

WildNews



ISSUE 80

Education

**Assessing
for Fractures
in Wildlife**

News

**Australia Day
Awards**

Discover...

All News & Events

+ Species Coordinators' Reports



President's Report



By Karen Scott

Welcome to another edition of WildNews. This year seems to be flying by as quickly as the last, but I hope that the cooler months will give our wildlife volunteers some reprieve from the huge numbers of wildlife that needed help during Spring and Summer.

The next few months are busy ones for our small administrative team in Wildcare. For many of you, your membership of Wildcare will expire on 30th June 2017 and a reminder email will be forwarded enabling you to renew online.

Shortly we will be calling for applications for permit renewals which also expire on 30th June 2017. Please ensure that you submit your application as early as possible to allow us sufficient time to process it.

Thank you to all of our volunteers who have already submitted their entire 2016 Rescue/Carer records. It is imperative for us, as an organization, to have this data to support grant and funding applications and also to provide us with essential data to support our requests for changes to traffic, with both State and Local authorities.

I would like to extend a warm invitation to all Wildcare members to attend the Wildcare Annual General Meeting which is to be held on Sunday 25th June 2017 on the Gold Coast.

This is a great opportunity for members to meet each other, share their experiences and raise any ideas that you have for Wildcare for the coming year. We will be calling for nominations for the Management Committee in May, for anyone interested in helping with administrative tasks.

On behalf of the entire Management Committee, thank you for your continued support.

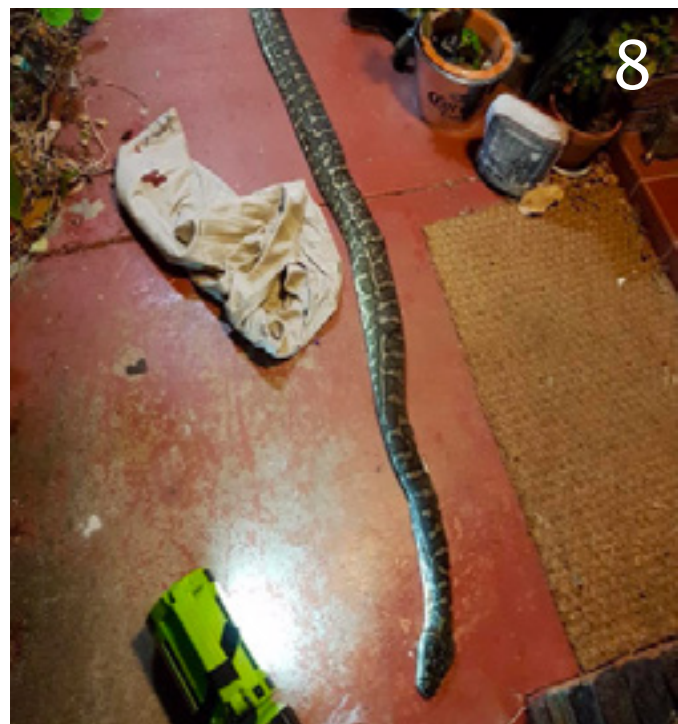
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OUR MISSION

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

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MAIN COMMITTEE

President Karen Scott
Vice-President Lewis McKillop
Treasurer Tracy Paroz
Secretary Caitlin Raynor
Committee Members Rachel Lyons,
Brigitte Blakeway

NEWSLETTER TEAM

Eleanor Hanger & Deborah Bianchetto.
Submissions can be sent to news@wildcare.org.au
Cover photo: Kerry Johnson

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A Warm Welcome to our New Members

Wildcare Australia welcomed the following new members:

Jamie Gajewski, Kristelle Miller, Natasha Saul, Lauren Edser and Stephanie Richardson, Jenaya Lewis and Simon Lewis, Heidi Lamb, Erin Flanders, Joanne Gibson, Emily Shearman and Louise Shearman, James Hudson, Ellen Ryan, Melissa Hudson and Gary Hudson, Melissa Adams and Camden Goode, Lauren Bottle, Ruth Bolam, Rosalyn Wilson, Emma Brown and Vernia Brown, Storm MacKenzie, Letitia Taylor, Laura Connelly, Jennifer Fleming, Marissa Duggan, Heather Palfrey and Ian Palfrey, Wendy Tomkins, Natalie Munsie, Clare Tidmarsh, Antonella Millefanti, Tui Williams, Kelly Collett and Jemma Collett, Caren Gillis and Jason Gillis, Paula Taylor and Bernie Morgan, Jenelle Ibbeson, Jane Revell and Matthew Revell, Devlyn Denais, Tanille Rachinger, Christy Hannover and Gabriel Hannover, Angela Scott, Shari English, Brooke Pelizzari, Gavin Fleming, Allison Perry and Tamsin Perry, Gwendolyn Cope, Rhonda Bateman, Ryan, Sharon and Sahra Holmes, Alys Timmer, Zade Watso, Rebekah Goody and Tamah Murfet, Julie Draper and Chloe Draper, Zia Moores and Andrew Tonkin, Cyan Reign, Abaigael Spurr, Susanne Gamble, Leonard Fitzpatrick, Yvonne Humphries and Byron Humphries, Julia Baker, Helen Cruwys, Tanya Stankovich and Savo Stankovich, Steffany Cockerell and Gregory Cockerell, Annette Drakeley, Stephen Ramage, Louise Brewster, Dornene Moore and Jase Moore, Stephen Hamilton and Valerie Hamilton, Reyna Watson, Molly Morgan, Miranda Ripper, Zoe Shipley, Ellen Macaione, Harry Audus, Karen Steven and Tom Audus, Angela Beruldsen, Amanda Moores and Mark Harrison, Rachael Cecil, Amanda Pearce, Sandy Leber, Hollie Fender, Peta Harvey, Steven Kudzius and Erin Wilkinson, Jane Walter, Tracy Harrison and Kyra Harrison, Morne Matthysen and Chapman Leijenaar, Tristan Murdoch, Kerry Kent and Alister Head, Richard De-Safere, Lyndal Howard, Karen Spina, Kayleen Chrzescijanski and Finn Spina, Leanne Hodgson, Ashleigh Cooper, Belinda Cooper and Stefanie Cooper, Corrina Duke, Chris Gauthier, Arielle Pritchard, Michelle Ward and Shayan Barmand, Theresa Strydom, Linda Mae Baldwin and Lance Baldwin, Joshua Dowsett, Ali McKenzie, Tania Fitzsimons, Justine Rice, Dotty Timms, Alison Clarke, Ellen Smith, Kyla Smith and Allen Duminiet, Somer Olsen, Rhonda McEwan, Colleen Rennie, Maddie Bray and Matthew Ewin, Rhonda Ward, Leah Brewer, Dan Buckley, Stasia Kail-Buckley, Maya Buckley and Penny Buckley, Shayne Stegemann, Roze Gallo, Tahlee Gallo and Willem Gallo, Julie Hoskins, Carole Strutton.

