with a distinctive white tip, and have partially webbed hind feet.

Photos: K. Bettink/DBCA



### Have you seen a rakali?

Please let us know us if you have seen a rakali by sending a [fauna report form](#) (on the Department's website [www.dbca.wa.gov.au](http://www.dbca.wa.gov.au)) to [fauna@dbca.wa.gov.au](mailto:fauna@dbca.wa.gov.au).

### What is a rakali?

Rakali are the largest rodents found in Australia. They are also known as water rats because they spend a lot of time in the water. They aren't entirely nocturnal, and they will look for food during the day as well as the night. They are most often seen at sunset when they are most active.

### Where do they live?

Water rats can live anywhere in Australia where there is water all year around. They water can be fresh, brackish or marine, as long as the water is clean and there is lots of vegetation. They like to have old logs and rock ledges about as a place to hide and nest.

### Interesting facts

Rakali have partially webbed back feet, almost like a platypus or a duck, to help them swim. Not only are they strong swimmers, but they can also travel long distances on land.

Water rats will eat almost anything, including insects, fish, crustaceans, mussels, frogs, lizards, water birds, turtles, turtle eggs and even other small mammals.

They will often carry their scavenged food back to a flat area out of the water. They leave behind pieces of shells and bones. This area is called a midden.

For more information see the department's website [www.dbca.wa.gov.au](http://www.dbca.wa.gov.au)



Department of Biodiversity,  
Conservation and Attractions