

Roadkill in Tasmania

Night Driving

Driver Education Series Part 2

It's that time of the year again, warmer days and nights, animals coming out of their habitats and getting onto roads in larger numbers, more cars on the roads, tourists and night parties. All this leads to what we are now seeing an increase in the level of roadkill. Bonorong Wildlife Sanctuary is so overwhelmed with incoming reports it can sometimes take several hours to get callouts to rescuers.

As we know injury and death to animals is much higher at this time of the year but animal/vehicle collisions also take their toll on people (sometimes loss of life) and property.

As we say repeatedly speed is the killer. Dawn to dusk is the most hazardous period. Recently driving back from a late night show I had an experience with a large Forester Kangaroo. Although driving at a normal speed limit I was distracted and forgot to drop my speed. The animal came racing out of the scrub and was at full speed by the time it hit the road. Fortunately I only hit the very end of his tail and the only damage was my pride and I guess its very sore tail.

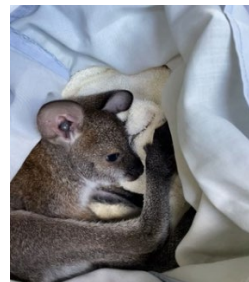
Driving at night has given me an opportunity to make a number of observations. As well as the frequently published precautions of lowering your speed especially in known wildlife corridors, keeping your headlights on high beam lowering them at the approach of oncoming vehicles and dropping your speed at the same time, and keeping your eyes on what is happening at the side of the road are also important. One thing I would like to see become a common practice is motorists flicking their headlights to warn other drivers when they notice there is wildlife in the vicinity.

I know there are a large number of people in our state that avoid going out at night because of the presence of wildlife on the roads but there is no need to be overly worried, don't be stay at homers. In wildlife corridors keep your speed down drop it by at least 10% and be alert and vigilant and please apart from being discourteous it is not helpful to honk drivers that are driving slowly at night to avoid an animal.

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Joey has now found a home and doing well.