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, contact us and I'm sure we will be able to help you. We hope you have a long and happy association with Wildcare Australia.

Thank you to all those members who have renewed their Wildcare membership subscription for another year. Your ongoing support is much appreciated.

NEXT ISSUES SUBMISSIONS DATES

Issue 81 : 15th June
Issue 82 : 15th September

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



Education Report

We have had a great response to our workshops this calendar with some being completely booked out. It is gratifying to see so many volunteers eager to expand their knowledge and learn from each other.

Our July to December 2017 is currently being developed and should be ready for publication at the end of May. Remember that Permit renewals are due at the end of June, so please double check that you have fulfilled your training requirements for the year. Existing carers only need to complete one relevant workshop each year for the species that they are permitted for and this can include any of the general advanced workshops such as Advanced First Aid for Wildlife.

Notice of Annual General Meeting

This year the Wildcare Australia Inc. Annual General Meeting will be held at the Nerang Bicentennial Centre, Nerang on the Gold Coast, on Sunday, 25th June 2017 from 2pm – 4pm.

All members are invited and encouraged to attend. More information will be emailed to members in late May 2017.



MICHELLES NATIVE PLANTS

BEAUTIFUL LOCAL SPECIES

RAINFOREST TO DRYLAND · GRASSES TO TREES

50mm TUBESTOCK @\$2.50 up to 20
@\$2.00 for 20 up

NO MINIMUM ORDER

some larger stock available

SEE ME AT ELANORA HIGH SCHOOL MARKET

FIRST SUNDAY OF MONTH 6:00am · 10:30am

PH: 0448595047

EMAIL ME FOR SPECIES LIST

michellesnativeplants@bigpond.com










Australia Day Awards – Michael Wilson

By Siobhan Brierley

For the past six years Michael has been a wildlife carer and a volunteer for the Redlands After-Hours Wildlife Ambulance. He has transformed his home into a safe haven for animals and dedicates most of his time to caring for sick and injured marsupials and nursing them back to health. He specialises in caring for possums, bandicoots and echidnas and emergency care of all other marsupials. Michael dedicates a lot of his personal time to caring for these animals by doing timed feeds, cleaning their enclosures, driving large distances to cut leaf and ensuring they are being given the appropriate treatment to ensure they get well. It is not always easy and sometimes he also has to deal with the emotional strain of losing these animals.

On top of the caring, Michael also volunteers for the 24 Hour Emergency Wildlife Ambulance (RAWA) which means he is on call some weeks and is called frequently by the RWCN for advice and guidance. He is also a co-ordinator for Wildcare in the Redlands and a tutor, educator and advisor to the community and local vets. Michael spends time on his weekends attending Wonderful Wildlife days, volunteer meetings and educating the community on what the wildlife ambulance does.

At any time Michael may have up to 20 possums in his care that are all on different feeding schedules and may be receiving different medication. He always ensures he makes enough time for every animal and often goes out of his way to pick up other possums from vets if he can accommodate them. He is a very compassionate person who goes above and beyond to provide a safe place for all animals and also educate others on our wonderful local flora and fauna.

Congratulations Michael from all of us at Wildcare Australia Inc.



18/05/1984 - Michael receiving his Australia Day Award from the Mayor of the Redlands, January 2017



The Wildcare Hotline Needs More Volunteers

The Wildcare Hotline is essential to the process of providing advice and organising rescues for injured, sick and orphaned wildlife. At the moment, there are shifts that are unmanned which means that calls for help are going unanswered and our wildlife suffers as a consequence.

With our Hotline Coordinator Caitlin returning to her native Canada and no longer able to volunteer on the Hotline, there are now even more gaps in the roster which need to be filled.

