

**“ANIMAL SOCIETY”**  
Episode 11 “Marsupials”  
Final Timecoded Script

**SERIES INTRO:**

**001** 00:00:01:00 00:00:02:11  
Across our world, we live

**002** 00:00:04:08 00:00:05:06  
In cities

**003** 00:00:05:13 00:00:06:12  
And villages

**004** 00:00:08:04 00:00:10:00  
All part of a greater whole

**005** 00:00:11:03 00:00:12:12  
But we’re not alone

**006** 00:00:14:17 00:00:16:03  
They come in herds

**007** 00:00:17:23 00:00:18:19  
Hives

**008** 00:00:19:18 00:00:20:19  
And swarms

**009** 00:00:21:12 00:00:22:07  
Prides

**010** 00:00:22:18 00:00:23:07  
Packs

**011** 00:00:23:18 00:00:24:12  
And pairs

**012** 00:00:24:21 00:00:26:00  
Living in nature

**013** 00:00:26:12 00:00:28:06  
Members of society

**EPISODE INTRO:**

**014** 00:00:37:09 00:00:39:22

From the densest jungle to rock deserts

**015** 00:00:40:04 00:00:43:05

One group of mammals can be found unlike all the rest

**016** 00:00:43:13 00:00:44:15

Marsupials

**017** 00:00:44:21 00:00:49:03

They are over 300 species existing across the Americas and Australia

**018** 00:00:49:15 00:00:54:06

Ranging in size from the largest, the red kangaroo at nearly 6 feet tall

**019** 00:00:54:10 00:00:58:01

To the smallest, the marsupial mice, at a mere 2 inches

**020** 00:00:58:12 00:01:01:02

While superficially similar to many other mammals

**021** 00:01:01:10 00:01:04:05

They are distinct for their unique reproductive system

**022** 00:01:04:09 00:01:10:06

Embryos developing neither in an egg nor a placenta, but in a kind of yolk sac in the womb

**023** 00:01:10:18 00:01:13:22

The neonatal young emerging tiny and underdeveloped

**024** 00:01:14:04 00:01:18:05

Crawling across its mother's body to find its abdominal pouch for nursing

**025** 00:01:18:09 00:01:19:24

Where it remains until weaning

**SEGMENT 01:**

**026** 00:01:20:07 00:01:25:18

A distinct lifecycle most exemplified by the image of the kangaroo and its young, the joey

**027** 00:01:26:20 00:01:29:17

The most recognizable and largest of all marsupials

**028** 00:01:29:23 00:01:32:18

Kangaroos are endemic to Australia alone

**029** 00:01:32:24 00:01:39:08

They are members of a family of macropods, a common group of marsupials including pademelons and quokkas

**030** 00:01:39:23 00:01:44:19

As well as the three groups of closely related wallabies, wallaroos and kangaroos

**031** 00:01:45:03 00:01:51:10

Kangaroos being a general term for the larger species at over 5 feet tall, weighing as much as 200 pounds

**032** 00:01:51:23 00:01:57:18

With wallabies being the smallest, on average 20 to 40 inches tall, weighing 3-10 pounds

**033** 00:01:58:04 00:02:00:06

Wallaroos being an intermediate group

**034** 00:02:00:14 00:02:06:15

Also related are the tree-kangaroos, equivalent in size to wallabies but purely arboreal

**035** 00:02:07:05 00:02:10:23

Kangaroos also being additionally distinct for their upright stance

**036** 00:02:11:08 00:02:13:06

Long muscular tail for balance

**037** 00:02:14:10 00:02:16:15

And relatively small, elongated head

**038** 00:02:17:13 00:02:23:02

As well as their unique hopping gait and large, powerful hind legs and feet used to achieve it

**039** 00:02:23:15 00:02:30:10

Being the only large animal to hop as a means of locomotion, commonly reaching speeds of around 12 to 15 miles per hour

**040** 00:02:30:18 00:02:33:19

Though over 40 miles per hour sprints have been observed

**041** 00:02:34:09 00:02:39:20

4 species in all, they can primarily be identified by their varying size and color of their fur

