

WILDCARE AUSTRALIA

EDUCATION WILDLIFE REHABILITATION RESEARCH

January 2004, Issue 32

P.O. BOX 2379, NERANG MAIL CENTRE Q. 4211

WILDNEWS

The Newsletter of the Australian Koala Hospital Association Inc. - WILDCARE AUSTRALIA



This newsletter is proudly sponsored by
KAY ELSON MP FEDERAL MEMBER FOR FORDE



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PRESIDENT’S REPORT

As I write this report I am in the small town of Paynesville in East Gippsland, Victoria. The weather has alternated between the hottest of summer days and the coldest of winter nights, all in the space of four days. Am I on holidays? No I’m working. So it is not all pleasure in this very pretty seaside town.

For those of you who don’t know, I am now working at Australia Zoo and I feel as if I’m living my dream. It has also made me realize how lucky I am to be able to do so. I am getting the chance to work with so many different species and to experience the smells, colours, textures and size of so many wonderful animals.

Working in an area north of Brisbane has also put me in contact with a whole different network of carers and animals, and that is another step for me to take for Wildcare in the next few months as I test new waters with carer groups and individuals up here.

I hope you all had a wonderful Christmas and a fantastic and happy New Year.

Gail Gipp
 President

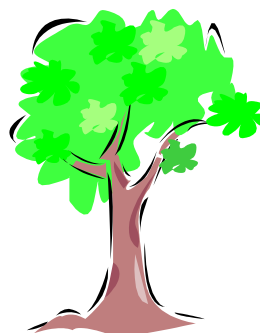
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Quote of the Month.....

‘A century of Man is more burdensome for earth than twenty centuries of Nature’

Mme Michelet 1872



VETERINARY TREATMENTS, DRUG DOSING AND TREATMENT COMPLIANCE

By Jon Hanger

Sick, injured or orphaned wildlife presented to wildlife carers often have diseases or injuries that require veterinary attention and treatments. In most cases, these animals are given to, or returned to wildlife carers for ongoing treatment, rather than being kept at veterinary premises. The application of correct, suitable and effective treatments is often pivotal in achieving a positive outcome. Unfortunately, many treatment failures are attributable not to lack of drug efficacy, but to failure of carer compliance, incorrect dosing, inappropriate drug delivery or a combination.

It is important to remember that many of the drugs used in the treatment of wildlife are schedule 4 drugs that may only be prescribed by veterinarians. In addition, veterinarians may only prescribe such drugs to carers if they have personally examined the animal for which the drugs are prescribed. S4 drugs **may not** be prescribed to any animal by a person who is not a veterinarian, even if they are an experienced carer.

The following article series summarizes some of the more common mistakes made in the treatment of native wildlife.

Part 1.

The difference between mg (milligrams) and ml (milliliters)

When we measure drugs out, particularly in wildlife medicine our unit of measure is the milliliter (ml) – **this is a measure of volume**. For example: the dose of oral Clavulox drops for a flying fox might be 0.15 ml twice a day.

However, often when veterinarians are calculating or prescribing drugs we use a dose rate in **milligrams (mg)** – a measure of weight – per kilogram of bodyweight. For example: the dose rate for a single dose of Rimadyl (carprofen) is 4mg/kg. If an animal such as a koala weighs 5 kg, then it will need 5kg X 4mg/kg = 20mg of carprofen. How do we convert a dose of mg (which we can't measure out) to a dose of ml (which we can measure out – with a syringe)? The answer is that we divide the total dose (in mg) by the drug concentration in the bottle – which is in mg/ml.

In the end we end up with a formula that looks like this:

$$\text{Dose in mls} = \frac{\text{dose rate (mg/kg)} \times \text{body weight (kg)}}{\text{Drug concentration (mg/ml)}}$$

For example: the dose rate of carprofen is 4mg/kg. How much do we give a 5 kg koala? The drug concentration in the bottle is 50mg/ml.

$$\text{Dose in mls} = \frac{4\text{mg/kg} \times 5\text{kg}}{50\text{mg/ml}} = 0.4 \text{ ml}$$

Of critical importance when using this formula are that correct units are used. For example if the weight is not converted to kilograms (kg) from grams, then the dose will be incorrect by a factor of 1000. For example: for a 500g flying fox its weight must be converted to 0.5 kg before being used in the formula; a 6 gm microbat would weigh 0.006 kg.

