

Banded hare-wallaby

Lagostrophus fasciatus



...*"the striped kangaroo, the smallest and most beautiful among the species"...*

is how naturalist François Péron described the banded hare-wallaby in 1801.

Description: The grey fur of this wallaby's back and rump is striped with dark bands while the underbelly is greyish-white.

Diet and Habitat: Banded hare-wallabies are browsers, mainly eating shrubs, and to a lesser extent grasses. They form runways under the vegetation, where they shelter during the day beneath thickets of Acacia and other dense shrubs.

Breeding: These hare-wallabies are territorial and male-male interactions can be aggressive. Relations among females and between juveniles and adults are peaceful.

Banded hare-wallabies usually first breed in their second year. Breeding usually peaks in autumn, but this species is capable of breeding year-round if conditions are favourable. Joeys spend about six months in the pouch.

As with many other macropods, the female can delay development of a fertilised egg, reactivating an embryo when a joey leaves her pouch (embryonic diapause).

Their lifespan is thought to be up to six years.

Distribution: Banded hare-wallabies once ranged across southern Australia. The only remaining natural populations are on Bernier and Dorre islands, although they have been successfully reintroduced to Faure Island and Mt Gibson Sanctuary. They have also been introduced to Dirk Hartog Island as part of the Dirk Hartog Island National Park *Return to 1616* Ecological Restoration Project.

Current distribution (approximate)



Quick facts

Head-body:	400 - 450mm
Tail:	230 - 360mm
Average weight:	1 - 2.3kg
Gestation:	30 days
Number of young:	1
Weaned:	9 months

Conservation Status

There were once two subspecies of the banded hare-wallaby but the mainland subspecies is now extinct, leaving the subspecies on Bernier and Dorre islands.



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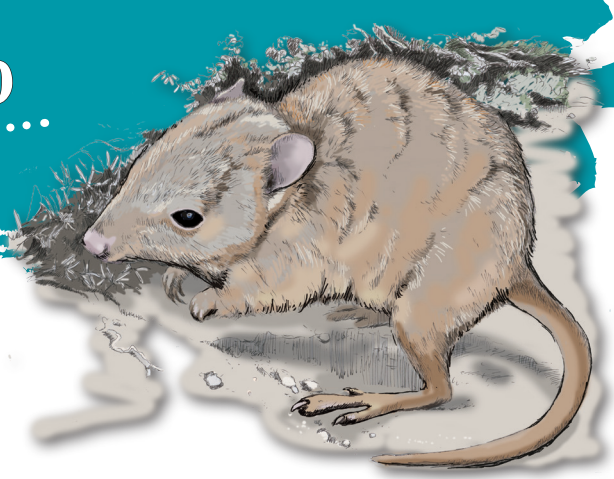


DID YOU KNOW?

The banded hare-wallabies are the only surviving relative of an extinct and ancient group of kangaroos.

Boodie (burrowing bettong)

Bettongia lesueur lesueur



Description: The boodie is a chunky little macropod with cinnamon tinged grey fur. Its tail is weakly prehensile and is used to carry nesting material. They store fat in their tails that can become large and 'sausage like'. Although the posture of boodies is hunched, they hop on their hind legs like other macropods.

They have a snub nose, small ears and Shark Bay boodies have a white tail tip that helps distinguish them from the brush-tailed bettong (woylie).

Diet and Habitat: This is the only macropod that regularly inhabits burrows, where they share nests with other boodies during the day.

They emerge after sunset to forage by moving slowly with their nose close to the ground, sniffing for fungi and bulbs. They also eat seeds, nuts and green plant parts.

Breeding: Female boodies can produce up to three young per year, with breeding occurring throughout the year. After a three-week pregnancy, a single joey is born and remains in the pouch for 115 days.

Boodies reach sexual maturity within their first year and can live for three years or longer.

Distribution: Boodies once covered one of the largest geographic ranges of almost any Australian mammal species but were extinct on the mainland by the early 1940s.

Natural wild populations of boodies can now only be found on a few Western Australian islands including Bernier, Dorre and Faure, Barrow, Boodie and Alpha. They will be reintroduced to Dirk Hartog Island as part of the *Return to 1616* Ecological Restoration Project.