**042** 00:02:39:24 00:02:43:06

Varying between red, grey and brown or tan

**043** 00:02:43:16 00:02:47:06

Spread throughout the open plains, savannahs and forests of Australia

**044** 00:02:47:10 00:02:54:19

As they are strictly herbivorous, being both widespread grazers as well as feeding on shrubs and leaves, depending on the species

**045** 00:02:54:24 00:02:58:00

Most kangaroos being nocturnal or crepuscular

**046** 00:02:58:03 00:02:59:07

Resting during the day

**047** 00:02:59:10 00:03:02:04

Emerging in the late afternoon to forage for food

**048** 00:03:02:11 00:03:06:24

Highly social animals, kangaroos are most commonly found in groups known as mobs

**049** 00:03:07:04 00:03:11:11

Consisting of 10 or more individuals, depending largely on geographic region

**050** 00:03:11:21 00:03:17:01

Eastern Australian mobs generally being larger and more stable than their western counterparts

**051** 00:03:17:13 00:03:21:10

Red kangaroos mainly found in groups of only 2 to 4 members

**052** 00:03:21:19 00:03:25:15

Membership being typically highly flexible, and not tied to a fixed territory

**053** 00:03:25:23 00:03:31:16

Wherein members may come and go as they see fit as part of natural migration and foraging behavior

**054** 00:03:32:01 00:03:39:14

Though typically females, known as flyers, develop strong bonds with related individuals of the same sex, staying within the same mob

**055** 00:03:40:02 00:03:44:16

Most groups consisting of 2 to 3 often related females and their off-spring

**056** 00:03:45:05 00:03:50:03

Along with an equivalent number of males, or boomers, with one dominant individual

**057** 00:03:50:21 00:03:54:12

The larger the group, the more intricate their social structure becomes

**058** 00:03:55:00 00:04:00:16

With significant social interactions, not unlike those of ungulates such as wild horses or antelopes

**059** 00:04:01:03 00:04:07:04

Though no permanent hierarchy exists, dominance may be asserted with force, particularly during mating season

**060** 00:04:08:08 00:04:13:03

While both sexes of kangaroos may be prone to in-fighting for drinking spots or food

**061** 00:04:14:02 00:04:19:08

Most commonly, its males who engage in ritualized "boxing" for dominance and mating privileges

**062** 00:04:20:04 00:04:26:22

Often initialized by long-standing rivalries between individuals as mutual scratching and grooming prior to the fight

**063** 00:04:27:07 00:04:28:17

Or out of nowhere

**064** 00:04:29:16 00:04:36:02

One or both then adopt a standing posture, grasping the other male's neck with its forepaw to issue a challenge

**065** 00:04:36:14 00:04:40:09

Which may be rejected, as with younger males challenging larger ones

**066** 00:04:40:19 00:04:44:18

They may then paw and strike at each other's heads, shoulders and chests

**067** 00:04:45:02 00:04:47:23

Even supporting themselves on their tail to kick each other

**068** 00:04:48:02 00:04:51:04

Locking forearms to wrestle their opponent to the ground

**069** 00:04:51:17 00:04:58:11

The winner asserting his dominance by displacing the loser from their resting places and pushing them into the fringes of the mob area

**070** 00:04:58:21 00:05:02:18

The primary means of communication between kangaroos being olfactory

**071** 00:05:03:03 00:05:07:18

With mutual sniffing and grooming making up nearly all social interaction within a mob

**072** 00:05:08:02 00:05:14:02

Picking up significant chemical cues by the smell of each individual relaying its health, age and status

**073** 00:05:14:10 00:05:19:01

Enforcing social hierarchies through subtle body language cues while sniffing as well

**074** 00:05:19:10 00:05:22:06

Maintaining social cohesion with minimal aggression

**075** 00:05:22:16 00:05:25:16

The most significant interactions occurring during mating

**076** 00:05:26:01 00:05:31:22

Kangaroos may mate all year round, mature females going into oestrous approximately every 5 weeks

**077** 00:05:32:07 00:05:37:03

Though their reproductive cycle may be temporarily halted due to harsh environmental conditions

**078** 00:05:37:09 00:05:38:19

Such as severe drought

**079** 00:05:39:02 00:05:41:18

It remains relatively uncommon for most species

**080** 00:05:42:00 00:05:44:19

The oestrous female initialize seeking out a mate

**081** 00:05:45:06 00:05:49:14

Roaming widely to attract the attention of males through sniffing and body language

