



# Amazing Animals Fact sheets

## Kangaroos

Kangaroos are the largest marsupial surviving on earth today. They are well known for their style of movement; hopping on their hind legs whilst using their large, muscular tail for balance. Kangaroos use their tail like an extra leg when they are manoeuvring around, or standing still. Kangaroos are one of the only animals that are not able to move backwards easily, and this is why they are used on the Australian national emblem. Kangaroos graze on plant matter such as grass, heath plants and young shoots and are well adapted for arid environments obtaining most of the water they require from the food they eat. Kangaroos have good eyesight and excellent hearing and they use their large ears to pick up even the slightest sounds. Kangaroos live in social groups, called "mobs".



### Red Kangaroo

The Red Kangaroo has a naked muzzle with a black and white mark on the sides of the muzzle and a broad white stripe running from the corner of the mouth to base of the ear. Their fur is rather short and velvety to the touch. The front limbs of a Red Kangaroo are small and short with heavily-clawed digits. The hind feet are long and extremely powerful enabling the Red Kangaroo to travel at speeds as fast as 65kph (40mph).

Female 'reds' are often called 'blue flyers' due to the blue-grey colouring of their fur.

#### Habitat

The Red Kangaroo is found over most of Central Australia. They prefer sparsely wooded or open plains with plenty of shade. They will also occupy mallee scrub and the more arid desert portion of Australia. The Red Kangaroo has

adapted well to these hot and dry conditions (where rainfall is less than 500mm per year) and numbers in these areas are abundant.

They normally move in groups ranging from a few dozen to several hundred individuals. These groups are known as mobs. The mob usually consists of a dominant male, a number of adult females, several subordinate males and juveniles of both sexes.

#### Diet

The Red Kangaroo has the ability to survive on very small water rations. The herbage and foliage that the Kangaroo eats provides them with their water needs as well as their nutritional requirements. In times of drought, Red Kangaroo populations can suffer as their food supplies diminish.

#### Breeding

The Red Kangaroo breeds all year round. The females have the unique ability to delay birth of their baby until their previous Joey has left the pouch. This is called embryonic diapause. The gestation period is around 33 days. The young Joey will permanently leave the pouch at around 235 days old, but will continue to suckle until it reaches 12 months of age.

## Australia Zoo Red Kangaroo profiles



## Pebbles

Now this is a red roo that loves to play jokes on the other kangaroos - our cheeky Pebbles likes to creep up on her mob mates and grab their tails and then hop away.

She is a striking kangaroo with very pretty features especially around her face, just like her beautiful mum Dusty.

With such a cheeky nature we are always keeping an eye on her so that she does not teach any of the new joeys her sneaky tricks!

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