

Cars are part of our everyday life, but the convenience of car travel comes at a price for wildlife wherever there are roads. In present drought conditions, more animals are moving about to find water and food, and are coming into more contact with drivers.



HITTING AN ANIMAL AND STOPPING TO CHECK ITS CONDITION

- Half (51 per cent) of Australians say they have hit an animal while driving; this is most common among Tasmanians (72 per cent) and least common among NSW drivers (44 per cent) (source: 2007 AAMI Crash Index)
- Of the Australians who have hit an animal while driving, two thirds (66 per cent) said they stopped to check its condition (source: 2007 AAMI Crash Index)
- Drivers in Queensland were most likely to stop and check the animal's condition (70 per cent) and people in Tasmania were least likely (49 per cent) (source: 2007 AAMI Crash Index)

TYPES OF ANIMALS HIT

- Nearly half of all Australians who have hit an animal while driving have hit a cat or dog (47 per cent); the proportion of drivers who have hit one of these animals is highest in SA (53 per cent) (source: 2007 AAMI Crash Index)
- One in four Australians (44 per cent) who have hit an animal while driving have hit a kangaroo or wallaby (source: 2007 AAMI Crash Index)
- Those most likely to have hit a wallaby or kangaroo are drivers from Tasmania (62 per cent) and the Northern Territory (61 per cent) (source: 2007 AAMI Crash Index).
- Half of Australians (53 per cent) who have hit an animal while driving have hit a bird, and this is most common in South Australia (73 per cent) (source: 2007 AAMI Crash Index)

HOW TO AVOID HITTING AN ANIMAL

Watch out for wildlife. There are more animals on the road in summer. Animals choose to bask on the warm road surface, and nocturnal animals move about on calm, still evenings.

Look around. Use your peripheral vision and be aware of your surroundings, especially when travelling through forest or grassland areas where animals are not clearly visible.

Slow down. Speed is considered to be a key factor in collisions between cars and animals. Slow down to allow braking time if necessary.

Take note of signs. Wildlife black spots usually feature signs such as 'Kangaroos next 30 kms' to alert drivers to potential hazards.

Sound your vehicle's horn. This will help scare the animals away from the path of your car.

Be careful with injured animals. If you hit an animal, or encounter an injured animal, only stop if it's safe for you to do so. Wildlife can be aggressive when scared or injured.

Note emergency numbers. Keep a list of emergency numbers for wildlife groups in your car's glove box, in case you injure an animal.