Fortunately many drugs come with a dose rate that says something like “1ml /20 kg” so the calculation is more simple. However, often with wildlife different dose rates are used to those written on the bottle, depending upon species, severity of disease etc, so it helps to know how to calculate doses correctly.

COMING EVENTS

The three page **Wildcare Australia Education and Training Programme for January to June 2004** is included in this newsletter. To save paper but hopefully to still make it user friendly it has been set out vertically rather than horizontally.

The **Brisbane** community should contact Kim Alexander or the Wildcare office, prior to any workshop or course, to confirm the date and venue.

The **Gympie** area community should contact Paula Rowlands or the Wildcare office, prior to any workshop or course, to confirm the date and venue.

People from all other areas should contact the Wildcare office, prior to any workshop or course, to confirm the date and venue.

Orientation Days:

Day 1 - Orientation and Telephone Training

Day 2 - Rescue Techniques, Basic 24-hour Care and Animal Welfare

Costs:

Please note that all Wildcare workshops are free to members. There is a fee for courses and workshops run by other persons or groups.

We hope you have a wonderful year of learning.

Jan	18	Lizard & Turtle Workshop
	22	Wildcare Brisbane Meeting
	31	Introduction to Caring for Mammals Workshop
Feb	1	Waterbird Workshop Migratory Bird Workshop
	2	Brisbane Orientation, Evening 1 Section 1
	5	Pelican Rescue Workshop with Lance Ferris (fee)
	7	Brisbane Orientation, Day 1 Wildlife Ecosystems, Week 1
	8	Brisbane Orientation, Day 2
	9	Brisbane Orientation Evening 1 Section 2 & 3

Please refer to the Education and Training Programme insert for further activities and dates.

WILDCARE AUSTRALIA Brisbane Meeting

Thursday, 22nd January, 2004

6pm - 7.30pm

Logan Hyperdome Library
Meeting Room

See page 6 for details

NEW MEMBERS

WILDCARE AUSTRALIA welcomes the following new members:

David & Catlin McCormack, Elanora; Janice Bishop, Banora Point; Robyn Dredge, Worongary; Priscilla Bettridge, Beaudesert; Kristy Paula Hughes, Gales; Eric Haylock, Indooroopilly; Samara Brooks, Jimboomba; Lee Ellis, Nerang; Patricia & Stephen Durin, Ormiston; Margaret Christison, Annerley; Mary Grant, Tweed Heads South; Pete & Louise Smit, Dayboro; Mimosa Murabito, Tingalpa; Scott Hunter, Nth Maclean; Kerry Chadwick, Nerang; Jenny Thomas-Dupont, Glenwood; Barbara Fiala, Scarborough; Debra Brown, Miami; Graham Taylor, Oxenford; Moemt Suzakt, Mermaid Waters; Nadia & Ross Dixon Mudgeeraba; Sarah Gordon & Teresa Dawson, Oxenford.

We hope you have a long and happy association with WILDCARE AUSTRALIA

PELICAN RESCUE WORKSHOP

with Lance Ferris

Thursday, 5th February 6.30pm –9.00pm and Friday, 6th February from 9.00am. Friday will be a practical session demonstrating equipment.

Cost \$10 per head. Venue to be announced.

Contact Karen Barney 07 5543 6441 for further information.

Please note:

The Thermostatically Controlled Hospital Box Workshop has been cancelled indefinitely.

WANTED

WILDCARE REPRESENTATIVES

Two Wildcare members are needed to be part of the *Coalition of Stakeholders Meeting for Responsible Pet Ownership* which aims to develop and implement solutions to pet overpopulation and irresponsible ownership.

This group could become an advisory group to the GCCC.

Possible first meeting date is either Wednesday, 28th January or Tuesday 3rd February. Probable time is 5.30 or 6.00 pm until 7.30 or 8.00 pm. Snacks will be provided.

If you think you would be able to take on this role or would like further information please contact Kylie Patrick on 0422 151 277

WORKSHOP CERTIFICATES

We have a huge number of workshop certificates still being held for carers at the office.

Please remember to look through the two folders situated on the shelves in the office. If you wish the certificates to be posted to your home please send us an A4 size envelope with \$1.50 value in stamps and we will forward them onto you.

SHOP DURING WORKSHOPS

The shop will not be open before the workshops commence, as of January 2004.

However the shop will open during the break and after the workshops close. There will be forms available on the desk top for carers to fill out as their shopping list. These orders can then be prepared during the workshop by the designated workshop convenor and tallied ready for payment and collection at the end of the workshop to ensure there are no long queues.

