

Helping injured wildlife

If you find an animal or bird trapped in your netting, do not try to free it yourself. Attempted rescues risk human injury and can be extremely distressing for wildlife, animals can quickly die from shock.

For professional assistance in the case of injured or trapped animal, please call:

» **ACT Wildlife: 0432 300 033 (24/7)**

» **Access Canberra: 13 22 81**



Credit: Tolga Bat Hospital



Wildlife friendly fruit netting



For more information on wildlife friendly tree netting, visit www.environment.act.gov.au



To learn more about wildlife rescue in the ACT, visit actwildlife.net



Wildlife friendly fruit netting

Secure
your harvest,
protect our
wildlife



The dangers of unsafe netting

Netting is a popular method of keeping animals and birds away from fruiting plants. However, native wildlife can become tangled in netting when the mesh size is too large. Birds and bats can easily become caught while trying to reach fruit, whilst lizards and snakes can get caught in netting draped on the ground. These animals then panic and struggle to free themselves, resulting in serious injuries or even death.



Credit: Tolga Bat Hospital

The Grey-headed Flying-fox is listed as Vulnerable in the ACT. When their natural food sources become scarce, Grey-headed Flying-foxes feed on fruit trees and can become tangled in unsafe netting.

What type of netting should be used?



To ensure the safety of native wildlife visiting your garden, netting should have a mesh size of 5mm x 5mm or smaller. **An easy way to check if your fruit netting is safe is the 'finger test'.** If you can easily poke your finger through the mesh of your netting, it's likely that animals could become tangled in it.



When to use netting

Once your plant has flowered and tiny fruits are starting to appear, you can start preparing your netting. Prior to that, the fruits haven't been fertilised and will not attract hungry wildlife.

How to use netting

- » Tie your netting tightly around the trunk of your tree to ensure there are no gaps for wildlife to enter. If you are combining multiple nets, be sure to keep those stitches tight!
- » If you are using a frame, try to construct it larger than the tree being netted to prevent birds pecking through.
- » Have you considered covering individual fruits or branches, rather than the whole tree? Using netting sleeves for bags lessens the risk of animals becoming tangled and makes it easier to harvest your fruit.
- » Discarded netting can still pose a risk. When disposing of old netting, it is recommended that you use a strong biodegradable bag and place in general waste bin.