



# Australian Rat Fanciers Society Inc.

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Rat Advice Lines: 0401 741 162 or 0498 021 237  
Rescue Service: 0411 670 215

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## **ADVICE REGARDING RESCUE OF WILD RATS**

The AusRFS Rescue Service can only take in domesticated (pet) rats. We are not able to take in wild rats. However, we acknowledge that wild rats deserve to be treated with compassion and we have a procedure in place to assist people who contact us for advice.

If you find a wild rat needing help, the best source of help is the Facebook Group **Wildie SOS - Rats and Mice Australia**. You need to join the group before posting a request for help, but the administrators are quick to approve membership requests. This is an Australia-wide group, some group members are experienced with identifying different species and with caring for orphaned wild rat species.

Once your membership is approved, you can post, asking for assistance. In the post, please include a photo of the rat/s, including tail and bottom of back feet. Also mention the location (including state) and situation where the rat/s were found - all this information will help with ID.

### **IF A NEST OF SEEMLY HEALTHY BABIES HAS BEEN DISTURBED**

**If the nest area is safe**, in most cases the mother will return and move her babies elsewhere. Leaving the babies is by far the best thing to do.

**If the babies can't be left** (eg. You know the mother is dead), then gather the babies in a secure cage/box with bedding to keep them warm - **warmth is essential** – then seek assistance asap as babies need regular feeding.

### **ADULT RAT**

If you can pick up an adult rat, it is either very ill or a lost pet rat.

**If a Domestic Pet Rat**, then of course the AusRFS Rescue Service will take the rat. Please contact the Rescue Co-ordinator on 0411 670 215 to arrange pickup/drop off.

### **If the rat is injured or extremely unwell**

Even if there is no sign of injury, the rat, could have internal injuries or have ingested bait. In this case it's best to take the rat to a vet to be euthanised. Vets should not charge to euthanise wild animals.

### **If it could be a native, or not a rat at all?**

The rat could be a native species of rat or something completely different (sometimes small baby animals are hard to identify if you aren't experienced). If it's native, then Wildlife Victoria (8400 7300) might be able to help.

### **RELEASING / KEEPING AS A PET**

Although it is our understanding that it is not illegal to release wild non-native rats into the environment in Victoria, it is probably irresponsible to do so. But if you find a wild rat in your house and are happy to use a humane trap and release it outside, that's up to you.

If you find wild babies and decide to raise them, you must be prepared to make the commitment to care for them for their lifetime. But you should not expect a wild rat, of whatever species, to act like a domesticated pet rat, even if raised and handled from a baby. Some tame to some extent, some don't.

**The Australian Rat Fanciers Society Inc**  
**Founded in 1996**  
*For the love of rats*