

# COMMON RINGTAIL POSSUM

*Pseudocheirus peregrinus*

The common ringtail possum has well adapted to living around humans and is often seen in suburban gardens at night. The ringtail possum can be grey or brown with white patches behind the eyes and on the belly, with a white tipped tail. They are prehensile, so can use their tail like a fifth limb, to climb and jump through connecting branches, fences and powerlines. Ringtail possums are generally quiet but occasionally they'll use a soft, high-pitched alarm call and make harsh grunts when fighting.

## DISTRIBUTION & HABITAT

In the wild they can be found in rainforests, woodlands, eucalypt forests and suburban gardens. They spend a great deal of their time in trees, and during the day they'll sleep in their soccer-ball-sized nest, called a drey.

## DIET

They mainly diet on eucalyptus leaves, although they will eat fruits, flowers and leaves of other native trees, along with rose buds.

## LIFE EXPECTANCY & BREEDING

Life expectancy in the wild is approximately 6 years. Breeding season is from April to November, and they commence breeding from an early age, because from 13 months old the ringtail possum is sexually active. The male and female both build the nest together. One to two babies are born, sometimes three. The young are hairless and about the size of a jellybean. They'll usually leave the pouch after 7 weeks and will



ride on their mother's back until they are weaned at 6 months old, and while their mother eats, the father will care for them.

## CONSERVATION STATUS

The common ringtail possum appears on the IUSN Red List as LEAST CONCERN. Cats, dogs and foxes are the most common threats to ringtails.

