



The Kangaroo Trail

Our mission is to be the flagship of a 'See Australia' promotion based around wildlife tourism with the marvellous mob of marsupials - the kangaroos and their kind. Through partnerships with conservation agencies, tourism organisations, operators and gateway communities across the continent and offshore islands our vision is to place Australia at the forefront of nature-based tourism destinations for both our international visitors and our citizens. Australia will be the destination for seekers of the natural world as we capitalise on our unique wildlife heritage. We seek to expand wildlife tourism with the kangaroos as our flagship fauna by revealing an array of opportunities and a diversity of experiences. We encourage visitors to take a mission to see all of Australia's species of kangaroos so that their tourist dollar will have real and realisable benefits through the economic activity of wildlife tourism to nature conservation and the local communities and agencies who maintain habitat for flagship species such as the kangaroos. We unashamedly promote kangaroos as a wild living entity to be enjoyed and appreciated many times over for their fascinating behaviour and biology and not their meat and hide products.

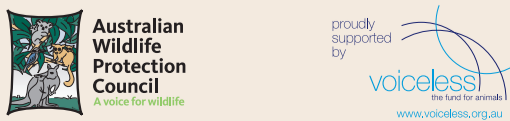
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For further information on the Kangaroo Wildlife Trail please visit:
www.rootourism.com.au

The 'Kangaroo Wildlife Trail' map is a not for profit project initiative developed by The Australian Wildlife Protection Council, as an innovative educational medium to promote respect, compassion and understanding of Australia's iconic kangaroo fauna. No support has been provided by any Australian government tourism or wildlife agency even though this was invited.

Voiceless, the fund for animals, generously awarded a grant to setup this project.



Victoria & Tasmania

Victoria has a low diversity of macropods but one of them, the Long-footed Potoroo, will be amongst the most elusive to see. The Long-footed Potoroo is the most recently described living species in Australia, nominated by Seebeck and Johnston in 1980. Victoria and Tasmania are the best places to see its relative, the Long-nosed Potoroo, and in the former state you do not have to travel far from Melbourne for the experience. Likewise the nearby Mornington Peninsula is nominated for the best place to see the Swamp Wallaby which is common along the east coast of the continent and into the hinterland. A fleeting glimpse of the long black tail of the Swamp Wallaby receding into the bush has led to many a tale of "Panthers" escaped into the wilds of Australia.

The web portal for Tourism Victoria is www.visitmelbourne.com. The Melbourne visitor centre is at Corner Flinders and Swanston Street, Melbourne (Phone +61 (0)3 9658 9658). Information on wildlife, parks and reserves is found at www.parkwebvic.gov.au (Phone +61 (0)3 8627 4699, Email: info@parks.vic.gov.au).

Tasmania by virtue of its geographical isolation from the mainland has several endemic macropods and distinctive sub-species amongst its abundant wildlife. The Mount William and Narawintapu National Parks are particularly noted for their large populations of macropods grazing in easy view.

The web portal for Tourism Tasmania is www.discovertasmania.com. The visitor centre is Level 2, 22 Elizabeth Street, Hobart (Phone +61 (0)3 6230 8235). Information on wildlife, parks and reserves is found at www.parks.tas.gov.au (Phone: 1300 135 513 within Australia).



New South Wales & ACT

In New South Wales, macropods like the Eastern Grey Kangaroo can be seen in the National Parks surrounding Sydney, but we recommend travelling further afield for some truly spectacular experiences. A journey north through the Hunter Valley to Barrington Tops National Park and nearby forest reserves will reveal five species of macropods including the rare Parma Wallaby. In the hinterland of the north coast and an easy drive from popular destinations like Tweed Heads and Byron Bay, you can find some of the richest sites for species in Australia.