Sharon Griffiths



WILDCARE AUSTRALIA

Pet Bird Procedure

The Granivore Bird Coordinator has been designated the management of pet birds if carers rescue them.

The process is as follows:

If a telephone operator receives a call for a pet bird rescue, they should direct the caller directly to the RSPCA.

If the caller is not sure whether the bird is a pet, a rescuer should be sent to investigate the situation. The carer should contact the relevant species coordinator if they are unsure whether the bird is a pet, feral or native.

If the rescuer attends the call and finds that the bird is in fact a pet, they must then notify the Granivore Coordinator as soon as possible. The Granivore Coordinator will take the rescue details as a record, in case a member of public calls looking for their bird. When the coordinator has been contacted, the bird should be taken to the nearest RSPCA by the rescuer immediately.

At no time is the rescuer to keep the bird or give the bird to another carer to keep as a pet. The carer may register their details with the RSPCA so that if the original owner cannot be found, they can be given the opportunity to have the bird.

It is essential that Wildcare Australia carers follow this procedure to ensure that we provide a service to members of the general public who have lost their pets and desperately try to find them. Often pet birds, which are worth a lot of money, are rescued.

Breeders do have birds stolen and therefore by following the policy we ensure Wildcare Australia does not become part of any illegal activities.

Sharon Griffiths

Further Information on ORIENTATION

Orientation will occasionally be offered as an evening workshop running over four weeks to accommodate those who find it difficult to attend on weekends. You must attend the four evenings to cover all areas of the orientation course. The dates are given in the calendar insert.

Please note there will be a minimum of five new carers required to run with this course.

URGENT
ALL MEMBERS
ESPECIALLY THOSE LIVING NORTH OF THE LOGAN RIVER

As the Brisbane Area Co ordinator for WILDCARE AUSTRALIA I am requesting ALL interested members to attend a special meeting on Thursday 22nd Jan, 6 pm – 7:30pm at the LOGAN HYPERDOME LIBRARY Meeting Room. The purpose of which is to discuss and fill the following positions:

EDUCATION – CARERS – we require a number of experienced carers who can deliver the Wildcare education workshops at a Brisbane venue.

Minimum requirements would be:

- attendance at a **2 ½ Day Group Training Workshop**
- commitment to the preparation and presentation of at least **3 full day workshops per year**.

EDUCATION – SCHOOLS / PUBLIC– we require a number of carers who can deliver the educational talks and displays to schools and other organizations from Logan to Pine Rivers and West to Ipswich.

Minimum requirements would be:

- attendance at a **2 ½ Day Group Training Workshop**
- commitment to the preparation and presentation of at least **6 talks per year**.

FUNDRAISING – we require a number of members who would be responsible for various fundraising activities through out the year, including the distribution and collection of raffle tickets, the distribution and collection of chocolates and money, organization and staffing of one sausage sizzle per year, and other activities as directed by the main Fundraising Committee.

DISPLAYS – SHOPPING CENTRE AND OTHER - we require a number of carers who can set up and organize staffing of static displays in shopping centers and libraries from Logan to Pine Rivers and West to Ipswich.

SECRETARY – we require a person or persons who will support the Brisbane Coordinator in her role of disseminating information to all members. Also they will be required to regularly supply updates and information on up coming events and workshops from the Brisbane Area through the WILDCARE newsletter and the WEBSITE.

RECORD KEEPER - we require a person or persons to support Kiersten in her role of WILDCARE RECORD KEEPER, by ensuring that all records from this area are completed and returned on time. This may also include working with some carers to ensure records are up to date and accurate.

AREA SPECIES COORDINATORS – we require a number of experienced carers who can support the MAIN SPECIES COORDINATORS in placement and monitoring of animals in care. They would be required to liaise regularly with the Main Species Coordinator and carers.

At present my family and I, with the support of a few members, are filling all of these roles.

Unfortunately we cannot maintain this level of obligation.

If these positions are not filled then these activities will not be offered in the Brisbane Area
This is your opportunity to show your commitment to WILDCARE AUSTRALIA – Brisbane.

For further information please contact Kim Alexander on (07) 3805 1815 or email to thealexanders@austarnet.com.au



HEAT STRESS AND DEHYDRATION



As the temperature soars again carers need to be watchful of heat stress in birds coming into care. **Dehydration is serious in any animal** so early treatment is vital.