**082** 00:05:49:23 00:05:53:14

Once a mate has been found, the kangaroos form a consort pair

**083** 00:05:53:23 00:05:56:12

Mutually courting each other over a period of days

**084** 00:05:56:20 00:06:01:12

Which may also attract rival males, causing fights for dominance and mating rights

**085** 00:06:02:00 00:06:11:19

The victorious male initially approaching the female slowly to avoid startling her, and after a prolonged courtship of the male licking, pawing and scratching the female, they mate

**086** 00:06:12:02 00:06:16:13

Mating being long, often 20 minutes or longer, to ensure conception occurs

**087** 00:06:16:15 00:06:20:08

Kangaroos of both genders using a system of paired genitalia

**088** 00:06:20:11 00:06:22:24

Effectively doubling their chances of conception

**089** 00:06:23:13 00:06:26:15

After mating, the male moves on to another female

**090** 00:06:27:11 00:06:35:20

Kangaroo pregnancy lasts around 4 to 5 weeks, the neonatal young emerging only an inch or two long, its hind legs being mere stumps

**091** 00:06:36:02 00:06:44:16

It instead uses its more developed forearms to pull itself through the mother's thick fur onto the pouch, a perilous though quick process of only a few minutes

**092** 00:06:45:00 00:06:49:10

Once in the pouch, it fastens onto one of the two teats inside to feed

**093** 00:06:49:19 00:06:54:07

Immediately, the mother's oestrous cycle begins again and she will seek out a mate

**094** 00:06:54:20 00:06:57:17

Many females achieving a state of permanent pregnancy

**095** 00:06:58:05 00:07:04:00

Given their unusual ability to freeze their embryos, or to delay the development and birth of their baby

**096** 00:07:04:04 00:07:06:15

A process known as embryonic diapause

**097** 00:07:06:23 00:07:13:03

To ensure another embryo may develop as soon as the previous joey leaves the pouch and the new embryo may take its place

**098** 00:07:13:09 00:07:18:09

The joey grows steadily while in the pouch, nursing full time for up to 190 days

**099** 00:07:18:13 00:07:22:17

Sticking its head out a few weeks prior until feeling safe enough to leave the pouch

**100** 00:07:22:22 00:07:29:03

From then on, it spends more and more time outside of the pouch until 8 months of age when it leaves the pouch for the last time

**101** 00:07:29:13 00:07:35:00

Though it will keep nursing periodically by sticking its head into its mothers pouch until 12 months of age

**102** 00:07:35:07 00:07:38:06

While male kangaroos take no part in raising their young

**103** 00:07:38:11 00:07:45:01

Females may engage in alloparenting, occasionally adopting other female's joeys, caring for them as their own

**104** 00:07:45:06 00:07:50:24

After fully weaned, the joey remains a juvenile kangaroo until between 18 months to 2 or 3 years

**105** 00:07:52:00 00:07:55:14

At which point they reach maturity and may seek out a mate of their own

**106** 00:07:56:15 00:08:01:16

Since the extinction of the Tasmanian Tiger, adult kangaroos have few natural predators

**107** 00:08:02:12 00:08:06:06

With only juveniles being targeted by dingos, eagles and goannas

**108** 00:08:06:11 00:08:12:23

Coupled with disease, in-fighting and harsh environmental conditions, most juvenile kangaroos don't survive into maturity

**109** 00:08:14:05 00:08:17:24

The average lifespan of kangaroos being around 6 years only

**SEGMENT 02:**

**110** 00:08:31:02 00:08:31:22

Koalas

**111** 00:08:32:12 00:08:35:14

One of the most famous animals of all Australian wildlife

**112** 00:08:36:16 00:08:40:01

It is renowned for its iconic appearance with its round shape

**113** 00:08:40:09 00:08:41:19

Thick grey-brown fur

**114** 00:08:42:13 00:08:43:17

Round fluffy ears

**115** 00:08:44:09 00:08:46:02

And large spoon-shaped nose

**116** 00:08:46:17 00:08:51:16

Being on average 24 to 34 inches long, weighing 10 to 30 pounds

**117** 00:08:52:03 00:08:56:19

With southern koalas often being considerably larger than their northern counterparts