We have nominated Washpool National Park for seeing the Whiptail Wallaby but this park stands out in the region with 9 species of macropods. Out in the central west you can view the same skies as the Australia Telescope in the Warrumbungle Mountains while you camp amongst abundant Red-necked Wallabies and Eastern Grey Kangaroos. For the quintessential Outback experience you want to see the Red Kangaroo. You will find no bigger individuals anywhere than Sturt National Park in the far north-west reaches of the State. When times are good, here is Australia's version of the Serengeti with red and blue-grey backs bent into a riot of wildflowers with the joeys crawling and learning how to use those big feet. En route from the main regional centre of Broken Hill find Euros amongst the spectacular gorges and Aboriginal art sites of Mutawintji National Park. No, these are not bank notes dropped out of European tourists' pockets but the inland sub-species of hill-dwelling Common Wallaroo - common because it has the widest geographic range of the large kangaroos.

The web portal for Tourism NSW is www.visitnsw.com.au. Holiday information and brochure requests can be made by phone: 13 20 77 (in Australia) or email: visitorcallcentre@tourism.nsw.gov.au. Information on wildlife, parks and reserves is found at www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au. The information centre is Level 14, 59-61 Goulburn Street, Sydney (Phone: +61 (0)2 9995 5000, Email: info@environment.nsw.gov.au).

The bush capital, Canberra, in the ACT is the best place to see the Eastern Grey Kangaroo - Skippy's species. The centre of the Commonwealth Government and the Australian Parliament are thus also appropriately occupied by Australia's most identifiable symbol, the kangaroo.

The web portal for Tourism ACT is www.visitcanberra.com. The visitor centre is 330 Northbourne Avenue, Dickerson, Canberra (Phone: +61 (0)2 6205 0044, Email: crcv@act.gov.au). Information on wildlife, parks and reserves is found at www.tams.act.gov.au/play/parks_forests_and_reserves (Phone: +61 (0)2 6207 5111).

Interesting facts about kangaroos and their kind:

Pouch wars - Most species increase their reproductive rate by having three overlapping generations: a diapausing blastocyst (about 100-cell embryo) in utero, a pouch young and a young-at-foot. Each of these may have a different father and so sibling rivalry is expected to be intense. Even so there is no evidence that the young-at-foot directly interferes with the pouch young even though it puts its head back into the pouch to suckle from one of the other four mammary glands until weaning. The majority of species have the capacity to be 'perpetually pregnant' from sexual maturity until death.

Molars on the move - Like all herbivorous mammals, the kangaroo family suffer high tooth wear from the silicates in grasses. As a molar wears it moves forward in the tooth row and may eventually be shed to be replaced by a new emergent molar. The latter are limited so eventually a very old individual will run out of teeth. The exception is the Nabelek which continues to produce molars to cope with a diet of ferns growing on sandstone.

Macropod mates - One of the most sociable species of kangaroo is found in the Top End (wet-dry tropics) of Australia. The Antilopine Wallaroo forms large aggregations and individuals whether male or female regularly allogroom (e.g. one grooms the neck and shoulders of another), lean on each other and lie resting in contact. Several species have long-term associations between female kin forming a matriline of mothers, daughters, grand-daughters etc.

Training times - Young of all species are extremely playful. When they exit the pouch they will hop in circuits around their mother or dash off and back at full speed. En route they may bat at shrubs and trees and return to their stoic mother and give her a clip on the ears.



Queensland

If you want to tick off a swag of species from your viewing list then Queensland is the favoured destination.

In the Outback in Idalia National Park you can view a successful re-introduction of a critically endangered species, the very attractive Bridled Naittail Wallaby. Stripes are the fashion here with great viewing of the Black-striped Wallaby and look out for the northern population of the Yellow-footed Rock Wallaby.

Head north for the darker subspecies of Common Wallaroo, the Eastern Wallaroo, and a touch of purple in the unusually coloured Purple-necked Rock Wallaby. Then go east to the Wet Tropics and down the coast for a bonanza of rock-haunting and tree-loving species amidst the Rock Wallabies and Tree Kangaroos.

