

# CONNECT WITH NATURE

# NATURE SAFARI



## It's time to put your sense of adventure to good use and explore your local nature reserve or waterway!

All around the Camden local government area you can find a wide variety of natural areas, reserves and waterways that many different types of creatures call home.

We are lucky enough to have over 684 hectares of nature reserves and bushland - this means that most of us only live a stone's throw from native Australian bushland.

These natural areas are important as they protect and conserve our local biodiversity. They also provide places for people to visit, exercise, relax, play, discover and connect with nature.

A connection to nature can improve your physical and mental health and reduce stress, boost your immune system and increase your energy levels. Best of all though, connecting with nature is a lot of fun!



Photo by Evie Hay

### What will I need for a nature safari?

- Binoculars;
- Water bottle;
- Hat and sunscreen;
- Sturdy shoes;
- Camera; and
- Photo guide to birds, mammals and reptiles of Western Sydney.

*Optional: Take the Nature Quest guide from Council's website with you, and play 'Bird Bingo'.*

### When is the best time to go on a nature safari?

Early morning or afternoon is best as that's when the animals are most active. Try to avoid the hottest part of the day, as it's too hot for the animals and you!

### What might I see?

Birds, insects, spiders, lizards, kangaroos, wallabies and even wombats!

## Here's a tip!

It's a good idea to always take a parent or guardian with you on a nature safari. Make sure you tell someone where you are going and when you expect to be home.



**PENRITH**  
CITY COUNCIL

Connect with Nature is a partnership between Camden and Penrith City Councils.



Photo by Isabelle Robertson



Photo by Lyn Forbes



Photo by Kerrie Dwyer



Photo by Josette Halls



Photo by John Dodd



Photo by Raquel Wood

## How do I discover all these creatures?

- It's best to stay on the path to prevent trampling of the delicate life under our feet. This will help protect the native plants and animals living within the groundcover, and also means less noise that might otherwise scare wildlife away;
- As you are walking along a path, scan the ground, shrub layer and treetops. There's lots of life on the ground as well as in the trees;
- Shhh... stay quiet. This will allow you to hear more animals, including their calls or rustling of leaves as they move about; and
- Most importantly... be patient.

## Look for clues left behind by animals and areas where animals seek food or shelter:

- Tree hollows - a tree hollow is a hole which has naturally formed in the trunk or branch of an old tree. Hollows are often home to many different types of animals, such as birds, possums and microbats;



Photo by Hayden Wilson

- Scratch marks on a tree - these marks are created by possums, sugar gliders or large reptiles, such as a Lace Monitor. These marks tell you that something has been climbing up or down the tree trunk or branch. If you see these marks, look up as there could be a curious creature in that tree;



Photo by Isabelle Robertson

- Water source, like a creek or river - just like us humans, animals need water to survive. A great way to see animals is to head down to the edge of a creek or river, as you're bound to see animals having a drink or going for a swim. You may even be lucky enough to spot the elusive platypus;
- Bird hides - are shelters with windows that allow you to set up your binoculars and watch birds from a distance without them knowing you are there. Using your binoculars you can get a closer look at the many colourful Australian birds;

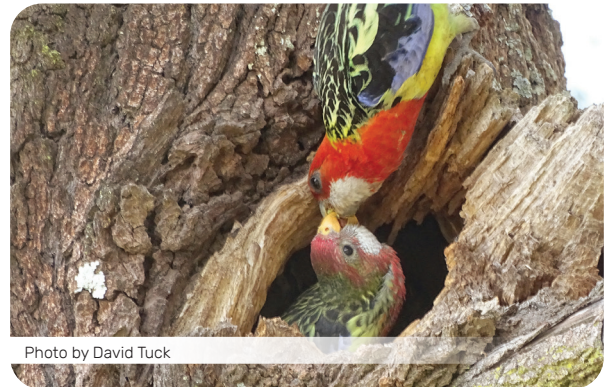
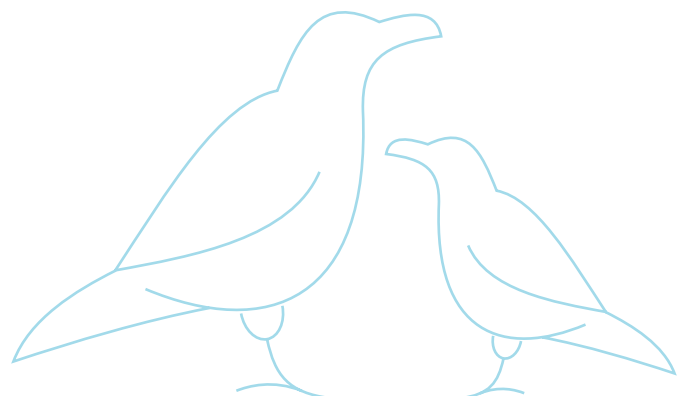


