

EMERGENCY WILDLIFE PHONE SERVICE - 07 5527 2444 (24 X 7)

WILDCARE AUSTRALIA

EDUCATION

WILDLIFE REHABILITATION

RESCUE

Summer 2007/2008, Issue 47

WILDNEWS

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



This newsletter is proudly sponsored by
BRETT RAGUSE MP FEDERAL MEMBER FOR FORDE



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IN THIS ISSUE:

President's Report	3
From the Office	4
Wildlife Phone Service	5
Coordinator's Corner	6 - 7
Keeping the Dream Alive	8 - 9
Official Business	10
Research and Wildcare	11
Species Spotlight: Whales	12
Rescue Stories	13
On the Lighter Side	14
PJ's Wildcare for Kids	15 - 16
Photo Gallery	17
New Members	18
Supporters	19 - 20

SUBMISSIONS

If you are interested in submitting an article or photograph for inclusion in the next newsletter, please submit via the Wildcare Australia email address, subject "Wildnews", before

30th March 2008

The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of WILDCARE AUSTRALIA or of the editor.



PRESIDENT'S REPORT



I hope you all had a wonderful Christmas and are having a safe and happy New Year.

Wildcare Australia is now in its eleventh year, which is hard to believe as it doesn't seem that long since Eleanor, Sharon and I sat around Sharon's kitchen table, decided to take the plunge and form a wildlife group and then set about determining our vision for the group. A couple of weeks and quite a few phone calls and meetings later (email was nonexistent in our world then) we had what we hoped was the perfect list; all the things we wanted this group to be and all the things we wanted to avoid. That was in 1996, and here we are all these years later; it's absolutely amazing.

I think most of us have been affected by the Japanese whale hunt, and for those who have signed the petition "well done". Recently I was speaking to a few wildlife rehabilitators and was amazed by some of the comments I heard, suggesting a lack of interest in the welfare of animals outside their own sphere. There are so many animals out there that need our help, many Australian as well as international species. It is so easy to get cocooned in our own environment or caught up with the species

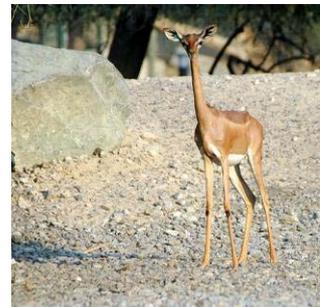
that's close to our hearts that we often see the world with tunnel vision. So please, no matter how busy you are, add your signature to the petition. It takes seconds but it could help save a species.

Over the last few months, I have been working with Queensland University with a view to having our workshop courses accredited. This has been an exciting process that is coming closer to completion. What does it mean? Once our courses have been accredited by the university, those people who attend our workshops and complete a brief exam will receive a certificate of accreditation which, unlike a certificate of attendance, can be used, if required, to gain credit towards further studies. It also allows our courses to be taught at universities and schools. This is not only a credit to Wildcare but also to those people who have spent so many months and even years, researching and compiling the notes you have today. So to all of those involved, well done!

Running a group like Wildcare Australia takes an enormous amount of work, and most of it is behind the scenes. Many take for granted the workshops, the meetings, the networking, the legalities, the notes, the newsletter, the office, the fundraising and the multitude of other tasks that contribute to making Wildcare Australia what it is today. But without the very small group of people who contribute so much of their lives to it, we would have a very badly operating rehabilitation group.

The members of the committee are all very approachable, and the meetings are open to all, so if you would like to attend, have an idea or simply need to ask "how it really is" please feel free to contact me, by emailing gail@wildlifewarriors.org.au, or any of our other committee members.

One of our wonderful but very cheeky vets who works at the Australian Wildlife Hospital takes great delight in sending me emails from Dubai, where he goes each year for a few months. He loves telling me what he has been doing (usually sipping coffee and watching the sunset). He does however send some wonderful photos. Here is one of them. Can you guess what it is? The first correct email I receive will win a prize.



Gail Gipp

Quote of the month

The greatness of a nation can be judged by the way its animals are treated.

Gandi

AUSTRALIAN BACKYARD WILDLIFE CERTIFICATE

Wildlife Protection Association of Australia, Inc is encouraging more Australians to think about making their backyards, balconies and patios wildlife friendly. If you have a wildlife friendly backyard, now can get recognition for that effort. Learn more at <http://www.australian-backyard-wildlife.com>

FROM THE OFFICE



WILDCARE OFFICE

As you are all aware we are VERY SHORT STAFFED IN THE OFFICE and we are extremely grateful for any time any member can spare.

Firstly, a big thank you to Brian Milligan for helping in the office two days a week for the best part of 2007. Brian, unfortunately, is currently ill and we wish him all the best.

Shawn Senior often calls into the office to lend a hand when he finishes work at Fleays Wildlife and Roy Webster and I are always glad to see him. Shawn is great on the phones, helps to pack and unpack goods and then helps with rescues on his way home. Great work Shawn.

Tracy Paroz has been great; she's been coming in to help out a few days here and there when she has had free time. New member Lauretta Salis has visited the office and been a great help recently and hopes to return again after the holidays. Very, very new member Julie Swift-Hoadly spent her first day in the office this week and was a great assistance to me.

A special thanks to Kim Alexander whose help over the holidays in the office, with rescues and everything else was invaluable.

AS ALWAYS HOW WOULD WE EVER COPE WITHOUT ROY WEBSTER - THANK YOU ROY.

Trish Hales

WILVOS WORKSHOPS

Presenter: Dr Anne Fowler

Saturday, 23rd February: Husbandry & Diseases of Birds (handling, feeding, housing, and diseases)

Sunday, 24th February: Husbandry & Diseases of Marsupials (macropods and possums) and Echidnas as well as wounds, bacterial and fungal **infections in Reptiles** (mainly water dragons, blue tongues). Designed as an introductory day covers a lot but gives resources for more detail.

TIME: 9am to 5 pm

COST: \$10 WILVO members, \$20 non-members.

VENUE: CWA Hall, Short Street, Nambour

Bookings are essential and close Wednesday 13th February, 2008

Bookings can be made by contacting Nalda on 07 5445 7771 or emailing

naldap@optusnet.com.au

NATIONAL WILDLIFE REHABILITATION CONFERENCE 2008

21 - 25 July

Crowne Plaza Conference Centre, Canberra City

For details on registration, accommodation, programmes and speakers, visit the NWRC website at www.nwrc.com.au



OFFICE HELP NEEDED

The Wildcare Office usually operates 8am to 4pm most weekdays and is in DIRE need of volunteers. If you have a spare day or even half a day a few times a month, we would love to hear from you.

