

# Guidelines for Carer Records

(Revised May 2009)

## Introduction

### Why Records are Important

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All wildlife rehabilitators in Queensland must hold a current Rehabilitation Permit issued by either the Environmental Protection Agency or an accredited wildlife organization, such as Wildcare Australia. Wildcare has an 'umbrella'-like permit, meaning that the permit covers all endorsed wildlife rehabilitators within the organization.

One of the conditions of holding a Rehabilitation Permit is that accurate records must be kept on all fauna that is rescued or kept in care by the permit-holder. In the case of Wildcare Australia rehabilitators, these records **MUST** be submitted to Wildcare Australia which in turn lodges an annual report. Records no longer go to the Environmental Protection Agency, but the EPA can ask for these at any time.

It is **YOUR RESPONSIBILITY** as a wildlife rehabilitator with Wildcare Australia to complete accurate records and submit them each month to the Wildcare Australia Record Keeper.

Records provide valuable information on figures and trends about our native wildlife and why they come into care. This assists authorities, such as the Environmental Protection Agency, Main Roads and local governments, to plan strategies to reduce hazards that impact on our wildlife. It also assists Wildcare Australia in increasing community awareness of the need to conserve and protect our unique biodiversity, and can be used to justify grant applications.

## Keeping Carer Records

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There are two (2) methods of completing your monthly Carer Records:

### **EXCEL SPREADSHEET – (Preferred method)**

Your Volunteer Manual CD-Rom contains a template for the Carer Records in Microsoft Excel format. At the end of each month, you can simply email the file to the Record Keeper. The Record Keeper will then finalise your monthly records and then email the spreadsheet back to you so that you can continue to add subsequent months. This is the preferred method of submitting Carer Records.

### **WORD/HANDWRITTEN CARER RECORDS FORM**

Your Volunteer Manual CD-Rom contains this document in both Microsoft Word format and Adobe Acrobat format. You have the option of printing the Record Form and completing it by hand or completing the form in Microsoft Word. You can submit the Record Form to the Record Keeper either by post, fax or email.

Regardless of what method of record keeping you use, the guidelines for completing the records are the same. The guidelines on the following pages are therefore applicable to both the Excel Spreadsheet and Word document files.

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# How to Complete Carer Record Forms

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**Please refer to the Sample Carer Record Forms at the end of this Chapter.**

CARER'S NAME	<p>Please enter your first and last name exactly the same in each row of the Excel form or at the top of each Word form. It is easiest to copy-&amp;-paste it in.</p> <p>This helps us when we merge all records of all carers (usually more than 3000 records) into one, single Excel spreadsheet as we will have the carer's name associated with each of their records.</p>
DATE YOU RECEIVED THE ANIMAL	<p>Please enter the date that you RECEIVED the animal into care. This helps us double-check the accuracy of Wildcare Codes and also helps us to reconcile animals which have been transferred among different carers.</p> <p>For example, if Jane transfers a Magpie-lark with the code JJJ 05/04/08/00123 to you on 01/05/08 she will note the transfer date of 01/05/08 in her records and you would note the received date of 01/05/08 of a Magpie-lark with code JJJ 05/04/08/00123. We can then easily determine that this is, in fact, the same animal and consolidate these 2 entries into ONE record with a single outcome (and avoid duplicate records).</p>
CODE	<p>Please ensure every record has one of the codes below:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><b>Wildcare Code</b> - Please ensure every NEW animal you care for has a unique Wildcare Code; if you received the animal from another carer/rescuer and a code was not given to you, then please give it your own code. Whenever possible in this situation, please ensure that you obtain that animal's original code from the other Wildcare carer (along with all the other rescue information). Wildcare Codes should ALWAYS be typed or written in exactly the same format; XXX dd/mm/yy/00001. The format is: your initials, followed by a space, then the date (dd/mm/yy) followed by a forward slash (/) immediately followed by a sequential 5-digit number (starting with 00001). It doesn't matter if you accidentally skip numbers in the sequence of your 5-digit sequential number (such as one code has 00025 and the next animal has a code with 00027).</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><b>ROAD KILL</b> - Please record all road kills you see and use "ROAD KILL" for that animal's code. <i>Road kill records are sometimes requested by Qld Main Roads and local councils when they are addressing dangerous 'hotspots' for wildlife – e.g. Wildlife-friendly crossings.</i></p>

