



Central
Coast
Council

Pets and protecting wildlife

Owning a pet is highly rewarding, but as a responsible pet owner you have an obligation to ensure your pet does not affect the natural environment and its inhabitants.

The impact of pets on native wildlife

- The sight, smell and sound of a dog or cat can cause birds and animals, such as koalas, distress.
- Dogs and cats can kill or harm wildlife.
- Breeding of native animals can be disrupted, affecting the already reducing populations.
- Dogs and cats can disturb bush regeneration projects and areas of ecological significance.
- Dog and cat poo that washes into waterways can harm fish, frogs and other aquatic animals.

What you can do

To help preserve our wildlife and the environment, there are some things that responsible pet owners can do:

- Dogs are not allowed to roam freely in public spaces. For your dog's safety and the safety of our native wildlife, you must take all reasonable precautions to prevent your dog from escaping your property. Failure to prevent your pet escaping can result in a fine.
- When exercising your dog in public spaces, it's important they are kept on a leash and restrained at all times except when you're in an allocated off-leash area. Central Coast Council provides a number of off-leash exercise areas but owners must ensure that dogs are under effective control.
- For your cat's safety and to protect local wildlife, it is recommended to keep your cat inside, especially overnight.
- Dogs and cats are prohibited to enter schools (including preschools and kindergarten grounds), shopping centres, public-bathing areas including beaches (except in designated areas), food preparation areas, sporting fields, playgrounds and wildlife protection areas, as outlined by the *Companion Animals Act 1998*.
- If your dog defecates in a public place or on someone else's property, you must remove the faeces immediately and dispose of it properly. This will stop it from getting into the waterways. If you fail to pick up after your dog, you or the person in charge at the time may be liable for a penalty.
- If your dog attacks or harms an animal, or causes a nuisance, as an owner you remain liable.
- If you find a sick or injured wild native animal, contact WIRES Wildlife Rescue Line at 13 000 WIRES or 1300 094 737

For more information on responsible pet ownership visit centralcoast.nsw.gov.au/pets