Photo by David Tuck

- Scats - these are animal droppings or poo. The type of scat indicates what animal lives in the area. For example, square shaped poo is from a wombat. Sketches of common scats are on the next page; and
- Tracks on the ground - as an animal walks, hops or trots through an area, they leave behind tracks on the ground. As different animals have different shaped feet, you can tell what creature has moved through the area based on the type of track you see. Sketches of common tracks are on the next page.



# WHAT SCATS AND TRACKS COULD I SEE ON A NATURE SAFARI?



WOMBAT



TRACKS

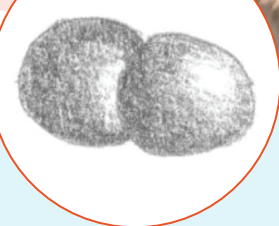


SCATS

KANGAROO



TRACKS



SCATS



WALLABY

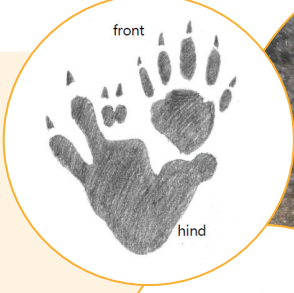


TRACKS



SCATS

POSSUM



TRACKS



SCATS



ECHIDNA



TRACKS



SCATS

## What about snakes?

Snakes are a natural part of living in Australia and it is important to be snake aware and take precautions so that we can enjoy the outdoors safely. They play an important role in our ecosystem, especially in controlling rats and mice. It's important to remember that you are in their home.



Photo by Amy Semmelweis

To avoid encountering and disturbing snakes:

- Stay on the path and out of long grass;
- Be aware and watch your step;
- Wear closed-in and sturdy shoes;
- Make a bit of noise when you walk to scare off any snakes;
- Avoid picking up rocks or logs as snakes might be sheltering underneath;
- Avoid walking at the hottest part of the day when snakes are most active; and
- Carry a first aid kit and know how to treat a snake bite.

If you come across a snake on your walk:

- Stop, don't panic and don't approach the snake. Walk away slowly;
- Wait for the snake to pass or retreat for cover in the bush;
- If it doesn't move, tap the ground with a stick to create vibrations that will alert the snake that you are there. This alert should encourage the snake to retreat under cover;
- Don't poke or try to move it; and
- Keep a safe distance so the snake does not feel threatened. If you leave the snake alone, it will leave you alone.

*Please remember that all native animals, including snakes are protected under the NSW Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 and it is illegal to harm them.*

## Where can I go for a nature safari in the Camden area?

- Bicentennial Equestrian Park, Camden;
- Kings Bush Reserve/Nepean River Cycleway, Camden;
- Elizabeth Macarthur Reserve, Camden;
- John Peat Reserve, Camden;
- Cut Hill Reserve, Cobbitty;
- Elizabeth Throsby Reserve, Currans Hill;
- Charles Throsby Reserve, Currans Hill;
- South Creek Reserve, Gledswood Hills;
- Gledswood Hills Reserve, Gledswood Hills;
- Harrington Forest, Harrington Park;
- Harrington Park Lake, Harrington Park;
- John Oxley Reserve, Kirkham;
- Mount Annan Botanic Gardens, Mount Annan;
- William Howe Regional Park, Mount Annan;
- George Caley Reserve, Mount Annan;
- Lake Yandel'ora, Mount Annan;
- The Cascades, Mount Annan;
- Gundungurra Reserve (North), Narellan Vale;
- Kolombo Creek, Oran Park;
- Grand Prix Park, Oran Park; and
- Springs Lake Reserve, Spring Farm.



Photo by Murray Wilson