Quick facts

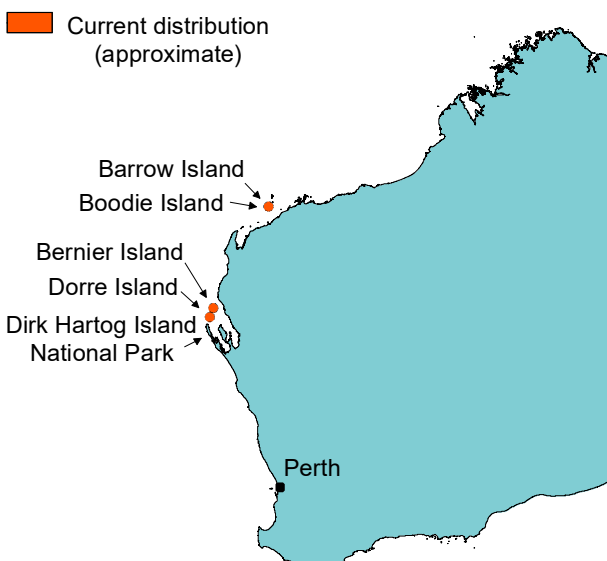
Head-body:	360mm
Tail:	285mm
Average weight:	1.3kg
Gestation:	3 weeks
Number of young:	1
Weaned:	5 - 6 months

Conservation Status

The small restricted populations of boodies leave them vulnerable, with their existence depending on continued conservation efforts. Threats include introduced predators and wildfires.



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DID YOU KNOW?

Boodies are the only macropod that regularly inhabits burrows.

Brush-tailed mulgara

Dasymercus blythi



Description: Brush-tailed mulgara are muscular, carnivorous marsupials with short round ears and short tapering tails. They are light reddish-brown or tan above and whitish below. Males are generally larger than females.

Diet and Habitat: Brush-tailed mulgara occur in Australia's arid centre. They hunt large invertebrates and small vertebrates, and store fat in their tails which can be thick at the base.

They shelter in burrows during the day and emerge at night to hunt, but they are not completely nocturnal, sometimes sun-bathing during the day near the entrance of their burrow.

Breeding: Female brush-tailed mulgaras give birth to up to six young. Brush-tailed mulgara breed in winter and dispersal of young coincides with peak food availability in spring.

Mulgaras may live for six or more years and are presumed to keep growing throughout their lives.

Distribution: Small scattered populations of mulgaras have been found in arid regions through Central and Western Australia.

The brush-tailed mulgara is proposed for reintroduction to Dirk Hartog Island National Park as part of the *Return to 1616* Ecological Restoration Project.

Quick facts

Head-body:	120 - 165mm
Tail:	60 - 100mm
Average weight:	60 - 110g
Gestation:	30 days
Number of young:	up to 6
Weaned:	12 - 15 weeks

Conservation Status

The brush-tailed mulgara is a Priority 4 species that is Near Threatened. This species is close to Vulnerable, but not listed as Conservation Dependent.



Current distribution (approximate)



DID YOU KNOW?

Brush-tailed mulgaras don't need to drink as they can get all the water they need from their food.

Chuditch (western quoll)

Dasyurus geoffroii



Description: The distinctive markings and size of the chuditch make it easy to identify. Numerous white spots on this marsupial's reddish-brown body fur break up its outline, making the chuditch hard for both predators and prey to see. Their granulated footpads and dark 'brush' on their tails readily distinguishes them from their more arboreal relative, the northern quoll which has striated footpads and no 'brush' on its tail.

Diet and Habitat: About one third the size of an average domestic cat, the chuditch is Western Australia's largest carnivorous marsupial. They hunt large invertebrates and small vertebrates on the ground at night, but will also consume carrion such as road-kill.

This solitary animal has a large home range and is able to climb. It sleeps in hollow logs or burrows during the day.

Breeding: Young are born between May and September and are independent at about six months of age. They are sexually mature by their first breeding season and live up to four years.

Distribution: Occurring naturally only in the greater south-west corner of Western Australia, attempts have been made to reintroduce the chuditch to other mainland sites, including sanctuaries with mixed success.

The chuditch will be the last animal reintroduced to Dirk Hartog Island National Park as part of the *Return to 1616* Ecological Restoration Project.