The web portal for Tourism Queensland is www.experiencequeensland.com. Information on wildlife, parks and reserves is found at www.epa.qld.gov.au/parks_and_forests (Phone: +61 (0)7 3235 9037).



Northern Territory

It may disappoint some that the iconic Territory parks, Uluru-Kata Tjuta and Kakadu, are not amongst the best sites to see conserved species with the exception of the Black Wallaroo on the Arnhem Plateau.

In fact you do not have to travel far from the Territory gateways, Alice Springs and Darwin, to easily view Rock Wallabies, Wallabies and possibly Australia's largest kangaroo, a big male Antilopine Wallaroo. Litchfield National Park south of Darwin is particularly rich in species. Amongst the challenges is the Nabalak, a small Rock-Wallaby, for which we have nominated Robin Falls, a reserve near the township of Adelaide River, down the Track (Stuart Highway) from Darwin. Travel a little further down Dorat Road and you will find Burrell Creek Estate, the home of rootourism®. Then head south down the Track to classic Outback pubs in Daly Waters and Dummarra to view the Spectacled Hare-Wallaby and Northern Naittail Wallaby in the nearby surrounds. You might venture further into the Tanami Desert and perhaps catch a phantom glimpse of the Mala or Rufous Hare-Wallaby as this once widespread species is effectively extinct in the wild on mainland Australia, but re-introduction programs are in progress.

The web portal for Tourism NT is www.travelnt.com. The visitor centre in Darwin is at Corner Mitchell and Knuckey Streets (Phone: +61 (0)8 8936 2499, Email: info@tourismntpend.com.au) and in Alice Springs is at 60 Gregory Terrace (Phone: 1800 645 199 in Australia, Email: visinfo@catia.asn.au). Information on wildlife, parks and reserves is found at www.nt.gov.au/nreta/parks (Phone: +61 (0)8 8999 4555). Kakadu National Park is administered by the Commonwealth with the traditional owners. Information on Kakadu is found at www.environment.gov.au/kakadu/index.html.



Macropodidae

This Family is the most diverse and widespread as it includes species in New Guinea. The Family is divided into a number of groups along generic and/or body size line. These include:

Hare-wallabies (*Lagochestes* and *Lagostrophus*)

The Hare-wallabies are small (< 5 kg), delicate-bodied wallabies typically found in arid or seasonally arid tussock grasslands and woodlands. Two of the four species of *Lagochestes* are extinct. The Banded Hare-wallaby (*Lagostrophus fasciatus*) occupies an uncertain taxonomic position and may represent the remnant of a once diverse Sub-family of broad-faced kangaroos (Stehurinae).

Quokka (*Setonix*)

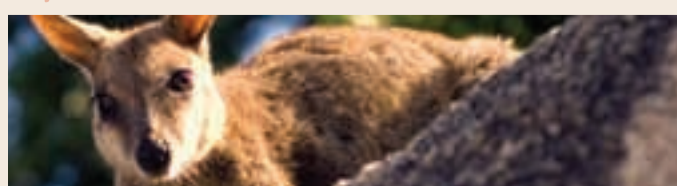
This monospecific genus contains the Quokka (*S. brachyurus*), a small and somewhat taxonomically anomalous wallaby. It is somewhat rotund with short hind feet and a scaly almost naked tail. It is confined to the south-west of Western Australia and is predominantly a browser unlike the majority of grazing Macropodids. There is some speculation that it is a relict of a browsing group of macropods and shares this character with another anomalous species, the Swamp Wallaby (*Wallabia bicolor*).

Pademelons (*Thylogale*)

The Pademelons are small, compact, short-tailed wallabies that typically inhabit wet sclerophyll and rainforests from Tasmania to New Guinea. The genus is equally diverse in New Guinea (4 species) and Australia (3 species) with one of the latter, the Red-legged Pademelon (*T. stigmatica*), in both regions. Reddish coloured fur is something of a theme with red-bellied, red-necked and red-legged in the species common names. They emerge from forest cover at night to eat succulent grasses and take some browse.

