

WILDNEWS

Autumn 2010 Issue 56



*Wisdom is
Knowing
the Right
Questions to
Ask*

*Vet Check:
Medicating
Wildlife*



President's Report.

Karen Scott

I WOULD LIKE TO EXTEND A WARM WELCOME TO ALL OF OUR NEW MEMBERS. We have had a large number of new members over the past few months and I have had the privilege to meet or speak with most of you. I hope that your association with Wildcare is a long and positive one!

To our "old", or should I say "existing", members, thank you for your hard work over the busy Spring and Summer period. No matter the size of your contribution, together we are contributing hugely to the welfare of native wildlife in South-east Queensland and I thank you for your continued commitment and dedication.

Over the past few months, I have become aware of many of our members who do not fully understand the process of their Rehabilitation Permit Endorsement. To try to answer some of these questions and concerns, there is an

important article entitled "FAQ's about your Rehabilitation Permit" in this edition of the newsletter. I would urge all members who are rescuing or caring for wildlife through Wildcare, or who are intending to do so, to read the article very carefully. If you have any questions with regards to your Permit, please contact me to discuss them. This is very important information, as your Permit Endorsements come up for renewal with your membership by the end of June, 2010 and many members are not meeting the requirements to have their Permit renewed.

Don't forget that Wildcare is now also on FACEBOOK. We are trialling this over the next few months. You can find us on Facebook and request to join. Membership is for current members of Wildcare only.

A Warm Welcome to Our New Members

Wildcare Australia welcomes the following new members:

Kerrylin Buchanan, Tamra Tacklind, *Ashmore*; Corali & Aidan Philpott, *Bald Hills*; Christene and John Wilson, *Beenleigh*; Laura Warren, *Benowa Waters*; Alana Petie, *Boondall*; Jodi Jones, *Boyne Island*; Samantha, Isabella & Olivia Summerfield, Peggy Moore, *Buddina*; Natasha Kendall, *Bulimba*; Steve & Vicki Rayner, *Canungra*; Melissa Shay, *Carina*; Elsie Court, *Cornubia*; Annette & Jacqui Markey, *Elanora*; Erin Wallace, *Gilston*; Karla Carter, *Guanaba*; Yukiko White, *Hamilton*; Lewis McKillop & Tegan Swinbourne, *Indooroopilly*; Charmaine Brayley, Moaike Fluitsma, *Kippa-Ring*; Donna-Rose McAnaney, *Labrador*; Ally Beecm, *Mackenzie*; Drew Gould, *Main Beach*; Leonardi & Matthys Van Lille, *Mansfield*; Sandi & Trevor Lalor, *Monteray Keys*; Maria Vicai-Stones,

Morayfield; Lynda & David Delahoy, *Murgon*; Katherine Page, Shannon & Dianne Baker, *Nerang*; Elise Anderson, *Norman Park*; Narelle Bulman, *Ormeau*; Kylie Maher, *Ormeau Hills*; Kerry & Shannon Bell, *Pacific Pines*; Fletcher Morley & Chelsea Kynaston, Joelle, Gloria & Angel Hair, *Palm Beach*; Kim Stuart, *Paradise Point*; Perry Kollmorgen, *Riverhills*; Cassandra May, *Rochedale South*; Andrea Hudson, *Samford*; Lucinda White, *Shorncliffe*; Joanne Brierley, *Tallebudgera*; Glenys Carlson & Russell Clarke, Jess & Kathryn Lee, Samara Quirke, *The Gap*; Rosemary & Anthony Trentham, *Upper Coomera*; Hayleigh Farlow, *Warner*; Cecilia & Eric Michalowicz, *Widgee*; Gary Croker, *Wongawallan*.

By joining Wildcare Australia you are demonstrating your commitment to the welfare of Australia's native animals. Please don't hesitate to get involved in this, your organization. If you are unsure of where your personal niche may be, call our office and I'm sure we will be able to help you.

We hope you have a long and happy association with Wildcare Australia.

Our Mission

To protect and enhance the environment by providing a high standard of rescue, care and rehabilitation for sick, injured, orphaned and displaced native fauna with the goal of successful release into the natural environment.

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The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of WildcareAustralia or the editors.

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Newsletter submissions can be sent to news@wildcare.org.au



WILDNEWS Contents



FEATURE STORY - 14

*Wisdom is Knowing
the Right Questions to Ask.*



NEWS & ACTIVITIES

- President's Report - 2
- A Warm Welcome to our New Members - 2
- Record Keeper's Rap - 4
Mudgeeraba Show - 4
Volunteer Recognition - 4
- Management Committee Meeting Summary - 5
- Cat Safe Initiatives - 5

RESCUE

- Wildcare Rescues in the News! - 6
- Telephone Coordinator's Report - 7
- Princess - 7

REHABILITATION

- Vet Check: Medicating Wildlife - 8
- Species Coordinator Reports - 10
- Possum Email Group (PEG) - 13
- Wisdom is Knowing the Right Questions to Ask - 14
- FAQ: Wildcare Rehabilitation Permit - 15

EDUCATION

- Community Speakers Team - 16
- Education Report - 17
- Notes from an Enthusiastic Naturalist - 17
- Wildcare Training Schedule - 18
- Advertising & Supporters - 19
- Thank you to Wildlife Hospitals and Veterinarians - 20

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Record Keeper's Rap.

2009 RECORDS UPDATE: Thanks to everyone for responding to the request in the last newsletter for 2009 records, as I've had a heap come in since then! Even earlier ones - Yes, I will always accept them too.

Even though they still keep coming, the 2009 records received so far have been collated and used to provide data for much of the requests in the last two months, including:

- 2003-2008 Possum & Glider records, Brisbane area for Brisbane City Council grant application
- 2003-2009 Bahrs Scrub and Surrounding Towns Rescue/Carer Records
- 2003-2008 Records Summary Tables for revised Wildcare Orientation Manual
- 2009 Outcome Records for Currumbin Wildlife Hospital (all 2009 records associated with CWH)
- 2003-2009 Springbrook Road Trauma/Road Kill stats
- 2003-2009 Logan City Council Road Trauma/Road Kill stats
- 2003-2009 North Beaudesert/Logan Rescue/Carer Records.

Isn't it great that we can use the data from the records in these ways? Hopefully for those of you who find doing your records a chore (... oh come on, I know there's one or two of you out there), knowing

that the data is so beneficial makes submitting your records more worthwhile?

NEW RECORDS EMAIL: records@wildcare.org.au
We have recently shortened the email address for sending records, to make it easier for all. It is now quite simply, records@wildcare.org.au . The old email address is still being redirected to me for the time being, in case you are still using it. Also, when you email in your records, I will always reply (hopefully in the following week), so you will know that they have been received.

