

NUMBAT

Description

Numbats are reddish-brown on their shoulders and head. This colour changes further down the body to black with white stripes. Their bushy tail is about 17 cm long.

Diet

Numbats are **insectivores** and eat an exclusive diet of termites. An adult Numbat requires up to 20,000 termites each day.

In the wild

They are not strong enough to break into termite mounds themselves, so they wait for termites to come into easy to reach places. For this reason, the Numbat's lifestyle is very closely linked to termite movements. In summer, termites are out early in the day but retreat deeper into the soil as the day becomes hot. During that part of the day, Numbats retreat to the shelter of either a hollow log or burrow and wait for the cooler part of the afternoon to feed again. In winter, the termites are not active until late morning when the soil begins to warm but remain active until dusk. The Numbat is active at the same time to feed.

Threats

Numbats are threatened by loss of habitat through land clearing, fire and predation by feral predators including foxes and cats.

At Perth Zoo

Perth Zoo, as part of its Native Species Breeding Program, is breeding Numbats for release into protected habitats. To date, over 100 Numbats have been bred for release into the wild.

Numbats can be seen in the **Alinta Numbats Under Threat Exhibit** in the **Australian Bushwalk**. Come for the Numbats Under Threat presentation at 10.30am, October–April only.

Did you know?

The Numbat is one of two Australian marsupials that are strictly **diurnal** (active during the day).

The Numbat is Western Australia's mammal emblem.



Scientific Name

Myrmecobius fasciatus

Conservation Status

Extinct

Extinct in the Wild

Critically Endangered

Endangered

Vulnerable

Near-Threatened

Least Concern

Data Deficient

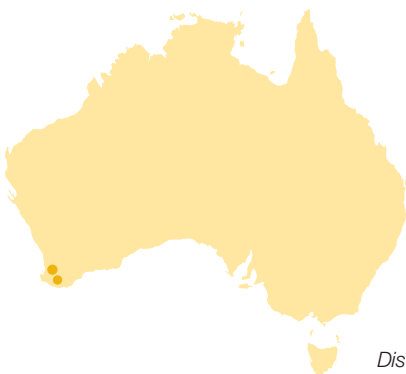


Body Length: 20–27 cm

Weight: 400–700 g

Gestation: 14 days

Number of young: 4



Distribution ■

Distribution: South-west Western Australia

Habitat: Forests, woodlands