<p>CODE (Continued)</p>	<p><b>DOA</b> - For non-roadkill animals that are found dead on your arrival to the rescue scene, please use "DOA" for that animal's code – <i>e.g. Flying-fox on power line.</i></p> <p><b>No Rescue</b> – If you attend a rescue and determine, once you get there, that the animal does not need to be rescued or it is no longer there, please record this entry in your records and use “No Rescue” for that animal’s code.</p> <p><b>N/A</b> - If you rescue an animal and DO NOT intend on rehabilitating it and, instead, you drop it off at a vet surgery, then please use “N/A” as the code for that animal in your records. You DO NOT need to record a Wildcare code for that animal in your records. If the vet determines that the animal is suitable for rehabilitation, then the Wildcare carer who picks up the animal for rehabilitation will then give it their own code. Once again, this prevents animals from being double-coded or counted twice.</p>
<p>ANIMAL (Excel form only)</p>	<p>This new field will help us to more easily report on the totals of specific types of animals that we rescue and rehabilitate. Selecting from this pick list helps to keep all data consistent among the thousands of records that the Record Keepers manage so that data sorts and data totals can be completed accurately. When the Record Keepers transcribe Word records into Excel forms, they will enter this information appropriately.</p>
<p>SPECIES / FULL COMMON NAME</p>	<p>A list of common names has been provided and is formatted with the general name first followed by the descriptor (such as “Kingfisher, Azure” or “Possum, Mountain Brushtail). This will hopefully make it easier to scan the list for the correct full name. We have also provided various “unknown sp.” options as we are aware that the identity of the animal is sometimes only partially known (such as “Duck, unknown sp.” for tiny ducklings) or is completely unknown (e.g. if the animal is not there when you go to its rescue).</p> <p>Selecting from the list helps to keep all data consistent among the thousands of records that the Record Keepers manage and also saves a lot of time which was previously spent on correcting typos or correcting slang names entered by carers (such as ‘Pee-wee’ or ‘Mickey Bird’).</p>
<p>NAME YOU GAVE ANIMAL</p>	<p>This field is entirely optional and has been added because many carers, especially macropod carers who have animals in care for several months, find it easier to track the progress and outcomes of their animals by a “given name” which is associated to a Wildcare code.</p>

<p>QUANTITY (QTY)</p>	<p>This number should ALWAYS be one (1). The only instance in which a carer can record more than 1 in this column is if absolutely ALL data in every other column is EXACTLY the same. For example, 9 Pacific Black ducklings all rescued at the same location on the same day by the same rescuer for which the gender cannot be determined (i.e. “unknown”) for any of them and they are subsequently ALL released on the same day at the same release location....these can be recorded in one row with a quantity of “9”.</p> <p>If, however, the GENDER, or AGE, or OUTCOME, or OUTCOME DATE, or any other piece of information is different, then a new row needs to be completed. For example, if the 9 ducklings from the example above are Wood Ducks (so the gender can be discerned prior to release) and you note that you have 5 males and 4 females and if one of the males dies, and the rest of the ducks are released on the same day at the same location, THEN you will need to use 3 rows to record these animals. One row for the 4 males released, one row for the 1 male which died, and 1 row for the 4 females released.</p> <p><i>These records will share the same code but codes will be discriminated by ‘a’, ‘b’ or ‘c’ added to the end (as illustrated in the sample records).</i></p>
<p>REASON FOR CARE</p>	<p>We have created a simplified list of Reasons for which animals are rescued or come into care. Details and clarification (such as fractured wing, tick paralysis, barbed wire fencing, etc) should be noted in the “Comments” field.</p> <p>Selecting from the list helps to keep all data consistent among the thousands of records that the Record Keepers manage and also saves us a lot of time which was previously spent on correcting typos and sorting through similar entries which were written differently (such as “Cat attack” and “attacked by a cat”).</p> <p>On occasions, an animal will have two reasons for care, such as the lorikeet in the sample records below. In these cases it is best to put the primary reason in the “Reason for Care” column and the secondary reason in the “Comments” column.</p>
<p>OUTCOME</p>	<p>We have identified 9 possible outcomes and have provided them in a pick-list in Excel to make it easier for carers to record the appropriate information.</p> <p>This list will help us sort and total data accurately and quickly and should also make it easier for carers to sort and update their records for animals Still In Care (SIC).</p>
<p>OUTCOME DATE</p>	<p>Every outcome should have a corresponding Outcome Date entered. If an animal is Still In Care at the end of the month when you complete your records, then use the last day of the month for the Outcome Date. <i>This date then needs to be updated for every following month that this animal remains SIC.</i></p>