Naittail Wallabies (*Onychogalea*)

The Naittail Wallabies are so named because of a small, horny spur on the end of the tail. The function of this spur has been the subject of much speculation including a pivot for rapid directional change. Of these attractively marked mid-sized wallabies, only the Northern Naittail Wallaby (*O. unguifera*) remains abundant and relatively widespread. The Bridled Naittail Wallaby (*O. fraenata*) is threatened and reduced to one small population but through a successful captive breeding program it has been reintroduced to two locations at the western margins of its original expansive eastern Australian range. The Crescent Naittail Wallaby (*O. lunata*) is extinct.



Western Australia

Western Australia is a treasure trove of macropods as some of its off-shore islands have conserved species that were once widespread on the mainland but became extinct with the introduction of pastoralism. The wildlife authority, CALM, has been active in re-introduction programs to bring some of these species back to the mainland, secured from introduced predators including the European red fox and feral populations of the domestic cat. The trail through Western Australia is the longest of any region and requires over-water travel to island destinations and entry into remote regions of the Kimberley. The rewards are viewing many of the smaller species of macropods at close hand in now refuge habitats.

The web portal for Tourism WA is www.westernaustralia.com. The Western Australia visitor centre is at Forest Place (corner Wellington Street), Perth (Phone: +61 (0)8 9483 111). Information on wildlife, parks and reserves is found at www.calm.wa.gov.au with a dedicated portal and 'park-finder' at www.naturebase.net (Phone: +61 (0)8 9334 0333).



Rock-wallabies (*Petrogale*)

The Rock-wallabies are the most diverse Australian genus with 16 species. Recognition of this diversity has come from the application of cytology and molecular techniques in taxonomic investigations. Thus some similar looking species along the Queensland coast are now recognised as separate species. Since many populations are isolated, genetic analyses have investigated inbreeding depression but found sufficient gene flow to maintain genetic variation. The Rock-wallabies range in body size from the tiny 1-kg Monjon (*P. burbridgei*) of the Kimberley to the 12-kg Yellow-footed Rock-wallaby (*P. xanothopus*) in the arid parts of south and eastern Australia. The genus includes some of the most attractively furred species and the Brush-tailed Rock-wallaby (*P. penicillata*) was decimated by a fur trade that prospered from 1884-1914. The habitat preference that gives them their common name is for rocky outcrops and slopes, boulder piles, cliffs and gorges, and escarpments. Their ability to hop up near vertical rock faces is legendary.

Forest Wallabies (*Dorcopsis*)

The six species of Forest Wallabies are confined to New Guinea. Their taxonomic affinities to the Australian Wallabies are not well-defined but molecular evidence suggests a separation about 10 million years ago. Their behaviour and ecology in the wild is not well-studied but as the common name suggests they are inhabitants of the forest floor. The curious characteristic of these wallabies is that they curve their tail so only the tip touches the ground while standing and feeding. They also use their forepaws regularly to manipulate food for chewing by the permanent molars.

Tree-kangaroos (*Dendrolagus*)

Tree-kangaroos represent a return to an arboreal existence from the possum-like ancestor of kangaroos and their kind. Tree-kangaroos are more diverse in New Guinea (8 species) than Australia (2 species) and inhabit lowland and upland tropical rainforest. The hind-limbs are relatively short and the fore-limbs are robust with strong claws to assist climbing and purchase in the trees. A folivorous diet places the Tree-kangaroos as the austral equivalents of Leaf-eating and Proboscis Monkeys in south-east Asia.



South Australia

The best sites in South Australia are dispersed around the southern part of the State and the key site of Kangaroo Island requires over-water travel.