2010 RECORDS FORM

There have once again been some subtle changes to the Excel records form for 2010, mainly some extra pick-list options, based on omissions noticed or suggestions made by carers using the forms. You'll also see a (not-so-subtle) new column asking for council location. You don't need to fill this column in as I can do this, and definitely leave it blank if you are not sure which council it is, but this has been added to make it easier for me to pull records of animals rescued from specific council locations, and you'll see from the request list above that this is often being requested.

Kiersten Jones
Record Keeping Volunteer
records@wildcare.org.au

Mudgeeraba Show

Wildcare will participate again in the Mudgeeraba show on the 26 & 27 June, 2010.

Set up will occur on the 25 June. Anyone interested in assisting, please contact Trish Hales in the Wildcare Office on (07) 5527 2444 or via email office@wildcare.org.au.

Volunteer Recognition.

- **Liz Meffan** - For being so reliable! The emergency phone volunteers have a great means of communication, thanks to Liz!
- **Barry Johns** - For making possum boxes at cost price for so many years.
- **John Hanger** - For making possum boxes.
- **Eleanor Hanger and Renée Rivard** - For the professional work put into the Wildcare Newsletter.
- **Trish Hales and Roy Webster** - For keeping the Wildcare office running so professionally.
- **Patricia van de Berkt** - For volunteering on the emergency phone service and for doing a great job caring for wildlife.
- **Amy Whitham** - For taking on the position of Treasurer which has been a tremendous help to Karen Scott.
- **Katherine Page** - For volunteering in the Wildcare Office and being so keen to learn - she has attended just about every workshop offered.

Management Committee Meeting Summary

January/February/March

Business/Corporation

The Volunteer Manual has been revamped and a New Members kit assembled for circulation to all new members.

Wildcare has a Facebook page which is available to current members only.

2010 Annual General Meeting

This year the AGM will be held on Saturday 19th June 2010 at the Beenleigh Police Citizens Youth Club, 28 Alamein St, Beenleigh.

Education - Workshops

The Education Calendar for May – August 2010 will be available on the website soon.

Grants and Donations

Wildcare received donations totaling \$2,219 from Gold Coast Postforming, Westpac Gift matching and CBA Brisbane Customer Service Team.

Members/Memberships

All new and renewing membership applications were approved.

Wildcare Publicity

Wildcare has continued to feature in some fantastic media releases which were organized by Liz Meffan.

Tracy Paroz
Secretary

Cat Safe Initiatives

PLEASE HELP PROMOTE BREEDER PERMITS AND CAT SAFE ENCLOSURES TO HELP KEEP CATS AND WILDLIFE SAFE.

Gold Coast City Council and the Animal Welfare League (AWL) Qld in conjunction with all stakeholders including Wildcare Australia have been working as the Gold Coast Companion Animal Stakeholder Coalition for the last 16 months to introduce 2 important initiatives to reduce the oversupply of cats. The first initiative is Breeder Permits and a Code of Practice to set standards of care. This will not only help prevent poor standard breeding but also require kittens to be desexed prior to sale or transfer at 10 weeks of age.

The second initiative is to introduce a Cat Safe Fencing Campaign which is about to run for 2 months and will hopefully be ready by May/June, 2010.

Wildcare Australia is seeking your help with this campaign to educate cat owners about how they can keep their cats safely in their own yard through a range of options, from keeping cats indoors to cat safe fencing and enclosures.

Detailed information about the range of options and a competition to win cat safe fencing will be on the AWL Qld website www.awlqld.com.au and Gold Coast City Council website when the campaign starts. The options include indoors only, outdoor enclosures attached to the house with a cat flap, and inverted or roller



attachments to fencing for part of the yard. AWL Qld is also setting up a display of the options at their Coombabah and Stapylton Rehoming Centres. Please help spread the word to all your friends and neighbours.

In the 2008 to 2009 financial year, almost 1400 cats were handed in or collected by Animal Management Officers as strays on the Gold Coast. Over 90% of these cats were healthy and able to be handled, suggesting they were owned or had been owned at some point.

If cat owners can become aware of how they can take better care of their cats to prevent them wandering and accept that fencing a cat is possible and just as important as fencing a dog, **it will be very beneficial for cats, their owners, wildlife, and the whole community.**

This program will also emphasise new State requirements to microchip and register cats so that, if cats do escape, they can be returned straight to their owners by the public or Animal Management Officers rather than be impounded. Currently, 89% of cats that come into the pound are unclaimed by their owners, compared with only 25% of dogs unclaimed.

Wildcare Rescues in the News!

Publicity/Media Report 2010

Since the last newsletter, you may have noticed that Wildcare has been in the news from time to time. Here are only some of the latest updates.

Channel 9's "The Shak" is no longer being produced, however before it ceased production we managed to film three very good segments. By now they have all gone to air. We have copies of these segments thanks to Channel 9 forwarding us a lovely DVD they put together. A possum segment followed by a segment on twin joey Eastern Grey Kangaroos and also a diverse bird programme were all completed successfully. Thanks to everyone who took part. I hope you enjoy your DVD. We have spare copies of these, so contact a committee member for more details.

In August 2009, Channel 9 local Gold Coast news filmed the release of 'Whitlam' the koala. We thought this was pretty special as releasing koalas back into the wild is becoming somewhat of a rarity, particularly on the Gold Coast!

In November, we completed a newspaper article on baby birds and the whole bucket scenario encouraging the public to help. We also received some major coverage on Channel 7 and in the Sunday Mail during a koala rescue at Currumbin Waters, where fire crews were required to assist. Finally, in November we heard ABC radio interview Karen Scott about her koala joeys.

One of our young members, Jasmine Rasmussen, aged 8 put together an advertisement which was aired on Brisbane's River 94.9FM radio station about Wildcare and what we do. Jasmine also completed a fantastic interview early one Saturday morning.

There have been articles in various newspapers, including the Courier Mail, the Gold Coast Bulletin and The Australian. These have mainly focused on animals in care that had been orphaned, or through some bizarre circumstance have been brought to the attention of the media.

January, this year, saw the media harassing Rowley Goonan about the lake situation at Pacific Pines. Rowley was involved in several rescues of swans, their eggs and babies, and also ducks from the toxic lake that caused the infection of our native water birds with botulism. The council ended up a bit red-faced but we were merely once again there to conduct our good work.

In February we saw Rowley, with Dianna Smith up to her neck in the Pimpama River, rescuing a Brahminy Kite. The bird was caught up in fishing line and was dangling in the middle of the river

from a Telstra line! Channel 9 got that one too, as well as some reporters from other media sources. Excellent help was received from Energex. Also in February, ABC Radio broadcasted promotional/educational talks given by Rowley, who spoke mainly about waterbirds. I was also interviewed on Brisbane's 4BC after a Tawny Frogmouth flew into the kitchen of one of the announcers one night.