**118** 00:08:57:01 00:08:59:10

Despite being of the same singular species

**119** 00:09:00:04 00:09:06:06

And while it's often referred to as a bear, all similarities with the canid family of bears are strictly superficial

**120** 00:09:06:19 00:09:10:10

Being instead closest in relation to wombats than any other animal

**121** 00:09:11:06 00:09:15:01

They can be found in the coastal regions all along Eastern and Southern Australia

**122** 00:09:15:05 00:09:19:10

Both in tropical and subtropical areas and even semi-arid climates

**123** 00:09:19:16 00:09:23:06

Typically residing around local coastal woodlands and open forests

**124** 00:09:23:19 00:09:27:21

As the leaves of the eucalyptus trees make up the vast majority of their diet

**125** 00:09:28:04 00:09:30:21

And the koalas themselves are highly arboreal

**126** 00:09:31:06 00:09:35:14

Rarely leaving the tree branches and foliage they've resided in their whole lives

**127** 00:09:35:21 00:09:40:07

Using sharp curved long claws to easily grip into tree trunks and branches

**128** 00:09:41:06 00:09:43:16

With opposable digits on the forelimbs

**129** 00:09:44:01 00:09:49:02

Using their well-developed sense of smell to sniff out the fresher branches of leaves for consumption

**130** 00:09:49:19 00:09:57:19

While its hearing is additionally well-developed to aid it in avoiding predators and threats, with a well-developed middle-ear providing a strong sense of balance

**131** 00:09:58:10 00:10:04:01

Though their eyesight is considerably poor, with small, underdeveloped eyes featuring slits for pupils

**132** 00:10:04:18 00:10:14:23

Due to their diet, koalas have evolved several specializations to accommodate the low nutritional value and high fiber values of the eucalyptus leaves, as well as its high toxicity

**133** 00:10:15:07 00:10:21:01

With uniquely shaped teeth as well as large cheek pouches capable of storing additional food while chewing

**134** 00:10:22:01 00:10:27:00

Koalas sometimes also regurgitating partially digested food to be chewed a second time

**135** 00:10:27:20 00:10:33:22

Having a significantly extended caecum, or large intestine appendix, to enable hindgut fermentation

**136** 00:10:34:20 00:10:42:01

Letting food particles ferment for extended periods of time to allow their intestinal bacteria to release as many nutrients as possible

**137** 00:10:42:17 00:10:53:05

Though in turn, the high water content of the eucalyptus leaves allows the koala to go long periods of time without drinking, smaller females foregoing any additional water consumption entirely

**138** 00:10:53:11 00:11:00:09

But because of the low energy derived from their food, koalas are additionally highly sedentary, sleeping 20 hours each day

**139** 00:11:00:12 00:11:08:16

Only waking up intermittently in 4 to 6 sessions every day to feed in their immediate vicinity, consuming only 14 ounces of leaves a day

**140** 00:11:08:23 00:11:14:12

The koala also has one of the smallest brains in proportion to its body weight as a result of their limited diet

**141** 00:11:15:01 00:11:20:14

Occupying only 60% of its cranial cavity, surrounded by a large amount of cerebrospinal fluid

**142** 00:11:21:00 00:11:23:16

Protecting the brain from shock in case of a high fall

**143** 00:11:23:23 00:11:31:00

Due to this, koalas have only limited abilities to perform complex behaviors outside of instinctual foraging and seeking out mates

**144** 00:11:31:22 00:11:36:23

Koalas are typically antisocial, with the only significant bonds being between mothers and their offspring

**145** 00:11:37:03 00:11:40:10

Spending on average only 15 minutes a day on social behaviors

**146** 00:11:40:21 00:11:43:10

Often as a result of overlapping territories

**147** 00:11:43:20 00:11:47:20

Southern koala home ranges typically being smaller with extensive overlaps

**148** 00:11:47:23 00:11:53:05

While in northeastern Australia koala home ranges are far larger and have significantly less overlap