<p><b>OUTCOME DETAILS</b></p>	<p>Only 3 outcomes require further detail. Animals with an Outcome of RELEASED should have the specific release location noted in this field and any animal which has been TRANSFERRED to someone should have the name of the person or organisation to whom it was transferred entered in this field (ie. name of the Wildcare carer, name of the vet surgery or wildlife hospital, name of the other wildlife group, or simply “private carer” (person’s name optional) if the animal was transferred to a carer with a private licence). For EUTHANASED, the name of the Vet Surgery or Wildcare Trauma Carer who euthanases the animal should also be entered in this column.</p>
<p><b>GENDER</b></p>	<p>Only 3 options are relevant in this column and a list has been provided with the acceptable entries; male (M), female (F) or Unknown.</p>
<p><b>AGE</b></p>	<p>This column has been kept very simple with only 4 relevant ages, “Orphan/Baby”, “Juvenile”, “Sub-Adult” or “Adult”. Any other detail (e.g. specifying baby birds as ‘nestlings’ or ‘fledglings’) can be noted as desired in the “Comments” field.</p> <p>“Orphan/Baby” should be used for any uninjured animal still at an age where it is dependent upon care for survival (such as for food or protection), whereas “Adult” should be used for an animal that is of independent age but has come into care for management of a condition or injury.</p>
<p><b>RESCUER DETAILS</b></p>	<p>Please enter the name of the person who rescued the animal, if known. If you rescued the animal yourself, please type in your name (please do not type “me”!).</p> <p>This information is useful in case you (or a carer who you later transfer the animal on to) need to contact the rescuer to gain more detailed information about the rescue location or scenario, in order to ensure the animal’s rehabilitation or release is managed appropriately.</p>
<p><b>CALLER’S NAME &amp; PHONE NUMBER</b></p>	<p>Please enter the name and phone number of the person, vet surgery, wildlife hospital, etc who contacted Wildcare for the original rescue or rehabilitation. Please do NOT enter the Wildcare phone operator’s name here.</p> <p>This information is again useful in case you (or the transfer carer) need to contact the caller to gain more detailed information about the rescue location or scenario, in order to ensure the animal’s rehabilitation or release is managed appropriately.</p>

<p>ACCESSIONS CODE</p>	<p>Other animal hospitals, such as Australian Wildlife Hospital (AWH) and Currumbin Wildlife Hospital (CWH), assign their own codes to animals so that they can track and report outcomes to the EPA of animals which come into their hospital that are then sent out to Wildcare carers for rehabilitation.</p> <p>If you pick up an animal from one of these facilities, please record their accessions code in this column so that the record keepers can provide the outcomes of their animals to them. <i>They will usually give you a copy of the accession form which has this accession code as well as all the rescue details.</i></p>
<p>SPECIFIC PLACE OF RESCUE</p>	<p>Please record the street number and street name of the specific place the animal was rescued. This is VERY important when releasing territorial animals, adult animals which mate for life, or certain other situations.</p>
<p>SUBURB / TOWN</p>	<p>Please record the specific suburb or town of the location of the rescue.</p> <p>Please don't use abbreviations such as "R'Bay" as this could represent a different place according to where one lives (i.e. Raby Bay or Runaway Bay).</p> <p>Please also don't assume that the Record Keeper will know the suburb by the street name and leave the suburb blank, as we get records from all over South-east Queensland and don't necessarily know your local area as well as you do.</p>
<p>COMMENTS</p>	<p>Use this field to record further details related to the Reason For Care, the Age, or any other information you think may be relevant and useful regarding the rescue or rehabilitation of the animal.</p>

# Common Questions

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## **Do I need to keep records if I only rescue and do not rehabilitate animals?**

Yes. This data is just as important as rehabilitation data and is a means of identifying impacts of land development, roads and domestic animals on our wildlife. It also provides us with data on the extent of involvement that Wildcare Australia has with local wildlife. Rescues represent a large component of the community service that Wildcare provides, and the records of these rescues therefore indicate the magnitude of this.

Both rescue and rehabilitation records data can be used in grant submissions to justify the need for funds. When successful in obtaining such grants, these funds then help to reimburse costs to members, such the carer's subsidy for shop items, and even phone and fuel expense reimbursement.

An exception to requiring a record for a rescue that is a direct transfer to vet/hospital would be a rescue which does not occur as a result of being contacted by Wildcare (phone volunteer or other Wildcare member) and if the person doing the rescue does not represent Wildcare in any way during the course of the rescue, from collection to delivery to the Vet.