Volunteering on the Hotline can be a very rewarding experience. Most shifts are for only three hours and at this time of year the Hotline is relatively quiet, which makes it a good time to become involved. Calls are mostly received from the Gold Coast and Brisbane, with the occasional call from further afield, e.g. Sunshine Coast, Scenic Rim, Logan and Redlands. The nature of the calls is varied, but the most common calls are for birds and possums with the occasional snake, lizard, turtle, macropod and other native creature. Most members of the public are caring and helpful and will take injured wildlife to their local veterinarian, or to one of the 24 hour animal emergency centres, if the call is after hours.

There is no shortage of funny anecdotes from Hotline volunteers either - like that of one of our volunteers attending the rescue of an injured possum, stuck in the drain hole of a dumpster, at a day-care centre. It wasn't a possum but rather a rat and the other rats were behind it attacking it. Into the dumpster went our brave volunteer WITH the rats and somehow managed to free the stuck rat and is probably still trying to get the smell out of her memory bank! That is true dedication. There was a call from a man who had already contained a venomous snake, but didn't want to transport it, in case it bit him. Another call came from people wanting a noisy frog moved because it was keeping them awake at night. And then there was the call asking if we knew of any donkeys that needed fostering.

The hotline can be a challenge for new volunteers, until you get to know the best people to call for advice and who to call in an emergency. Our Species Coordinators are a great source of advice and for local contacts, as are some of our very experienced and dedicated carers. We also have the support of the Currumbin Wildlife Hospital Ambulance, as well as the RSPCA and Redlands Wildlife Ambulance services.

There can be a bit of a geography challenge for some, but for the tech savvy, using Google maps can not only pinpoint the location of the wildlife but also provide the location of the closest veterinary surgery. There are also the occasional times when we just have to recognise that we can't save everything.

Maintaining volunteer interest and participation is a challenge for any not-for-profit organisation, and the Wildcare Hotline is no exception. Taking time to talk to other Hotline volunteers about their experiences, talking to experienced rescuers and carers, and hearing some of the wonderful rescue success stories definitely helps to improve motivation to continue to provide much needed support for our precious wildlife. Our Hotline volunteers keep in touch through a private Facebook page where we share stories and keep up-to-date with information, and we aim to get together for a catch-up on a regular basis.

If you would like to become a Hotline volunteer, or you know someone who might be interested, we would love to hear from you. Training and resources are provided to all potential Hotline volunteers.

Please contact us via email to enquiries@wildcare.org.au if you would like some more information.

Our wildlife needs you.

Help me, I am Sssstuck!

By Brigitte Blakeway

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Among many rescues this one turned out to be a memorable 'Christmas special'.

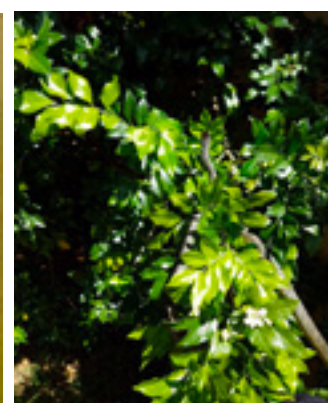
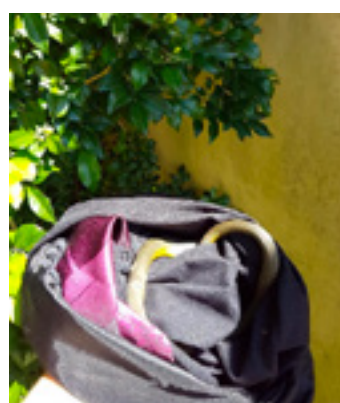
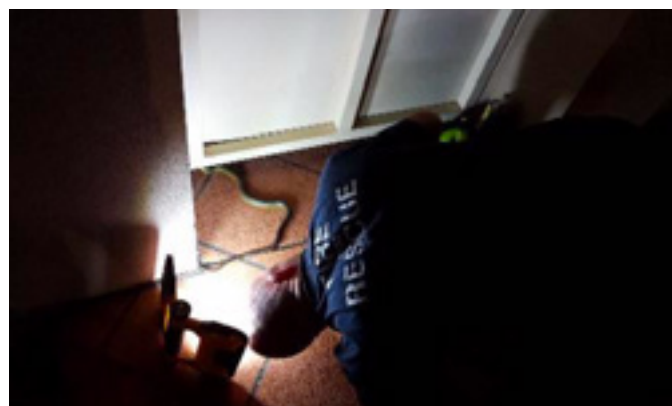
What is worse than a rat up a drainpipe? A green tree snake stuck in a steel framed gate, with a storm rolling in.

On my arrival, I found a very stressed snake, with swelling; an excitable family in Christmas mode and the ominous sound of thunder rolling over the hinterland. Assessing the scene and attempting to manipulate the snake's body to see if there was any manoeuvrability to play with. I soon discovered the answer was, 'NO!'

We now move to PLAN B, the use of power tools to remove a panel from the gate to see if access was any better. However it was only to find that "Bobby", as he was now named by the little boy whose gate he was stuck in, was not only well and truly stuck, but was totally enclosed in the thick steel frame of the gate. It was at this point that I was told he had been there for a while and that a neighbour had tried to remove him a couple hours earlier, with no luck. So we skipped straight to PLAN C!

Who do you call in such a situation, but the trusty local fire brigade (thanks Liz) and out they came, bringing the heavy duty gear. I really need the kind of "tin snips" and "muscles" they have. After considering the best approach to minimise any further injuries, we safely extracted "Bobby" and the homeowner kept their gate.

Bobby went off to Currumbin Wildlife Hospital the next day where he was checked over, given pain relief medication and sent back to me for some tender loving care and a little rest. He recuperated very quickly and was able to be released before Christmas Eve so he could hang out his stocking for Santa.