The Department of Environment and Resource Management, under whose authority we operate, have strict guidelines covering the use of animals for publicity purposes. So we are limited in what we can cover and must apply for a permit, which takes time, before any photos and interviews can take place. However don't let that put you off as it can be done. The only stipulation is that no visibly sick or injured animals may be used. As far as rescues go, this is out of our control as most times the media just turn up and film us in the middle of the rescue! It is a good idea to wear your Wildcare shirts when you attend rescues as situations can change rapidly and the media have a habit of 'popping up' when you least expect it.

We always send out media releases to all outlets when stories or items of interest arise. However they get very picky at times and do not announce everything we send through. I am mainly referring to the large amount of habitat destruction in South East Queensland. We have constantly sent through information on areas where this has been quite noticeable and we want to speak out, however have been refused. I know you are all passionate about this, so we need you to know we are trying.

Our aim is to give you, the carers, the opportunity to educate the public about the species you care for...and to keep me busier with all of your interesting creatures and information.

The Gold Coast Sun regularly features articles with a nature-based theme, so if you have a good story that may be of interest, or if you have wildlife in care that you feel needs media exposure, please contact me.

With National Volunteer Week coming up in May, we are working on some media coverage to increase Wildcare Australia's profile. If you have any good ideas, please contact me at 0419 684461 or lizmf@bigpond.com

Liz Meffan
PR/Media Wildcare

Telephone Coordinator's Report



As I write this for the newsletter we are still singing the same song, "we need more phone operators!"

Only three hours a month will help us out immensely. That's not much to ask for. Most of our current dedicated team of operators do much more than that and would appreciate a break, I am sure.

Also our overnight people could do with a break – so if you haven't been on the phones for some time, it's time you called us and helped again.

A regular shift is not necessary as the rosters are put out a month in advance so you can choose what suits your lifestyle. We are grateful for any help at all.

There is good training provided, help available at all hours should you need assistance, and weekly updates on any information you will require. We couldn't make it any easier for you!

You operate from the comfort of your own home and now is the best time to start as the 'busy' season has slowed down.

Doing the phones is really the best experience you can get if you want to become involved with rescuing and caring for our native wildlife. Ask any of our operators, the calls are very diverse indeed!

If you are a current member and have completed Orientation then we need you now.

Call on 5527 2444 for more information.

Liz Meffan
Telephone Coordinator

Princess.

Her history is a mystery and a sad one indeed, judging by her appearance. However she, with four friends, came to Wildcare's attention after they had been dropped anonymously at a vet surgery. With appropriate care, the correct diet, housing and management, her condition improved and after a very long time in care, she was finally able to be released.



THE GOLD COAST REPTILE CENTRE (G.C.R.C)

We offer the following services:

Removal and Relocation
Education
Demonstration
Reptile Courses

Handling
Husbandry
Identification
Enquiries

For more information, phone 0430 288 826.

VetCheck *Medicating Wildlife*

Dr. Amber Gillett

Australian Wildlife Hospital

Important Information for Wildlife Rehabilitators

A large proportion of sick, injured and orphaned wildlife will require veterinary assistance during their rehabilitation period for injuries and conditions ranging from mild dehydration and bruising through to extensive wounds and fractures.

Pharmacology is the study of how drugs work in the body and encompasses methods of absorption, metabolism, distribution and excretion. As a wildlife rehabilitator, it is a key factor that you have a basic appreciation of veterinary pharmacology in order to understand the importance of appropriate and precise ways to medicate your animals.

The following information is provided to assist wildlife rehabilitators understand these fundamentals.

Definitions

Efficacy: The ability of a drug to produce the desired therapeutic effect.

GIT: Gastrointestinal tract (includes stomach, intestines, caecum and colon).

Contraindication: A factor that renders the administration of a drug or the carrying out of a medical procedure inadvisable.

Analgesia: Insensibility to pain without the loss of consciousness.

Off-label: An approved drug legally prescribed by a veterinarian for a purpose for which it has not been specifically approved.

Bacterial resistance: The capacity of an organism/bacteria to survive exposure to a toxic agent/drug that was formerly effective against it. This is often due to a genetic mutation in the organism/bacteria and selection for genes in the organism/bacteria that confer protection from the agent/drug.

Commonly Used Drugs

The most common types of medications used in wildlife are:

Analgesic – an agent that relieves pain (eg, Painstop, Methone, Temgesic).

Antibiotic – an agent able to inhibit or kill another organism (eg, Clavulox, Septrin, Betamox, Baytril).

Sedative – depresses the central nervous system and tends to cause reduced nervousness or excitement (eg, Pamlin, midazolam).

General Anaesthetic - induces unconsciousness; can be administered as an injectable or inhalant formulation (eg, Alfaxan, isoflurane).

Anti-inflammatory – depresses inflammatory mediators and subsequently relieves pain, swelling and fever (eg, Metacam, Rimadyl).

Prescriptions

All Schedule 4 medications must be prescribed by a veterinarian who has examined the animal. You should never administer a drug to an animal that was prescribed for another animal, even if the animal is exhibiting the same clinical signs. Do not ask a veterinarian to prescribe a medication for an animal that they have not seen, as this is illegal.

All medications prescribed by a vet should be clearly labeled with the date prescribed, the name and species of the animal, the drug name, the drug concentration, the dosage, and the frequency and length of administration. If you do not understand the instructions on the drug label, clarify the details with the veterinarian or vet nurse.

Storing Medications

Check with the prescribing vet as to how the medication should be stored. Some drugs must be stored in a refrigerator. All drugs should be kept in a dry location out of direct sunlight. If you are unsure how a drug should be stored, place it in the refrigerator until you can clarify with a vet or vet nurse.

Medications are not registered for use past their expiry date and should not be used unless advised otherwise by a veterinarian. Under a veterinarian's discretion, they can be used off-label.

Do not freeze unused portions of medications. Freezing can destroy the active ingredients of the medication and render it useless.

Many antibiotics come in a powder form and have a limited shelf-life once reconstituted. This is often no longer than 14 days, however always check with the prescribing veterinarian about the shelf-life of the medication and do not use it past that date unless advised otherwise by the veterinarian.

Correct Dosing

In order for veterinarians to correctly calculate the dose of a medication, the animal must be weighed accurately at the time of prescription. Also important is for young, rapidly growing animals, or those that are on medications for long periods of time, to be weighed frequently so that the dose of medication can be adjusted accordingly on a frequent basis by the veterinarian.

