

JR FACT FILE



SOUTHERN BROWN BANDICOOT

Isodon obesulus obesulus



Photo courtesy of Alison Kuitert

What is a Southern Brown Bandicoot?

The Southern Brown Bandicoot is a ground-dwelling marsupial found on mainland Australia.

They're listed as 'nationally endangered' Australia-wide and regarded as 'near threatened' in Victoria.

The Southern Brown Bandicoot is about the same size as a rabbit with a long pointy snout, small eyes and rounded ears. It has a compact body, large rump and lightly furred short, thin, tail which is approximately half its body length. It has clawed feet to help with digging and its fur is bristly and greyish or yellowish brown in colour with a white belly.

Bandicoots leave conical hollows in the ground when digging for food (invertebrates and fungi). Their scat (poo) is cylindrical, 25 – 50 mm long and 8 mm in diameter.

AT A GLANCE

Size:

Approximately the same size as a small rabbit.

Diet:

Invertebrates and underground fungi.

Life Span:

Two to three years.

Habitat:

Coastal or near-coastal heathland and woodland with sandy soil.

Threats:

Foxes, cats, dogs and clearing of their habitat (home).

Where does a Southern Brown Bandicoot live?

They're found living in coastal areas from Mt Lofty in SA to Sydney in NSW.

What does a Southern Brown Bandicoot eat?

Bandicoots eat invertebrates and underground fungi that they dig for with their claws and long nose.

A Southern Brown Bandicoot's family life:

Southern Brown Bandicoots build oval shaped, mounded nests of leaf-litter and soil made under dense undergrowth or other shelter.

During their life span, female Southern Brown Bandicoots can produce two or three litters per year each of two or three young. Breeding season is generally from early winter to summer. Although it looks like they have a lot of babies, many die before making it to adulthood due to threats from foxes, cats and dogs as well as loss of habitat.

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Where can I spot a Southern Brown Bandicoot in Victoria's parks?

In Victoria they can be found within 50km of coastal areas from Lower Glenelg National Park in the west to East Gippsland.

Look out for cone shaped diggings and cylinder shaped poo 25 – 50 mm long and 8mm in diameter. They make mounded, oval shaped nests of leaf-litter and soil built under dense undergrowth or other types of shelter.

Why are threatened species so important?

Threatened species (like all species) perform important ecosystem functions, eg control pests and improve soil condition. This means they are an essential component of ecosystem health.

How can I help?

- Keep cats and dogs under control at all times
- Control foxes on your property
- Create, protect or improve patches of bushland on your property
- If you see Southern Brown Bandicoots on your land or in the area, please contact your local DSE office

FASCINATING FACT

- A YOUNG BANDICOOT IS CALLED A JOEY.