Although relatively few species are nominated for South Australia, the sites are rich in wildlife immersed in spectacular scenery making any journey a rewarding nature-based activity.

The web portal for Tourism SA is www.southaustralia.com. The visitor centre is at 18 King William Street, Adelaide (Phone: +61 (0)8 8303 2220, Email: InformationAndBookings@SouthAustralia.com). Information on wildlife, parks and reserves is found at www.parks.sa.gov.au (Phone: +61 (0)8 8336 0924).



[Credits]
Content and content management by:
David Croft - rootourism™ wildlife tourism services - www.rootourism.com
Project Management - Maryland Wilson - Australian Wildlife Protection Council - www.awpc.org.au
Design by: Neil Williams - moocreative graphic design studio - www.moocreative.com

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Wallabies (*Macropus* and *Wallabia*)

The division between the wallabies and kangaroos in the genus *Macropus* is arbitrary and based on body size and an adult foot length of 250 mm. Wallabies do not exceed 20 kg and include small species like the Tammar Wallaby (*M. eugenii*) and Parma Wallaby (*M. parma*) of less than 5 kg. The nine species are collectively found across Australia with one, the Agile Wallaby (*M. agilis*), also in New Guinea; and the Toolache Wallaby (*M. greyi*) now extinct. The species tend to rest in woodlands and then graze at night in adjacent grasslands or grassy patches in the forest. The Swamp Wallaby (*Wallabia bicolor*) is more a browser and placed in its own genus. The species is relatively secretive and has been remarkably resistant to urban encroachment on its habitat unlike most of the other wallabies. The Agile Wallaby remains abundant across northern Australia and is readily seen in urban reserves in Darwin and Townsville.

Kangaroos and Wallaroos (*Macropus*)

The six species of large Kangaroos include the iconic Eastern Grey Kangaroo ('Skippy') (*M. giganteus*) and the Red kangaroo (*M. rufus*) of the Outback. Eastern and Western Grey (*M. fuliginosus*) Kangaroos were only separated as species in the 1970s and neither is closely related to the Red Kangaroo. The latter has stronger affinities with the less well-known Wallaroo group of three species. The Common Wallaroo (*M. robustus*), a robust hill-dwelling species, is the most geographically widespread of all macropods although it is absent from Tasmania. Least well-known is the Black Wallaroo (*M. bernadus*) which is the smallest member of this group and is found only on the Arnhem Land escarpment. The species may have become marooned in this small geographic range through past climate change. The other tropical species, the sociable Antilopine Wallaroo (*M. antilopinus*), is gracile and males vie with those of Red Kangaroos as the largest living macropod.



Information for travellers:

Australia and its offshore islands are a very large landmass and so to complete the kangaroo trail is not a trivial journey but one of many months by air, road and sea. If you succeed in seeing all 50 species and the additional recognised subspecies in the wild then you will be amongst a very small and select group of wildlife travellers. The destinations are widespread, some are very remote and challenging to access, and once you arrive the species may be elusive requiring much patient observation well into the nocturnal realm. We encourage you to complete the kangaroo trail but recognise that for many the journey will be short and selective based on a region, a type of habitat or species of interest. Certainly no nature-based traveller should depart Australia or head home without taking at least one hop along the trail.

The web portal to the Australian Tourism Commission is www.australia.com. Each State and Territory has a tourism portal to assist you in planning your journey. Furthermore, each State and Territory has a Parks and Wildlife authority where you can gain more information on the national parks and nature reserves which are your destinations and on the fauna and flora you can expect to see. We list the websites and main offices in the information in the State and Territory boxes that follow.



Air services to national and regional gateways are provided by Virgin Blue (www.virginblue.com.au), Tiger Airways (www.tigerairways.com), the Qantas group (www.qantas.com), and Regional Express (www.rex.com.au).

