

## **Northern Brown Bandicoot** *(Isoodon macrourus)*

**National Status :** Not listed

**State Status :** Not listed (NT)

### **Description:**

The Northern Brown Bandicoot has a head body length of up to 40 cm, a shorter tail up to 17 cm and can weigh up to 2.1 kg. Males are larger than females, often up to double the size. The fur is speckled brown-black above and whitish below. Their ears are short and rounded and they possess an elongated snout, despite being a 'short-nosed' bandicoot. Forelimbs are shorter than hindlimbs and are used when foraging to dig conical holes, which they explore with their snout.



### **Distribution:**

This species is a common resident of suburban gardens north of Sydney, extending northwards to Cape York in Queensland, across the top of the Northern Territory and into the north of Western Australia.

### **Habitat:**

This bandicoot prefers areas dominated by grass and dense shrubbery and in more northerly areas may be found in more open country with sparse groundcover. It may be found in grassland, woodland and open forest, and in the drier areas of inland Queensland it can be found within fringing forests associated with river systems.

### **General:**

These bandicoots generally construct a nest of ground litter over a shallow depression in the soil with a loose entrance and exit at either end. Occasionally they may be found in hollow logs or under tussocks of grass. Like other bandicoots they tend to be solitary animals and males tend to be quite aggressive. Their home range is relatively small, up to six hectares. They have an omnivorous diet, foraging at night for invertebrates, berries, grass seeds, subterranean fungi and plant fibre such as sugar cane. Breeding may occur throughout the year if environmental conditions are good, and the short gestation period of 12.5 days is followed by a period of about 48 days in the pouch with a litter size of 1-7. Young reach independence by 60 days and females may become sexually mature as early as 3-4 months of age.

### **Threats:**

Unlike many other terrestrial small to medium sized mammals, these bandicoots have fared well in the face of European settlement on continental Australia. Fire, drought or grazing may render their habitat temporarily unsuitable but they appear to be highly adaptable to such unstable environments, moving to other suitable habitat as it becomes available. Their range has contracted in pastoral and agricultural country, so that even this ubiquitous species is still susceptible to the common threats of habitat alteration by grazing, broadscale clearing, changes in fire regimes and introduced predators.