Signs of heat stress and dehydration are :-

1. Bright pink wrinkly skin
2. Open mouth breathing (panting heavily like a dog)
3. Off balance, trouble standing
4. Holding wings away from body

If left untreated death can occur fairly quickly, so if not sure ring your co-ordinator immediately. **Cooling the bird is the first priority**, lightly spray the bird with tap water in a spray bottle. If a severe case dip the bird's body (not head) in a container of water (DO NOT use cold water out of fridge). Place the bird in a cool place (have a fan in the room but not directly on the bird when wet). If the bird will drink itself, place a shallow container of water and lectade (rehydration fluid) or glucodin powder in with the bird. If too ill to drink itself drip the fluid on to the tip of its beak and allow the fluid to run into the beak. If you can't get fluids into the bird in this manner ring your co-ordinator immediately. **Be extremely careful giving fluids** down the throat as the glottis which is the opening to a birds wind pipe remains open when forcing a bird to eat or drink. If fluid goes down the wind pipe you can drown the bird. Please ring for advice before doing this.

Our co-ordinator for Nectivores is Barb Van Luyn. For any birds that need to be reported in care or for advice please ring Barb.

If you are getting any lorikeets into care and have not seen Pcittacine Beak and Feather Disease before **please contact Barb Van Luyn immediately**. Any suspect birds must be housed separately, we have had a few cases where an infected bird has been housed with healthy lorikeets. **There is NO CURE for Beak and Feather disease** so please take note of this warning.

All insectivore (magpies, pee wees, butcherbirds) babies coming into care **must** be checked for throat (Gape) worm. **It will not cure itself** and the baby will eventually die if not treated. A couple of treatments may be necessary to clear the bird of all the parasites. If any babies of these species are in care and have not been checked please ring me immediately (not all vets know what to look for when diagnosing gape worm).

Another point I would like to cover are **young birds being kept in cages too long before being moved into aviaries**, thus causing feather damage. A bird will then have to wait for a moult so the feathers can regrow, or have the broken feathers removed by a vet.

We also had a few cases last season of **carnivore babies being released at too young an age** (these birds do not mature until about 4-6 months, and spend a further 6 months learning from their parents, so if you are taking on these species you have got them until they are confidently finding food and know how to defend themselves (this does not mean playing together in the aviary). Please DO NOT release any of these babies until you have contacted me to check the suitability of the bird for release.

We are getting very good results with our babies by adding PROTEXIN, which is a probiotic, in powder form to their food. It is available from the office. A sprinkle of the powder on the food each day helps their digestive system with the transfer to an artificial diet of meat, honeyeater mix or fruit. **Do not use protexin if your baby is on any antibiotics** except for Baytril as the protexin will work against the antibiotic and it won't do its job.

It is VITAL for an adult bird of any species to be returned to where it was found as it will have a mate waiting for its return and in particular the territorial species, carnivores and noisy miners.

Keeping your bird clean especially in the hot weather is very important, especially cleaning around the vent and under the tail area if the bird can't perch due to injury. Birds hate to be dirty so always supply a dish of water that the birds can bathe in which will encourage them to preen.

I am desperate for help from anyone that can spare time to come and help me treat my carnivores and clean out aviaries occasionally. If you have some spare time please call me on 55436441.

If anyone has an **empty aviary** at the moment please let me know as we are desperate for aviaries to house babies in as they get to the fledging stage and start feeding themselves. If you can help please ring.

Karen Barney
Bird Co-ordinator

RECORD KEEPER'S RAP

Hope everyone had a lovely Christmas in this hot, sultry environment!

Last newsletter I asked for assistance with data entry of the handwritten records. A few people have kindly offered to help. Thanks to these people! As yet, I haven't had a chance to organise this, but bear with me - I apologise to those whom I've not been in touch with yet, but I will do so in the next couple of months, and will arrange delivery of some records to each of you!

One reason for my delay is that I'm still finalising the Annual Records Report for the 2002-3 records. There are a lot of gaps and mixed up details that I'm trying to iron out, and it seems to be worse this year than the previous years that I've been doing this 'job'! It just clarifies to me the importance of all carers maintaining accurate records, as well as submitting them on time. If you record the street location but not the suburb, I get out the street directory to look it up. If you have a code but little else, I manually sift through the piles of handwritten phone records in the hope of finding the original details. Just think of me doing these multiple menial tasks next time you leave out what seems like a minor detail...!