The kangaroo trail is supported by the trail website www.rootourism.com where you will find:

1. Fact sheets on each species of macropod including identifying characters, where it lives, ecology, activity times, and extensive information about its behaviour (such as social interactions, parental care, communication).
2. An up-to-date calendar of special events in the lives of the macropods such as large aggregations, emergence of young, breeding activity.
3. Links to relevant tourism operators, gateway destinations, booking agencies, home pages of national parks, tourism information and visitors' centres, state and commonwealth tourism and wildlife management agencies.
4. Lists of guide books to the fauna, flora and the destinations.
5. Feedback from trail users such as anecdotes, special observations, photographs



Quick guide and sighting chart

The map is a guide to the best places to view each macropod species - however some species can be found in other regions, below is a complete list of species and all regions they can be found in:

Bettongs, Potoroos, Rat-kangaroos

Rufous Bettong (NSW, QLD)
 Tasmanian Bettong (TAS)
 Boodie (Burrowing Bettong) (WA)
 Woylie (Brush-tailed Bettong) (WA)
 Northern Bettong (QLD)

Musky Rat-Kangaroo (QLD)

Gilbert's Potoroo (WA)
 Long-footed Potoroo (VIC)
 Long-nosed Potoroo (TAS, VIC, NSW)

Kangaroos and wallabies

Bennett's Tree-kangaroo (QLD)
 Lumholtz's Tree-kangaroo (QLD)

Spectacled Hare-wallaby (WA, NT, QLD)
 Mala (Rufous Hare-wallaby) (NT)
 Rufous Hare-wallaby (WA)
 Banded Hare-wallaby (WA)

Tasmanian Pademelon (TAS)
 Red-legged Pademelon (QLD, NSW)
 Red-necked Pademelon (NSW, QLD)

Bridled Nailtail Wallaby (QLD)
 Northern Nailtail Wallaby (WA, NT, QLD)