**149** 00:11:53:09 00:11:56:18

Koala societies mainly consist of residents and transients

**150** 00:11:56:23 00:12:03:13

Residents being females and older males with fixed ranges while transients are younger males looking to establish a territory

**151** 00:12:03:21 00:12:10:04

Resident males being highly territorial, dominating other koalas by leaving significant scent-markings around his territory

**152** 00:12:10:10 00:12:18:02

Rubbing against new trees with a chest gland leaving a complex chemical secretion that may vary in composition with the season and age of the individual

**153** 00:12:18:17 00:12:24:14

As well as loud low-pitched bellowing calls, including snore-like inhalations, wails and growls

**154** 00:12:24:22 00:12:28:09

Produced by a unique vocal organ located in the soft palate

**155** 00:12:28:21 00:12:30:18

Calls that may travel for miles

**156** 00:12:30:22 00:12:34:23

The same calls also used by the males during mating season to attract a mate

**157** 00:12:35:12 00:12:40:10

While females use softer bellows and snarls in times of distress or as defensive calls

**158** 00:12:40:18 00:12:43:04

Young koalas similarly squeaking when threatened

**159** 00:12:43:10 00:12:51:04

Despite their lacking eyesight, many koalas also use a variety of facial expressions to signal anger, fear, defensiveness and submission

**160** 00:12:51:18 00:12:58:10

Particularly among males and pregnant or lactating females, who are all likely to become involved in fights and territorial displays

**161** 00:12:59:00 00:13:05:20

Including biting, wrestling and chasing behaviors, cornering intruding koalas to drive them out of specific areas or trees

**162** 00:13:06:04 00:13:11:04

Koalas have fixed annual mating seasons, commonly around September until April at the latest

**163** 00:13:11:07 00:13:17:00

Because of their larger size, males may often force themselves onto nearby females if not responding to his calls

**164** 00:13:17:10 00:13:24:17

Her screams in fighting him off attracting other nearby males, which may in turn result in male on male combat for dominance prior to mating

**165** 00:13:25:00 00:13:30:07

Allowing the female to assess the more virile dominant male, after which she submits to him willingly

**166** 00:13:30:16 00:13:35:07

Many males accumulating significant scarring on their exposed noses and eyelids as a result

**167** 00:13:35:13 00:13:43:00

Mating itself is then quick and repeated, after which the male leaves to seek out another mate, taking no part in caring for the female or their offspring

**168** 00:13:43:13 00:13:47:15

While the female attempts to gain as much weight as she can for the oncoming pregnancy

**169** 00:13:47:24 00:13:53:17

Koala gestational period lasting for 33 to 35 days, with interbirth intervals of 1 to 2 years

**170** 00:13:54:04 00:13:57:17

The female giving birth to a single joey with twins being a rarity

**171** 00:13:57:20 00:14:01:21

The young are born as an embryo, weighing less than a fiftieth of an ounce

**172** 00:14:02:14 00:14:07:10

Though they have a relatively well-developed upper body as well as respiratory and digestive systems

**173** 00:14:07:20 00:14:12:00

It crawls into its mother's pouch to continue the rest of its development over the next year

**174** 00:14:12:13 00:14:14:07

Suckling on one of its two teats

**175** 00:14:14:10 00:14:22:13

The mother preparing its young for its eucalyptus diet by predigesting the leaves only as it begins to venture out of the pouch finally at 6 months of age

**176** 00:14:22:16 00:14:25:18

Producing a faecal pap that she then feeds to its young

**177** 00:14:26:00 00:14:31:07

By 9 months of age, it will have already exceeded 2 pounds in body weight and developed its adult fur

**178** 00:14:31:13 00:14:37:22

It rides its mothers back from then on, gradually spending more and more time away until fully weaned at 12 months of age

**179** 00:14:38:20 00:14:42:17

Once the mother becomes pregnant again, she severs all bonds with its previous offspring

**180** 00:14:43:13 00:14:47:03

Becoming aggressive and driving its young out to seek out a territory of its own

**181** 00:14:48:05 00:14:53:15

Females then become sexually mature at 3 years of age, while male only mature at age 4

