



Pets and wildlife

The majority of people share their lives with an animal: dogs, cats, birds, ferrets, rabbits, reptiles, etc. Pets are great companions and really are parts of the family. While we are very lucky to have a great variety of native wildlife species living in Canberra, some pets behave like predators. Our beloved pets can be a threat to wild animals so it is important to make sure they live in harmony with our local wildlife.

What to do to prevent wildlife death and injuries:

- Keep pets under control as much as you can during the day. Your backyard should be escape proof. If a wild animal visit your place, keep your pet away until it has gone away, be patient.

Dogs and wildlife

- Carefully choose/consider the breed of your dog. Is it a natural hunter, does it have a strong muscular body, is it strongly prey driven? If yes be sure it never gets close to wildlife. Smaller gentler breeds are less threatening to wildlife, easier to contain and restrain.
- Protect wildlife by walking your dog with a leash. There are specific off-leash areas and great dog parks around Canberra to exercise and socialise your dog.
- Teach your dog from an early age that chasing wildlife is not acceptable. Train it to stay close to you and have a strong recall. Enrol your dog in obedience training.

Cats and wildlife

- Keep your cat indoors at night as cats spend more time hunting between dusk and dawn. Even well fed cats roaming at night hunt and kill possums or birds. It will also protect cats from fights, possible infection, disease or being run over.
- Make the decision to build a cat enclosure in your garden or to keep your cat permanently indoors.
- Have two bells of different sizes on your cat collar. It will alert wildlife that it is coming. Discipline your cat. Use water bombs or a hose whenever it is stalking wildlife.

Do Not:

- Let your dog or cat run free in places where wildlife is abundant. It is illegal to injure or disturb native wildlife, they are protected by law.
- Release unwanted pets into the bush. Exotic fishes, frogs or other reptiles, for example, can endanger native species and disturb fragile natural ecosystems.
- Keep native species illegally. Check with Territory and Municipal Services as to what you can have in your state and what the conditions are.

Did you know?

In Australia, around 70% of households own a cat or a dog. In addition, there are around 18.4 million fish, 8.1 million birds and over 1 million other small animals.

For information on companions animals follow the links:

http://www.tams.act.gov.au/city-services/pets/keeping_dogs_in_the_act/where_can_i_take_my_dog

<http://www.act.gov.au/browse/topics/pets-and-wildlife/domestic-animals>

or contact ACT Wildlife Inc. on 0432 300 033

ACT Wildlife - www.actwildlife.net