A few figures to share with you from the 2002-3 records:

Animals rescues in this period:

Birds	over 3000**
Reptiles	67
Frogs	6
Macropods	423
Possums & Gliders	471
Koalas	25
Echidnas	8
Other small terrestrial mammals	23
Bats & Flying-foxes	111

TOTAL over 4134 rescues / episodes of care

** (birds total still an approximate figure, subject to possible duplications in records, due to missing codes or new codes given on transfer)

**How's that for a contribution to our wildlife!!
Well done to all our fantastic phone people, carers and rescuers.**

In addition to the above information, the summary reports for each reporting year's records include reasons for rescue, locations, monthly trends, species lists, outcomes, ...and comparisons of each of these between reporting years.

This is open to change and variation. So if there is anything you feel would be worthwhile capturing from our records, please email me with your thoughts. One thing I would love to look at is the duration in care.

Contacting the Record Keeper:

I'm still getting people telling me that their email to me bounced. A reminder that my email address changed a few months ago. The one to use now is: kierstenj@bigpond.com

Don't forget to get your records in at the end of each month, and please make sure your records are accurate, too. If you can't get all the details of a rescue, which often happens when you have to respond quickly, you can always ring the phone person later that day.

As always, please contact me if you have any queries regarding records.

'Til next issue,
Kiersten Jones
Record Keeper, Wildcare.
(PH 5576 3625).



ARAZPA QLD 2003 Conference

Recently John Mitchell and I attended the ARAZPAQ conference on behalf of Wildcare. What is ARAZPAQ? It is the Queensland branch of the Australasian Regional Association of Zoological Parks and Aquaria, formerly the Queensland Wildlife Parks Association. The members of this association are mainly zoos, wildlife sanctuaries and animal-oriented theme parks. However, speakers also included individuals from the EPA, University of Queensland, Queensland Tourism and the RSPCA.

While the majority of the talks were directed towards zookeepers and zoo managers, there were also some topics relating to wildlife care. Janet Gamble and Amanda Lane from the RSPCA spoke about the importance of consideration of euthanasia with injured wildlife. They brought one case to attention of a possum that came into the RSPCA with stitches, indicating it had been in care before. They questioned the appropriateness of release of this animal prior to it entering the RSPCA's care.

Deb Hotchkis from QPWS introduced a new Carers Kit on CD-ROM which all wildlife carers, including Wildcare carers, will have access to in the near future. This is an overall information provider of all general and basic aspects of wildlife care, and will be continually updated as new information becomes available.

Dr. Andrew Tribe from UQ spoke about research projects between zoos and UQ students, and mentioned a number of projects, including the

tracking projects carried out in association with Wildcare.

Margi Sycamore (Brisbane Ranger) explained 'Substrate', which I now know is the material on an enclosure floor.

Danielle Butcher from the DPI spoke about changes to classifications of exotic pests, both flora and fauna. This was discussed further by Jim Thompson of the EPA, who also spoke about the changing responsibilities of the EPA in the near future. These changes will affect both zoos and wildlife carers. Sue Beckensall, General Manager of Fleay's, also advised of the future focus of Fleay's Wildlife Park. Their focus will now be on education and research, rather than tourism.

So despite there not being many wildlife carers in the audience, I found attending this conference to be an opportunity to see the zookeeping industry, a bit of networking opportunity (even for shy old me), an insight into wildlife care and husbandry in this industry, and a chance to get to know more about John and Cath Mitchell! (well, if you spend two full days in the company of someone, you're going to find out more about them!!)

John and I also scrupulously took notes as each presenter spoke, so if anyone is interested in finding out more about the conference, feel free to get in touch with either of us through Wildcare.

Kiersten Jones

Daisy's Story

Daisy is a Brushtail Possum. She was handed in to national parks by people who felt that "maybe" they had been doing the wrong thing by her.

When she came to us she was severely dehydrated and had skin like an elephant. She was very stressed and had thrush. Although 500 grams in weight she was

naked. Yes, that's right, no fur at all. She was taken to Jon Hanger who gave her subcutaneous fluids. This had to be continued until her fluid levels had returned to normal. She also had to have daily baths and Canesten cream rubbed on her. You can imagine how she loved all of that.

Daisy has gained 500 grams in six

weeks and now has stubble, just a little, but we have hope for her yet.

Kerry Johnston

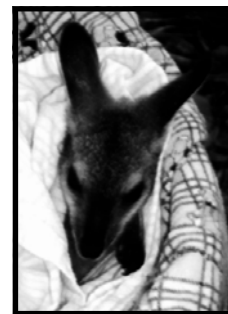




ALL NATIVE ANIMALS

in care

should be registered with the relevant coordinator as soon as possible. Please check the coordinator list as changes do occur and your old list may be out of date.