**182** 00:14:53:19 00:14:56:17

Beginning scent-marking behaviors and territorial markings

**183** 00:14:57:04 00:15:00:06

Despite their sedentary nature, koalas have few predators

**184** 00:15:00:12 00:15:03:23

Dingos and large pythons being the primary threat to adults

**185** 00:15:04:11 00:15:08:19

While large predatory birds such as eagles and owls may prey on juveniles

**186** 00:15:09:05 00:15:16:10

Koala lifespans range from 13 to 18 years in the wild, females commonly living longer due to higher mortality rates among males

**187** 00:15:16:17 00:15:22:14

Around age 6, the molars of the koala begin to wear down and their chewing efficiency slows gradually

**188** 00:15:22:22 00:15:28:06

Once they reach their early teens many koalas lose their teeth completely and the animal dies of starvation

### **SEGMENT 03**

**189** 00:15:41:09 00:15:42:05

Possums

**190** 00:15:43:11 00:15:47:00

A wide term to describe two distinct groups of marsupials

**191** 00:15:48:23 00:15:50:18

The opossums of the Americas

**192** 00:15:51:08 00:15:53:01

Over 100 species in all

**193** 00:15:54:01 00:15:57:18

And true possums of Australia, Papua New Guinea and Indonesia

**194** 00:15:58:09 00:15:59:19

70 species in all

**195** 00:16:00:19 00:16:04:08

True possums actually being closer in relation to kangaroos

**196** 00:16:04:21 00:16:09:07

While opossums diverged early on from a common ancestor of all marsupials

**197** 00:16:09:13 00:16:12:00

Being the only marsupial found in the Americas

**198** 00:16:12:09 00:16:16:16

Though the opossums were the first to be described and earn the moniker of possum

**199** 00:16:17:22 00:16:22:13

The two groups are superficially similar, being small to medium-sized marsupials

**200** 00:16:23:06 00:16:24:18

With short, stocky bodies

**201** 00:16:25:14 00:16:26:12

Long snouts

**202** 00:16:27:03 00:16:28:22

And thin, muscular tails

**203** 00:16:29:13 00:16:32:15

The external differences between the two groups being subtle

**204** 00:16:33:11 00:16:38:12

True possums generally having fur-covered tails, larger ears and narrower snout

**205** 00:16:40:17 00:16:47:17

While opossums have only light fur or scales on their tails, smaller ears and a larger, more prominent snout

**206** 00:16:49:09 00:16:56:22

Possums may range in size from the largest, the bear cuscus of Indonesia at 4 feet in length, weighing up to 15 pounds

**207** 00:16:58:03 00:17:04:02

To the smallest, the Tasmanian pygmy possum, at less than 6 inches in length, weighing a third of an ounce

**208** 00:17:05:18 00:17:06:14

Either brown

**209** 00:17:06:20 00:17:07:09

Black

**210** 00:17:07:19 00:17:08:04

White

**211** 00:17:08:15 00:17:09:21

Or grey in color

**212** 00:17:10:12 00:17:14:13

They are broadly omnivorous or herbivorous as well as highly opportunistic

**213** 00:17:15:18 00:17:21:06

Feeding on anything from insects and bird eggs to fruits and foliage, even smaller mammals

**214** 00:17:23:08 00:17:27:16

True possums typically exhibiting greater dietary specialization than opossums

**215** 00:17:28:15 00:17:33:12

With many species of true possum preferring individual insects or plants over all others

**216** 00:17:34:16 00:17:37:09

While opossums can often be found to eat almost anything

**217** 00:17:38:05 00:17:42:07

With an unusually diverse array of teeth to accommodate almost any diet

**218** 00:17:43:03 00:17:52:08

Both groups are generally nocturnal foragers, preferring to sleep during the day in a primitive nest in a hidden crevice or hollow tree, often filled with twigs and leaves

**219** 00:17:52:20 00:17:55:22

Emerging in the late afternoon or at night to hunt

**220** 00:17:56:06 00:18:03:00

Frequently being partially or fully arboreal, often found climbing trees and manmade structures in search of food

**221** 00:18:03:17 00:18:10:23

With a prehensile tail to aid in climbing, not unlike New World monkeys, though it is too weak to support the entirety of the possum's weight

**222** 00:18:11:11 00:18:16:24

Generally solitary, only a few species of possums may come in pairs or smaller familial groups

