

Tree Kangaroos



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Tree Kangaroos: Amazing Animals of the Forest

Tree kangaroos are animals that live high up in the trees. They spend most of their time climbing and jumping from branch to branch. Unlike other kangaroos that live on the ground, tree kangaroos are built for life in the trees.

Tree kangaroos are very elusive. That means they are hard to find. They hide so well in the forest that scientists have trouble spotting them.

These animals also show great agility. They are excellent jumpers and climbers. Tree kangaroos can leap from one branch to another. Their agility helps them move quickly and safely through the trees.

Tree kangaroos are also very cautious. When they hear or see something coming, they quietly climb higher to stay safe. This careful behavior protects them from danger.

Don't be fooled by their soft fur and sweet faces—tree kangaroos are strong! They have powerful arms and legs. Their strength helps them hold onto branches and climb tall trees. They can even grab things with their strong paws.

These five traits—being elusive, agile, cautious, strong, and great at tree living—make tree kangaroos just right for life in the forest.



Photo credit: Doug Bonham

How Scientists Track Tree Kangaroos

Scientists use technology to study tree kangaroos. They want to learn where these animals go and what they do. First, scientists put a radio collar around a tree kangaroo's neck. This collar looks like a dog collar, but it has special parts inside. The radio collar is comfortable and doesn't hurt the animal.

Inside the collar is a transmitter. A transmitter is like a tiny radio that sends out signals. Scientists can study these signals to track where the animal goes.

Each transmitter sends signals on its own frequency. A frequency is like a radio station number. Just like your car radio has different stations, each tree kangaroo has its own frequency number. This way, scientists know which animal they are tracking.

The collar also has a microchip inside. A microchip is a tiny computer smaller than your fingernail. The microchip stores information about the animal, just like a name tag.

High above Earth, satellites fly around in space. These satellites pick up the signals from the transmitters. The satellites help scientists know exactly where each tree kangaroo is, even when the animals are hiding in thick forests.

This tracking technology helps scientists learn about tree kangaroos without bothering them too much.



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Keeping Tree Kangaroos Safe During Examinations

Scientists give tree kangaroos health examinations, just like when you visit the doctor. But scientists follow special procedures to keep the animals safe during examinations because tree kangaroos get scared around people.

The most important part of this procedure is using anesthesia. Anesthesia is special medicine that makes animals fall asleep. When an anesthesia works, the animal becomes sedated. Sedated means the animal is in a deep, peaceful sleep and cannot feel anything.

During the examination, scientists watch the sedated animal carefully. They check three things to make sure the anesthesia is working safely and the animal stays properly sedated. First, scientists check the tree kangaroo's pulse to make sure its heart is beating at a good speed during the procedure. A pulse tells how fast a heart is beating.

Second, they watch the animal's respiration. Respiration means breathing. Scientists count how many times the tree kangaroo breathes in and out each minute. Good respiration shows that the anesthesia is working properly.

Third, they take the animal's temperature. A normal temperature means the animal is healthy during the examination.

Scientists must work quickly during this procedure. They don't want to keep the animal under anesthesia too long. By watching the pulse, respiration, and temperature, they can finish the examination safely and quickly.



Kangaroos and Tree Kangaroos

Kangaroos and tree kangaroos belong to the same animal family. They have some things in common, but they also live in very different places and move in different ways.

Both animals have long tails and strong back legs. They are mammals, so they have fur and feed their babies milk. A baby kangaroo is called a joey. It stays in its mother's pouch until it is big enough to live on its own.

Kangaroos live on the open land of Australia. They can hop fast and can jump very far in one hop. Their tails help them balance as they move. Kangaroos live in groups called mobs.

Tree kangaroos live in the rainforests. They are good at climbing. Their legs are short but their front paws are strong for grabbing tree branches. Their tails help keep them balanced as they climb high in the trees.

Unlike land kangaroos, tree kangaroos are quiet and hard to spot. They live alone or in small groups and move slowly through the trees.

Both kinds of kangaroo carry their joeys in pouches. Both use their tails for balance. But one is built for speed and hopping. The other is built for climbing in the trees of the rainforests.