It is very easy for growing animals to become under-dosed if the amount of medication is not frequently recalculated according to increasing body weight. This can lead to medications not working or the development of bacterial resistance to the drug.

continued on next page

VetCheck continued...

Administration Timing

All drugs prescribed need to be administered within set time frames to ensure maximum efficacy. For example, an oral medication may be prescribed to be given twice daily and is often written as BID. This means it should be given 12 hours apart each day. An injectable medication may be prescribed to be given once per day, written as SID, which means it should be given at the same time each day (24 hours apart).

Sometimes medications need to be given through the night. For example, if a medication is prescribed as to be given four times per day, QID, then it needs to be administered every 6 hours which will unfortunately mean medicating through the night at the same time every night for the duration of treatment.

Abiding by the times for which the vet prescribes the medications, is absolutely essential for maximum drug efficacy.

Factors Affecting Certain Medication Administration

Some drugs need to be administered to an animal in specific ways to ensure maximum efficacy.

One example is the administration of Nilstat (nystatin). This drug works through contact and not systemic absorption. When treating thrush in the gastrointestinal tract for example, the Nilstat needs to contact as much of the thrush as possible to work effectively. In order for this

to be achieved, it needs to be administered when there is no food or the least amount of food as possible in the GIT. This is generally 30 to 60 minutes before the next feed, when most of the last feed has emptied from the stomach. By adhering to this rule, the Nilstat can then potentially contact the thrush for up to 60 minutes before more food is placed in the GIT.

If you have been prescribed a medication with which you are not familiar, ensure that you speak with the vet and are well informed of any special requirements in this regard.

Length of Administration

The prescribing vet will instruct you how long the medication should be given. You should ensure that you follow these instructions exactly. Do not stop the medication without instruction from the vet, even if the animal appears to have improved. Many medications need to be prescribed for a set length of time in order to be effective.

Contraindications

It is essential that you inform the vet of any other medications that are currently being given to your animal including non-prescription drugs, vitamins and supplements. Some drugs will react negatively with other drugs and supplements which can have serious side effects. Ensure that you inform the vet if you are using anything such as calcium supplements, vitamins, probiotics, Nilstat, Painstop, infant paracetamol, etc.

COMMONLY USED ABBREVIATIONS

in veterinary pharmacology

SID	Once daily	PO or p.o.	Orally or by mouth (per os)
BID	Twice daily	IM or i/m	Intramuscularly
TID	Three times daily	IV or i/v	Intravenously
QID	Four times daily	SC, SQ or s/c	Subcutaneously
qd	Every day (same as SID)	ml	Milliliter
q8h	Every 8 hours	mg	Milligram
q12h	Every 12 hours	g	Gram

Vets frequently see wildlife whose condition has deteriorated due to the incorrect administration of medications. By ensuring that you have a basic understanding of veterinary pharmacology, you will be able to assist with providing the best possible care for your animal.

Coordinator Reports

Bats

THE BAT SEASON HAS BEEN REALLY BUSY and I am afraid this newsletter is not going to be the bearer of good news about our beloved flying puppies. The seasons have changed dramatically. The bats are either confused or they know more than we do about what is happening out there.

This year's season started with a lower than usual number of baby bats coming into care, which from the bats' point of view meant that they either decided not to have so many this year, or that things were looking pretty good out there, food-wise. The adults coming into care were all around the 1kg mark and the babies were 100g or more. From the carers' point of view, it meant that we had a little more sleep this season and the knowledge that most bubs were being wild reared - a better outcome for them.

Sadly, the weather decided to change. The rain washed most of the nectar and pollen from the bumper flowering, which in turn, put a strain on the bats. They had to start foraging earlier some nights and had to forage lower for food. The consequences of these changes started to impact the bats. We have had a larger number of injured bats coming into care, with injuries predominately from barb wire, head trauma (collisions with cars) and, because they are foraging lower, a more than usual number of dog attacks.

Around airports the earlier fly-out times put the bats and humans more at risk, as the flight patterns of the planes had to change at a moment's notice. Bats have pretty predictable fly-out times, leaving just on dusk and returning at dawn, so arrangements for the air traffic to modify its arrival and departure times are made in advance.

When weather and food shortage affect bat foraging behaviour, the bats don't inform us before hand (a danger to both the bats and humans). We need to be more circumspect in our decision making and alert to the consequences of change, not only human induced but also that caused by natural events. When Mother Nature decides she has had enough and sends these little reminders, we need to lift our game before she really gets serious.

To make matters worse, the bat season didn't end and the babies are still coming in. As late as last week we had a 70g baby, black boy, making a total of eleven babies out of season so far. Other groups are reporting similar rescues. This will mean we need to rethink our rehabbing and release procedures to ensure these little guys have the best chance of survival on release. In previous years, mothers have timed their births to coincide with the height of the flowering season, so the bubs get the best

start in life. If we are to follow our normal release time frame we need to make sure that conditions are optimal out there for their release. In some instances it may mean we either need to release earlier or release at a later stage when the conditions are more conducive to survival.

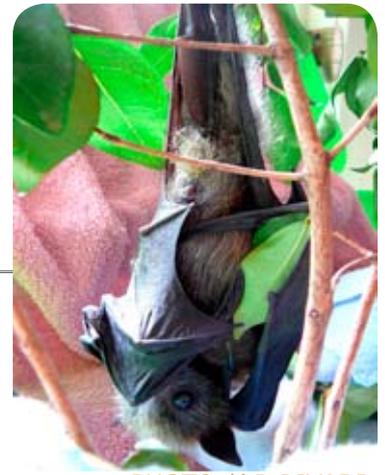


PHOTO // R RIVARD

Our recent workshop revealed an increasing number of people interested in caring for, not just baby bats, but adults as well. We also had quite a number of people from other groups attend. Thank you to those people. It is always great to share our different techniques for caring and rescuing. Wildlife care is a continual learning process and what works for one may not work for another, or we may not have thought of that different way of doing something.

With the increase in injuries that we are experiencing, there is a need for more people to bring their wound management skills up to date, so that we are able to rehabilitate and release the animals back to the wild instead of having to euthanase them.

The Grey-headed Flying Fox is still in dire straits. The decline is ever increasing and we are in danger of losing them before we lose our beloved koalas which would follow a close second.

Terry and I are off to the USA and of course we will be visiting Lubee, BCI in Austin with a visit to Braken Cave to watch the flyout of 30 million little freetails. Sadly the US bats are in a worse predicament than our bats here, with the spread of White Nose Syndrome. A recent visit to Narrowleaf by bat researchers from the US brought closer to home the need to find out how to treat this virus before it completely destroys all their bats. Imagine how many more insects we would have in a world without microbats; consider the devastation to crops and the increase in insect-transmitted diseases. This would not just affect the United States, but would impact on other countries as well. It is about balance in nature. Take one thing out of the equation and it upsets the whole balance.