PLEASE CONTACT THE OFFICE - 07 5527 2444

WILDLIFE PHONE SERVICE

WILDCARE'S 24-HOUR EMERGENCY WILDLIFE PHONE SERVICE

PHONE COORDINATOR UPDATE

Since the last newsletter we must welcome the following new telephone operators: Mimi Dona, Kat Payne, Shawn Senior and Narelle Adams. These people have filled in some major 'holes' for us and have given some of the other volunteer operators a well-deserved break. If we could have more people like this to fill in the three-hourly time slots, our wildlife would be most grateful.

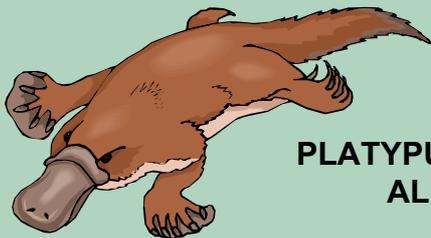
Just to reiterate, your fellow Wildcare volunteer telephone operators are in desperate need of a break! Yes, it's been another extremely busy baby bird and bat season and of course the calls are still coming in, not only for birds and bats but for all the other creatures that need us.

Responding to calls is not only a great way to learn about our wildlife but is also a means of educating the public. We have a fabulous bunch of people currently serving their telephone duty religiously as well as caring for all the wildlife they have, so we would love to give them a break and put on some new recruits.

If you can spare just 3 hours a week, we really need YOU!! All training is provided and we can guarantee you won't be bored!!

Get in and give a little back to our wildlife and your community. It's easy and very rewarding so call me anytime.

Liz Meffan
Wildcare Telephone Coordinator



PLATYPUS RESCUE ALERT

It's that time of year when young platypus are learning to fend for themselves and may wind up in trouble due to misadventure, starvation, or dog attack. During the rescue process it is important to remember that monotremes have a lower body temperature than eutherian mammals, so care should be taken when providing heat if animals present hypothermic.

An ambient temperature of 25 to 29°C is the maximum that should be used with monotremes. Subcutaneous fluids containing glucose will also assist in stabilizing the animal prior to transfer to a place that can provide specialist care. In Queensland, such care can be provided by David Fleay Wildlife Park (Ph 5576 2411), Australia Zoo Wildlife Warriors (Ph 5436 2097) or appropriately licensed carers. Transfer to specialist care should occur as soon as possible on the day of rescue.

Rosemary Booth
Wildlife Veterinarian

TOP SOIL AND MACROPODS - BEWARE



In October I had a truckload of 'Organic' soil delivered. I am always extremely careful about any dirt that is delivered or made available for my 'babies' to eat. I had not, however, considered the effect that the rain might have on 'fertilisers' in the soil. Over several months, I had several unexplained deaths and took my joeys to Australian Wildlife Hospital for necropsies. They revealed reddened and inflamed stomach mucosa indicative of acute inflammation and a mottled liver consistent with septicaemia.

After numerous phone calls to Gail and Dr. Jon, it was determined that the soil must have been contaminated with chook poo. My sister, Heidi realised that the load of 'organic' soil I had delivered had chook manure in it which must have been washed into some of my joey nursery areas after the heavy rains.

This has been a huge nightmare and learning experience and I hope other macropod carers can benefit from this experience.

Terri Eather

COORDINATOR'S CORNER

Brisbane & Gold Coast

Macropods

I am sure I must be the most fortunate Coordinator in Wildcare. Macropods are not an easy species to care for, the time and facility that are required severely limits the number of carers. I am very fortunate though, that we have a small but very dedicated group of carers that specialize in these animals.

Over the past few years, I have seen many of these carers evolve into very committed and knowledgeable macropod carers. The macropods that come into care do not need much "coordinating" as I am confident in the ability of the carers that specialize in them. So – thank you very much to each and every one of you (and you know who you are) for your continued dedication and commitment to these species.

Also, a special thank you to the 'unmentioned' carers that deal with a lot of our macropod calls – the trauma carers. They have the unfortunate task of attending to trauma calls which in most cases results in the animal being euthanased. This is one of the most unpleasant parts of being a trauma carer but their dedication to ending the suffering of these animals is commendable.

Hopefully, the warmer months will bring fewer joeys into care and you can all take a small break.

Karen Scott

Small Mammals

We had a few small mammals coming into care over the past 2 months - beautiful, healthy Long-nosed and Northern Brown Bandicoots orphans, most of which have been successfully raised and released. We've had several juvenile

bandicoots come into care as a result of dog attacks. Thanks to the prompt attention of our local vets, these were also successfully treated and released.

A litter of healthy Little Brown Antechinus babies from Tallebudgera Valley are currently in care.

We have very limited carers available so if you are interested in bandicoots or native mice, rats or dasyurids please contact me. They are very interesting species and although they require very intensive care, they develop quickly.

Karen Scott

Koalas

Reports of sick and injured koalas have slowed down in recent months, a welcome relief for our koala rescuers. We did have a run of back-young infants from the Gold Coast over October and November, all of which came into care as a result of road trauma. Unfortunately, most of these infants had severe fractures unable to be repaired. We continue to have adult koalas coming into care as a result of dog attacks and disease.

Hopefully with the recent rain and abundance of good quality eucalyptus tip, the koalas will mostly keep out of trouble through the warmer months.

Karen Scott

Possums

We've had the usual number of babies coming in, however they have not been in as good of condition as usual. The drought seems to have put possum parents behind the eight ball during breeding season resulting in less healthy babies coming into care.

We have a limited number of possum carers and are always in search of more. I am happy to pro-

vide instruction on basic care via an open house anytime so please contact me if you are interested. We could also use more assistance with transport of animals to carers from vets in inner city Brisbane and remote areas like Browns Plains and Ipswich.

Kathy Keed

Bats

We have had good success with injured and paralysis tick, pregnant mums. Several premature births and still-borns but the rest carried successfully to full term. This year the first baby arrived 10th October, more greys than blacks and approximately 95% males. Once again, a wide age range with newborns still coming in, including a recent premi.

Thanks to all 'bat-mums' who shared the load and 'bat aunties' who came to Advancetown and fed and cleaned, cleaned and fed!

Greer McNeill

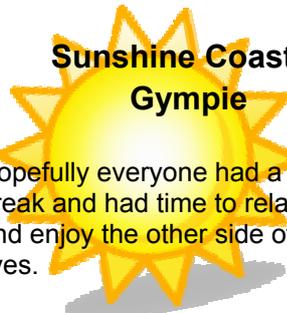
Birds

Baby bird carers, where are you???? We used to have a wonderful network of carers to look after our precious baby birds and being that time of year again we really need you!!!! I used to coordinate it all and team up the different kinds of birds to different carers but this year we actually had to turn away some of the birds because of lack of carers.

