



## KEEPING KANGAROO ISLAND SPECIAL

**Kangaroo Island's remoteness and isolation has created a special environment. Owing to its isolation from the mainland, the island has suffered less from the impact of European settlement and retains more than half of its native vegetation - a vast area of some 2,250 square kilometres. Similarly, the island has been spared the damage done by foxes and rabbits, ensuring the integrity of native bushland.**

Today, more than one-third of the island is declared as conservation or national park and has five significant wilderness protection areas.

With its range of habitats, Kangaroo Island is a biodiversity hotspot and a vital stronghold for many threatened species and subspecies. There is a high level of endemism in the island's plants and animals which have diverged from their mainland counterparts during the ten thousand years that the island has been isolated.

Twelve nationally threatened mammal species are found here, including the Kangaroo Island Echidna, Southern Brown Bandicoot and the endangered Kangaroo Island Dunnart.

Approximately 260 bird species call the island home, including threatened species such as the Bassian Thrush, Southern Emu-wren, Glossy Black-cockatoo, and Western Whipbird.

The island is also home to 25 reptile species, including the threatened Rosenberg's Goanna, and at least six amphibians.

Kangaroo Island contains over 900 plant species, including up to 50 endemic species (mostly found in the island's west), and 17 nationally threatened species.

The island depends on nature-based tourism and agriculture and therefore protecting our native vegetation is paramount. Every time someone travels to the island, there is a risk that pests or diseases could be introduced. This has the potential to devastate the local environment and agricultural industries, and we all play a part in ensuring its protection.

### Ligurian Bees

Kangaroo Island is a sanctuary to the only Ligurian Bee population in the world. Transporting bees, bee handling equipment and honey products (yes this includes jars of honey) could provide a pathway for diseases. Help keep this species pure and disease free by leaving your honey and bee equipment at home. Take advantage of local honey producers to replenish honey supplies and enjoy the taste of Kangaroo Island honey.

### Wine Industry

Kangaroo Island is unquestionably one of the world's most beautiful wine regions. The undulating island's landscapes and cooler Mediterranean climate provide a long, slow ripening season for grapes, helping to produce intensely flavoured wines. Help keep our vineyards disease free by ensuring vine cuttings from interstate are inspected and certified.

### Seed Potatoes

Kangaroo Island is a quarantine protected production area for seed potatoes. The seed potatoes grown at the western end of the Island are prized by mainland growers for their disease-free properties. Kangaroo Island's seed potato industry is still recovering from the 2019-2020 summer bushfires with growers working together to overcome infrastructure shortfalls and recover.

Unwashed or dirty potatoes may carry disease which could devastate the island's seed potato industry and we ask that you leave them behind. Instead stock up on local potatoes while you are here or bring washed or brushed potatoes in new packaging with you.

## Pest Plants

Hidden hitchhikers can travel to Kangaroo Island on vehicles, boots, and equipment. Cleaning vehicles, camping equipment and hiking boots before your visit will help remove any residual plant and soil material that may bring hitchhiking weed seeds with you. Cleaning your boat and fishing gear will also reduce the introduction of aquatic pests which are a major threat to our marine environment.

## Pest Animals

Foxes and rabbits are declared pests on Kangaroo Island and deer, ferrets and goats require a permit before being brought to and kept on the Island. All these animals can have devastating effects on the island's wildlife and native vegetation.

If you are travelling from a declared fruit fly outbreak area remember to check the fruit fly outbreak map to see if your area is affected, so you can understand the restrictions that apply.

You can help by reporting any sightings you have of these animal or plant pests immediately to the Department of Primary Industries and Regions Kingscote office on (08) 8553 4949.

## Pets

It's fair to say that your pets are your family, so it's natural to want to bring your furry friends along with you when visiting Kangaroo Island. If you are travelling from interstate with your pet dog or cat, we ask that you notify the Kangaroo Island Council on 08 8553 4500 of the following details:

- Duration of your stay
- Your full name
- Contact number, while visiting
- Breed of animal(s)
- Registration at which Council
- Microchip Number

There are no dedicated off-leash areas to exercise your pet on Kangaroo Island, however, if you choose to let your pet off-leash you must maintain effective control of it through voice commands. You will find lots of dog waste bag stations located around exercise areas, but it is also best to bring your own, just in case of emergencies.

We'd also like to remind you that pets are NOT allowed at Seal Bay or any national park on Kangaroo Island (including car parks).

## Leave only Footprints

With your help Kangaroo Island can continue to be a special and protected place.

Leave the island's natural places just as you found them. It can be tempting to take a rock or pick a flower, yet these don't belong in our homes and by leaving them where you find them, others can enjoy them now and in the future.

Take out what you take in. Even tiny pieces of litter should be picked up, food scraps as well. It's easy to think that throwing an apple core off trail will provide a meal for nearby wildlife. But unless that apple came from the place where you are bushwalking, it doesn't belong there. Not only can our foods harm wildlife, they can easily become dependent on human food during busy seasons. When the weather changes, that food source disappears, and animals may have a hard time surviving.

And one last word about footprints. You should avoid leaving those too! Whenever possible, follow a trail or rock-hop. Even one footstep can harm fragile plants in many environments.

Enter, tread lightly, and be amazed...

## For further information

Visit [www.tourkangarooisland.com.au](http://www.tourkangarooisland.com.au)