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THE WOMBAT ITSELF

Wombats are grazing animals and are among the world's largest burrowers. Many of their physical characteristics reflect these two habits.

Body shape and size

Their thick-set, low-slung bodies vary in size according to where they live and there is some variation between the three species.

Bare-nosed wombat adults on mainland Australia are usually about a metre long, measured from nose to tail, and they stand about 25 centimetres high at the shoulder. The average weight of mainland wombats is about 26 kilograms, but weights of 35 kilograms are not uncommon. Tasmanian wombats are slightly smaller. Robert Green and John Rainbird measured the body lengths and weights of a sample of 291 Tasmanian mainland wombats and found that the average length was about 81 centimetres and the average weight about 19.5 kilograms. In a similar study they found that the Flinders Island wombats are slightly smaller and lighter – about 78 centimetres long and 17.6 kilograms in weight.