I want to thank the dedicated few who have helped look after all the birds that came into care during this year's busy baby bird season. Please let us know if you can help in any way – just a few babies would be a great help. We might even be able to find some cages if that is a problem. I know we are all busy at this time of the year but the birds seem to have been forgotten!

Dianna Smith

Continued on page 7



Sunshine Coast & Gympie

Hopefully everyone had a great break and had time to relax a little and enjoy the other side of our lives.

The possum, bat and bird baby season was as hectic as it always is at this time of year. Thankfully, we have an amazing bunch of carers up our way who have accommodated almost all of the adult and juvenile patients that have needed assistance. A big thanks to Ailsa and Lynette for taking on so many young ones and congratulations to Lynette for having such success with all of her waterbirds, including the 11 Plumed Whistling ducklings.

Don't forget about our wildlife food and equipment shop at Pomona (Rachel's place) that usually has all the basic essentials in stock. We are also fortunate to have benefited from the Gambling Community Benefit Grant that Wildcare received and now have a selection of extension poles, nets and trapping devices for the use of carers. Give Rachel a call for instructions on how to access this equipment.

Please note the following upcoming workshops and festivals:

- Glider Workshop – 10th Feb in Gympie
- Celebrating with Mary Festival and Clean Up Australia Day in Gympie. Enviro and Landcare activities happening in week before and after – call MRCCC on (07) 5482 4766 or watch local papers – 2nd March
- Basic Bird Workshop – 22nd March in Gympie
- Orientation - 12th April in Gympie

Please make every effort to attend training workshops, even if you have attended them before. We've revised much of the workshop content and several will now be presented in hands-on format. Please register at least one week in advance by phoning the main Wild-

care Office. If you find you cannot attend a workshop for which you have previously registered, please let us know as it is very inconsiderate to presenters when a number of registrants fail to attend.

Best of luck to everyone in the new year and let's hope it is nice and quiet on the wildlife rescue front.

Paula Rowlands & Rachel Lyons

Birds

Finally, the number of chicks coming into care has started to slow down, although the bad weather seems to have brought in a few late nestlings. Information has it that most of the Butcherbirds, Noisy Miners and Doves are nesting again, so hopefully we will not receive too many from this 'second sitting'. We are still receiving the usual number of injured and sick birds.

Channel-billed Cuckoos and Koels are here now. We have had two come into care over the past few weeks. Please remember that these are migratory birds and must be self-feeding and flying very well by the end of February, as most of the migrations in this area start about the end of March. If your chick is not ready, you MUST hold it over the winter months.

Ailsa Watson

Possums

Orphaned possums have been steadily coming in over the past few months and continue to do so. Most of the orphans in care this year have been ringtails which was fortunate as we could group them up and save some aviary space. Several groups are almost ready for release. Thanks to Bev, Lesley and Sharon for taking on more than their fair share this year.

Paula Rowlands & Rachel Lyons

Gliders

We have numerous Squirrel Gliders in care at present and are pre-

paring for three group releases in the next month or so. Thanks to Delicia and Paula for taking the bulk of the load here. Late Feather-tail Glider babies are still coming in, we have had over 20 this breeding season. If you are interested in helping out with next year's batch (August to October) please let Rachel know.

Paula Rowlands & Rachel Lyons

Bats

Not as many microbats have come in this year but we have seen the usual amount of flying fox juveniles this year. Paula, David, Rachel, Luke and Tina spent several afternoons in early December fishing down numerous crying and starving orphans at the Gympie Roost site. We had received a few adult lactating females with barbed wire and fruit netting injuries without their bubs which prompted us to visit the roost.

All babies made it through except for one female grey. A big thanks goes out to those carers who were able to house a "few" extra; Trish Wimberley deserves a huge medal! We do need more flying fox and bat carers up this way and are keen to hear from anyone who would like to explore the amazing world of bat care.

Paula Rowlands & Rachel Lyons

Macropods

As usual, we've had a full house with joeys and several releases for different species groups are planned over the coming months. Not as many adult macropod hits as in previous months thanks to the recent rains, green grass and therefore less movement. Thanks to all of the macropod carers who have helped share the load this year by taking on what they could.

Paula Rowlands & Rachel Lyons

KEEPING THE DREAM ALIVE!

Education Highlights

WILDCARE EDUCATION AND TRAINING

2008 Calendar

The Training Calendar for 2008 has now been completed and has been posted on the Wildcare website under the "Noticeboard" section. You will notice a few changes to the Calendar this time.

Notably, a limited number of workshops have been scheduled for January and February. This is to allow time for the trainers to update the training notes, to finish developing new training workshops and to recover from a busy spring season (and perhaps to get a sleep-in or two?). As you may appreciate, all of the Wildcare training workshops are conducted by our own committed volunteers, many of whom work full-time outside of wildlife and who are also actively caring for a number of species, therefore the program will begin in earnest in March with over 60 workshops being offered throughout the year.

You will notice that the Calendar has been set for the entire year in an attempt to give everyone sufficient time to plan ahead. We have tried to avoid public holidays, special days like Mothers' Day and school holidays to enable you to have some family time too.

Please remember to book in for workshops through the office or via email. If for some reason you find you are unable to attend a workshop for which you have booked, it is important to let us know as soon as possible. In 2008, we will be trialing a new system whereby we will send a message to remind you that you are booked in for an upcoming workshop. This relies on using our computer and your mobile phone number to forward and receive the message. We have really entered the age of technology!

Many thanks to the veterinary staff at Currumbin Wildlife Hospital who kindly volunteered to deliver several bird workshops in the coming year including an Advanced Bird Workshop. We hope that this will become a regular component of our Education Program and look forward to the workshops.

For those of you who prefer your animals a little more cold blooded, 2008 will see the presentation of a new reptile workshop thanks to Jai Hennessy and Kristie Remmert, who have a tremendous amount of experience which they are looking forward to sharing with you. We know that many of you are looking forward to that workshop.

We are envisaging that a few new workshops will be available towards the latter part of the year, including the Anatomy and Physiology of Native Wildlife. An earlier version of this workshop proved very popular and we hope that this one will too.

There will be further workshops scheduled for the northern regions as the year progresses, if there is sufficient interest from members in those areas. These workshops will be advertised in the Newsletter and on the website as they are confirmed.

Workshop registrations for 2008 are now open. You can register for workshops by emailing education@wildcare.org.au (preferable method) or by telephoning the Wildcare office on 5527 2444 Tuesday to Friday between 9am and 4pm.

