

Eastern Pygmy Possum

Scientific Name:

Cercartetus nanus

Conservation Status in NSW:

Vulnerable



SPECIAL NOTE: Warringah Council staff recently found this threatened species in one of our reserves.

Description:

The Eastern Pygmy Possum is a small, nocturnal, tree-dwelling marsupial with a body length of 7-10cm and large ears. It has light brown fur on its back with a white underbelly. They are agile climbers and have a tail that is capable of curling and gripping.

They feed mostly on pollen and nectar from banksias, eucalypts and understorey plants but will also eat insects, seeds and fruit. They are an important pollinator of heath plants especially banksia.

Habitat:

Eastern Pygmy Possums are mainly found in heathland in the Sydney area. Outside of Sydney they are found in a variety of habitats including woodland and rainforests. They shelter in tree hollows, rotten stumps, holes in the ground, abandoned bird nests, ringtail possum dreys and thickets of vegetation, such as grasstree skirts.

They are mainly solitary and young are born mostly between late spring and early autumn or when food sources are available.

Threats:

Threats they are faced with include:

- loss of habitat
- fragmentation from land clearing
- predation from cats, dogs and foxes
- altered fire regimes
- reduced understorey shrubs
- loss of nest sites due to firewood removal

Community Action:

Warringah pet owners can help protect the the Eastern Pygmy Possum by making sure dogs and cats are not free to roam in bushland areas and by supporting Fox Control Programs.