

Red-necked Wallaby

Macropus rufogriseus

Kingdom Animalia
Phylum Chordata
Class Mammalia
Order Diprotodontia
Family Macropodidae



Native to: Temperate areas of Eastern Australia, Tasmania, King Island and the Furneaux group of islands.

Status: Least Concern

The red-necked wallaby is the most common species of wallaby and is not overly threatened as its populations have shown to be stable. Threats to red-necked wallaby habitat and hunting of the animals for sport and meat continue to be concerns for their future stability.

Appearance & Lifespan

The red-necked wallaby is the largest wallaby species native to Australia. It has brownish-gray fur with a lighter coloured chest and stomach and characteristic black nose and paws. The red-necked wallaby has large muscular hind legs for hopping and a long, thick tail for balance. They also have keen hearing and a good sense of smell but have poor eyesight.

Red-necked wallabies are approximately 80 cm tall (31.5") with a 30-100 cm body (11.9-39.4") and a 25-75 cm tail (9.8-29.5"). When fully grown, males weigh approximately 20 kg (44 lb) and females weigh about 10 kg (22 lb).

The lifespan of an adult red-necked wallaby is 12-15 years in captivity and 7-10 years in the wild.



Behavior & Reproduction

Like all other members of the marsupial family the red-necked wallaby rear their young in pouches. They usually have only one young at a time after a 40 day gestation period. When young are born they must crawl to their mother's pouch where they will nurse continually for approximately 7 months. The young are quite undeveloped when they are born and complete a large portion of their growth while in the pouch. At approximately 7 months old the young are large enough to leave the pouch for short periods of time and are completely weaned at 10-12 months.

The red-necked wallaby is mostly solitary but it may live in groups called "mobs" where there is a hierarchy among the females. Males are aggressive with each other and will fight by "boxing" or sparring well after they are fully mature.

Male red-necked wallabies reach sexual maturity at 2 years and females a few months before that. Both males and females reach their full size at 5 years, with the males growing at a faster rate to achieve their larger size. Red-necked wallabies are not very vocal, using body language and actions to communicate. They can growl, hiss and chatter if provoked.

Ecology & Conservation

The red-necked wallaby can live in a variety of environments but is usually found in eucalyptus forests, shrub and grasslands or other open areas that are nearby. They are generally found in Eastern Australia and the surrounding islands.

Red-necked wallabies are ruminant-like grazers whose diet consists of a variety of shrubs, grasses, bushes, bark, leaves and available fruit and vegetables. They will drink water if necessary but usually obtain the liquids it needs from the roots and vegetation it eats.

In the zoo, red-necked wallabies feed on special rodent lagomorph ration pellets, alfalfa and assorted green vegetables. They also are provided salt blocks.

Did You Know?

1. Wallaby young are undeveloped and are only 1 cm long embryos when born (0.4").
2. There are over 30 separate species of wallaby that reside primarily in Australia.
3. Wallabies and kangaroos cannot walk backwards.
4. Young red-necked wallabies are the size of a bean when they are born and are called "Joeys"

