

Kangaroos in your garden

Getting the balance right

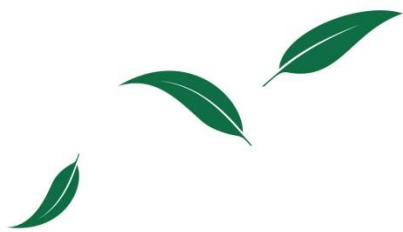
Having kangaroos visiting your garden is what many people dream of. However, it's important that you live with them instead of trying to control them or keep them out. It's about achieving a balance between the kangaroo's needs and our needs. The ultimate goal is to reduce human impacts on kangaroos while maintaining a beautiful garden. Based on 13 years of living with a mob of 7-11 kangaroos in our Perth Hills garden, here are some tips on how to share your garden with them.

How to protect your plants

1. Fence in your vegetable garden. Kangaroos can jump high so the fencing needs to be tall. Ours is 1.8 metres high and heavy duty.
2. Protect all new plants with individual wire cages. We make cages from a roll of chicken wire. They are usually 90cm high and typically around 60cm wide.
3. The kangaroos need to see the cages at night so they don't crash into them. Place coloured flagging tape around the top of each one.
4. Once the plants are established, after about 3 years, cages can be removed.
5. If you grow plants kangaroos like eating, consider putting tall, permanent fencing around selected areas of planting. The height will determine your success in keeping kangaroos out.
6. If you have a lawn put screens over different sections of it to control which bits are grazed and when. We make screens from shade cloth, the type which lets 50% of the light through. This is attached to a simple wooden frame roughly 1.2 x 1.8 metres in size.



Photos: Wire cages around plants (above right) and screens on lawn (bottom left).



Channelling kangaroos in your garden

Kangaroos will develop routine paths they hop along even when there is no fencing.

1. Plan the routes you would like kangaroos to take through your garden.
2. Put temporary fencing up along each side of a route to channel them through the areas of your choice.
3. Once they've got used to using the path(s), take the fencing down. They will usually continue using this route.
4. Leave a space for kangaroos in your fence as they will quickly learn where it is and stop jumping over the fences. Our fence opening is about one metre wide.



Photos: Routine path taken by kangaroos (left) and Space left in a fence (right).

How to keep kangaroos safe

1. Kangaroos can be killed by dogs. Do not let dogs chase them.
2. When kangaroos jump over a fence they risk getting their foot caught in the wire and can die by hanging. Run sighting wire: soft white nylon wire, with plastic around it, along the top of the fence, so the kangaroos can see where the top of the fence is.
3. Keep all wire, garden twine and cables in non-kangaroo areas. Take care not to leave wire lying around anywhere in the garden as it can harm other wildlife too.
4. Drive slowly, kangaroos are mobile and can be killed or injured by vehicles.
5. Put water out for the kangaroos in summer. We leave a



bucket of water out in easy access for the kangaroos. Place a piece of wood that sticks out of the bucket so that any wildlife that falls in the water can get out again safely.

Photos: Sighting wire placed on a fence (above right) and Water bucket with wood (bottom left).



Final tips to keep you safe

1. Always remember that kangaroos are wild animals. They can be frightened by humans and domestic animals.
2. Keep your distance especially from the big males. Do not come between a big male and his harem of females.
3. Do not feed kangaroos; this may be detrimental to their health.

About Healthy Wildlife

The 'Healthy Wildlife Healthy Lives' – A One Health project aims to educate the public about people's interaction with wildlife in urban areas, particularly how people and domestic animals spread diseases to wildlife, such as birds, quenda (bandicoots), native fish, bobtails and kangaroos. The project informs people about how to avoid harm to wildlife, create positive interactions and protect and conserve the environment. The aim is to keep wildlife healthy for a healthier world.

The project is a partnership between Eastern Metropolitan Regional Council and Murdoch University, supported by Lotterywest.

VISIT: www.healthywildlife.com.au

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