



## WIRES Image and Video Photography Guidelines

Images and video footage of animals in care are a crucial element in WIRES' public education role and they are a visual representation of the care and expertise of our volunteers and the professionalism of WIRES as a rescue organisation.

All images and footage must comply with all the conditions for animal care as specified in our [NPWS Licence Conditions](#), all WIRES Policies and the OEH [Code of Practise for Injured, Sick and Orphaned Native Fauna](#), all individual WIRES Species Codes and Manuals and the [Conditions of WIRES Membership](#) and [WIRES Code of Conduct](#).

When taking images and footage of animals in care or being rescued or released:

1. The welfare of the animal always comes first. No rescue, treatment or critical care activities should be delayed, modified or adapted for the purposes of capturing an image or footage of a rescue. There should be no image or footage that includes multiple attempts at rescue.
2. Images and footage can only be taken in the course of normal animal care, for example weighing, feeding, medical treatment and examination or for identification purposes.
3. No animals in care/rescue or release can be handled purely for the purposes of photography or videography.
4. No images/footage can show cuddling, unnecessary handling or any action that is or could be construed as anthropomorphising or imprinting any animal\* in care.
5. No image/footage showing an animal in a domestic environment is appropriate. While animals are cared for in member's homes, images that show this can send the wrong educational message to the casual and uninformed observer and encourage people to think native wildlife can be kept as a pet\*\* in a domestic situation.
6. Wherever possible an animal in care should be photographed in a pouch or blanket. Imagery/footage of animals in bare hands should be avoided. There may be some circumstances when engaged in feeding, or examination of the animal where handling is appropriate. Recommended PPE should always be worn.
7. Wherever possible any WIRES member/volunteer/staff in the image should be wearing WIRES official branded clothing shirt or high-visibility vest that clearly displays the WIRES name, this assists with the educational message that it is only appropriate for fully trained volunteers to be engaged in wildlife care.

8. Images or footage that have been approved by HO for public use that are of animals being rescued, in care or being released under the WIRES Licence should include attribution to WIRES.
9. No individual or commercial gain can occur in relation to any images/footage of animals being rescued, in care or released under the WIRES licence.
10. No animals held under WIRES' licence can be photographed in studio conditions\*\*\* nor can they be transported to any location other than the location of rehabilitation, for photography or media purposes, without permission of WIRES HO and NPWS.
11. No images or footage of any animal held under WIRES' licence can be used on personal or business social media profiles or pages, public or private non-WIRES groups, websites or for any fundraising purposes unless approval has been granted by WIRES HO.
12. Images of animals being rehabilitated under the WIRES' licence being fed or with food in the image must comply with all the guidelines for supplementary feeding as outlined in the relevant WIRES Species Manual. Please also refer to the more specific WIRES Image and Video Guidelines – Food, Rescue, Rehabilitation and Release.
13. Animals that are sick or severely injured should never be photographed or filmed except for the purpose of obtaining treatment advice, this includes at the rescue site unless second person is there to take footage and is not required to undertake a safe and rapid rescue of the animal.

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**Notes:**

\* One of WIRES' primary goals is to educate the public about Australian wildlife. While educating the public about native animals, WIRES works tirelessly to create understanding of the importance of respecting wildlife and preserving the local flora. This is done in order to ensure the presence of native species into the future. Humanising or imprinting animals in care misrepresents WIRES' philosophy on rehabilitation for release.

\*\* All animals rescued by WIRES members will be initially assessed in order to make an informed decision on the care and rehabilitation level required by each individual animal. If the animals can be rehabilitated, they will be taken into the care of a WIRES member and will stay in care until they fully regain their health. The final aim is to reintroduce the animal into their natural, original habitat. Therefore, any image portraying a native animal as domesticated is misleading and could create an incorrect representation of WIRES' values and ethics.

\*\*\* *Studio conditions* include:

- *Artificial lighting*: animals' sight is very sensitive to light so artificial lighting can cause distress, especially in nocturnal animals (such as possums, gliders, raptors, etc).
- *Photography White boxes*: placing animals in white boxes can be extremely stressful as this artificial light and brightness can create discomfort for wildlife.
- *Compositions*: as described in point 1., the welfare of the animal comes first. Setting up artificial composition in order to photograph an animal while they are in care for rehabilitation is not appropriate. Interactions with wildlife need to be strictly care-based (e.g., feeding, weighing, etc.). Contact should be limited to these interactions.