Please mark in your diary the workshops that you wish to attend. We look forward to seeing you there.

Looking Back on 2007

2007 has been a fairly busy year for Wildcare and in particular for our training program.

We were invited to conduct training workshops for members of other wildlife groups, including groups in Canberra, Victoria, Darling Downs and northern New South Wales. It is always a privilege to be invited to deliver our training workshops to other groups and is testament to the high quality of training that Wildcare members receive.

We were also honoured to be invited back to deliver our Australian Wildlife Course to the veterinary students at the University of Queensland. This partnership with the University and the veterinarians-in-training is a unique and vitally important one and has served to develop a greater understanding and appreciation of the role of wildlife rehabilitation.

Wildcare Australia prides itself on its level of commitment to training and its development and delivery of high quality education, which enables its carers to undertake the arduous role of wildlife rehabilitation armed with skill, expertise and up-to-date knowledge.

Our comprehensive range of workshops has been developed over the years by our own highly skilled rehabilitators who work closely with wildlife veterinarians to create workshops which reflect the changes and developments in wildlife rehabilitation.

But the workshops are only relevant if our members attend and carry these skills and practices into their daily management of the animals in their care.

Luckily, or perhaps because of their commitment, a huge number of our members and rehabilitators do attend our courses regularly.

Continued on page 9

Wildcare Education and Training (continued)

To give you an idea of the number of people who have completed training through Wildcare in recent years:

2003	306 people
2004	471 people
2005	565 people
2006	702 people
2007	621 people

Since the inception of our Orientation Program in 2001, a total of 451 people have completed Orientation. More recently, a staggering number of our carers have attended our newer workshops including:

- Introduction to Caring for Orphaned Mammals - 271 people
- First Aid for Native Wildlife -137 people

This is a credit to the commitment of these carers and our trainers.

To the Future

We are looking forward to continuing to develop new workshops and to improve our existing training programs. We are investigating having some of our courses accredited and believe that this will come to fruition over the next year or so.

We wish to extend a special thank you to those trainers who kindly give up their weekends to teach workshops. In 2007 alone, Wildcare volunteer trainers conducted over 70 workshops free of charge for our members at 11 different locations from the Sunshine to the Gold Coast. That equates to 490 hours of workshop delivery, not taking into account the many hours spent developing new training material, upgrading existing material, photocopying, burning CD's, etc and traveling to and from the venues. These trainers also spend many hours and considerable amounts of their own money attending other wildlife events and undertaking courses to further their own knowledge in order ensure that the workshops they deliver are up-to-date and of the highest quality.

Thank you also to those diligent members who strive to learn as much as possible and regularly attend the training workshops. Without you and your willingness to learn and develop your skills and knowledge, the workshops that are developed and delivered would merely be that, workshops. It is you that carry it forward and put it into practice.

Additionally, a special thank you to Trish and Terry Wimberley for allowing us to continue to use their property, 'Narrowleaf', to hold workshops. Thank you too, to the volunteers and staff at the Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary for graciously allowing us the use of their training room for some of our workshops. This has been a wonderful opportunity for us this year and we hope it will continue.

Further north, thank you to Daisy Hill Koala Centre, the Waterford West Primary School, CREEC at Burpengary, the Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre at Eumundi and David Rowlands at Gympie for the continued use of their training facilities. The opportunity to use these venues has allowed so many more of our volunteers to attend the workshops closer to their area and therefore to spend less time away from their homes and, more importantly, their animals.

The 2008 year is shaping up to be an even better year for our Education Program, but remember this is your Education Program and as such we need feedback not only on the workshops we already deliver, but also suggestions for ones to include. Keep watching the Website throughout the year for further updates and special guest workshops. We look forward to seeing you at future training workshops.

Regards,
Wildcare Training Team
Karen Scott, Kathryn Biber and Kim Alexander

FRUITS OF OUR LABOUR

This morning I got the dreaded "flying fox in netting" call.

When I arrived, my heart sank as I remembered cutting a bat from netting at the same place several years ago. It had been trussed up in a green mono-filament net that had been draped over a spindly peach tree that struggled to grow in the shale and clay. I recall spending time discussing various options to protect the fruit and yet, here I was again.

I climbed the steep drive with uncharitable thoughts about the owners filling my head and reluctantly followed said owner to the trapped bat. There I saw it; this magnificent construction of posts, wire and taut-knitted netting over a small orchard, and I stopped dead in my tracks. Then I noticed that there were two more netted areas every bit as carefully constructed as the first.

The "flying fox in netting" hung casually amongst the cool green leaves of the peach tree which was now flourishing in a heavily mulched garden bed. The crafty old black boy had squeezed in through a hole made by the possums and had, no doubt, dined on peaches. The solution was easy...open the end of the enclosure at dusk and he can leave at his own pace, no stress, no chasing, no scragging, no capture. The owner said they had harvested a good crop off the tree this year and would leave the net open so the possums can have the balance of the fruit, as well as the bat should he choose to return.

So take heart everyone, despite all the trials and despair of the last few seasons, there are good people out there who do care and who listen and act upon our advice. I was lucky enough to find one.

I left with a light heart and a jar of peach marmalade made by the gentleman and his delightful son.

Greer McNeill

OFFICIAL BUSINESS

Wildcare Management Committee Meeting Summary Oct/Nov 2007

Business/Corporation

- Proposed and approved to change the legal name of the organisation from "Australian Koala Hospital Association Inc" to "Wildcare Australia" to bring in line with our registered business name.
- Requests have been received from members seeking references from Wildcare Australia. Committee discussed and agreed that only workshop attendance statements and periods of membership would be provided upon request. Members are, however, at liberty to request personal references from other members.

Education/Workshops - External

- University of Queensland Course now completed. Approximately 120 students completed the 8-week course on the care and management of native wildlife provided by Wildcare trainers.
- Karen Scott recently conducted Advanced Macropod Workshops in Lismore and Esk. The Esk workshop raised \$840 and the Lismore workshop \$500.
- The last issue of Paws and Claws did not have an article from Wildcare. All committee members will assist with writing articles for future issues.

Education/Workshops - Wildcare

- The 2008 education calendar is in final stages; available soon. No workshops expected for January and February to allow trainers an opportunity to prepare for 2008 workshops and to recover from busy spring season.
- Proposing to use SMS/Text Mail to contact registrants to confirm their attendance at workshops. Planned implementation is early 2008.
- Committee approved reimbursement of petrol expenses to trainers when presenting workshops outside their region. To be done on a

quarterly basis.