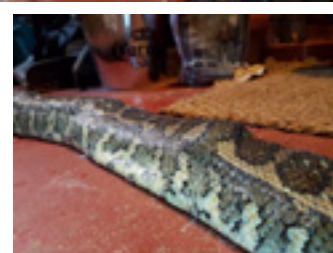
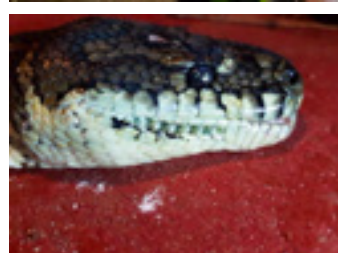
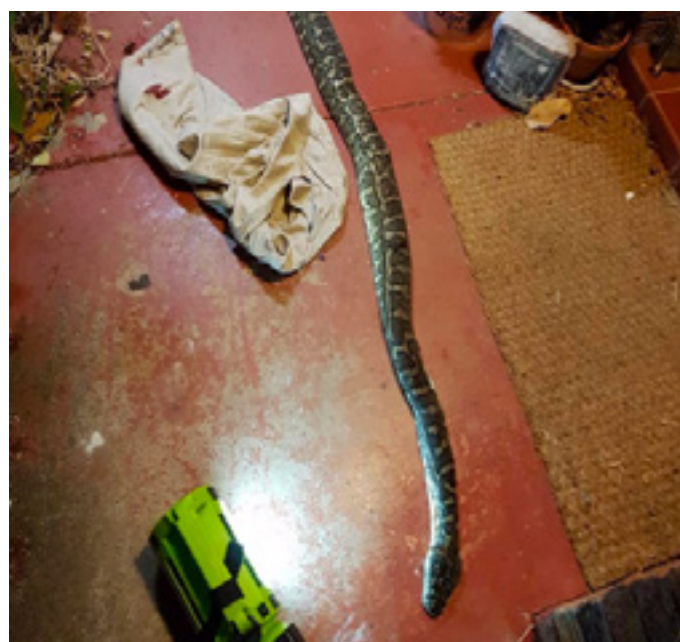
Slow Down and Watch OUT! – our pythons are about!

During the hotter months of the year and even during the cooler months, the road surfaces generate a lot of heat and one of the sad things we have to deal with, and even sadder for our reptile friends are the terrible injuries they sustain on our roads. Being ectothermic, which means that their body temperature depends on external sources, such as sunlight or a heated rock surface, they seek warmth to raise their body temperature in order to eat. They come out and in our highly-urbanised Gold Coast find our roads one big "heat pad". This results in terrible injuries and often leaves them in a critical condition and unable to move off the road, often sustaining several more car impacts.

Such was the plight of this lovely python who found herself stuck between a rock and a hard place and nowhere to go. By the time I had located her (given she was rather long and unmistakable on the road) and pulled up, six cars had already run over her. I cannot explain the sheer frustration of that rescue. She was clearly visible (I had well and truly picked her up in my headlights). She had a good sized girth on her and looked like a fallen branch from the storm. She reached over one lane and slightly on to the other lane. Given that fact – I don't know anyone who would run over a branch, or not slow down to ascertain if it was safe to drive over it, or think about the damage caused to the car if you did.

No! They all ran her over and kept on going. No one attempted to go around her, even though it was safe to do so, with clear visibility of any oncoming cars. They did not even slow for me, with hazard and warning lights flashing and reflective gear on.

So I sadly picked her off the road, and hoped that she had passed quickly. I brought her home to check and make sure that she was not gravid (carrying eggs). RIP beautiful.



Help me, I am Sssstuck!

By Brigitte Blakeway
Continued

But there are always “silver” linings. Bring on the dragons!

Meet Hollywood– the Eastern Water Dragon

Rambo has nothing on this guy. He was found at MovieWorld and taken to Currumbin Wildlife Hospital with some swelling to the head/eye region. He came into care while on medication and was truly a star. Such a handsome fellow and a poser. I am sure he was building up his portfolio for the upcoming blockbusters!

My next Star of the month was the equivalent of Sharon Stone (Basic Instinct Crazy), with the soundtrack Psycho KILLER! She was gravid when she came into care, and confinement was not on the script of things she should be doing. To be fair, I will make an exception for her killer tendencies – due to her being gravid and we all go a little pregnancy crazy when we are in those final weeks.

However, when she was released, I can safely say we were both glad to be going separate ways! Her parting look to me.



Coordinator Reports

REPTILES

By Brigitte Blakeway

As with all of our wildlife, the reptiles coming into care have certainly kept us busy.

There have been five successfully rehabilitated and released monitors. Most were in care after suffering road trauma, others after ingesting the wrong thing, for example, pork bones.

Eastern Water Dragons seem to be finding themselves in a spot of bother on a regular basis, keeping our wonderful carers very busy. Add to that a good sprinkling of blue tongues, pythons and green tree snakes, from eggs to hatchlings to adults. What a busy time it has been in reptile world!

As any Hollywood hunk, will tell you, sometimes being this handsome is hard work! ‘Hollywood’ the water dragon found himself needing some ‘R n R’ for a short while. Resting up away from all the hustle and bustle he was soon ready for release. Not one to shy away from paparazzi, I think you would agree he has certainly got the brooding looks of that other famous actor Marlon Brando!

