



# Animal welfare organisations label possum torture case in Brighton a disgrace

SHARON GREEN • BAYSIDE LEADER • JUNE 03, 2014 3:47PM



Animal welfare organisations have been sickened by the torture of two brushtail possums (similar to this one). Picture: David Clark. Source: News Limited

**ANIMAL welfare organisations have been left sickened by a weekend torture attack on two brushtail possums.**

Michele Phillips of [South Oakleigh Wildlife Shelter](#) said she was called to a Brighton property on Saturday morning, where a trail of blood led to a bin where she found two brushtail possums that had been tortured.

"There was one dead possum soaked in something, and had obvious head injuries. Another was skinned alive," she said.

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"It was horrendous."

It comes just a few months after [five kittens were mutilated](#) behind a Blackburn garage.

Ms Phillips said she reported Saturday's attack to the Department of Environment and Primary Industries.

"Brush-tail and ring-tail possums are protected. Hefty fines and penalties apply to those who harm them," she said.

"Animal cruelty has got to be taken seriously."

[Wildlife Victoria](#) spokeswoman Amy Amato confirmed the incident and said a wildlife rescue volunteer was sent to the site and found "a horrific scene of animal cruelty".

"It's completely heartbreaking when a volunteer witnesses such horrific cruelty at the hands of our fellow humans. It's so distressing," Ms Amato said.

"This is yet another cowardly act of cruelty towards our precious wildlife.

"Native wildlife are protected and the matter has been reported to the relevant authorities."

Spokeswoman for Bayside City Council Ruth Clayton said possums were protected under the [Wildlife Act 1975](#) and that council referred residents to contact a licensed animal handler in cases where possums needed to be attended to.

DEPI spokeswoman Sally Bateman said the department was investigating the incident.

She said, under the Wildlife Act, people who killed or harmed possums faced a maximum penalty of \$10,000 and/or up to a maximum of six months imprisonment, with further penalties applicable under the Cruelty to Animals Act.

Report sick, injured or orphaned wildlife to Wildlife Victoria by calling 1300 094 535.