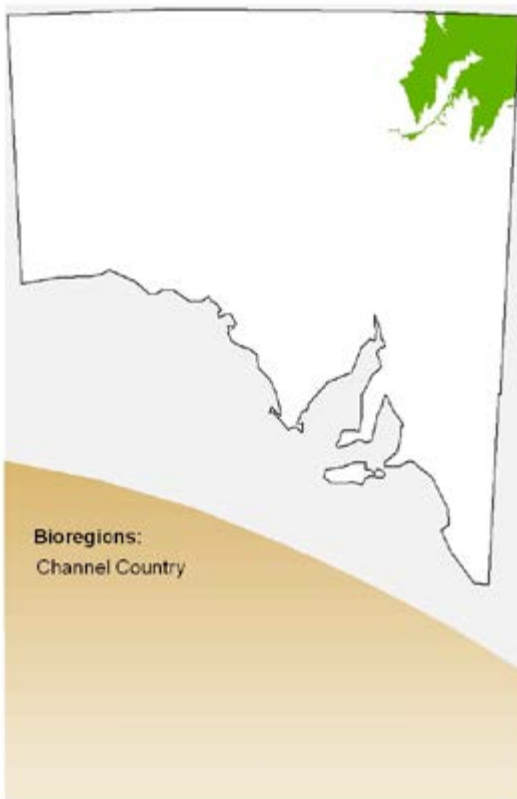


# Kowari

*Dasyercus byrnei*



Map courtesy of Mapping Unit, Customer and Commercial Services.

Map is not intended to indicate spatial distribution of the species, only the bioregions in which the species is found.

Kowaris are marsupials known for their large appetites and feisty personalities. Similar in appearance to Ampurtas and Mulgaras, Kowaris are slightly larger than both with a full black brush on the end of their tails (Ampurtas have a crest only) and four toes on their hind feet (Ampurtas and Mulgaras have five). Males can grow to 18cm and weigh more than 140g with 14cm tails. These animals make a variety of sounds including hissing and a loud, high chattering in response to predators or other Kowaris. Dependent young make a grating call if in distress. They are nocturnal; they hunt at night and shelter in burrows during the day.

## Diet

Kowaris are carnivorous. Their diet consists mainly of insects and spiders, but they also eat small lizards, birds and rodents.

## Breeding

Kowaris are generally solitary animals that come together briefly to mate. They breed between May and December usually following rain so there will be enough food around, and young are born 30-35 days after mating. Newly born young are only three mm long! A female normally has six teats to feed them with so only six young of any one litter can survive.

## Habitat

They can be found almost entirely on wide gibber plains with some low sand mounds. They are territorial animals and they mark their home ranges and burrows with urine and faeces. Both sexes also have scent glands that they rub on objects to mark them as their own territory.

Kowaris either construct their own burrows or modify those of other mammals such as the Long-haired Rat and the Bilby. They may have several burrows in their home range, which can be as large as 25 km<sup>2</sup>.

## Threats

Predators such as foxes, dingoes, cats and raptors prey on Kowaris. An increase in the amount and intensity of fires in their habitat has led to less food being available. This situation is made worse by competition with grazing animals.



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Kowaris twitch their tails like cats as a threatening display, and sometimes bask in the morning sun!

### Conservation

You can help the Kowari by:

- being a responsible pet owner – desex your cats and dogs, keep them inside at night and don't take them into national parks.
- spreading the word about these unique marsupials – many people have never heard of Kowaris.

## For further information

### Public enquiries

For more local information on any of the species in this resource please contact your nearest Natural Resource Centre office on:

**Eastwood:** (08) 8273 9100

**Gawler:** (08) 8523 7700

**Lobethal:** (08) 8389 5900

**Willunga:** (08) 8550 3400

### Education enquiries

For teachers wanting more information about environmental education resources and opportunities please contact the relevant NRM Education sub regional team on:

**Northern Adelaide:** (08) 8406 8289

**Barossa:** (08) 8563 8436

**Central Adelaide:** (08) 8234 7255

**Southern Adelaide:** (08) 8384 0176

**Southern Fleurieu:** (08) 8551 0524



Photo Alex Clarke

Kowari



Photo Harald Ehmann

Kowari