Equipment

- The dart gun has been purchased and is being held by Australian Wildlife Hospital pending an amended Weapons License being obtained by Mark Alexander.
- Committee endorsed the purchase of a bottle of Methone for use, as needed, on wild koalas and other wildlife by the veterinary staff at Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary.

Members/Memberships

- All new membership applications were approved.
- Due to the volume of spamming, Wildcare aims to limit the number of emails sent to members.
- Discussed involving new carers more upon joining. Committee agreed that from early 2008 the Volunteer Manual would be posted to all new members to ensure they have some information to read before attending the Orientation Program. Volunteer manual being updated and will be sent to all new members when they join. Planned implementation is early 2008.

Office

- Office computers were repaired and network problems rectified.
- Wildcare database was updated to include the map reference of the carer's location.
- A new supply of our coloured brochures and new letterhead has been printed.
- More tree stands have been ordered which will be available from the office shop.
- Committee assessed the cost of purchasing and printing CD labels. Committee agreed to purchase 2 x Canon printers, at a cost of \$130 each, which print directly onto the CD. This will eliminate the need to purchase CD labels and will be more cost efficient.
- The new information brochure is being finalised by committee members. Will be provided to those wishing more detailed infor-

mation about Wildcare Australia and caring for native wildlife.

Permits/Agreements

- Gail Gipp is still liaising with the EPA in relation to the specifics of Wildcare's amended Rehabilitation Permit so that updated Permit Endorsements can be provided to carers.
- Enquiries being made to EPA for obtaining a Permit to keep certain animals for education purposes.
- Committee agreed that evidence of vaccinations and current titre levels would no longer be required from bat carers. Committee agreed to amend the Wildcare Bat Agreement; onus for obtaining/maintaining appropriate vaccination coverage will be on the individual carer. The new Agreement has been presented to current bat carers for execution.

Telephone Voucher

- The committee nominated Amy Whitman and Tonya Howard as the October and November recipients, respectively, of the after-hours telephone volunteer voucher in appreciation of their contributions to Wildcare.

Treasurers Report

- The committee welcomed Kirsty Arnold as the new treasurer. We greatly appreciate her volunteering to take on this important role.
- Committee has received a cheque for \$70 from the 2007 Wildlife Expo.

Vacant Positions

- Bird Coordinators for Brisbane/Gold Coast: Karen Barney, Cheryl Barney and Dianna Smith have recently resigned as Bird Coordinators. The committee wishes to thank these women for their invaluable contributions. Position descriptions, titles and roles for all Coordinator Positions will be reviewed and updated.

RESEARCH & WILDCARE



POSSUM EXUDATIVE DERMATITIS RESEARCH

By Kathryn Biber

As you may have read in the previous edition of Wildnews, I am currently doing research on exudative dermatitis in Brushtail possums. This project is being conducted in collaboration with the University of Queensland, School of Veterinary Science. We are looking to identify the pathology in the wounds, which will lead to a better understanding of the potential causes of the disease, future implications for treatment and management, and potential zoonosis. This research will benefit all wildlife carers and I am hoping that everyone in Wildcare will jump on board and help us achieve this goal.

So how can you help?

As of the 1st February 2008, please contact me immediately if you rescue or receive into care a common or mountain brushtail possum with exudative dermatitis. I can then arrange for the possum to be collected and transferred to the University of Queensland, School of Veterinary Science where samples will be taken from the wounds. As this will be my full-time work for the next 6 months, you will be able to reach me 24hrs on my mobile.

I am hoping that all carers will be

willing to assist me in this project, as the more possums we can sample, the more significant our results will be. If you have any questions, or would like any further information please contact me via phone or email katbiber@yahoo.com.au I will report on our findings over the coming issues of Wildnews.

For anyone unfamiliar with exudative dermatitis, these photos will give you an indication of how the disease presents in possums. If you rescue a possum, and are unsure whether it has exudative dermatitis, please ring me and we can go from there.



WILDCARE RECORDS USED IN RESEARCH

I want to extend a BIG thank you to all you members out there who submit your records, and especially to those who submit them on time! And an even BIGGER thank you to Kiersten Jones (assistant record-keeper) and Amy Whitman (an incredibly devoted new member) who have recently helped to get the backlog of Wildcare Records updated, compiled and summarized. We should have final summary reports for 2002 – 2007 in the next 1 or 2 months. I have provided some preliminary data for 2007 below.

- Birds – 45% (931)
- Possums/Gliders – 28% (574)
- Macropods – 16% (338)
- Bats – 3% (60)
- Small and Other Mammals –

2.1% (43)

- Koalas – 2% (35)
- Reptiles/Snakes – 1.5% (28)
- Turtles/Frogs – 1.7% (25)
- Monotremes – 0.6% (13)

The data we collect are not only interesting but are invaluable in research being conducted by Wildcare members as well as other organizations and academic institutions throughout Queensland. Below are some of the requests to which we are currently responding.

- Griffith University - where are animals being injured across the urban and peri-urban landscape in the southeast Qld/ Gold Coast region.
- Qld Main Roads - impact of landscape and road attributes wildlife, specifically road kill.
- GCCC - data on native animal "attacks" for the Gold Coast region.
- Wildlife Preservation Society (WPSQ) - data for head of the Glider Network for WPSQ.
- Wildcare member and Environmental Scientist with GCCC – effectiveness of the now fragmented bush areas around Burleigh / West Burleigh in supporting wildlife.

Additionally, we have identified some changes to the Excel and Word templates which we hope will facilitate your efforts in recording data and will greatly facilitate our task of merging all members' data into summaries.

We will be providing quarterly summaries in upcoming newsletters so watch this space....and keep those records coming in!

The Recordkeeping Team,
Renée Rivard, Kiersten Jones and Amy Whitman

SPECIES SPOTLIGHT

Whales



WILD TRAVELS

The Nullabor Roadhouse was not exactly a five star hotel, but it was the perfect place to spend the night prior to visiting the Head of Bight and what was to be a most enjoyable and awe inspiring experience.

The day dawned cold and windy with a fair degree of cloud cover so thermals, scarves and wind protection were required as well as binoculars and cameras. We drove the relatively short distance, twenty-six kilometers or so, across the limestone plateau to the information centre at the Head of Bight. From there we followed the board walk, with mounting excitement, to the edge of the cliffs, all the while scanning the ocean for the giant forms which had drawn us to this place. There had been twenty-six sighted the day before, so our expectations were high, but also tempered by the knowledge that wild animals are unpredictable and we may not see any. What were we looking for? Southern Right Whales.