Enough gloom and doom! The babies we had in care this year, although small in number, have been released. It was a delight to have them in care, although a joy tempered with sadness at the thought of the mother bats that had to lose their lives for us to have this experience. Once again, thank you to all the bat carers for their help in caring for those babies and continuing to care for the late bubs. Enjoy them while you can.

Coordinator Reports continued...

A huge thank you to Jim and Greer McNeill who have retired and will be moving to their property during the next month or so, to take life at a slower pace. I will sadly miss Greer for all her rescues around Helensvale and Southport. She has more than made my life easier. Greer is not escaping all responsibilities however, she will continue to look

after bats around Bundaberg and will be visiting for the workshops, so she doesn't get off that easily. In her own words, "you usually have to die to get out of wildlife caring." We will miss you greatly.

Trish Wimberley

Birds

AFTER ANOTHER EXTREMELY BUSY BABY BIRD SEASON, I am sure we can all be quite relieved that things are getting quieter. This is a good time to relax and also to get cages and aviaries scrubbed and prepared for when the next season hits!

I would like to welcome all the new bird carers for the next busy season. It was great to see such a good turnout at the last course and to see so many people keen to help the native birds who need our help so much.

There are some things and changes you all need to be aware of, so I am using this to inform you all.

First and foremost, remember that you must hold a Rehabilitation Permit in order to care for any native animal. Check your records, if you do not have a permit then you are not licensed and therefore should not be caring for any native animals, including birds. It is imperative you have a current Permit Endorsement. If you have any questions about your Permit, please contact one of the following:

Karen Scott - karenscott01@bigpond.com
Tracy Paroz - secretary@wildcare.org.au

For those carers who do have a Permit Endorsement with Wildcare, you will note that the Permit limits you to 20 animals in care. If you do require a Permit for more than 20 animals, particularly those who may be caring for ducklings, you will need to apply for a Permit Endorsement to cover you for more than 20 animals.

When assessing applications for Permit



PHOTO // JM HANGER

Endorsements, Wildcare requires that carers up to date with their training requirements. This means that if you have not completed a Basic Workshop for Native Birds, and/or Advanced Bird Workshop together with a recent workshop in First Aid for Wildlife in the last year, you may not be able to care for birds this season. We need all the help we can get so please make sure you are up to date with your courses. This is a requirement for all species and carers so please check the Wildcare Calendar for the next workshops in your area. If we get a large number of carers requesting more courses, we will try to squeeze some more in.

That brings me to my next topic! Closer to the busy season you will again receive a call asking what species you are able/willing to care for and what facilities you have. We want to be on top of this so we can make sure we place birds with the most appropriate carers. Maybe use this quiet time to consider what species you would be interested in caring for. Please be aware of things such as diet, frequency of feedings and times of day for feeding, so you know you are able to provide the necessary care, correctly and with confidence. Some species can be rather costly so please take this into account before launching into something which you may not be able to continue.

We are still looking for someone to take on the role of Coordinator of Insectivores and we also need help with the Waterbirds.

Our Brisbane Coordinator, Heather Frankcom, has been fortunate enough to have a gentleman donate over 90 kilos of his handrearing mixes, for wildlife carers to participate in his clinical testing and evaluation of the products. There is a lori mix and a granivore mix. It is all packed into boxes at Heather's place at present, but she is happy to pack it into smaller bags and distribute it to carers, who are interested in assisting with the trials. You would need to fill out a form while using the mix. Heather has started crop feeding Crested Pigeons with it and they are thriving! If you are interested, call Heather on 0438 241154.

If you are reading this and are not receiving regular bird updates, then please email me and I will add you to the list. If you are caring for birds this season, you MUST be on this list.

Coordinator Reports continued...

Any interesting pictures or stories are always welcome, so let me know of any weird or interesting happenings!

If you know of any cages, aviaries, old guinea pig runs (ideal for ducklings) or any other 'birdie' style enclosures, please let me know on 55454799 or 0419 684461 or lizmf@bigpond.com.

Liz Meffan



PHOTO // JM HANGER

Echidnas and Small Mammals

THE PAST FEW MONTHS HAVE SEEN A STEADY FLOW OF YOUNG DISPERSING ECHIDNAS COMING INTO CARE. Many of these have been found by concerned residents worried that they might become injured or may be too young to survive. After a thorough veterinary check-up at the Currumbin Wildlife Hospital, they have all been released back into suitable habitat near where they were found.

We currently still have a few dispersing young in care that have come in malnourished, dehydrated and/or injured. All of these youngsters are expected to make a full recovery and be released in the coming month or so.

I have had very few reports of bandicoots and small mammals coming into care, so hopefully there is plenty of food out there for them and they are staying out of trouble.

Karen Scott

Koalas

THE PAST FEW MONTHS HAVE BEEN EXTREMELY QUIET ... (TOUCH WOOD). We have had very few trauma koalas coming into care and only a small handful of diseased koalas requiring rescue. Hopefully this quiet period will continue, particularly after the harrowing year we had in 2009. Koalas have received a large amount of media attention in the past six months. This has been much needed in order to raise the awareness of the general public to the plight of not only our national icon, but of all Australian wildlife.

The past few weeks have seen the release of several young koalas that came into care last year. Charley Evergreen, an older infant (2.2kg), came into care on her own and was suffering from Chlamydia. Charley was released back to Elanora recently.

Two hand-reared young males were also released. Davey and Little Tim came into care after they were

both found on their own at Currumbin Waters and Tallebudgera Valley respectively. Both youngsters were hand-reared and then placed into the new plantation area at the Australian Wildlife Hospital (AWH) for the final stage of their rehabilitation.

This was a great opportunity for the young boys to develop the necessary climbing skills and muscle tone that they would need to be able to be successfully released back to the wild. This is a fantastic facility that is offered by AWH – although catching, weighing and monitoring the youngsters when they didn't want to come down from the trees was a bit of a challenge for the Hospital staff. Many thanks to the staff and volunteers who put in many long hours at the Hospital caring for these animals.

Karen Scott

Possums

OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS WE HAVE SEEN POSSUMS IN CARE THAT ARE NOT DOING WELL; poor fur condition, poor body condition, and even, dare I say it, faeces or dried milk on the fur. It is a good idea to constantly review our management of the animals with these points in mind:

Coordinator Reports continued...

Hygiene: Keep everything clean – your hands, the animal (clean spilt milk from fur immediately), toilet as required, ensure clean bedding, cages, aviaries, utensils.

