

A tale of two fences

In the city

Louise lives in the city near a park and found a glider caught on a barbed wire security fence. She worked with the Council to find a solution. The Council replaced the barbed wire with plain wire and planted more trees near the fence to shorten the gliding distance.



In the country

Geoff, who lives on a rural property with cattle, found a flying-fox caught on his barbed wire fence. The bat had come to feed on a nearby native shrub.

Geoff decided to keep the shrub as it was an important feed tree for various animals. He covered the top two strands of barbed wire near the shrub with polypipe painted white.



What can you do?

- Encourage wildlife friendly fencing in your local area. Talk to neighbours, councils, fencing contractors and suppliers. Familiarise yourself with the information on our website.
- Monitor barbed wire fences in your local area. Report any entangled animals to your local wildlife rescue organisation, found at www.fauna.org.au. Enter it online, search for Entangled Wildlife Australia.

Do not approach a trapped animal as it is likely to stress, struggle and do more damage. Wait for an experienced rescuer who will untangle the animal with minimal further injury. Do not handle flying-foxes.



NATIONAL
GRANTS
PROGRAM



Tolga Bat Hospital


wildlife
friendly
fencing



wildlifefriendlyfencing.org

This project received grant funding from WIREs through their annual National Grants Program 2023.

Doing some fencing? Make it wildlife friendly!




wildlifefriendlyfencing

86% of recorded wildlife entanglements occur on the top strand of barbed wire fences



Fences close to water prevent wetland birds from landing and taking off safely.
www.ozcranes.net

Each year thousands of animals face a cruel death entangled on barbed wire fences.

Many nocturnal animals like bats, gliders and owls fail to see the fence or cannot clear the height in windy conditions. Over 75 wildlife species have been recorded as fence victims.

Kangaroos and emus can get hung up on plain wire and mesh fences. If the fence is too high the animals' legs can become caught in a twist of wire.

Low wires and tension droppers may prevent larger animals from squeezing through the fence

Wildlife need to move freely and safely across our landscape unless being purposely excluded for safety reasons.



These kangaroos failed to jump the high fence and were caught by their legs. Blocked by the dropper, they could not scramble through or under the fence.

Designing friendly fences

Stop and think

Do I really need a fence? How will a fence affect the local wildlife? Could a line of native trees do the job?

Avoid barbed wire

Avoid barbed wire as a top strand, especially on fences likely to be hotspots for entanglement of wildlife – on ridge lines, near feed trees, across wildlife corridors, over or near water bodies.

For hotspots:

- go barbless on the top strand to prevent most entanglement
- increase visibility of the fence to help wildlife see it.

Safe-twist barbless wire

Go barbless – work with the same tools and skillset as for barbed, but scratch-free. Barbed wire on the other 3 strands is less likely to entangle wildlife, but consider going barbless on other strands also.

Increase visibility

White electric fence tape (preferably 40mm wide), metal tags or split white polypipe are all very effective at improving the visibility of a wire fence. Electrified fences are also friendly unless fitted too close to barbed wire. Animals can be caught and unable to escape the electric shocks.

Friendly fencing in action



Go to our website for details of the range of available white sighter wires. This includes nylon coated, solid nylon and electric wires.



Wise placement of a fence can make a big difference. To avoid the risk of a tangle hotspot on the ridgetline this fence was placed below the ridge.



Split white polypipe cut lengthwise and into 30-40cm lengths increases visibility. Do not use on cattle fences unless secured well with cable ties or the like.



Whites Wires began manufacturing barbless wire in Albury NSW in late 2022. Easier to use than plain wire.



Nettings pliers and clips make this a quick easy job. Best spacing about every 30cms.



White electric fence tape and metal tags are ideal for security fences where the barbs need to remain. They move in the wind and the tags catch any light at night.

WFF is safe and effective for wildlife, people and livestock.