

## EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

# Helping wildlife after floods and fires

February 2019

Native wildlife may be heavily impacted by natural disaster events, either through injury, death or habitat destruction. Following a flood or fire, wildlife sightings in your area or on roads may increase. These animals and birds may be stressed, disorientated or injured.

NSW Department of Primary Industries, along with Emergency Services and a range of supporting organisations, manage and coordinate the rescue of wildlife affected by floods and fires.

### Your safety

Your personal safety is important. Natural disaster zones are often dangerous and all wild animals should be treated with caution.

- Do not enter impacted areas without authorisation.
- Wildlife can bite, scratch, may be venomous or carry disease. Many species should only be handled by trained carers or handlers.

### What do I do if I find injured wildlife?

Handling or disturbing sick, injured or distressed wildlife may cause them further harm.

- Monitor if possible at a safe distance.
- Remove any threat to the animal such as children, pets and vehicle traffic.
- Note exact location and problem.
- Small wildlife that are safe to handle can be contained in a pillow case or wrapped in a towel and placed in a secured box in a quiet location.
- Contact a wildlife rescue group e.g. WIRES, to report the problem and seek further advice. Small animals can also be taken to a local veterinarian.
- Be wary of providing food or water. It is advisable to contact an experienced carer first.

Free Wildlife Rescue apps from IFAW and WIRES provide direct contact with rescue organisations to report or receive advice.

### After a natural disaster

- Keep a lookout for sick, injured or orphaned wildlife.
- Refrain from providing food as this may entice wildlife to areas where they are vulnerable to predators or discourage movement to safer locations.
- Be mindful when cleaning up after a natural disaster. Dead logs and rocks provide homes and food sources for wildlife.
- Consider planting trees or installing bird nesting boxes when vegetation has been destroyed.
- It is against the law to keep native animals taken from the wild. They must be given to an authorised carer operating within a licensed wildlife rescue organisation.

### More information

NSW Department of Primary Industries – [Community information for floods and bush fires](#)

NSW RFS [www.rfs.nsw.gov.au](http://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au)

NSW SES [www.ses.nsw.gov.au](http://www.ses.nsw.gov.au)

WIRES - 1300 094 737 [www.wires.org.au/](http://www.wires.org.au/)

Wildlife rescue Apps - IFAW and WIRES



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