

The Last Bandicoot Standing

There was once eight bandicoot species that lived across South Australia including Billbies. Land clearing and the introduction of foxes and feral cats has seen a statewide extinction of all but one - the Southern Brown Bandicoot. This bandicoot is now a symbol of resilience and hope and needs our help to survive.

Identifying a bandicoot

Bandicoots are often mistaken for introduced rats, but if you know what to look for, you can spot the difference. The key differences are bandicoots are larger, have a pointed nose, rounded rump, and shorter tail – an introduced rat's tail is longer than its body. Bandicoots are marsupials keeping their young safe and warm in their pouch. Rats are classified as rodents and don't have pouches.

Nature's soil engineers at work

Southern Brown Bandicoots are important soil engineers, turning over tonnes of soil each year. Their diggings are cone-shaped holes in the ground and help native seeds grow while spreading fungi keeping bushland healthy. They feed on insects, spiders, earthworms, fungi, fruits, seeds and roots.

A slow and silent decline

Southern Brown Bandicoots are listed as nationally Endangered and Vulnerable in South Australia meaning they are edging towards extinction. Much of their habitat like ferns along creeks and in gullies, has been cleared for housing and farming. Fire can also affect their homes leaving them vulnerable to foxes and cats. The last remaining bandicoots survive in small, scattered patches of bush like Belair National Park and Scott Creek Conservation Park.

Saving our bandicoots

Across South Australia, community groups, land managers, rangers, volunteers, ecologists and many others are all working hard in the fight to save our bandicoots. Projects like the Bandicoot Superhighway in the Mount Lofty Ranges, is one of many that is having a positive impact. We can all support bandicoots by: sticking to paths; not feeding wildlife; being quiet and respectful if we see them in the wild; learning more about them; or volunteering with a Friends of Parks and Nature group. Together, we can protect these beautiful marsupials from extinction.



Fishbone
Water Fern



Southern Brown Bandicoot



Wherever your adventures take you, we encourage you to connect with Traditional Owners to learn more about the significance of the plants, animals and landscapes.