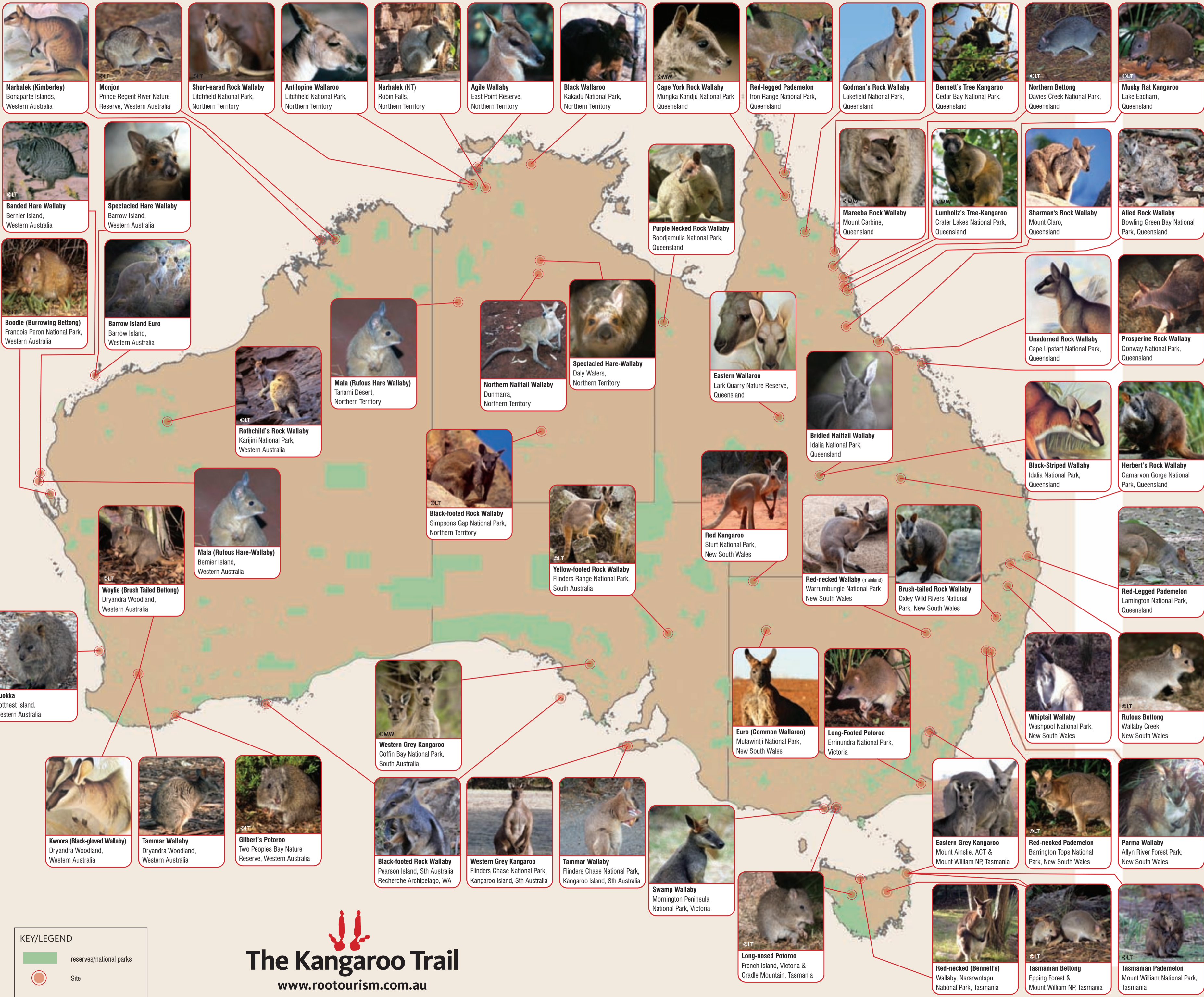
Allied Rock-wallaby (QLD)
 Short-eared Rock-wallaby (WA, NT)
 Monjon (WA)
 Cape York Rock-wallaby (QLD)
 Narbalek (NT, WA)
 Godman's Rock-wallaby (QLD)
 Herbert's Rock-wallaby (QLD)
 Unadorned Rock-wallaby (QLD)
 Black-footed Rock-wallaby (WA, NT, SA)
 Mareeba Rock-wallaby (QLD)
 Brush-tailed Rock-wallaby (VIC, NSW, ACT, QLD)
 Prosperine Rock-wallaby (QLD)
 Purple-necked Rock-wallaby (QLD)
 Rothchild's Rock-wallaby (WA)
 Sharmans Rock-wallaby (QLD)
 Yellow-footed Rock-wallaby (QLD, SA, NSW)

Agile Wallaby (WA, NT, QLD)
 Black-striped Wallaby (NSW, QLD)
 Tamar Wallaby (SA, WA)
 Kwoora (Black-gloved Wallaby) (WA)
 Parma Wallaby (NSW)
 Whiptail Wallaby (NSW, QLD)
 Red-necked Wallaby (VIC, NSW, ACT, QLD)
 Bennett's Wallaby (Red-necked Wallaby) (TAS)

Quokka (WA)
 Swamp Wallaby (SA, VIC, NSW, ACT, QLD)

Western Grey Kangaroo (SA, WA, VIC, NSW, QLD)
 Eastern Grey Kangaroo (VIC, NSW, ACT, QLD, TAS)
 Barrow Island Euro (WA)
 Northern Wallaroo (NT)
 Euro (WA, SA, NT, NSW, QLD)
 Eastern Wallaroo (VIC, NSW, ACT, QLD)
 Antilopine Wallaroo (WA, NT, QLD)
 Black Wallaroo (NT)
 Red Kangaroo (WA, SA, VIC, NT, NSW, QLD)

NOTES:



The Kangaroo Wildlife Trail Map

This map is the quintessential guide to the best places in Australia to see our iconic kangaroo fauna, the true spirit of Australia.

