

Possum Box Installation



Possum boxes for brush tailed possums should ideally be installed in a tree at a height of 12 feet (3.6m). A study published in 2004 by Lyndall Petett and Louise Yates (Nest Box Occupancy: The management and release of rehabilitated wildlife on the Sunshine Coast) found that boxes placed above this height had very low occupancy.

When installing nest boxes think **safety** at all times.

- If you have a safety harness, wear it.
- Always have someone holding the ladder
- Make sure that both feet of the ladder are level and stable
- Preferably tie a rope between the ladder and the tree to stabilize it
- Make sure that sightseers stand well back in case you drop something whilst up the tree.
- You need two hands to climb the ladder so when taking the nest box up the ladder, hang it over your shoulder on a rope.
- Never climb up the tree without a ladder, or above the height of the ladder

We have found after installing many nest boxes that the following method is the simplest and the safest

1. Select your tree. Ideally it should have a branch at the level you plan to install the box.
2. The box should have its opening away from the prevailing weather and should be in a shady position.
3. Make sure your ladder is tall enough to reach up the tree without climbing above the safety level on the ladder.

4. Take a piece of rope and a bungee strap up the tree and tie the rope around the tree with the bungee strap threaded behind the rope, about 450mm above the position chosen for the nest box.



5. Climb down and tie a short rope through the eyebolts on the nest box so that you can hang it over your shoulder to climb the ladder.

6. Climb up and hook the bungee cord through the top two eyebolts on the nest box. This ensures that you have both hands free to tie the box on.



7. Cut two pieces of wire long enough to go around the tree at the chosen height, with enough extra to tie the wire through the eyebolts. Thread a length of old hose onto each piece of wire to protect the tree.

8. Tie the first wire through the top two eyebolts, taking care to position the wire behind the hooks of the bungee strap (so that you can remove the hooks after the wires have been tightened).



9. Tie the second wire through the bottom eyebolts. Fold the ends of the wire over so there are no sharp points for birds and animals to catch themselves on.

10. When both wires are in place unhook the bungee strap and untie the rope from around the tree.



11. If the wire runs over a branch then it does not need to be tied too tightly. If no branch is available then use either a small ratchet strainer, or twist the wire up with fencing pliers.