**223** 00:18:17:09 00:18:23:16

They are instead often openly hostile to any other individual of the same species and highly defensive of their territory

**224** 00:18:23:20 00:18:27:22

Possums often being either partially transient or with fixed home ranges

**225** 00:18:28:01 00:18:30:20

While opossums are almost exclusively nomadic

**226** 00:18:31:02 00:18:36:10

Particularly males prone to violent clashes when encountering one another, biting and scratching each other

**227** 00:18:36:14 00:18:39:04

Many males often covered in scars as a result

**228** 00:18:39:11 00:18:43:24

As such vocal communication may vary greatly, but remains largely primitive

**229** 00:18:44:05 00:18:50:03

Primarily consisting of hostile barking, snarling, hissing and shrieking for threats and displays of dominance

**230** 00:18:51:18 00:18:56:03

With non-verbal communication often limited to basic signs of aggression or submission

**231** 00:18:57:11 00:19:01:05

Their only other form of communication occurs through scent markings

**232** 00:19:01:22 00:19:09:23

Many possums marking their territory with urine and by rubbing against tree trunks with their scent glands as well as distributing their saliva on branches

**233** 00:19:10:11 00:19:15:18

Emitting a powerful musky odor signaling the age, sex and status of the individual

**234** 00:19:15:23 00:19:18:20

Warding off members of the same sex while attracting mates

**235** 00:19:19:05 00:19:28:03

While all possums are typically polyestrous, the female entering into estrous every 30 to 60 days, many possums are limited to only 1 or 2 litters per year

**236** 00:19:28:05 00:19:32:05

Depending on building up fat reserves to prepare for birth giving and lactation

**237** 00:19:32:16 00:19:36:19

Mating season typically occurs around spring or early summer for most species

**238** 00:19:36:23 00:19:38:11

When food is still abundant

**239** 00:19:38:17 00:19:43:22

Both sexes often having multiple partners, courtship being either simplistic or non-existent

**240** 00:19:44:02 00:19:49:06

Male opossums, for instance, attracting their mate by emitting a clicking sound out of the side of their mouth

**241** 00:19:49:19 00:19:52:23

Which is then reciprocated by the female prior to mating

**242** 00:19:53:14 00:19:57:02

Mating is quick and seldom repeated for any significant duration

**243** 00:19:57:10 00:20:01:02

The male then either leaves voluntarily or is forced out by the female

**244** 00:20:01:10 00:20:03:08

Taking no part in raising their young

**245** 00:20:04:00 00:20:08:11

True possums may then have a litter of between 2 to 6 young, depending on the species

**246** 00:20:08:16 00:20:18:01

While opossums typically give birth to a very large litter of up to 20 young, many of which failing to attach to a teat, limiting the surviving young to 13 at the most

**247** 00:20:18:08 00:20:24:05

Unlike other marsupials, opossums do possess a primitive kind of placenta assisting in the development of their young

**248** 00:20:24:10 00:20:31:08

Though the gestational period remains the same for both groups at between 12 to 16 days, up to 30 for some species

**249** 00:20:32:01 00:20:38:13

The newborn may be less than half an inch long, weighing a tenth of an ounce for some species, emerging blind and weak

**250** 00:20:38:24 00:20:42:24

Crawling their way across their mother's stomach to find its pouch to begin nursing

**251** 00:20:43:14 00:20:49:00

Only leaving its mother's pouch upon weaning between 9 weeks to 4 months, depending on the species

**252** 00:20:49:16 00:20:52:00

At which point they move to the mother's back

**253** 00:20:52:14 00:20:57:07

Clinging onto her even as large groups of young until large enough to forage for themselves

**254** 00:20:58:09 00:21:01:15

Venturing further and further away from their mother while in the nest

**255** 00:21:02:00 00:21:04:20

Until strong enough to attempt to seek out food on its own

**256** 00:21:06:24 00:21:10:15

Most possums reach maturity at around 6 to 12 months of age

**257** 00:21:12:00 00:21:16:13

Males are then often forced out upon maturity while females may remain nearby

**258** 00:21:17:18 00:21:25:09

Leading to many females having higher survival rates than males, alongside the increased aggression and conflict-prone nature of many males

