



Murray Bridge Veterinary Clinic ABN 34 007 931 875

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## **FINDING AN ORPHANED NATIVE ANIMAL**

**Remember this is a wild animal that is not used to human interaction.** A newly orphaned native animal will be suffering shock and stress from loss of mum, loss of warmth and loss of nourishment.

**IMMEDIATE NEEDS ARE: A warm, quiet, dark area.** Feeding is not a priority, get advice first. Make the Joey secure and warm in a pouch substitute and restrict any handling as much as possible.

The law protects native animals. It is a requirement that a qualified carer or vet assess the animal and advises on appropriate care as soon as possible.

At **Murray Bridge Veterinary Clinic** we offer a free nurse consult were the Joey will be checked over for illness and injury. We will weigh and measure the Joey to attain a correct age and will then be able to advise on correct type and amount of milk to feed.

For members of the public that wish to become carers, we can provide all the appropriate information and forms needed and arrange for a qualified support person to be on call to help with any queries.

We can also arrange for a qualified carer for any orphans needing care. Native animal orphans, particularly kangaroos, have a high mortality rate when not looked after correctly. Pinkies, or unfurred joeys, must be cared for by an experienced carer if they are to have any chance of survival.

### **Legal Requirements in South Australia for caring for a protected native animal.**

- A permit **MUST** be obtained from the Fauna Permit Dept. (Fines apply)
- Male kangaroos must be castrated by a veterinary surgeon while in pouch.
- It is illegal to release any hand raised native animal without submitting a plan to Fauna Permit Dept. Otherwise they must be housed in a correctly fenced area and cared for the rest of their lives, for kangaroos this is approx 20 years
- A person without prior experience should have a qualified support person or group.

Does your daily routine allow for the commitment? Orphaned joeys are similar to a premature baby needing around the clock care wherever you go. They may need constant warmth, bottle-feeding and toileting every 4 hours to a strict timetable. If these times are not adhered, the joey may develop stress diarrhoea, which can be fatal. Cost is also a consideration.

### ***Feeding***

Native animals are allergic to cow's milk! In an emergency they can be fed small amounts of 50% tinned evaporated milk & 50% warm water.

We recommend Wombaroo who make a variety of stages of milks for native animals.



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### ***Toileting***

After feeding, most species need to be toileted. Rub the genital area briskly but gently with a soft damp tissue to encourage Joey to pass urine & occasionally faeces. If this is not done urinary and kidney disorders can occur.

### ***Heating***

Many species cannot regulate their temperature and need constant warmth ranging from 32C to 28C depending on the species and the stage of development. Heater pads with thermostats are ideal; other heat sources need monitoring to avoid hot patches, which can burn delicate skin.

### ***Pouches***

Most orphans require a pouch of slightly stretchy material that is close fitting eg t-shirt material. Place this in another pouch made of a jumper and then into a suspended bag. Pouches need to be kept dry and clean. (You will need a few).

Native orphans can be a joy or heartbreak to raise but are an intense and long term commitment, please consider the animal's welfare carefully when you decide to keep and care for one.

FOR MORE INFO: **NATIVE ANIMAL NETWORK** 08 8388 6944  
ANNEMARIE @

**Murray Bridge Vet Clinic 08 8532 2333 A/H 08 8535 4276**