Not before he allowed his stunning head shot to grace the ‘cover of Wildcare’s Lizard workshop.”



Star of the Season – Hollywood – the Eastern Water Dragon

Assessing for Fractures in Wildlife

By Robyn Stenner
(BVSc, MANZVCS - Wildlife Medicine)

It is not uncommon, as a wildlife carer, to rescue an injured animal and to be uncertain as to whether it needs veterinary attention or not, or what you can do to reduce the suffering of that animal until a vet can be seen. I hope this article can give you a bit of a refresher in assessing for fractures in our wildlife. I would need a book to address species specific points, but will try to give some general guidelines.

Diagnosing some fractures is very challenging, while others are quite obvious to see. The first step is ALWAYS to examine the animal really thoroughly from afar, preferably while it feels safe/does not see you watching it. All our wildlife are instinctively going to mask any sign of weakness (to avoid predation in the wild), and this can complicate successful examination of body posture/mobility. Generally with some patience and time the patient will settle in a box/cage or small room, and become less aware of you watching. How the animal holds itself and how it moves are two of the biggest clues you should be assessing to check for fractures. Even fractures of the coracoid or clavicle (in birds), or ribs (in mammals) will result in subtle changes to posture and movement. Scan the animal from front to back and top to bottom, noting any differences between the left and right side, or from what you know to be a normal posture for that species. As with so much in wildlife assessment, knowing what is normal for the species is key to picking up on subtle changes here.

Your distant examination will be subtly different for each group. In birds wings and legs are most commonly fractured (keel bone/rib fractures are less common as that degree of trauma often kills the bird). Look at the way they are standing. Are they standing normally for that species? Birds generally should perch so observe how they stand on the perch - it should be high and with the weight evenly distributed on both legs, not squat or favouring one leg. Are wings held evenly against the body or is one held outwards or dropped? If so where does the drop seem to be - from the shoulder, elbow or wrist? If the bird is mobile during the assessment this will also give you further clues. Generally with any degree of fracture there will be significant lameness when trying to move the limb. The exception to this is in juvenile birds that have long standing metabolic bone disease and folding fractures - these individuals usually will use the legs normally, as they are "used to" the fractures. Diagnosis in these cases is often due to bowing of the bones, or palpation of old healed fractures. All birds will instinctively try to fly (unless they are in severe shock or have significant head trauma). For any bird that seems to have normal mentation and tries to fly, but is unable to gain height or sustain lift, one should suspect a fracture.

Fractures in marsupials are generally pretty obvious if you follow the rule of checking from top to bottom and comparing left to right. A brief examination of the animal moving will generally confirm a suspicion that you have from their posture. Of course as with any species, if the fracture is obvious from examination of posture, then do not make the animal move - head to the vet. The

mobility assessment (and hands on assessment) should follow, only if there are no clear fractures on a distant examination but you remain suspicious. The fractures which can be commonly missed in marsupials are rib fractures, and skull fractures. Pay very close attention to facial symmetry, jaw position, and other signs of head trauma (changed demeanour or mentation, blood on the head, eye trauma). These fractures can become more apparent when the animal is examined "hands on". Generally speaking with marsupials, limb fractures will be reasonably obvious, as the limb will be displaced to the side, held up, or positioned abnormally at rest. There will be varying degrees of lameness on the use of the limb.



Dropped wing and leaning to the left at perch. Note tail also deviating to right, to shift centre of balance away from L leg). Likely fracture to L leg and L wing.



Note swelling below right eye pushing it upwards (exposed third eyelid in medial corner of eye) due to fractures to skull and hard palate. Blood around nose and mouth (tear to tongue, bleeding from nose/nasal bone fractures). Dropped lower jaw (jaw fracture)

Assessing for Fractures in Wildlife

By Robyn Stenner

Reptile fractures are often much more challenging to diagnose - except for turtle shell fractures. Even so, if you have a turtle you have rescued and the carapace appears to be fine, ALWAYS check the plastron to ensure there are no fractures there. Turtles will commonly present with significant shell damage and seem "fine", so it would be easy to miss plastron fractures if you did not check the underside. Common fractures in lizards and snakes include spinal fractures, rib fractures, and skull/jaw fractures. Signs of fractures to the head include facial/jaw asymmetry, drooping of the lower jaw, or one of the eyes seeming sunken compared to the other. If it is safe and the fracture is not obvious, you can gently open the mouth slightly to assess for damage to the teeth or loss of symmetry intraorally. However, this should only be done if the external examination seems unremarkable, and there is reason to suspect there could be a jaw fracture (blood around mouth/ear/nostrils). Spinal fractures will generally be fairly clear as a lump where there should not be one on the back. Limb fractures can be difficult to diagnose in skinks such as blue tongues, as they have quite squat limbs and often are quite "lazy" with their limb movements! The challenges in water dragons are the opposite, with them often moving so quickly that it is hard to see if one limb shows lameness. Having a large escape proof area to watch them moving after their initial explosion of activity is helpful.