Feeding: Check easy reference guide (for guidance only). Ensure correct volume and strength of milk for age and stage of development. Use Impact (speak with coordinator). Large quantity (not a little posy) and variety of native vegetation (increase from small quantity in carry cage to bucketful per possum in aviary). Small quantity of supplement. (see notes)

Stress free environment: Housed in quiet area, far from pets and natural predators, one handler and not shown to others or allowed to be handled by others—tempting though it may be. Avoid smoking or using strong chemicals around the animal.

Pre-release: Fur condition should be like a Chinese carpet. Possum should be very familiar with its natural diet (check easy reference guide), healthy (not fat), strong and becoming independent. If sending your possum to a pre-release carer, please provide a possum box (for external use) which can be used in the aviary and later put up in a tree.

Please try to get to the workshops. There is always something new to learn and we have updated the notes and guides again.

Love your possums (thanks, Kathy K.) by giving them the best possible care. If you have any questions, concerns or just want to clarify something, please don't hesitate to ask. If you have made any interesting observations, please let us know. We are all learning.

Eleanor Hanger

Are you a possum carer?

Have you joined Wildcare's Possum Email Group (PEG)?

PEG is an email-based network of possum carers that has been in operation in the Brisbane area for over 12 months and is used to place possums with carers or to find 'buddies' for orphaned joeys.

It has also been used as a way of sharing information and advice through 'discussion forums', where a carer may post a question and group members provide feedback.

Feedback from members has been very positive with carers feeling better supported and possums being placed in a timely manner.



PHOTO // C OERTEL

Currently, PEG operates quite simply through the Brisbane Possum Coordinator, Caroline Oertel. If you would like to know more or become a member of PEG, please email Caroline at bungletheowl@bigpond.com.



PHOTO // JM HANGER

A Quokka (*Setonix brachyurus*) found in South-west Western Australia.

Common on some offshore islands, such as Rottnest, but rare on the mainland due to fox predation and habitat loss.

Wisdom is Knowing the Right Questions to Ask.

People tell me I'm a good carer and, for the sake of this argument, let's assume that is correct. But what does 'good carer' mean? I would like to share the story of Buggles to illustrate what I think is a 'good carer'.

Buggles is a female Common Brushtail Possum. She had been with a member of the public for a couple of months and when she came to me she weighed 140g. She was fully furred and fluffy. I estimated that she should have weighed about 450g. As I write this, she is doing well because I am a 'good carer' – so people keep telling me.

I think a good carer has three things: experience, caring vets and a supportive carer network. I have experience. Over the last ten years, I have raised about 20 brushies from little to release and have mentored other carers through the raising of that many again. I am by no means the most experienced carer around but these are the sorts of numbers I think we are talking about when we say someone is experienced. What that means is that I am familiar with the normal developmental milestones of brushtail possums. It also means that I have all the food products and supplements we use to raise babies, I know the early signs of trouble ahead, and I have appropriate bedding and heating equipment, and so on. Knowing what to have in the cupboard is acquired as we gain experience.

With experience also comes an appreciation of the commitment required to care for wildlife. Buggles required feeding all through the night and bag/pouch changes every few hours. On about the third day, with eyes hanging out, I was up at 6:00 a.m. to sew more pouches because mine were all in the wash or on the line in the rain. But I knew up front this would be the case and chose to keep Buggles with me. Maybe responsibility is a better word than commitment. It is about being aware of what you are taking on and seeing it through.

I have access to great vets. They are not all wildlife vets but they are good vets and they care about wildlife. Buggles was taken straight to the Australian Wildlife Hospital for an initial assessment. She was suffering from severe malnutrition and dehydration and had a mild candida infection. All of this

was attributed to carer error so the treatment plan was for supportive care and good food to build her back up, and medication for the candida. Candida (or yeast) is a common and easily fixed problem when mild so did not complicate things too much. Having ruled out major medical issues, I came home and linked up with my local vet surgery where treatments such as subcutaneous fluids and vitamin supplements were adjusted on a daily basis. These vets were willing to try things. On about day four, I was feeling we were fighting a losing battle and took Buggles in to be euthanased but the vet had one more thing to try and that became a major turning point for her. Thanks Dr Bernie!

While my first call was to a vet, my second call was to my possum coordinator. I called on our carer network for advice. I was humbled by the quick, supportive and incredibly useful feedback. Other people had successfully brought possums back from the brink and did not hold back in sharing their experiences with me. They were also very encouraging – telling me that what I was already doing was good while at the same time adding a few extra tips that I think made a huge difference. Buggles began to blossom and I really began to believe I could save her. Time will tell what the final outcome will be.

What makes me a 'good carer' for Buggles is not just my skills and experience but the skills and experience of at least ten other people who also contributed to this story. A 'good carer' is a community not an individual and I take the praise for being Buggles' good carer on behalf of the community of people of which I am but one.

Deborah Turnbull



PHOTO // ADAM JWC, COURTESY OF WIKIPEDIA

FAQ: Wildcare Rehabilitation Permit

Do I need a license or permit to care for wildlife?

Yes. Native wildlife is protected and you must hold a license/permit in order to legally hold them.

If you are rescuing and/or caring for wildlife, you must hold a Permit.

How do I get a Permit?

You can apply for a Permit through Wildcare Australia, Inc or you can apply directly to the Department of Environment and Resource Management (DERM) for a Permit. To get a Permit through Wildcare, you must complete and submit a Request for Permit Endorsement. This is then assessed by the Wildcare Committee.

How does Wildcare assess my request for a Permit?

We look at a number of factors to determine whether a Permit will be issued to you under Wildcare's Group Permit. The factors that we take into account are:

1. Are you active within Wildcare? That means do you undertake rescues, are you actively caring for wildlife and do you report incoming animals to appropriate species coordinators.
2. Do you submit Carers Records to Wildcare? If you do not submit records then Wildcare will assume that you are either not caring for wildlife (and therefore do not require a Permit) or are caring for wildlife either under an individual permit or through another wildlife care group. You need to submit Carers' Records to Wildcare on a regular basis in order to be granted a Permit.
3. Are you up to date with your training? You must have completed the compulsory Wildcare training (Orientation Program and First Aid for Native Wildlife). You must also complete at least one training workshop EACH YEAR for the species that you are caring for. This workshop could either be a basic or advanced workshop for that species, or could be an advanced workshop such as Fluid Therapy, Advanced First Aid or Anatomy and Physiology.

What is a "Conditional Permit"?

