# Outrage over influencer's wombat incident leads to visa review



The incident involving an American influencer and a baby wombat has sparked outrage in Australia and led to a review of her visa status. Samantha Strable, a 24-year-old who identifies as an “outdoor enthusiast & hunter,” posted a now-deleted video on social media this week that showed her snatching a wombat joey from its distressed mother during a roadside encounter. The footage captured her laughing while holding the joey by its front legs and running away, while a male companion filmed the event, further inflaming public sentiment against her actions.

The situation escalated when Australian Home Affairs Minister Tony Burke announced that her visa was under review, stating, "The department is now working through the conditions on her current visa and determining whether immigration law has been breached." He expressed a desire for her to leave Australia, remarking, “I can’t wait for Australia to see the back of this individual, I don’t expect she will return.” Prime Minister Anthony Albanese joined the chorus of criticism, labelling the act as an “outrage” and suggesting Strable might find better luck with more formidable Australian wildlife: “Take a baby crocodile from its mother and see how you go there, take another animal that can actually fight back rather than stealing a baby wombat from its mother.”

As public outrage grew, Strable obscured her social media accounts and could not be reached for comment. The wombat involved in the incident belongs to a species that is protected in Australia, further raising concerns among wildlife advocates regarding Strable's actions. Yolandi Vermaak, the founder of animal care charity Wombat Rescue, highlighted the potential risks of such disturbances, noting that separating a joey from its mother could result in the mother rejecting her offspring. She voiced grave concerns over the joey's health, mentioning visible signs of mange, and called for efforts to ensure both mother and baby receive necessary care.

Craig Foster, a former Australian footballer and sports analyst, condemned Strable's behaviour through social media, advising "Americans" to refrain from interacting with Australian wildlife unless under professional supervision. He stated, “Every animal and insect in Australia has evolved to eat you, bite you in half,” and characterised the nation as a “stress test for humans,” further underscoring the serious nature of mishandling native wildlife.

Government sources confirmed on Friday that Strable had since departed Australia and was en route back to the United States. Prior to this incident, she had previously applied for a position with the animal rights organisation PETA, but her application was rejected due to her background as an "avid hunter," which contradicted PETA's policies. Reports indicate that she had a history of controversial hunting practices, including killing wild pigs and deer in various countries.

In an ironic twist to her situation, she attempted to defend her actions in the wombat incident, claiming that she only held the joey for "one minute" and that no harm was done. However, her claims did little to pacify supporters of wildlife welfare, maintaining a spotlight on the ethical implications of her actions in Australia.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.krtv.com/influencer-from-montana-picks-up-baby-wombat-in-australia-sparks-outrage> - This article corroborates the incident involving an American influencer picking up a baby wombat in Australia, which sparked outrage and led to a review of her visa status. It also mentions the criticism from Australian officials and wildlife experts.
* <https://www.krtv.com/influencer-from-montana-picks-up-baby-wombat-in-australia-sparks-outrage> - The article further details the reaction of Australian Home Affairs Minister Tony Burke, who expressed a desire for the influencer to leave Australia, indicating that her visa was under review.
* <https://www.krtv.com/influencer-from-montana-picks-up-baby-wombat-in-australia-sparks-outrage> - It highlights the protected status of wombats in Australia and the potential harm caused by handling them, as noted by wildlife experts.
* <https://www.news.com.au/lifestyle/real-life/news-life/wombat-snatchers-shock-transformation-into-animal-hunter/news-story/9c6cee3c85cea355f9e941eab95c6015> - This article discusses the influencer's background as a hunter and her controversial actions, contrasting with her previous attempts to align with animal welfare organizations.
* <https://www.krtv.com/influencer-from-montana-picks-up-baby-wombat-in-australia-sparks-outrage> - It mentions the public's reaction and the calls for the influencer to be banned from returning to Australia due to her actions.
* <https://www.krtv.com/influencer-from-montana-picks-up-baby-wombat-in-australia-sparks-outrage> - The article also notes that the influencer has since departed Australia, as confirmed by government sources.