Regardless of the species, a hands-on examination can be done in much the same way. When it comes to assessing for fractures in a conscious animal, having a second person to help hold it is invaluable. If you need to make the assessment alone, then wrapping the animal in a towel and exposing only one part at a time for assessment helps. Always remember to be gentle, but handle firmly to minimize trauma and reduce the time the examination takes. The first step is to palpate over the entire body from head to toe (excluding limbs at this time) to check for any swelling or crepitus (crunching). Take note of any areas that the animal is especially sensitive about having touched. This process will show up not only fractures, but wounds or other evidence of trauma/disease which need veterinary assessment. Try not to increase stress or pain by focusing for too long on an area in which you find swelling, or have other concerns. Once you have found evidence of significant injury this is enough information for you to know the animal needs to see a vet, and therefore you can abort further assessment. The only area I suggest you do check, prior to stopping, is each limb. This is primarily to ensure there are no obvious fractures which could benefit from having a splint applied, if veterinary attention will not be possible within the hour.

Limb assessment can be challenging and risky, but does have its place in picking up on fractures. For those obvious fractures you have diagnosed on distant examination you may just be palpating to confirm which bone is broken and then apply a light splint. Palpation can pick up on fractures which were not obvious, but where there was noted lameness. I recommend palpating all the good limbs first so you fix "normal" in your head, and then feeling the one you suspect is broken. With all limbs start by holding the bone at either end just below the joint, and then gently move the limb with the hand furthest away from the body in a normal range of motion. If there is crunching, or abnormal movement, or noted signs of discomfort by the animal, then there is probably a fracture. There is a high risk of further damaging the tissues during palpation, especially with a struggling animal. So I really don't recommend you do more than this gentle assessment of mobility, and even this only with some "hands on" experience

with your wildlife vet first. You can get a sense of whether a fracture is likely in a limb from the distant examination as above and if suspicious, then off to the vet.

So what to do in between assessment and seeing the vet? In reality if you can get to a vet within an hour or so, then I would suggest placing the animal in a warm, dark, well-padded box and leaving it to settle. You are more likely to cause damage to the fracture site with increased handling and movement. If you cannot get to the vet for a few hours or overnight, then for body/head fractures the same applies - minimize movement and stress and leave them alone. (Talk to your vet about pain relief in the interim). For limb fractures there can be a place to splint these, in order to reduce movement and trauma at the fracture site (and provide local pain relief as well). For a splint to be successful it needs to immobilize the joint above and the joint below the bone. For this reason splinting the humerus or femur is not really feasible. In these cases the muscle support will often reduce damage to blood vessels/nerves by reducing bone movement. (You can do a figure of 8 and body wrap in birds to "splint" the humerus). Always ensure your splint is smooth and preferably padded - for small birds or lizards a matchstick wrapped in tape or vetwrap can be enough to provide temporary support. The tape or vetwrap holding the splint to the limb should also be checked for tightness. It should be just firm enough to stop the splint moving, but not so tight that it constricts the limb. This is a bit of an artform, especially in a conscious animal. Always check, after you have applied it, to see that you can get a finger between the wrap and the body/limb (for larger animals or bird figure of 8 bandage), or can gently insert the blunt end of a smooth toothpick in smaller species. If not, then undo and start again.

Even though you may apply a beautiful well-padded, and supporting splint, these animals should still always see a vet for xrays. An assessment needs to be made as to the viability of the fracture, and the best method to repair it to ensure full function of the limb after healing. It is imperative that limb function is 100% on recovery, to give the animal the best chance of survival post release.



Figure of 8 bandage to support wing fractures. Very useful bandage in birds as it can support all wing fractures. Ask your wildlife vet to show you how to apply it.

On our selection, among the trees

By Daniel CK

Deep and sweeping views from the front verandahs
the consequence of a decent elevation, pitched straight down a valley.
Occasionally we comically curse its interruption by a house or two.
Grateful and content. We know the benefits of the trees, clean air and quiet
this haven on the hill provide.
We find ourselves most at peace
when pottering around our little plot.

Given up on close relations with neighbours
we've surrounded ourselves with animal friends;
quite tame wild-life and fairly wild domestic ones.

Greeted in the mornings by a quiet chirping pair of fairy wrens
mid-morning lace monitor tries to pay the chooks a visit
just to check on their eggs.
A rainbow of birds, flutter in and out of our day;
King parrots, blue-winged kookaburras, whistlers and budgies.
Sulphur crested cockatoos in almost plague-like proportions,
drunk teenagers who gate-crash the chicken's run,
eat their food and leave a mess.
In the late afternoon, old married couple of wedge-tailed eagles
hover a moment too long over our chooks and dachshunds
At the end of the work day, whiptail wallabies and ex-pat hares
stand by the side of the road, cheering us home
sometimes a spotted or scrub python ventures onto the track
have to stop mid-race home, gently guide them to care.
In the mid-night stillness, more-pork'ing mopokes and guttural growling
possums interrupt the quiet and the cicadas.

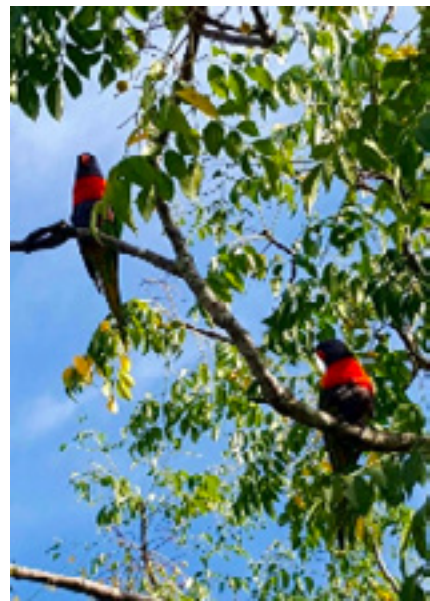
Our girls surrounded by furry and feathered love wherever they venture;
Winnipegaka, the Quaker sits on their shoulder,
commentates while they search for knots in long luscious hair
untimely screeches render them temporarily deaf.
Hens imitate roosters to gain attention on sun's rising,
keen to escape their hutch, commence the day's foraging.
Sausage dogs accompany the girls to the toilet, and everywhere else.
Rottweilers trail them if they suspect adventure, or food, is afoot.
At day's end horses whiny impatiently for their only non-hay meal,
follow the girls until full buckets are served,
their heavy soft nostrils blowing warm sweet smelling air over little heads and
shoulders,
frisk the girls' pockets in hope of remnants of a carrot or lint of licorice.