Quick facts

Head-body:	260 - 400mm
Tail:	210 - 350mm
Average weight:	0.6 - 2kg
Gestation:	17 - 18 days
Number of young:	2 - 6
Weaned:	4 - 5 months

Conservation Status

Loss of habitat and feral predators (foxes and feral cats) are major threats to the chuditch.



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Current distribution (approximate)



DID YOU KNOW?

Chuditch are the largest carnivorous marsupial in Western Australia.

Desert mouse

Pseudomys desertor

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Description: This small stout native mouse has short limbs. Its fur is brown above with long black guard hairs that give it a grizzled appearance.

It is grey-brown underneath and has a distinctive pale ring around its eye.

Diet and Habitat: Desert mice live in arid inland areas in a variety of habitats but require areas with dense ground cover.

They are nocturnal and mostly solitary. Plant material makes up most of their diet and they spend the day sheltering in shallow burrows or underneath thick tussocks amongst dense vegetation.

Breeding: The desert mouse can breed throughout the year and has an average litter of three young. Desert mice are sexually mature at about 10 weeks of age.

Populations increase dramatically after good rainfall and increasing vegetation cover.

Distribution: The desert mouse is widespread across arid and semi-arid Australia. It is proposed for reintroduction to Dirk Hartog Island National Park as part of the *Return to 1616* Ecological Restoration Project for the purpose of reconstructing the island's fauna.

Quick facts

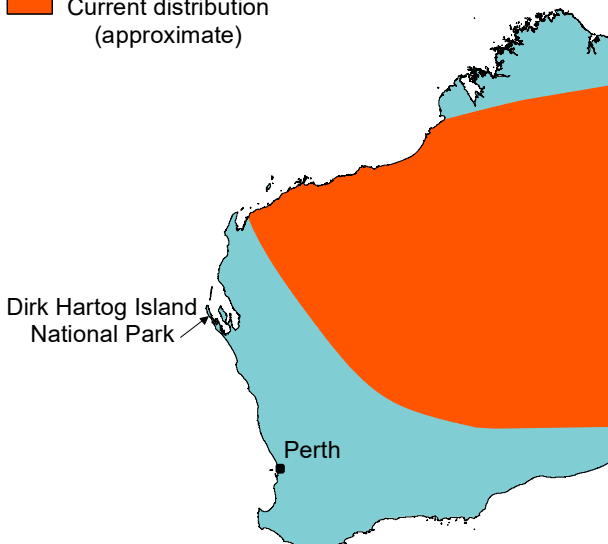
Head-body:	70 - 105mm
Tail:	67 - 105mm
Average weight:	15 - 35g
Gestation:	27 - 28 days
Number of young:	1 - 4
Mature:	10 weeks

Conservation Status

Desert mouse numbers fluctuate with environmental conditions and their range has extended further south in the past. Despite a decreasing population trend, it is not currently considered threatened.



Current distribution
(approximate)



DID YOU KNOW?

Desert mice are folivores which are herbivores that specialise in leaf eating.

Dibbler

Parantechinus apicalis



Description: The dibbler is a small marsupial with coarse brownish-grey fur speckled with white.

It has distinctive white rings around the eyes and a tapering hairy tail.

Diet and Habitat: Dibblers are most active at dawn and dusk and their main habitat is dense heath with lots of leaf litter.

These small insectivores feed mostly on ground-dwelling insects and other invertebrates. Sometimes they eat small lizards, birds and mammals. Dibblers also eat berries and lick nectar from flowers.

Breeding: The dibbler breeds once a year during autumn. A mating session may continue for several hours.

Young are 2mm long when born and females can carry as many as eight at one time in their pouch!

Distribution: Dibblers were once widespread in south-west Western Australia (WA). They were believed extinct in the early 1900s but found again in 1967 on the WA south coast and later on two WA islands.

New populations have also been established through Perth Zoo's captive breeding program on Escape and Gunton islands as well as Peniup nature reserve. Dibbler reintroductions to Dirk Hartog Island National Park as part of the *Return to 1616* Ecological Restoration Project began in 2019.

Quick facts

Head-body:	140 - 145mm
Tail:	95 - 115mm
Average weight:	40 - 125g
Gestation:	44 - 52 days
Number of young:	6 - 8
Weaned:	3 - 4 months

Conservation Status

Dibblers are threatened by habitat loss caused by land clearing, die-back disease and wildfires. Predation by introduced predators is also a threat.