BIRD CO-ORDINATORS

NOCTURNAL

(Tawny frogmouths, owl nightjars, white-throated nightjar)

Deb Stanton - 07 5578 4993 anytime

NECTIVORES

(Blue-faced honeyeaters, noisy friarbirds, lorikeets)

Barb Van Luyn - 07 5530 7408 m 0438 275 767

CARNIVORES

(Kookaburra, crows, magpies, butcherbirds, currawongs)

Karen Barney - 07 5543 6441 anytime, except on Wed. & Sat. please call after 7.30 pm

MIGRATORY

(Dollar birds, koels, channel billed cuckoos)

Karen Barney - 07 5543 6441 anytime, except on Wed. & Sat. please call after 7.30 pm

FRUGIVORES

(Fig birds, olive backed orioles)

Karen Barney - 07 5543 6441 anytime, except on Wed. & Sat. please call after 7.30 pm

DUCKS

Sonya Murray - 07 5596 5262 Contact times 7.00 am. - 8.00 pm.

WATERBIRDS

(Plovers, ibis, herons, egrets, swamphens, moorhens)

Karen Barney - 07 5543 6441 anytime, except on Wed. & Sat. please call after 7.30 pm

GRANIVORES

(Pigeons, doves, rosellas, galahs, cockatoos)

Deb Stanton - 07 5578 4993 anytime

SMALL INSECTIVORES

(Swallows, fairy martins, silver eyes, willy wagtails, noisy miners (honeyeaters), magpie larks)

Deb Stanton 07 5578 4993 and

Karen Barney 07 5543 6441 anytime, except on Wed. & Sat. please call after 7.30 pm

MAMMAL, REPTILE & AMPHIBIAN CO-ORDINATORS

KOALAS

Gail Gipp - 07 5543 6139

MACROPODS

Gail Gipp - 07 5543 6139

Orm Ridgway - 07 5463 5666

Sharon Griffiths - 07 5525 2565

POSSUMS

Eleanor Hanger—07 5533 1025

Ricki Johns - 07 3207 4025

Angela Mutton (Gliders) - 07 5594 1248

BANDICOOTS

Karen Scott - 07 5576 5462

Eleanor Hanger - 07 5533 1025

OTHER SMALL MARSUPIALS

Karen Scott - 07 5576 5462

BATS - FLYING FOXES

Greer McNeill - 07 5573 1396

Trish Paterson Wimberley - 07 5563 0333

BATS - INSECTIVOROUS

Trish Paterson Wimberley - 07 5563 0333

RODENTS

Karen Scott - 07 5576 5462

SNAKES & LIZARDS

Brett Gray - 0407 181 069

FROGS

Shane Ho - A/h. (07) 5576 5462 or on (0418) 220869.

TURTLES

Shane Ho - (07) 5576 5462 or on (0418) 220869.

Another environmental disaster!

The last time I heard about Bogong moths they were causing a bit of a flutter in the National Capital on their annual migration to the Southern Alps. These moths leave the hot, dry plains of New South Wales and southern Queensland to escape the summer heat. They aestivate (a type of summer hibernation) in the caves and cool, rocky crevices at the higher altitudes.

The Bogong moths are an important food source for many vertebrates, including the endangered Mountain pigmy-possum (*Burramys parvus*) (Green, 2003), the smoky mouse (*Pseudomys fumeus*) (Common, 1990), and other small carnivorous marsupials, as well as foxes, bats, frogs and lizards.

The Bogong moths were a popular food item with the Aborigines who gathered in the highlands to feast on them. They are full of protein and provided a nutritious traditional food (Flood, 1990). The moths congregate in enormous numbers, Dr Ian Common counted 17,000 on one square metre of rock! (Flood, 1990), so were easy to gather. They were roasted and eaten, or roasted and ground into a paste to make "moth cakes" suitable to carry to those who were unable to attend the gatherings (Flood, 1990).

