



Possums in the Mount Lofty Ranges

Common Brushtail Possum (*Trichosurus vulpecula*)

Brushtail Possums are generally silver grey in colour with a pale to white coloured underside. They have a dark coloured 'brush' along their tail. Brushtail Possums are nocturnal and sleep during the day in tree hollows, hollow logs or even in house ceilings. Brushtail Possums have declined throughout the arid areas of South Australia, but are commonly found in urban environments.

Diet:	leaves, flowers, fruits and occasionally meat
Reproduction:	generally autumn and spring
Size:	600 - 950 mm (head to tail)
Weight:	1200 - 3500 g (females) and 1300 - 4500 g (males)
SA Status:	none



Common Brushtail Possum
(Photo: Peter Canty)

Western Pygmy-possum (*Cercartetus concinnus*)

The Western Pygmy Possum is the smallest possum located within the Mount Lofty Ranges. Roughly the same size as a house mouse, this marsupial prefers vegetation containing banksias, grevilleas, callistemons and melaleucas. They are agile climbers and are active during the night.

Diet:	nectar and invertebrates
Reproduction:	throughout year
Size:	142 - 202 mm (head to tail)
Weight:	8 - 202 g
SA Status:	none



Western Pygmy-possum
(Photo: Peter Canty)

Common Ringtail Possum (*Pseudocheirus peregrinus*)

The Ringtail Possum is silver grey and brown with a pale coloured underside. Its tail lacks the brush-like hairs of the Brushtail Possum and has a white coloured tip. Ringtail Possums build nests using shredded bark or grass either within tree hollows, dense tree foliage or in dense understorey vegetation.

Diet:	leaves, flowers and fruits
Reproduction:	generally April to November
Size:	600 - 700 mm (head to tail)
Weight:	700 - 1100 g
SA Status:	none



Common Ringtail Possum
(Photo: Peter Canty)

How do I tell?

Brushtail Possums are generally larger than Ringtail Possums and have a dark brush-like tail, whereas the tail of a Ringtail Possum has a white tip.

Further reading:

Smith, M. 1991. Western Pygmy-possum (*Cercartetus concinnus*). The Australian Museum Complete Book of Australian Mammals. Ed. Strahan, R. Collings Angus & Robertson Publishers Australia
Cadzow, B. and Carthew, S.M. (2003) The importance of two species of banksia in the diet of the Western Pygmy-possum (*Cercartetus concinnus*) and the little Pygmy-possum (*C. lepidus*) in South Australia. In 'The Biology of Australian Possums and Gliders' in press.