If you have been unable to satisfy all of the above requirements, Wildcare may (at its discretion) issue you with a conditional Permit. This means that the Permit will state that certain conditions must be met within a specified time period. For example, if you are not submitting Carers' Records, your Permit may be issued conditionally upon you submitting outstanding records. A Permit may also be issued conditionally upon you updating your training requirements, particularly for carers who have not attended a training workshop for many years.

If you do not comply with the conditions noted on your Permit, then it is likely that your Permit will NOT be renewed.

Why do I have to keep my training up to date to keep my Permit?

As a wildlife carer, you are given the privilege of caring for these amazing animals. As they have very specialised diets and housing requirements, we feel that it is important that you are conversant with the most up-to-date methods of care and management so that you can do the very best by the animals in your care. We do not feel that it is too much to ask that you dedicate at least one day a year to attending a training workshop to expand your skills and knowledge. Even if you care for a variety of species, you still only need to dedicate one day a year for each of those species. Things are constantly changing in the wildlife rehabilitation industry and it is important that we all keep abreast of those developments.

What if my application for a Permit is denied?

If you feel that your application has not been accurately assessed, you should contact the Wildcare Secretary and provide more information on your status as a wildlife carer through Wildcare. The Committee will then re-assess your Application.

Can I have a Permit through Wildcare if I have a Permit through another group?

We would prefer that all wildlife carers maintain only ONE Permit. We discourage carers from holding Permits under multiple care groups and/or DERM. If you hold multiple Permits, then no one really knows under whom you are operating. None of those care groups will know whether you should be submitting records to them or not, nor will they know which group is monitoring you. This makes management difficult on the part of the wildlife care group.

If you hold a Permit through another care group, you are still very welcome to be a member of Wildcare, be on our Rescue List and have animals placed in your care through Wildcare. If we know that you have a Permit through another group though, we will not expect to receive Carers' Records from you as we will assume that you are lodging those with the group that has issued you with a Permit. In this instance, you would be classified as an "Associate Carer". However, you may be asked to provide us with a copy of your Permit to ensure that you are appropriately licensed prior to us placing animals with you. In this case, we would also expect that if an animal was placed in your care through Wildcare, that you would report that animal to the appropriate Coordinator in the group that has issued you with a Permit.

Who do I ask if I have any questions?

If you have any questions regarding whether your training is up to date or about the conditions on your Permit, please contact Karen Scott by email at education@wildcare.org.au.

Community Involvement

Community Speakers Team

LAURA REEDER, WHO HEADS THE COMMUNITY SPEAKERS TEAM, HAS BEEN BUSY GIVING TALKS AND ORGANIZING FUTURE PRESENTATIONS TO PUBLICIZE WILDCARE AUSTRALIA.

RECENT EVENTS

Wednesday, 24th March Laura went to the Gold Coast Library in Southport and gave an informal talk to about eighteen people. She spoke about her personal history as a carer, shared stories and experiences both funny and sad. She explained what Wildcare is about, the work we do, how to become a carer and answered questions. Wildcare brochures were distributed.

On Monday, 5 April Laura spoke to a group of Rotary Group Study Exchange scholars from the Philippines about being a wildlife carer in Australia and the environmental impact of development on habitat.

On the 13th of April, there was a presentation at the TAFE at Alexandra Hills.

A major event at which Wildcare had a stall was the ABC Gardening Expo from the 16th to 18th of April at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre. Our focus was on Caring for Wildlife in Your Backyard.

Wildcare had a display and gave presentations as part of the Backyard Creatures Program. You could Go Organic in the Organic Circle, Get Your Hands Dirty in the Potting Shed, Indulge in a Garden Feast at the Cooking Stage, have something For Kids at the ABC for Kids Activity area or if you had a question head to the Ask it, Solve it stage. There was something for everyone.

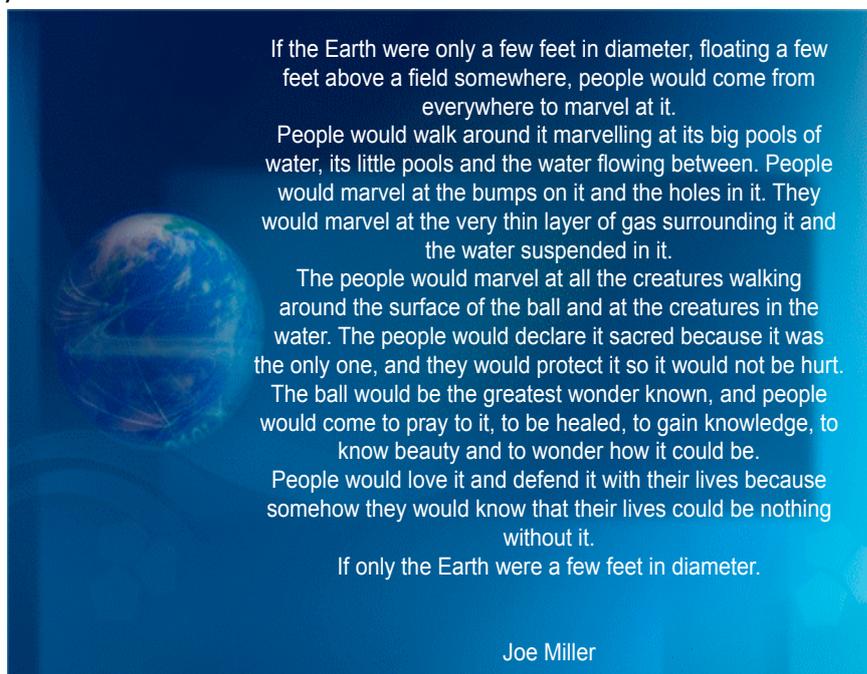
COMING EVENTS

Other events which we have on our calendar are:

1-2 May	Maleny Wood Expo
10 May	Beechmont Land Care
26 May	Gold Coast and Hinterland Environmental Centre (Gecko)
5 June	Logan Eco Action Festival (LEAF)
13 June	Gecko's Green Day Out Kurrawa Park
26 June	Wildcare on the Gold Coast
26-27 June	Mudgeeraba Show
24 July	Browns Plains City Farmers Display
25 July	Wild Logan – Oxley Catchment Group, LCC sponsor part of Peaks to Point
14 August	Rotary Expo, Karana Downs
18 September	Gold Coast City Council - Our Habitat, Our Home

If you are available to assist with any of these events, either by public speaking or manning stalls, please contact Laura. For those new to community involvement, we give full support, training and assistance. We have a wide selection of photos, plus display boards, banners, marquees and tables. If you are planning or involved in activities in your local area and would like to have Wildcare represented, just let us know. We'll help you put together a display, a slide show or whatever works best. Please remember that representatives of Wildcare should always wear a shirt or vest with our logo.