Our nemeses; toads and lantana,
full time job to tame their numbers,
daily battles in an unwinnable war.
Yukkas and agaves encroach deep into bushland,
recklessly dumped to avoid trips to the dump,
they propagate in toad-like numbers.

A fairly different upbringing to my wife's and mine
She in the heart of Bombay's heat and buzz
Me in the suburbs; routine of sport, activity and school.
Most holidays spent camping, fishing, at the beach.

I'd wrongly measured their lives against mine
Thought I'd been letting them down,
Deemed Dan deficient in delivering Dadly duties;
They must be participating in sports and music lessons,
extra-curricular activities until they drop.
But they're different people, creative and artistic,
clever with their hands, imaginations unlimited
Free spirits, not yet hamstrung by life's rulebook.

Life is fast paced and complicated
invaded by stimuli, encouraged to fear.
But in our little haven on the hill,
we pause, take shelter,
breathe, connect.



Observations of a Passionate Naturalist

By Eleanor Hanger

The creek is still flowing strongly after the recent rains and looks just as this creek should look – a rocky bed with channels of water choosing the best and easiest path to their meeting with the waters of the river. All of the weeds; the Elephant grass and Crofton, the Trad and Mistweed, have been carried away, sadly too a few Sandpaper Figs and Macarangas that dared to establish in the creek bed when drier seasons prevailed. Now we have rocks of every shape and size relocated at the height of the flow, guiding the cascading waters from pool to pool where native fish shelter, and providing basking sites for turtles and crevices for frogs to find rest. There are also the remains of crayfish – blue claws, wedged in rocky crevices.

The rocks form platforms from which birds can launch themselves into the crystal clear waters to bathe, most recently a kookaburra seemingly unperturbed by the speed of the flow. And what was that I missed, a photo opportunity without parallel – the Pheasant Coucal, standing on a metre high dead trunk with the sun showing every detail of the beautiful feather patterning.

The Lewins Honeyeater just called. Earlier in the day it was sipping nectar from some late flowers on the Quandong. Most of the flowers have already been fertilized and well-formed fruit have replaced their delicate petals. Yesterday the Lewins Honeyeater and the male and female Regent Bowerbird were enjoying the fruit of the Pipturus (Native Mulberry) an amazing tree that grows very fast – a pioneer species. It produces generous quantities of fruit that are enjoyed by a multitude of creatures; from the Currawongs, Crows and Bowerbirds to the Pigeons, Figbirds and Honeyeaters.

Pottering around on the grass were the Red-browed Firetails running their beaks along grass stems to feast on the seeds. The gorgeous little Eastern Yellow Robin stood on the side of a tree trunk about a metre and an half above the ground, totally focused on something I couldn't see, but no doubt was a tasty insect – a potential meal.

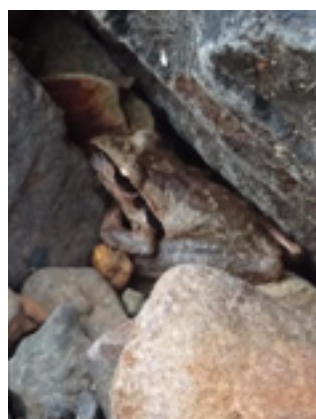
Earlier the Magpie-larks were marching across the lawn as if they were on a mission and in the long grasses the Superb Fairy wrens alerted me to their presence with their soft contact calls. The Brown Cuckoo Dove has just started to call, the Satin Bowerbird is tidying up his bower, the Kookaburra just sits and thinks, and the Pied Butcherbird awaits an unsuspecting invertebrate – just another perfect day in paradise.



Magpie-larks on a mission



Pied Butcherbird sitting in dappled sunlight on the Quandong



Well camouflaged



A walk after rain will reveal an amazing variety of fungi



Southern Leaf-tailed Gecko (Saltuarius swaini)

Bowra Sanctuary: A Bird Lover's Paradise

Allison Roberts

I am wrapping up a month as the volunteer guest caretaker for the Australian Wildlife Conservancy's Bowra Sanctuary outside Cunnamulla, Queensland (850 km west). This is my seventh year spending a month on the property and I absolutely love it out here. Each visit has both the comfort of coming to a place familiar and the excitement of something different, as the landscape and bird-life shifts dramatically with the rains. This month has been exceptionally dry with almost no summer rain. The property has been very dusty and barren. However, there are still signs of resilience with tiny flowers on desert plants and even a few large Bloodwoods in full flower. Last night we got an unexpected 20 mm of rain. This will have a dramatic effect in the coming weeks by filling up the dry waterholes and spawning new green growth. In years with good summer rains I have seen green grass so thick you could not find the parrots feeding on the grass seeds a few feet away. After winter rains the ground can be covered in broad leafy herbs, but generally the property is fairly dry.