These magnificent animals were hunted almost to extinction in the nineteenth century when they were considered the 'right' whale to catch for the large quantities of oil and whale 'bone' they produced and for the fact, advantageous for the whalers in their open boats, that the species was slow moving, easily approached, and didn't sink when dead.

The cliffs in this area are about 60 to 70 metres high and allow the public extensive views of the ocean without in any way disturbing the creatures far below.

The Southern Right whale is a ba-

leen whale (as opposed to a whale with teeth) that feeds on plankton in the colder waters far to the south of Australia in summer, and in winter migrates to the warmer waters closer to the coast to breed. The Head of Bight is one of the nursery sites where the mothers come to give birth and nurture their calves until such time as the calves are strong enough to make the migration south to the feeding grounds. It was here that we spent the day observing these magnificent mammals.

Initially things were rather quiet in the ocean and patience was required. Here and there a large form could be discerned just lying about relaxing. From one of the platforms a couple could be seen having what appeared to be a rousing good time! Then some distance away to the east another started tail lobbing, that is lifting its tail flukes (which weigh several tonnes) out of the water and slapping them down making a loud noise and lots of spray. This activity went on for some time. Was it just for fun or as a means of communication? Further to the west a number were cruising about, sometimes lying on their backs with their pectoral fins out of the water or attracting our attention by their V-shaped blow.

After some time, three of what had been enormous prostrate forms lying just below the surface, started to move, and then there appeared three calves cavorting about, swimming around and over their mothers and doing little rolls which revealed white patches on their bellies. Imagine our excitement to suddenly realize that the three prostrate forms had been females feeding their calves and imagine our amazement to hear that a calf may drink up to 600 litres of milk a day.

Of special interest was a newly born white calf with its mother and a midwife (who helps with the birth and initial care). As the newborn's lungs are without air it tends to sink, so it must be nudged to the surface for a breath. The calf suckles soon after birth with the mother forcing the milk out under muscular pressure and the calf just gulping it down! The milk is extremely rich and the calf will double its birth weight (about a ton) in a week and continue to grow at an amazing rate to be ready to migrate in October or thereabouts.

Right whales are fairly easy to identify as they have no dorsal fin and the pattern of callosities on the head of each animal is unique. The callosities are areas of hardened skin which harbour swarms of whale lice.

Southern Right whales breed every three or four years and their numbers are very gradually increasing after a period of some fifty years with virtually no sightings in Australian waters. However, there is no room for complacency as there are still many threats both within and beyond the control of man, which could push these spectacular creatures over the brink.

Eleanor M Hanger

References

Whale Information Booklet. Department for Environment and Heritage, Victor Harbor.

Bannister, John. *Western Australian Humpback and Right Whales an increasing success story*. Western Australian Museum, Perth.

RESCUE STORIES



THE SECRET DIET OF PELICANS

Most people believe that fish is the pelican's natural diet. Not true. Fact is pelicans only eat fish when there are no ham sandwiches available. I know this because I usually get to study their stomach contents on the floor of my car.

For some time I've observed their feeding habits and it's clear that Gold Coast pelicans are omnivorous. Local people recognise this and cater directly to their needs. Recently I caught a bird that was fed sausages every morning from the second floor balcony of a block of flats. Yum! Not long after that a sick peli disgorged a kilo of mince, all over me. That was nice! I caught one just the other day that turned up every afternoon for bread, steak and bacon. See what I mean? True omnivores.

My favourite bird was a regular visitor at an elderly folk's village. It was one of the scruffiest looking creatures I'd seen in quite a while and it wasn't above barging into their lounge rooms and bullying them for food. That's bad enough when you're 30 years old, it must be terrifying when you're 80. Despite its feisty behaviour the old folks loved the bird. They fed it bread daily. One day they were horrified to see fishing line coming from its mouth,

so they called WILDCARE. I told them they had to keep the bird around for 30 minutes 'til I got there and they were **NOT to feed it any more bread, ever!**

"Well, what do we feed it", was the reply.

"How about fish", I said, "**that's what pelicans eat**".

"Oh OK, where do we get that?"

"Try the fish shop."

They thought for a moment then said, "we've got sardines, will that do?"

"Yeah OK, just this once".

I have to warn you this story is about to take a major turn for the worse. When I arrived I saw the bird standing on the front lawn surrounded by elderly admirers two of whom were taking turns feeding it porridge from a spoon. "What happened to the sardines?" I asked in my most restrained tone. "Oh, she's eaten them all", they said, "four tins!"

I quickly grabbed the pelican by the snout then handed it over to the oldies to be restrained while I went to get the transport box. Looking back I could see four elderly ladies and one fella who couldn't believe their luck at being able to cuddle their favourite bird. The peli looked mortified. I smiled and thought "payback you little rascal for all the lounge rooms you raided last week."

Any doubt about what they'd fed the bird was soon dispelled when it threw the lot up in the back of my car. I tell ya, a thirty kilometre drive flat out to Currumbin Wildlife Hospital on a stinking hot day with several tins of half digested sardines on the floor of the car really tests a bloke's metal.

Rowley Goonan

BEARDED BABIES

'We aren't orphans!'

With reptile breeding season in full swing, we would like to share this very special story.

Almost 10 weeks ago, Jai was called to a bearded dragon rescue in Tallai. The female bearded was attacked by a dog, and unfortunately died, due to head trauma, moments after Jai arrived.

After completing his initial assessment, Jai realised the bearded was gravid, and rushed her home. A caesarean was performed, and 16 tiny eggs were extracted. After only 59 days (short incubation for bearded dragons, but long wait for us!) we received a wonderful surprise! There were two tiny babies in the incubator. For the next 18 hours we sat and watched as the remaining 14 eggs slowly hatched.



In the wild, these hatchlings would be on their own. The mother lays the eggs, and that is the end of her caring. The babies are totally independent, catching their own food, regulating their own body temperature and finding shelter. It is amazing to think that a 2 gram, 2-inch long baby needs no help from us whatsoever.

Sadly the mother did not survive, but all of her 16 babies now have a chance.

Kristy Rimmert

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

THE FIRST....

It's the call that we all, as brand new rescuers, wait for; the one that asks us to carry out our first rescue or in this instance, second as well. It was morning when Trish rang, she asked me to pick up 7 orphaned ducklings and a crow that had been attacked by a cat.

The ducklings had been left on someone's verandah in a cardboard box, so because of the heat I headed there first. During the drive I made a mental plan. It seemed easy: two pick-ups, two drop-offs. I decided I was lucky to get such an easy call to start off with. And it did seem that way at first.