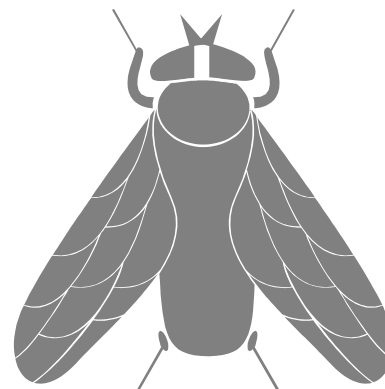
In January 2001 a disturbing discovery was made by Dr. Ken Green, an Alpine Ecologist with the National Parks and Wildlife Service, who has an interest in the Bogong Moth and its place in the food chain. What he found was moth debris washed by the heavy rains from among the rocks. Associated with this debris were areas of dead grass. When moths and samples of soil, from under the dead grass, were analysed they were found to contain arsenic. No arsenic was found in soil samples from areas of living grass adjacent to the dead grass areas. It became evident that the moths were carrying the arsenic.

Prior to this discovery it had been noted by the National Parks and Wildlife Service that a decline in small mammal numbers was occurring. Subsequent analysis of faecal samples of the Mountain pigmy-possum (*Burramys parvus*), the Bush Rat (*Rattus fuscipes*) and the Dusky Antechinus (*Antechinus*

swainsonii) revealed significant levels of arsenic. In the Broad-toothed Rat (*Mastacomys fuscus*), a herbivore, there was virtually none (Green, 2003). It is of the utmost importance that the source of the arsenic be found. Tragically for the moths and the animals that feed on them, Dr Green's application for further funding to continue the project was unsuccessful, so the problem continues.

Please write to, fax or email the Federal Government requesting/demanding urgent action before more species are allowed to slip quietly into extinction.

Eleanor Hanger



Bibliography:

Common, I.F.B., 1990. *Moths of Australia*. Melbourne University Press, Victoria.

Flood, Josephine, 1990. *The Riches of Ancient Australia: A Journey into Prehistory*. University of Queensland Press, St. Lucia.

Green, Ken. *Arsenic and Bogongs* Nature Australia Spring 2003 Vol 27 No. 10. 52-59

“IN THE LIFE OF A WILDLIFE CARER”

One of our diligent office volunteers has been known to wear socks inside out to ‘work’. The surprising thing is that this person is a very ‘spiffy’ dresser. Is this a result of ‘insanity caused by being a wildlife carer’ or is it caused by being sleep deprived?
This same volunteer has been known to over bake cakes, making them very ‘dry’. Instead of making it into something else eg trifle or even feeding it to the chooks, they eat it anyway.

Then there is the carer who has a brushtail possum baby that came in weighing approx 250 grams and had leathery, furless skin (similar to an elephants). Our wonderful Wildlife Vet (who was recently ‘stolen’ by Steve Irwin and Australia Zoo) was at a loss as to why this sweet little girl wasn’t growing any fur. Well, a couple of months down the road and lots of grams gained in weight, with a fabulous diet there is still no fur to be seen. As all good defensive mothers the carer is very quick to point out that she does have fur now – on her tail. But if the full truth were to be told, it is elephant course/spiky hair on half of her tail. Do we see a wool bodysuit being made for winter?

We have a retired Wildcare carer who received a ‘baby pig’ from her partner for Christmas 2003. It is now being piglet- sat by another carer, as the new Mum works full time and baby needs four hourly feeds day and night. This beautiful black baby can now be seen ruling the roost at the piglet-sitter’s house, eating almost everything including shoes. She also will not be left at home and loves going on rescues.

I wonder what the police and insurance companies made of this accident report.

A long term macropod carer needed to make a trip into town to get much needed milk, so she could make herself some coffee. As she was almost to the shops two cars were involved in accident close to her car. The two drivers reporting seeing a large kangaroo sitting in the passenger seat of another vehicle and didn’t see each other’s vehicles. The wonderful news was that the carer, her car and of course the ‘roo’ missed it all.

Terri Eather

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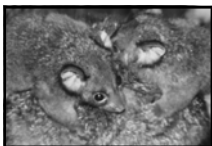
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STAMPS

Thank you very much once again to
our faithful stamp collectors, please
keep them coming.



Attention RINGTAIL POSSUM CARERS

In order to improve the quality of care given to ringtail possum babies and juveniles we are seeking information on diet including the milk product used, quantity, frequency of feeds, supplements etc, problems such as bloat, failure to thrive, raising a single orphan etc. and solutions such as change of diet, medications etc, outcomes, successes, failures and any comments, ideas, suggestions that you may have. Any information will be gratefully received. Please send to Eleanor Hanger emhanger@ozemail.com.au Thank you.

