



# Peter the Possum & Bird Man

POSSUMS RATS BIRDS BEES TURKEYS BATS

Wildlife Evacuation & Proofing Newsletter

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PHONE: 07 3250 1133

FAX: 07 3856 4611

POST: PO Box 76  
Royal Brisbane Hospital  
Qld 4029

ABN: 55 194 884 015  
HEAD OFFICE: Newmarket, Bris

info@possumman.com.au  
www.possumman.com.au

## SUMMER WILDLIFE FACTS:

- Out of 20,000 species of bees, only 4 make honey.
- A baby echidna is called a puggle.
- Bats always turn left when exiting a cave.
- Rats multiply so quickly that in 18 months, two rats could have over a million descendants.
- A baby possum is called a Joey
- Group of turkeys is called a rafter.
- The female pigeon cannot lay eggs if she is alone. In order for her ovaries to function, she must be able to see another pigeon.

## SERVICES:

- Possum Removal
- Possum Proofing
- Rat Treatments
- Pigeon Trapping
- Pigeon Shooting
- Pigeon Treatments
- Bird Proofing
- Lice Treatments
- Bee Removal
- Wasp & Nest Removal
- Dead Inspections & Removal
- Brush Turkey Relocation
- Chimney Proofing

## The Silent Foragers

When you live in Brisbane you may be aware of large bat colonies that fly silently overhead at dusk. These nocturnal animals are fruit eating bats or flying foxes with the two most common to Brisbane being black flying-foxes *Pteropus alecto* and grey-headed flying-foxes *Pteropus poliocephalus*. Black flying foxes are generally black all over, while the grey-headed flying foxes have a grey head and red or orange fur.

Flying foxes search for food at night, often flying up to one hundred kilometres in one night. Flying foxes feast on the ripening fruit in your backyard as well as the nuts on your palm trees, nectar and flowers. The flying fox is an excellent seed distributor, pollinating our native plants and ensuring new plant growth. As flying foxes live in very large colonies or camps of up to tens of thousands, they play a vital role in regenerating our native plants and forests.

The other type of bats found in Brisbane are Microbats, an insect eating bat which uses its superb radar while flying to locate its prey in three dimensions. The Microbat is useful to the environment in a different way. It eats up to more than half its body weight in insects per hour. That means that each Microbat is responsible for over a thousand insects every night. Each of these tiny mammals consumes disease bearing mosquitoes and other agricultural pests reducing our need for larger quantities of poisons. Occasionally a Micro bat colony will choose to live in a roof and must be removed with extreme care.

## Don't touch that bat!

A small percentage of bats may have Australian Bat Lyssavirus (ABLV) and when a person is scratched or bitten the bat has to be euthanased for testing. So it is important when you find one in need of help that you do not touch it. Make sure it is safe from other predators by placing a box over it and call Bat Care Brisbane's helpline on 0488 228 137. Bat carers are trained to rescue frightened and injured bats and are vaccinated to protect them from ABLV. There have also been recent reports of a link between bats and Hendra Virus in horses. Bats are the only mammal known to have antibodies to the virus other than horses. However there has been no evidence of bat to human infection, and it is unknown how the horses are being infected or if it is even the same strain of Hendra Virus. The virus can be transmitted from horses to humans so more research is urgently needed. It is also important that bats are not persecuted as they are very important for a healthy environment. If you see a bat on powerlines please also report it as it may have a baby on board.



## Batty Boat Cruises

If you would like to know more about these wonderful creatures of the night, join a Batty Boat Cruise run by Wildlife Queensland. You will witness the wonderful nightly flight of thousands of bats. The next summer cruises are on February 15 and March 1 & 15. Contact them on 3221 0194 to book your place.



*The large nest of Ropalidia romandi paper wasps*

### **Paper Wasps**

There are three paper wasps native to Brisbane. The *Poliste*, with its circular shaped disc is often seen under eaves. The *Ropalidia revolutionalis* is smaller and its nests are vertical strips about two cells wide. The *Ropalidia romandi* covers its large nests in a mud like papery envelope. Paper wasps are so called because their nests are made from a mixture of wood and saliva.

#### **Spring brings Wasp Nests**

Spring is peak paper wasp nest time when the female wasps waken after their winter hibernation and start their nest building. Like bees, each nest has only one queen wasp.

#### **Wasp Stings**

All wasps will attack by using their sting when directly threatened. Wasp stings are painful, quickly becoming swollen and irritated. If someone is stung, wash the bite immediately with soap and water; apply an antiseptic before placing on an ice pack to reduce swelling. Monitor the person for any intense reaction and if breathing becomes difficult, call an ambulance on 000.

#### **Nest Removal**

A nest must be removed if it is in a pathway or there is a person allergic to wasps stings. The wasps need to be killed as they will return to the site and rebuild. We remove all types of wasps and their nests quickly and efficiently.

### **WHERE WE SERVICE**

Our head office is based in Newmarket, but our servicemen are located across Brisbane, so we can send a local representative to your property.

We service all of Brisbane, from the Inner City to Bayside Suburbs, North to Caboolture, West to Ipswich and South to Beenleigh.

## **Things That Go Bump In The Night**

One of the more interesting sides of living in Brisbane is the closeness to nature that many houses experience. The most common possum you are likely to encounter is the Brushtail Possum, which has a bushy black tail and silver coat and is about the size of a cat.

Many possums have become urbanised over time and nest in the roofs of houses rather than their more usual homes in dead branches, fallen trees or hollow trunks. Unfortunately the sound of possums galloping over your roof at night is not a sound many people enjoy being close to!



*Brushtail Possum in "his" home*

Possums leave their home every night at around 7pm to forage in compost bins and gardens, feeding on flowers, fruit and leaves and then return before dawn. They are very territorial and usually use the same paths to and from their nest.

#### **Why do they make all that noise?**

Possums are very noisy creatures and people with possums often comment on the similarity to the sound of a herd of elephants thundering across the roof.

Possums have two mating seasons per year, one in Autumn and the other in Spring. While they are mating or competing for a mate, you will often hear growling, hissing, coughing and barking noises – along with their more regular thumping noises when they move around your roof on their nightly journeys.

When the babies are "encouraged" by their mothers to leave their nest you can also hear an increase in the noise levels as the baby resists moving out (much like many human teenagers).



*Mother Brushtail Possum with her teenager (back young)*