The ducklings were making a lot of noise and looked so cute and fluffy that I just wanted to pick them up for a cuddle but I remembered Kim's stern lecture at orientation, "**They are not crying for you, they are crying for their mother**". (I'm pleased to say Kim, I never touched them!) "Too easy" I thought, as I strapped the box in with a seatbelt and headed to the crow.

The crow had been found by a member of the public who had kindly put it in a box for me. Unfortunately the box was 1.5 metres long, 15 cm high and did not close nor hold together properly. Personally, I put crows second on my list of big birds to avoid, just after emus, and just before chickens (yes, I am also scared of chickens). Not wanting to embarrass myself publicly, I put the box in the car and drove around the corner to take stock of the situation.

I knew I had to assess the crow first. I pulled over in a side street and lifted the hatchback of my car. I started by rugging myself up to prevent injury, big gloves and a jacket in case of claws. I peeked inside one end of the box and the crow

ran to the other end. I moved to the other end and it ran back. We played this game for a few minutes before it became obvious that I was going to have to stick my hands in with it. I decided to try and wrap it up in a towel and then assess it, safe from beak and claws. I breathed in deeply. I draped the towel over the end of the box where the crow is and then attempted to scoop it up. The problem is that I don't know which end I have, beak or claws.

I knew I would have to get closer, but to be honest, I was scared. So as I leaned forward, terrified, the crow took its chance and leaped out of the box heading further into the car and sat on the rear passenger side window. Stunned, I stood for quite some time trying to figure out what to do. There was no way I was getting inside the car with an angry, scared crow on the loose. Then the ducklings started chirping again. Visions of calling Trish to report I have no ducklings but a well-fed crow spurred me into coming up with a plan; I will encourage the crow out of the car, onto the ground, drape it with a towel and start again.

I moved towards the crow and after a lot of noise and wing flapping it moved to the opposite side of the window. For quite some time, I stood in the road face to face with the crow, just the window separating us, quickly coming to the conclusion that I would never rescue large birds again. I couldn't ring and admit defeat on my first rescue, so a passing tradesman was my only option. I flagged him down and as he pulled over I simply said: "there's a crow in my car, could you get it out?" "That's kind of an odd thing," he pointed out. He got out of the car and looked in the back, genuinely surprised. "I put it in there," I stated and realised that that statement probably needed more explanation, "I'm a wildlife rescuer – can you get it out?" And at that point I realised how silly I

must have looked, a so-called wildlife rescuer rugged up like an Eskimo, being rescued by a passing tradesman... a passing tradesman, who reached inside the car with his bare hands, picked up the crow and put it inside the new lidded box. Yes, I was embarrassed.

After delivering the ducklings (uneaten) and the crow (with me jumping every time it moved inside the box) to their respective places, I drove home for a well deserved rest! Then the phone rang. It's the after hours phone operator with my third rescue ever and third rescue for the day! I was asked to simply collect an unknown bird. I told the caller the lengthy saga of the crow and how I will not be rescuing any more birds, as it is obviously not my forte. At the end of my story, I was met with a respectful silence. A silence that to me says both, "oh dear, we let anyone join these days" and "just go get the bird, you big sissy". Apparently my *crow-phobia* didn't get me any special treatment so I headed off for my third rescue of the day, strongly suspecting that I was going to be known among the office staff as "the crazy one who will do anything you tell her".

Anonymous new member

HUMOUR IN THE HOUSE

The Wildcare office received a call from a member of the public who said he had a very large DORK in his house and wanted it removed. When I queried "DORK", he confirmed yes it was a very large and aggressive DORK which was terrifying his wife and ripping up the lounge room. And then the caller, DORK, hung up.

I gather this call was a way of amusing himself. We get them all!

Trish Hales

PJ's Wildcare for KIDS



Hi again everyone!

I hope you are enjoying your school holidays. Unfortunately, the rainy weather has meant not as much beach time as I like. But, I've seen a lot of movies and spent a bit of time in the video arcade, that's for sure.

Recently, my family and I moved house and we were very busy. But, we've finally finished moving and I'm happy to be in our new house.

Back in November, my dad, who is the breakfast announcer on Radio 4BC, Peter Dick, had an outside broadcast at Dreamworld. It was great! We got to have a whole day at Dreamworld for free!

While we were there, the animal handlers brought out some animals for people to "meet and greet". Here is a picture of me and my friend Emily with Bonnie the Wombat and also a Bilby, I can't remember its name.

Dreamworld isn't just about rides. They have a really great Australian animal collection and also some beautiful tigers on Tiger Island. I hope you are lucky enough to get up close to some of them!

RESCUE SQUAD!

Yesterday, my mum was standing on our top floor balcony which looks over the back yards of our neighbours' apartments (we live in a townhouse now). She saw something in the corner of her eye and then noticed that a lizard was swimming in the neighbour's fish pond. She remembered that someone had told her that if you have a spa or pool or pond, sometimes creatures slip in there and then can't get out. Then, sadly, they drown.

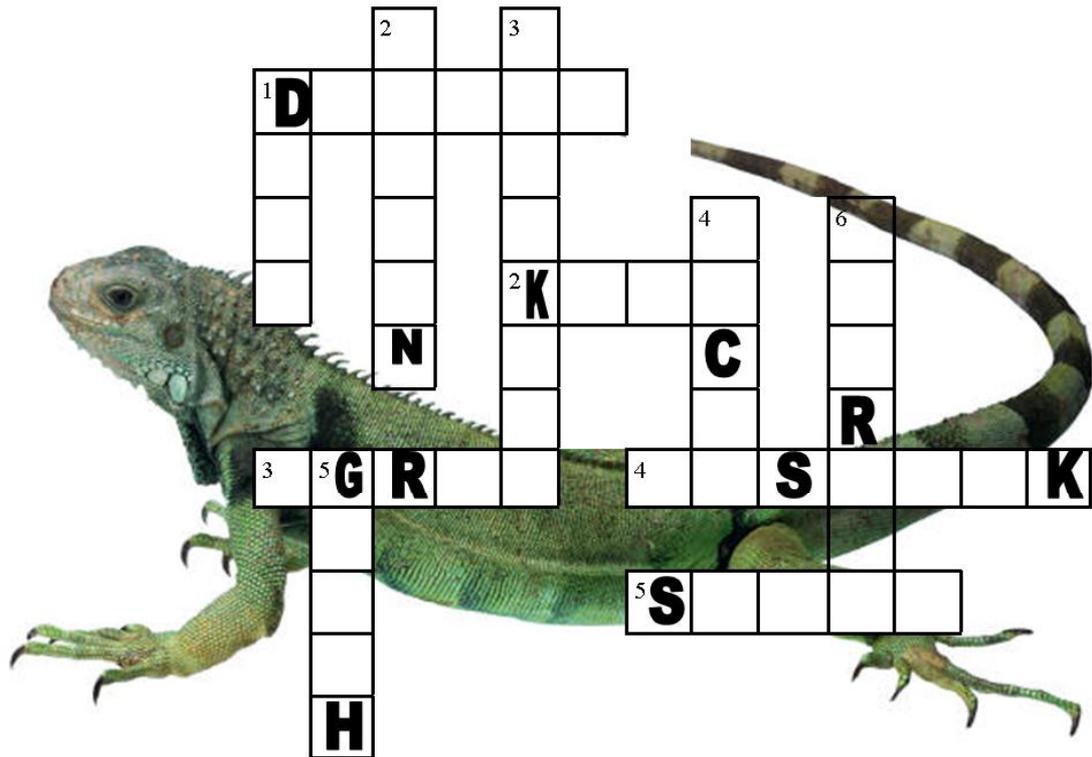
So, my mum asked me if I would hop the fence and rescue the lizard! Unfortunately, I was too short to reach up to their pond and I wasn't having any luck getting the lizard to hop into my fish-net. Then my mum had to climb over the fence as well and she got the lizard to climb onto a stick and it went off to freedom. It looked to be a Copper-tailed Skink. Unfortunately, there was already a dead one in the bottom of the pond. And the pond was also full of mosquito larvae!! I think a lot of people forget how much water is lying around in their gardens and how much mozzies love this hot weather for breeding. So, later on in the day, we saw our neighbours and warned them about the mozzies breeding in their pond. They were very grateful we had reminded them.