**WILDCARE
GRATEFULLY
ACKNOWLEDGES ALL ITS
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DEADLINE

**for articles for the next newsletter
30th MARCH 2004**

WILDCARE VOLUNTEER CARERS

**WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE FOLLOWING VETS FOR
THEIR DEDICATION AND TREATMENT OF OUR
AUSTRALIAN WILDLIFE.
OUR CARERS ARE VERY GRATEFUL FOR THEIR
SUPPORT**

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WILDCARE AUSTRALIA

EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR JANUARY TO JUNE 2004

Please phone 07 5527 2444 to confirm the dates and to register

	JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE
1	Happy New Year	Waterbird Workshop 11am-12.30 Migratory Bird Workshop 1-4.30pm			Orientation Day 1 9.30am-4.30pm	
2		Brisbane Orientation Evening 1 6pm-10pm (Section1)			Orientation Day 2 10am-3pm Brisbane Possum Workshop 9.30am-4.30pm	
3				Orientation Day 1 9.30am-4.30pm		
4				Orientation Day 2 10am-3pm Native Plants of SEQ Identification Course (Weeds) 9am-4pm Gympie Possum Workshop 9am-4.30pm		
5						Brisbane Orientation Day 1 9.30am-4.30pm
6			Orientation Day 1 9.30am-4.30pm Wildlife Ecosystems Course Week 5 9am-12 noon			Brisbane Orientation Day 2 9.30am-4.30pm
7		Brisbane Orientation Day 1 9.30am-4.30pm Wildlife Ecosystems Course Week 1 9am-12 noon	Orientation Day 2 10am-3pm			
8		Brisbane Orientation Day 2 10am-3pm				
9		Brisbane Orientation Evening 1 6pm-10pm (Section 2&3)			Nocturnal Bird Workshop 1pm-4.30pm	
10						

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	JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE
11				Easter Sunday		
12						Intro to Caring for Mammals Workshop 9.30am-4.30pm Gympie Macropod weekend Day 1 10am-4pm
13			Wildlife Ecosystems Course Week 6 9am-12 noon			Gympie Macropod weekend Day 1 10am-4pm Baby Bird Workshop 9am-4.30pm
14		Wildlife Ecosystems Course Week 2 9am-12 noon	Raptor Workshop 1pm-4.30pm			
15		Flying Fox Workshop Sub-Adult & Adult 10am-3pm			'Step up from Basics' Permaculture & Organic Gardening Day 1, 9am-5pm	
16		Brisbane Orientation Evening 1, 6pm-10pm (Section 4)			'Step up from Basics' Permaculture & Organic Gardening Day 2, 9am-5pm	
17				Basic Anatomy & Physiology Course Day 1, 9.30-4pm Gympie Koala Workshop (Adults, Infants & Juveniles) 9am-5pm		
18	Lizard & Turtle Workshop 10am-3pm			Basic Anatomy & Physiology Course Day 2, 9.30-4pm Brisbane Basic Bird Workshop 10am-4pm		
19						Basic Microbiology Course Day 1 9.30am-4pm

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	JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE
20			Wildlife Ecosystems Course Week 7, 9am-12 Brisbane Intro to Caring for Mammals 9am-4.30pm			Basic Microbiology Course Day 2 9.30am-4pm Brisbane Baby Bird Workshop 9.30am-5pm
21		Wildlife Ecosystems Week 3, 9am-12 noon Bandicoot & Echidna Workshop 10am-4pm	Ringtail Possum & Greater Glider Workshop 10am-3.30pm			
22	Wildcare Brisbane Meeting 6.00-7.30pm	Koala Workshop (Adults, Juveniles & Infants) 9am-5pm			Small Mammal Workshop 10am-3pm	
23		Brisbane Orientation Evening 1, 6-10pm (Section 5)			Glider Workshop 10am-3pm	
24				Basic Anatomy & Physiology Course Day 3, 9.30-4pm		
25				Basic Anatomy & Physiology Course Day 4, 9.30-4pm 'Hands on' Bird Workshop 9am-1pm		
26				Anzac Day Holiday		
27			Wildlife Ecosystems Course Week 8, 9am-12 Microbat Workshop 10-3pm			Wildcare Annual General Meeting 1pm-4.30pm
28		Wildlife Ecosystems Course Week 4				
29		Amphibian Workshop 10am-3pm			Macropod Wshop (Furred - Release) 9am-5pm	
30					Animal Welfare & Euthanasia Wshop 10am-12noon Guest Speaker Workshop 1-4pm	
31	Intro to Caring for Mammals Workshop 9am-4.30pm					