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Current distribution (approximate)

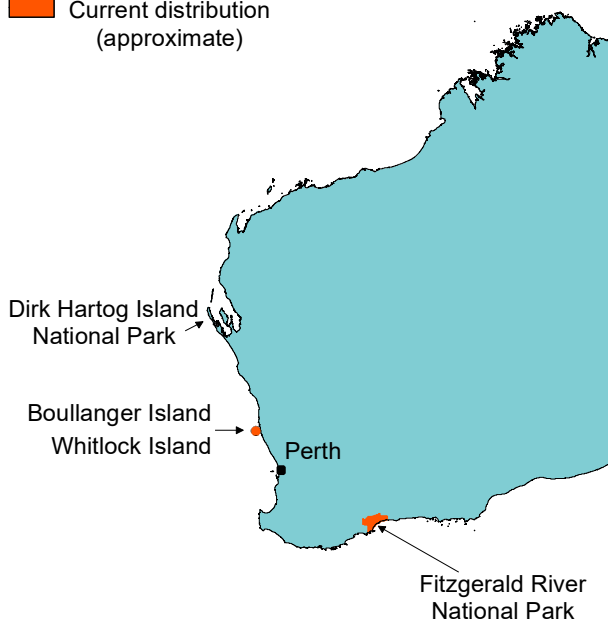


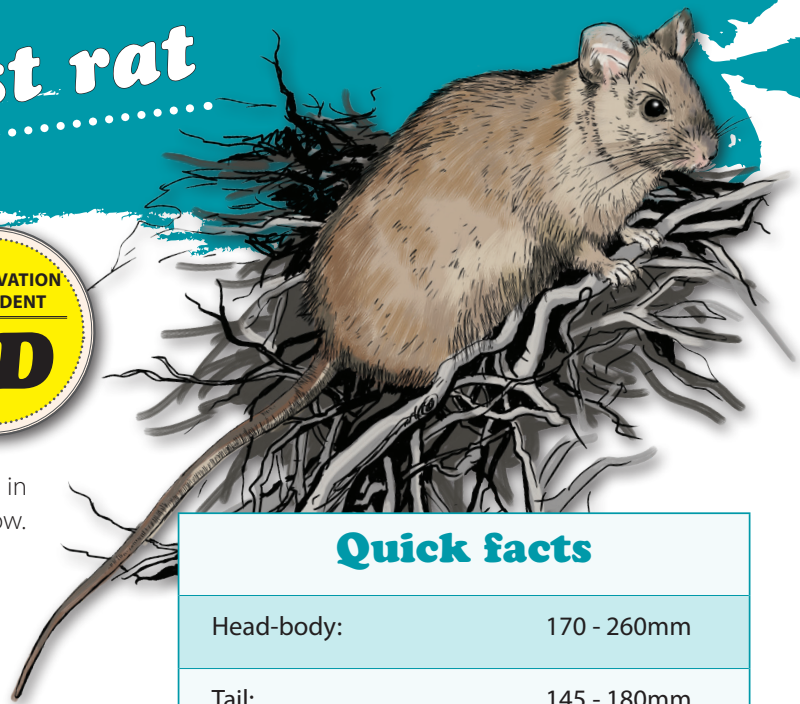
Photo ©Jan Barrie/Global Gypsies

DID YOU KNOW?

Dibblers were believed to have gone extinct until a pair were accidentally found in 1967.

Greater stick-nest rat

Leporillus conditor



Description: The greater stick-nest rat is a native rodent covered in fluffy, yellow-brown to grey fur above, and creamy-white fur below.

It has a blunt snout and large, rounded ears. The tops of its hind feet have distinctive white markings and its tail is shorter than its body length. Their posture at rest is hunched, like a rabbit.

Diet and Habitat: Greater stick-nest rats inhabit semi-arid to arid scrubland with little or no freshwater. They are nocturnal and feed on succulent vegetation and fruits.

Groups of 10–20 build and maintain communal nests that can be 1m high and 1.5m wide. The name “stick-nest” rat refers to the nests they construct out of sticks held together with wee and poo.

Breeding: Pairs establish strong bonds and can breed throughout the year, but mostly in autumn and winter when there is more food.

The young attach themselves to their mother’s teats and are dragged around with her until she deposits them in the nest some time before they are weaned.