Take this unparalleled journey of discovery across the vast Australian continent and its offshore islands. You will see supreme athletes such as one of the four species of plains dwelling kangaroos, rock climbers who seem to defy gravity such as one of the sixteen species of rock-wallaby, and one of the best noses for truffles in the world, the long-nosed potoroo. The trail will take you into the hinterland from each of the state and territory capitals to explore the fascinating world of the bounders of the bush. Your leaders will be one of the six species of large kangaroos who are the most recognisable of the multitude of macropods. Within their wild habitat you will follow the mob to their smaller kin and learn about the diversity and structure in the communities of Australia's unique marsupial grazers and browsers.

For the more adventurous, perhaps you can follow a Big Red into the spectacular landscapes and big skies of the Outback. The Wallaroos that span the continent will lead you into the most spectacular wilderness through the gorges and ranges of the Great Divide, the Flinders Ranges, the Red Centre, Cape York, Arnhem Land, the Kimberley and the Pilbara.

Viewing Kangaroos:

The best place to see each species or subspecies of kangaroos and their kin has been selected to maximise the likelihood of close viewing in the wild. However, with the exception of the Musky Rat-kangaroo, species are most active at night leaving cover and resting places around dusk and retiring back to these refuges around dawn. The best time to view most species is therefore towards dusk and into the early evening when they commence foraging. If you have the option, you should choose still evenings without rain as most species retreat to cover or are particularly flighty under inclement weather conditions, especially strong winds.

Some species habitually use dense cover (e.g. long-footed potoroo) and will be very difficult to see. However, most emerge into clearings or open habitat adjacent to forest edges or sparser shelter, and stationing yourself at such sites is usually rewarding. Rock-wallabies often sun themselves in cooler weather and may remain visible amongst the rocks towards dusk and for a period after dawn. During dry and warm periods, water bodies are an attractant and drinking, like foraging, usually starts around dusk and continues into the early evening. Many species are inactive for a few hours around midnight as they digest a filled gut before foraging again.



Image courtesy: Michael Williams - www.itsawildlife.com.au

The best strategy to employ for your viewing experience is to get local knowledge from wildlife rangers. Back this up with your own observations of sign such as faecal pellets (usually black and hard and not massed like rabbits or goats), tail drags and foot prints in suitable substrates like sandy soils. Station yourself comfortably in a good viewing location against a background that masks or disrupts your shape, and wait patiently for your subjects to emerge. If you prefer to stalk, then an oblique rather than a direct approach to a subject is preferable. Macropods have excellent senses of smell and hearing but vision is optimised for the night rather than the day and so you can mask your presence by being downwind, quiet and against a non-contrasting background. At night you will need a form of illumination - strong torch (flashlight) or spotlight. Detection is best achieved by scanning at maximum illumination but observation should be by holding the subject at the edge of the light or at minimal intensity if your device has a dimmer or switchable intensity (e.g. LED devices). Red filtering of light only has an effect through reduced intensity and not colour and so it is not recommended. Natural behaviour will be maximised and disturbance minimised if you have access to a generation 2 or better Night Vision Device supplemented by infrared illumination (e.g. spotlight with infrared transmission filter or array of infrared LED). However, NVDs are very expensive and binoculars and dim supplementary lighting may suffice.

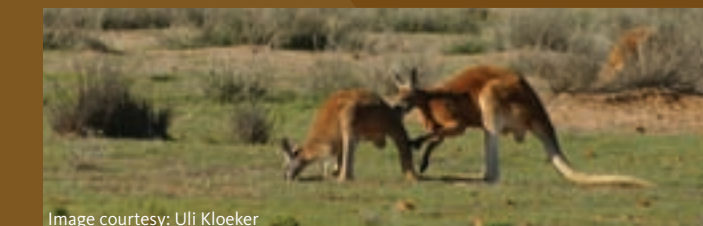


Image courtesy: Uli Kloeker