Contact Laura on talks@wildcare.org.au or 3201 1078.



If the Earth were only a few feet in diameter, floating a few feet above a field somewhere, people would come from everywhere to marvel at it.

People would walk around it marvelling at its big pools of water, its little pools and the water flowing between. People would marvel at the bumps on it and the holes in it. They would marvel at the very thin layer of gas surrounding it and the water suspended in it.

The people would marvel at all the creatures walking around the surface of the ball and at the creatures in the water. The people would declare it sacred because it was the only one, and they would protect it so it would not be hurt.

The ball would be the greatest wonder known, and people would come to pray to it, to be healed, to gain knowledge, to know beauty and to wonder how it could be.

People would love it and defend it with their lives because somehow they would know that their lives could be nothing without it.

If only the Earth were a few feet in diameter.

Joe Miller

Education Report

I AM VERY PLEASED TO REPORT THAT THE TRAINING PROGRAM OFFERED BY WILDCARE IS CONTINUING TO RECEIVE POSITIVE RECOGNITION from both wildlife carers and other organizations as well. This is testament to the many long hours that many of our Coordinators and Trainers put into the group's education program.

We have recently updated our Volunteer Manual and new members are now receiving their new Membership Kit when they join. The new Manual is more precise and clearer and has been well received by new members. All existing members will receive a copy of this Manual when you renew your membership for the 2010-2011 year. Please take the time to read the Manual as it contains a lot of pertinent information.

Our workshops for the first part of the year have been well received with most workshops being at capacity. Thank you to all members who have taken the time to attend training. I know how hard it is sometimes to fit this into our busy schedules but I am sure that everyone who has attended has benefitted from the training. Please remember to register for workshops at least five days beforehand. Bookings have been so heavy

for some workshops that people have had to be turned away! Remember...the early bird catches the worm!!

The calendar for May to August is to be published shortly and you will notice a few new workshops. Remember that some workshops are only offered once a year, so you should do your best to try to attend these when they are offered. We have also changed the format of some of our workshops so that they are half-day instead of a full-day. These are easier for people to fit into their schedule and they have been well received. We have also adapted some workshops to be more of a "forum-type" of workshop which has proven beneficial for more experienced wildlife carers. These workshops are a great opportunity for carers to network and share their knowledge and experiences.

Please refer to the article on Rehabilitation Permits for information on the training requirements that you must meet to maintain your Permit through Wildcare. If you have any questions, please contact me.

Karen Scott

Notes from an Enthusiastic Naturalist.



PHOTO // JM HANGER

The Quondong stands tall and proud only two metres from the balcony, almost embracing the house with its outstretched branches. For the last couple of months it has been producing masses of delicate white flowers, which have attracted many different birds to sip of the nectar and to chatter and squabble.

The Rainbow Lorikeets are the noisiest, outcompeting both numerically and vocally their smaller, quieter cousins the Scaly-breasted Lorikeets. The tiny Scarlet Honeyeaters flitter and flutter from flower to flower, rarely still for a moment. The spectacular male displays brilliant flashes of scarlet, whereas the little brown female almost passes unnoticed. The Noisy Friarbird visits occasionally, whereas the Lewins' and Yellow-faced Honeyeaters are there each day, generally not calling attention to themselves, although occasionally the Lewin's will give a trill or two. A couple of Eastern Spinebills were observed feeding quietly and some Rufous Fantails fly in periodically, probably to check out the insect situation, as the nectar has attracted

an array of invertebrates.

Down the years we have seen many different species of snakes. Sightings, though, are a rare event, apart from the pythons which find the area particularly attractive when there are macropods in the yard or possums in the aviaries. Just last night I came nose to nose with an enormous animal, partially hanging from the aviary roof. I'm not sure who got the biggest surprise.

In the last few days, we have had three sightings of Small-eyed Snakes – beautiful creatures whose scales gleamed blueish black as they were exposed to the sunlight. Two were together under a sheet of roofing material, one under another sheet and in the third sighting, the animal moved silently off the track as I approached. Small-eyed snakes are live bearers and are venomous. Their prey items include skinks and frogs.

A word of warning to those trying to protect a vegetable garden or treasured plant. The small chicken wire can be hazardous for snakes, as I found to my dismay. A very large green tree snake had become caught as it tried to move through and we had to use wire cutters to release it. So it is not only loose microfilament netting that creates problems for wildlife.

Eleanor Hanger

WILDCARE AUSTRALIA Inc.

Training Program - May to August 2010



Date	Workshop	Location	Full Day	Half Day	Pre-Requisites
May 2010					
Saturday 1 May	Orientation Program	Brisbane		✓	
Sunday 9 May	Orientation Program	Gold Coast		✓	
Saturday 15 May	Possums (Basic Course)	Gold Coast		✓	Introduction to Caring for Orphaned Mammals
Sunday 16 May	Introduction to Caring for Orphaned Mammals	Brisbane	✓		
Saturday 22 May	First Aid for Native Wildlife (Basic Course)	Gold Coast	✓		Orientation Program
Sunday 23 May	Possums (Advanced Course)	Gold Coast		✓	Possums (Basic)
Saturday 29 May	First Aid for Native Wildlife (Advanced Course)	Gold Coast	✓		First Aid (Basic)
June 2010					
Saturday 5 June	Possums (Advanced Course)	Brisbane		✓	Possums (Basic)
Saturday 5 June	Native Birds (Basic Course)	Gold Coast	✓		
Sunday 6 June	Orientation Program	Gold Coast		✓	
Sunday 20 June	Introduction to Caring for Orphaned Mammals	Gold Coast	✓		
July 2010					
Sunday 4 July	Orientation Program	Gold Coast		✓	
Saturday 10 July	First Aid for Native Wildlife (Basic Course)	Brisbane	✓		Orientation Program
Sunday 18 July	Macropods (Basic and Advanced)	Gold Coast	✓		Introduction to Caring for Orphaned Mammals First Aid (Basic)
Saturday 31 July	First Aid for Native Wildlife (Advanced Course)	Brisbane	✓		Orientation Program
August 2010					
Sunday 1 August	Orientation Program	Beerwah		✓	
Saturday 14 August	Baby birds	Gold Coast	✓		Native Birds (Basic)
Sunday 15 August	Bandicoots and Native Rodents	Gold Coast		✓	Introduction to Caring for Orphaned Mammals
Saturday 21 August	Orientation	Brisbane		✓	
Sunday 29 August	Possums (Basic Course)	Gold Coast	✓		Introduction to Caring for Orphaned Mammals
Register by:					
Email - education@wildcare.org.au or Telephone 07 55272444 (during business hours)		Please try to register for workshops at least 5 days before the scheduled date.			

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