Distribution: Greater stick-nest rats were found through south and western arid Australia but became extinct on the mainland in the 1930s.

New populations have been established on Salutation Island in Shark Bay from the Franklin islands in South Australia (SA) and in Mount Gibson Wildlife Sanctuary from St Peter Island (SA).

Reintroductions onto Dirk Hartog Island National Park as part of the *Return to 1616* Ecological Restoration Project began in 2021.

Quick facts

Head-body:	170 - 260mm
Tail:	145 - 180mm
Average weight:	180 - 450g
Gestation:	44 days
Number of young:	1 - 4
Weaned:	4 weeks

Conservation Status

Livestock trampling nests leaves greater stick-nest rats vulnerable to predation. Along with livestock, rabbits also deplete the stick-nest rat’s food sources.



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Current distribution (approximate)



DID YOU KNOW?

‘Stick-nest rat’ refers to the nest these animals build out of sticks.

Heath mouse

Pseudomys shortridgei



Description: The fur of this grey-brown native rodent is flecked with dark guard hairs that make the heath mouse look fluffy. It is paler underneath, has a blunt face, bulging eyes and short rounded ears.

The native heath mouse looks similar to introduced black rats but can be distinguished by their tails. The tails of heath mice are dark above and light underneath while black rats have ringed tails.

Diet and Habitat: Heath mice have a diet that changes throughout the year in response to seasonal availability. During their breeding season they will consume highly nutritious flowers, seeds and berries, but will eat leaf and stem material as well as truffle-like fungus when their preferred foods are unavailable.

They construct multiple shallow burrows, usually under a low bush. Although generally nocturnal, heath mice are sometimes active during the day.

Breeding: The heath mouse breeding season lasts four months, occurring once a year during late spring and summer. Females begin breeding at 10 to 12 months of age and can produce two litters of three young per year. Young develop quickly and growth is rapid, juveniles reaching adult size in 3–4 months.

Distribution: Heath mice may still occur in south-west Victoria, southern South Australia and southern Western Australia (WA).

They were thought to be extinct in WA until they were rediscovered in 1987.

They are proposed for reintroduction to Dirk Hartog Island National Park as part of the *Return to 1616* Ecological Restoration Project.



Quick facts

Head-body:	90 - 120mm
Tail:	85 - 100mm
Average weight:	55 - 90g
Maturity:	3 - 4 months
Number of young:	3
Lifespan:	max 6 years

Conservation Status

Numbers of heath mice are declining and are threatened by feral predators, habitat loss and habitat fragmentation.



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DID YOU KNOW?

Heath mice are semi-nocturnal. They're active in the early evening and early morning and return to their nest at sunrise.

Rufous hare-wallaby

Lagorchestes hirsutus



Description: The rufous hare-wallabies have long, soft greyish-brown fur tinged with red.

They were once abundant and widespread throughout the arid and semi-arid zones of Australia.

Diet and Habitat: These relatively solitary animals live in low scrub and spinifex on sandy soils. During the day they shelter in scrapes, shallow trenches under dense low shrubs or spinifex hummocks.

When frightened, they burst out, often emitting a high-pitched nasal squeak, and zigzag away at speed. They emerge at dusk to feed, grazing mainly on grasses and forbs, but occasionally eating seeds, bulbs and insects as well.

Breeding: Females can breed from five months and can produce up to three young a year. Like other macropods, they can have more than one young at the same time.

Females can delay development of a fertilised egg when there is a joey in the pouch; reactivating the embryo when the joey leaves the pouch. This is known as embryonic diapause.

Distribution: Rufous hare-wallabies were once widespread in central and Western Australia (WA).

Today, natural populations only remain on Bernier and Dorre Islands.

They have been translocated to Trimouille Island (WA) and Dirk Hartog Island National Park as part of the *Return to 1616* Ecological Restoration Project. They also survive in fenced mainland sanctuaries.



Quick facts

Head-body:	310 - 390mm
Tail:	245 - 280mm
Average weight:	1.5 - 2.3kg
Gestation:	15 weeks
Number of young:	1
Maturity:	5 months

Conservation Status

Threats to these hare-wallabies include loss of habitat, introduced predators and wildfires.