## **What if the animal is dead when I reach the site of rescue?**

If the animal was killed by road trauma or had died by the time you arrived to rescue it, please still record the rescue for the same reasons as above. The record then acknowledges the intervention by Wildcare.

The code will be either "ROAD KILL" or "DOA" depending on the cause of death.

Our records are a source of identifying the impacts of various factors on our local wildlife to local governments, departments and researchers. Therefore, even if the caller informs you that the animal has died when you phone them to arrange collecting the animal, you should still record and code the animal.

## **Why are we asked to record Road Kills that we see?**

As above, our records are a source of identifying the impacts of various factors on our local wildlife to local governments, departments and researchers. In the past the Qld Department of Main Roads have obtained our records data to determine road 'hot spots' - locations where wildlife mortalities frequently occur.

Wouldn't it be great if our records could help to produce wildlife-friendly road crossings such as glider rope bridges and wildlife overpasses/underpasses, and more road signage warning drivers to reduce speed for wildlife?

## **What if more than one animal is collected on one rescue?**

**FAMILY OF SAME SPECIES:** The same code can be used for all animals of the same species ONLY if all details are exactly the same, e.g. 7 sibling Pacific Black ducklings that are orphaned and rescued together and if they end up having the same outcome, such as all are successfully released at the same location. The code for these animals would be KRJ 28/07/07/00167a-g. If, however, any of them end up with different outcomes such as 1 dies, then you will need to separate their records by adding a different letter onto the end of the code,

for example KRJ 28/07/07/00167a, and KRJ 28/07/07/00167b-g.

**MULTIPLE ANIMALS OF DIFFERENT SPECIES:** If you receive two different animals in the one rescue, for example, you go to collect a crow from a vet, and they also give you a figbird when you arrive (and this DOES happen!!), then as the Rescuer, you must issue two separate Wildcare codes.

**PARENT AND JOEY:** In the situation of a parent and its young being rescued, the same code but separate records, with 'a' and 'b' added to the end of each Code, should be given to the parent and its young. It is likely that their outcomes, gender, or other details will be different.

For example, if a female wallaby (KRJ 29/07/07/00168a) with a live pouch-young was injured by road trauma, then her pouch-young (KRJ 29/07/07/00168b) may be able to be hand-reared and eventually released by a carer if its mother dies. If the mother is this instance is a road kill victim, then her code may be ROAD KILL-a, in order to link her to her joey's code (still KRJ 29/07/07/00168b).

## **We live on acreage property and I soft-release many animals from my home, so can I simply enter "carer's home" in the release location?**

No, please enter your full address, as well as "carer's home" if you want to, for animals you soft-release at your home. We get a lot of requests from researchers on release locations so we need to at least have an actual address in there. Indicating that the animal has been soft-released, provided you are happy for the address to be identified as your own, is also good information in this field.

## **If I acquire an animal from another carer, do I note their details in the rescuer column?**

If the animal has been transferred to you from another Wildcare member, the most important information to include in the record is the DATE YOU RECEIVE the animal and the CORRECT WILDCARE CODE (from the other member). Ideally the initial carer should be submitting their record for this animal so their record will contain all the rescue details. However, it is good for you to do this too. When you receive animals in transfer, then you should get all the rescue details too, as you may need some during the course of the animal's treatment or rehabilitation (e.g. To contact the finder for more information, or to arrange eventual release of the animal back at the rescue location). It also helps the Record Keepers to confirm that the animal is the same as that provided in the initial carer's records.

You could also write "received in transfer from ..... (WC Member's name)" in the 'Comments' field, for completeness.

## **When an animal is transferred to me, do I put my name in the Transferred column?**

No, that column is to note who you transfer the animal to if you transfer it out of your care.

We know that an animal has been transferred to you by 3 criteria, (1) if the Date you Received the animal is different from the date in the Wildcare Code, and (2) we see that you have a Reason for Care of either "Transferred to me for further rehab" or "Transferred to me for pre-release" and (3) the original carer will have your name noted in their records in the Outcomes column as the person they transferred the animal to.

## **I have received my Excel records back from the Record Keeper, and have added my new records for the month, only the new records were not saved when I prepared to email them back to the Record Keeper. What happened?**

When you receive your records back from the Record Keeper, you'll need to first save them with a new file name before making more changes.