We have a pond in our yard too but we keep fish in it so the mozzies can't breed in there. My neighbour hasn't got any fish but we told them we'd give her some when she cleaned out the pond. If you have a pond, don't forget to check it for any stray wildlife which might get in there. They can survive for a few hours but after that it's too late. Better still, put some wire mesh over the pond so they can't get in too easily. Or, put a plank of wood or rock near the edge so they can climb back out over the edge of the pond.

Enjoy the rest of your holidays! P.J.



WILD CROSSWORD



WORDSEARCH

This edition's crossword features some of our native reptiles and birds.



DOWN

1. Wampoo Fruit - - - -
2. Coastal T - - - - n
3. Rainbow L - - - - - -
4. Spotted Velvet G - - - -
5. Pink and grey bird
6. Dusky M - - r - - -

ACROSS

1. Nobbi - - - - -
2. Whistling K - - -
3. A long-legged bird
4. Brown G - s - - - k
5. Copper-tailed S - - - k

A	K	N	O	B	E	L	B	B	O	P	G
H	W	K	O	J	S	B	P	S	I	O	A
G	O	S	H	A	W	K	S	M	R	X	L
U	I	N	C	C	P	K	A	F	E	S	I
N	E	S	J	A	I	B	T	B	C	W	A
G	O	N	I	N	O	E	L	L	U	G	T
A	X	A	K	A	K	P	I	G	E	O	N
N	L	K	M	C	C	T	A	N	D	E	A
W	Q	E	O	P	E	E	U	Y	A	H	F
F	S	R	E	E	G	Y	Q	R	V	C	D
S	W	A	M	P	H	E	N	O	T	E	R
N	A	L	L	E	S	O	R	E	A	L	L
B	T	O	O	F	Y	L	A	C	S	M	E

Snake, Jacana, Swamphen, Quail, Pigeon, Gull, Rosella, Fantail, Goshawk, Rocketfrog, Pobblebonk, Gungan, Gecko, Skink, Scalyfoot, Turtle

Answers: DOWN: 1. Dove 2. Tailpan 3. Lorikeet 4. Gecko 5. Galah 6. Moorhen
ACROSS: 1. Dragon 2. Kite 3. Egret 4. Goshawk 5. Skink

A few of Wildcare's rescues and rehabs this year.

Photo Gallery



I'm a Golden Swamp Wallaby



A WARM WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Wildcare Australia welcomes the following new members:

Val Carr, *Arundel*; Lynette Kampe, *Ashgrove West*; Lorraine Pollard, *Ashmore*; Ellana Sue Hetherington, *Auchenflower*; Kelly Boorman, *Beerwah*; Beverley, Brian & Julian Heath, *Bichgno TAS*; Rebekah Bird, *Bonogin*; Stephanie Page, *Broadbeach Waters*; David Marland, *Buderim*; Paxton Kearney, *Caloundra*; Carolynn & Amanda Taylor, Glenn Jones, *Chambers Flat*; Laura McCosker, *Cleveland*; Morgan & Ray Bettridge, *Coomabah*; Hilary Stubbs, *Coomera*; Kathy Mahon, *Cooran*; Laura Simmons & Bradley Jeffers, *Corinda*; Karin Exner, Thilo Schafer & Michaela Schiener, *Eagle Heights*; Corinne Lendon, *Ferny Grove*; Dale & Kerstin Shepherd, *Glass House Mountain*; Sharyn & John Young, *Goodna*; Emma Bradshaw & Jack Giles, *Guanaba*; Kathryn & Jason Degier, *Highland Park*; Maren Mettelsiefen & Christian Dammann, *Karana Downs*; Patricia & Shareena Van De Berkt, *Labrador*; Daren Rodgers & Christie O'Halloran, *Loganholme*; Dyane & Markus Helin, *Maleny*; Yeng Peng Zee, *Moorooka*; Jo & Peter Grist, *Morayfield*; Jennifer Milner, *Mount Coolum*; Gerrit Schoonderbeek, Julie Swift-Hoadley, Paul Baldwin, Rosie Jones, *Mudgeeraba*; Dana Carey & Simon Deamer, *Noosa Heads*; Mary Moore, *North Maleny*; Leanne MacSloy, *North Tamborine*; Linda Arscott, *Oxley*; Jessica Hogan, *Parkinson*; Annette Deans & Ross Gyde, *Pomona*; Arnya Schmutter, *Robina*; Kate Jackson, *Rosalie*; Lindy Davidson, *Tallebudgera Valley*; Lauretta Sails, *Upper Coomera*; Sally Unwin, *Yugar*.



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 Trish Hales, our secretary, and I'm sure she will be able to help you. Trish can be contacted through the Wildcare Office.

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

WELL-TRAVELED POUCHES

One of our new and keen members and carers, Nikki O'Donoghue, has given to Wildcare several lovely knitted pouches. Nikki's Mum who lives in Cornwall knitted the pouches, packed them in her luggage and bought them to Australia via South Africa.

Thank you to Nikki, Nikki's mum and all members who contribute to Wildcare in so many different ways!

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