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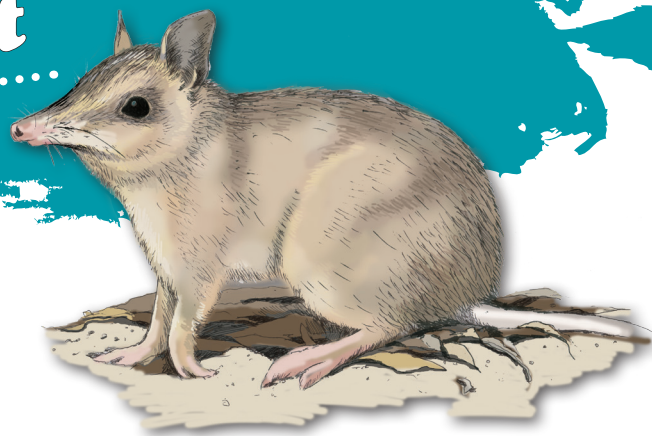


DID YOU KNOW?

Rufous hare-wallabies were once widespread but the last mainland wild populations had died out by 1991.

Shark Bay bandicoot

Perameles bougainville



Description: This smallest species of bandicoot is also known as the little marl and was previously known as the western barred bandicoot. It has large, erect pointed ears, a long-tapered snout and a short tail. Its fur is light brownish-grey with two or three dark bars across the hindquarters. The chin, underbelly and feet are pale. Females are larger than males. Its delicate appearance masks its hostile temperament - some bandicoots lose part of their tails during fights with other bandicoots.

Diet and Habitat: Shark Bay bandicoots are nocturnal and omnivorous. At night they hunt and dig for invertebrates, other small animals, seeds, roots and herbs. By day they shelter in grassy nests hidden in hollows, or leaf litter under shrubs.

They are quick and can jump straight into the air and change directions to snatch fast-moving prey.

Breeding: Breeding coincides with resources brought by rainfall - generally between autumn and spring. Females begin breeding at three to five months of age and carry one to three young in a backward-facing pouch which prevents soil from entering the pouch while digging.

Young bandicoots are independent after two weeks outside the pouch. They can live four years or more.

Distribution: Once common between Shark Bay and Onslow, Shark Bay bandicoots were extinct on the mainland by the 1940's, with wild populations only surviving on Bernier and Dorre Islands.

They have been translocated to other feral free sites including Mt Gibson Wildlife Sanctuary and Faure Island. They have been reintroduced to Dirk Hartog Island National Park as part of the *Return to 1616* Ecological Restoration Project.

Current distribution (approximate)



Quick facts

Head-body:	173 - 226mm
Tail:	81 - 106mm
Average weight:	168 - 302g
Gestation:	12 - 13 days
Number of young:	1 - 3
Weaned:	60 - 75 days

Conservation Status

Introduced predators (feral cats and foxes) pose the greatest threat to the Shark Bay bandicoot.

A papilloma virus is present in the Bernier Island population but not the bandicoots on Dorre Island.



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DID YOU KNOW?

Shark Bay bandicoots are the 'hobbit' of the bandicoot world being the smallest species.

Shark Bay mouse

Pseudomys gouldii



Description: The Shark Bay mouse is a small, robust native rodent with large black eyes. Its long, shaggy brown fur fades to white underneath, and its lightly furred tail is longer than its head and body.

Although Shark Bay mice build burrows, they shelter mostly in nests under vegetation. They also build tunnels and runways through piles of seagrass on beaches.

Diet and Habitat: These native mice live mainly in coastal dunes and other sandy areas sheltered by beach spinifex. They are omnivorous, feeding on flowers, leaves, insects and spiders.

Shark Bay mice may also be found among wattle and hard spinifex habitat further inland.

Breeding: The Shark Bay mouse breeds mostly between May and November and a female may breed twice a year.

The young attach to her teats and are dragged around beneath her when she is on the move.

Young are fully grown after 100 days and individuals can live more than two years.

Distribution: Once widespread through the south-west of Western Australia and into central Australia, the Shark Bay mouse became extinct on the mainland soon after European settlement.

Natural wild populations are now only found on Bernier Island with reintroduced populations on Faure Island and on North West Island. Australian Wildlife Conservancy has begun reintroductions to Mt Gibson Wildlife Sanctuary.

They are proposed for reintroduction to Dirk Hartog Island National Park as part of the *Return to 1616* Ecological Restoration Project.

