

Thank you for participating in the annual Ringtail Tally. Your efforts will be used to track population trends, future planning decisions, and conservation projects for the critically endangered Western Ringtail Possum. Instructions for completing your tally:

**Step 1: Choose your survey site.** This is a place where you have seen ringtails before; it may be your garden, local park, or patch of bush. It must be a specific location within a defined area that you can access each night of your survey, preferably 50 metres x 50 metres.

**Step 2: Count the number of ringtails seen each evening** at least twice a week over the four-week survey period (1<sup>st</sup> April – 2<sup>nd</sup> May). Counting instructions:

- **Record the number of ringtails seen** within the search area on a single evening.
- **Only count an animal if you are sure it is a ringtail.** For identification tips, see below.
- **Avoid counting the same individual twice.** If you see animals at different times in one evening and you are sure they are different individuals, add them together to get a total. E.g., If you saw 1 large ringtail, followed by 2 smaller ringtails = record a total of 3 ringtails.
- **If your site is an area of bushland,** record the number of ringtails seen within the same area each evening. Estimate the time you spent looking for ringtails and the area you covered (e.g. 50m x 50m).
- **The standard search area is 50 m x 50 m.** A smaller or larger site is fine, but estimate the size of the area being searched and record it on the tally sheet. Any ringtails seen outside your defined survey area should be recorded separately in the comments.
- **Conduct your survey two evenings per week,** over the four-week survey period (1<sup>st</sup> April - 2<sup>nd</sup> May) This will total eight survey evenings. It is ok to do fewer evenings than this if you cannot complete all 8. Once a week is the minimum number of surveys required. If you want to count on more than eight evenings, complete a second recording sheet.
- **How long to look for:** You do not need to be looking for ringtails for the whole night. Estimate the amount of time spent being 'on the lookout' for ringtails during each survey. Being 'on the lookout' means that you are in the search area and if a ringtail turns up, you are likely to see it. 15 minutes is the minimum time spent looking. **You can be out looking any time from half an hour before sunset to 10pm.**
- **If you don't see any ringtails on one or all survey evenings, this is still important information** – just record zero (0) ringtails for each evening spent 'on the lookout'. Even if you have no sightings, please still submit your completed data sheet.

**Step 3: Return completed data sheets by 31<sup>st</sup> May, 2026.** The preferred method is electronic submission – take a photo and email to [geocatch@dwer.wa.gov.au](mailto:geocatch@dwer.wa.gov.au). Alternatively, post to PO Box 269 Busselton WA 6280.

If you are having any difficulties or have questions, call 0491 069 078.

### Identifying Western Ringtail Possums

The Western Ringtail Possum has dark brown fur with a cream or grey chest. It has short, round ears. Its tail is long and thin with a white tip. There is not much hair on the tail. The brushtail will have a bushy tail with more hair, do not record these sightings on your recording sheets.



Western Ringtail Possum. Note the short tail hair and white tip on the tail.

Brushtail Possum. Note the longer, bushier tail hair.



**Recording sheet.** You are responsible for your own safety while taking part in ringtail surveys. Dress appropriately for the weather, take someone with you or notify someone of your destination and expected time of return.

<b>Site Information</b>	
Name of lead observer(s):	Phone: <span style="float:right">Email:</span>
Survey site address:	
How did you hear about the survey? <input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper <input type="checkbox"/> Facebook/ Instagram <input type="checkbox"/> Email from GeoCatch <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) _____	
Estimated size of your survey site (standard survey site = 50m x 50m).  If the block or reserve is large, select a practical survey site within it and estimate area in square meters (m <sup>2</sup> )	_____m x _____m or _____m <sup>2</sup>
Description of survey site:  <input type="checkbox"/> Suburban garden <input type="checkbox"/> Semi-rural house-block <input type="checkbox"/> Park/Sports field <input type="checkbox"/> Native bushland <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	
Tree species ringtails are using (if known):	
Number of trees on your house block:	
Other details of interest. Eg nearest crossroad, nearest crossroad, name of the nature reserve, position in park/nature reserve.	

Survey Data								
	Evening 1	Evening 2	Evening 3	Evening 4	Evening 5	Evening 6	Evening 7	Evening 8
Date								
Estimated total time spent looking each evening (minutes)								
Number of ringtails seen on that evening								
Total number of ringtails seen at your site over the 4-week period (add up each night). Total _____					If you didn't see any ringtails, did you see fresh evidence at your site, such as scats (poo)? <b>Y / N</b>			
Did you see any ringtails outside your survey area? <b>Y / N</b> Total outside survey area _____					Did you see and feeding mess or dreys? <b>Y / N</b>			
					Other observations of interest:			