**259** 00:21:26:09 00:21:34:23

Despite opossums having unusually robust immune systems, featuring total or partial immunity to the many poisons and venoms of their natural enemies

**260** 00:21:35:16 00:21:45:00

Their lifespans may range only 2 to 4 years due to environmental conditions and predation by animals such as wolves, foxes, raptors and snakes

**261** 00:21:48:19 00:21:51:22

While true possums may often live well into their teens

**262** 00:21:52:22 00:21:56:03

Some species being the longest-lived marsupials in existence

**263** 00:21:57:04 00:21:59:15

With fewer natural predators in their habitat

**264** 00:22:02:04 00:22:08:12

Unlike most other animals, when threatened by a predator, possums often attempt to stand perfectly still rather than flee

**265** 00:22:08:18 00:22:13:18

Relying on their small size and color pattern blending into their environment in order to not be detected

**266** 00:22:13:23 00:22:17:16

Opossums also exhibit one unique additional behavior as a threat response

**267** 00:22:18:00 00:22:18:20

They play dead

**268** 00:22:20:20 00:22:24:18

An involuntary reaction closer to fainting rather than a conscious act

**269** 00:22:25:10 00:22:32:00

It quickly collapses on the spot, foaming at the mouth while baring its teeth and excreting a foul smelling fluid from its anal glands

**270** 00:22:32:04 00:22:36:04

Only regaining consciousness after a period of a few minutes up to 4 hours

**OUTRO:**

**271** 00:22:40:20 00:22:41:17

Possums

**272** 00:22:42:17 00:22:44:00

Along with koalas

**273** 00:22:45:00 00:22:46:02

And kangaroos

**274** 00:22:48:23 00:22:51:21

While exotic and strange compared to many other mammals

**275** 00:22:53:08 00:22:57:08

They nonetheless form an essential part of the circle of life surrounding them

**276** 00:22:58:21 00:22:59:21

Whether predator

**277** 00:23:00:23 00:23:01:15

Or prey

**278** 00:23:02:21 00:23:03:19

Solitary

**279** 00:23:05:08 00:23:06:16

Or in large mobs

**280** 00:23:08:08 00:23:11:10

They help shape their environment and surrounding ecosystem

**281** 00:23:12:23 00:23:14:03

Each of them a member

**282** 00:23:15:21 00:23:17:12

Of an animal society

**METRICS:**

**018** 00:00:49:15 00:00:54:06

Ranging in size from the largest, the red kangaroo at nearly 180 centimeters tall

**019** 00:00:54:10 00:00:58:01

To the smallest, the marsupial mice, at a mere 5 centimeters

**031** 00:01:45:03 00:01:51:10

Kangaroos being a general term for the larger species at over 150 centimeters tall, weighing as much as 90 kilograms

**032** 00:01:51:23 00:01:57:18

With wallabies being the smallest, on average 50 to 100 centimeters tall, weighing 1-5 kilograms

**039** 00:02:23:15 00:02:30:10

Being the only large animal to hop as a means of locomotion, commonly reaching speeds of around 20 to 25 kilometers per hour

**040** 00:02:30:18 00:02:33:19

Though over 60 kilometer per hour sprints have been observed

**090** 00:06:27:11 00:06:35:20

Kangaroo pregnancy lasts around 4 to 5 weeks, the neonatal young emerging only a few centimeters, its hind legs being mere stumps

**116** 00:08:46:17 00:08:51:16

Being on average 60 to 85 centimeters long, weighing 5 to 15 kilograms

**155** 00:12:28:21 00:12:30:18

Calls that may travel vast distances

**177** 00:14:26:00 00:14:31:07

By 9 months of age, it will have already exceeded 1 kilogram in body weight and developed its adult fur

**206** 00:16:49:09 00:16:56:22

Possums may range in size from the largest, the bear cuscus of Indonesia at 120 centimeters in length, weighing up to 7 kilograms

**207** 00:16:58:03 00:17:04:02

To the smallest, the Tasmanian pygmy possum, at less than 15 centimeters in length, weighing 150 grams

**249** 00:20:32:01 00:20:38:13

The newborn may be only a centimeter long, weighing less than 50 grams for some species, emerging blind and weak