The easiest way to do this is to open the previous month's records file when you receive it back from the Record Keeper and then immediately save it as a new file, usually in the "My Documents" folder on your computer. Rename the new file (either same name with something added to the end (e.g. '1' or your initials), or with the current month's name). Then add your changes - For the current month, provide any new outcomes for those which had previously been 'still in care' and then add all the new rescues and animals in care for that reporting month. Then when you send your latest records back to the Record Keeper at the end of the month, you just attached the newly-named file with all your changes to the email.

# Submitting Carer Records

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## When do I have to submit my Carer Records?

Records must be submitted monthly. You have a 7-day grace period from the end of the month to submit the records. For example, your June records must be submitted by 7th July.

## How do I submit my Carer Records?

The current Record Keeper for Carer Records is Kiersten Jones. This position is voluntary. You can submit your records to her using one of the following methods:

- By EMAIL:** **This is the preferred method** - for Excel or Word Carer Records. These should be sent as an attached file with your email to:  
Generic Email Address: [carerrecords@wildcare.org.au](mailto:carerrecords@wildcare.org.au)
- By POST:** Handwritten or printed Word document Carer Records can be submitted by post to:
- Record Keeper (Carer Records)  
Wildcare Australia  
PO Box 2379  
Nerang Mail Centre Qld 4211
- If NIL to Report:** **You still need to submit a record.** If you have not rescued or received any animals into care for the month, then you can simply **phone or email** the Record Keeper to let them know. (If you have SIC animals, then you need to also state that these animals are all SIC, otherwise a form is required if there are new outcomes to report).
- To phone: Please phone Kiersten's Mobile: **0409 130 000**  
(After hours / leave a message or SMS)
- To email: Email Address: [carerrecords@wildcare.org.au](mailto:carerrecords@wildcare.org.au)

## How do I know my records have been received?

**Emailed Records:** If emailing your records (or Nil report), once your carer records have been received and processed by the Record Keeper, then she will reply by email to you, usually within the week. Her reply email will have your processed Excel carer records file attached, so you can save this and add on your next month of records to it.

**Posted Records:** If you usually mail your records in by post, then the Record Keeper may contact you by phone only if she has a query on your records, e.g. some missing information. Otherwise there is no reply/receipt issued for posted-in records. If unsure if received, then you can check with the Record Keeper by phone/email as to whether she has received them.

## What if I resign from Wildcare or am no longer caring for wildlife?

Please notify the Record Keeper by phone, letter or email if either of these situations occurs.

If you resign or become inactive, ANY OUTSTANDING RECORDS MUST BE SUBMITTED TO THE RECORD KEEPER immediately, including the Outcomes of ALL animals in your care as soon as they occur.

## What if I forget to submit my records?

If you are likely to forget, please put a system in place to remind yourself at the end of each month, for example, mark your diary or calendar.

If you do forget, please contact the appropriate Record Keeper as soon as you remember, indicating when you will be submitting them.

You may also receive a reminder call from the Record Keeper.

Hopefully forgetting to submit your records will not occur. As you can imagine, the Record Keeper's role of chasing up lost or late records can be very expensive in telephone calls, not to mention time-consuming. Remember the Record Keepers, like all members of Wildcare are VOLUNTEERS. The role of Record Keeper is a very demanding position and your assistance in ensuring that your records are submitted regularly is much appreciated.

## What if I run out of record forms?

The latest versions of the Carers' Record Forms are available by emailing the Record Keeper for Carer Records at [carerrecords@wildcare.org.au](mailto:carerrecords@wildcare.org.au) or by downloading them off the Wildcare Australia website [www.wildcare.org.au](http://www.wildcare.org.au) (found in 'Carer Resources').

It is best to get the latest version as they are periodically modified and improved, so it ensures you are getting the most user-friendly version.

If you don't have internet access on your computer, then your Volunteer Manual CD-Rom also includes copies of the Carers' Record Forms that were current at the time of your training. If you do not have either a computer or access to the internet, Queensland libraries offer free 1-hour internet access.

Otherwise, if handwriting your records and you need more forms, please advise the Record Keeper, either by attaching a note to your last submitted record, or by phone/email. You can also obtain the forms from the Wildcare Office, Monday to Friday, or when attending Wildcare Workshops.

## In Conclusion

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Thank you for taking the time to read these guidelines, as it will benefit the efficiency and accuracy of Wildcare's records and also the useful information obtained from them.

If you have any further queries, PLEASE do not hesitate to contact either of the Record Keepers, using the phone or email details listed in this manual.

Thank you,

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May 2009