Quick facts

Head-body:	80 - 115mm
Tail:	115 - 125mm
Average weight:	30 - 61g
Gestation:	28 days
Number of young:	3 - 4
Weaned:	30 days

Conservation Status

Threats to the Shark Bay mouse include predation by feral cats and foxes; habitat changes caused by introduced hooved herbivores and competition with rabbits.



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Photo ©W Lawler, Australian Wildlife Conservancy

Current distribution (approximate)



DID YOU KNOW?

Male Shark Bay mice share nesting duties with the female to raise their young.

Western grasswren

Amytornis textilis textilis

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Description: Earthy brown plumage marked with fine white streaks camouflage the western grasswren in its shrubby habitat. Females have a rufous patch on their flanks. This grasswren was previously known as the thick-billed grasswren for its beak, which is heavier than that of other grasswren species. It has a squeaky, reeling song and resembles a musical note itself. This species is often seen bouncing about jauntily with its long tail held high between shrubs.

Diet and Habitat: Its usual habitat is open saltbush and bluebush shrublands. In Shark Bay it prefers open shrubland typical of the country along the road to Monkey Mia. This grasswren is usually shy of humans. Your best chance of seeing one is very early in the morning when they hop about the ground feeding, often in pairs or family groups. Although they will perch briefly on exposed branches, they dart under cover at the first sign of danger.

Breeding: Western grasswrens usually breed from July to September, but may also nest from January to April when good summer rain produces an abundance of insects. Females select sites in thick scrub near the ground and build cup-shaped nests with dry grass, twigs and bark. Nests are sometimes hooded depending on the thickness of the vegetation above the nest.

Distribution: Once widespread from coastal Western Australia to central South Australia, this grasswren has declined dramatically over the last century. Today just two subspecies remain, each confined to small discrete areas.

The Shark Bay area is important habitat for the subspecies *A. textilis textilis* and it is proposed for reintroduction to Dirk Hartog Island National Park as part of the *Return to 1616* Ecological Restoration Project.

Quick facts

Head-tail: 150 - 200mm

Average weight: 20 - 25g

Number of eggs: 2 - 3

Incubation: 15 - 17 days

Conservation Status

Feral cats and habitat degradation caused by goats and sheep are believed to have contributed to their decline. The western grasswren has recovered in Francois Peron National Park since removal of sheep and many goats and cats from Peron Peninsula.



Current distribution
(approximate)



DID YOU KNOW?

They have short, rounded wings so they mostly hop and bounce between bushes and grass tufts.

Woylie (brush-tailed bettong)

Bettongia penicillata



Description: Woylies are small macropods with black crests on their tails that help distinguish them from burrowing bettongs (boodies). The woylie also has a lighter build and longer face than the boodie.

Woylies perform important ecosystem services while foraging as they spread seeds and spores and turn over large quantities of soil, which improves water infiltration and nutrient recycling.

Diet and Habitat: Woylies now live mainly in woodlands with dense tussock grass and woody scrub understories, but their previous distribution included many other habitat types. They are nocturnal, resting during the day in grass or bark-lined nests. Woylies have prehensile tails that they use to carry nesting material. They are herbivores and feed at night, mainly on the underground fruiting bodies of fungi. They also eat bulbs, tubers, seeds, insects and resin.

Breeding: Woylies can breed all year round in good conditions. A female can produce a joey every 3 ½ months from the age of 6 months.

Woylies in the wild may live 4 to 6 years.

Distribution: Woylies were once widespread across southern and western Australia but by the 1970s were restricted to three small areas in southwest Western Australia.

To help ensure their survival, woylies have since been translocated to other areas including fenced mainland sanctuaries such as Karakamia and Mt Gibson. They will be reintroduced to Dirk Hartog Island National Park as part of the *Return to 1616* Ecological Restoration Project.

Current distribution (approximate)



Quick facts

Head-body:	280 - 365mm
Tail:	250 - 360mm
Average weight:	0.8 - 1.5kg
Gestation:	21 days
Number of young:	1
Weaned:	3 - 4 months

Conservation Status

Since 2001 woylie numbers have dropped by 70 to 90 percent. Causes of this recent dramatic decline remain unclear but include introduced predators and disease.



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DID YOU KNOW?

They love to eat fungi and this helps to spread fungi around in their poo. Lots of fungi is important to the health of the environment.