The Australian Wildlife Conservancy (AWC) bought the 14,000 hectare property in 2010 from the McLaren family, who had run it as a sheep and then cattle station since the late 1800s. Ian McLaren was a bird lover and had built a bore-fed lagoon and campground for bird watchers. The AWC and Birds Queensland still maintain these facilities, making Bowra Sanctuary one of the easier AWC properties to visit. As caretaker I and the other volunteers look after the campers and guests who lodge in the old shearer's quarters and a small cottage. The property is open to visitors from March through October though capacity is limited, so it is always best to make reservations early to avoid disappointment.

The AWC maintains the property, including conducting scientific surveys to aid future conservation, fence and road maintenance, feral animal and weed control, and maintaining the homestead and guest facilities. Birds Queensland volunteers take care of the guests, collect daily bird survey data from the guests, run fixed route bird surveys, and have an annual bird-banding project. The bird-banding project which is currently in its fifth year hopes to learn more about longevity, local movements, breeding, and moult of the common inland birds on the property.

The property has a bird list of over 200 species though some are only seasonal or occasional visitors. Many are the dry specialist that you cannot see on the coast like the Major Mitchell's Cockatoo, Mulga Parrot, Hooded Robin, and Southern Whiteface, but there are also familiar species like Australian Magpie, Galah, Crested Pigeon, and Grey Shrike-thrush. There are good numbers of raptors and the open country is ideal for viewing them, with all the visitors and volunteers keeping an eye out for the elusive Grey Falcon. There are also a surprising number of water birds that visit the waterholes and lagoons. This month's highlights have been several sightings of Blue-Winged Parrots and Orange Chats which are both rare visitors.

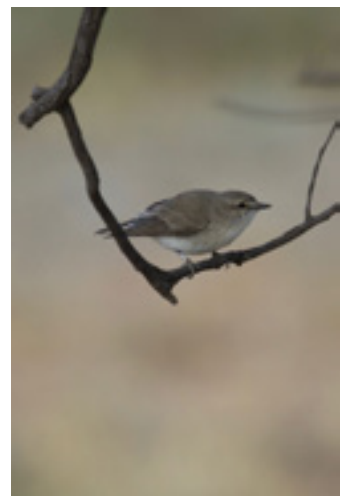
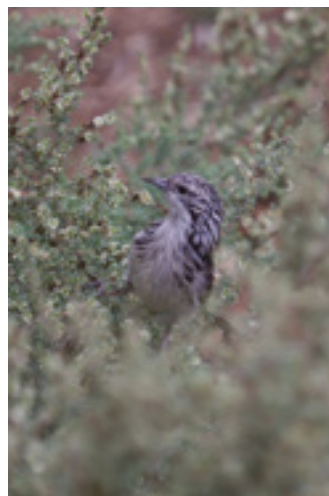
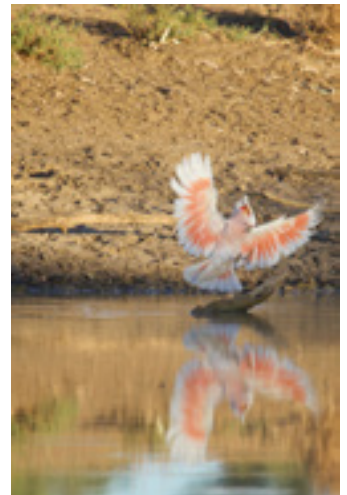
Although the property is known best for its bird diversity, there are also five macropod species (Eastern Grey Kangaroo, Western Grey Kangaroo, Red Kangaroo, Common Euro, and Swamp Wallaby), a resident echidna at the homestead, and a range of reptiles and amphibians. There is a variety of habitats on the property including open plains, waterholes dominated by River Red Gums, Gidgee

Woodlands, and Stony Mulga. If you are looking for a peaceful and economical conservation property to visit the next time you are out west, I highly recommend Bowra Sanctuary. You may even see me there!

For more information about Bowra Sanctuary and the visitor program please see:

<http://www.australianwildlife.org/sanctuaries/bowra-sanctuary.aspx>

<http://www.birdsqueensland.org.au/bowra.php>





Make a splash!

By Jasmine Rasmussen

As you go about your daily business, maybe heading to school or playing in the park with your friends, you may not notice the potential dangers lying around that could affect our marine life. Litter is an aspect of human existence which is hard to control, and we all must take responsibility for it. Not only does the presence of rubbish in our natural world affect marine animals, but land-dwelling native wildlife too! However, an issue as devastating as this can so simply be avoided by the responsible disposal of our litter. Or even by making choices to limit the amount of plastics we use. The encouragement of blending in biodegradable products into our every day lives helps to reduce the total waste of plastics, which take years to break down after contaminating the environment.

For example, a simple plastic bag used to carry home the groceries would take between 20 and 1000 years to decompose (ABC, 2008). That means that a constant expenditure of such waste products leads to mass destruction. When we allow rubbish to enter our water ways, it is estimated that around “one million birds and 100,000 marine mammals and sea turtles die each year when they become trapped in plastic or eat it,” (WDC, 2017) and this statistic does not include the thousands of other species which we are lucky to have wandering the biologically diverse ocean. It is such a tragedy to think that such a simple solution is often avoided, costing us millions of innocent lives.

This is one section of youth action where our Fauna Fighters can really strive. Each and every one of us has a responsibility to protect the wildlife that we adore.

ABC. (2008). ‘Plastic shopping bags and the environment’. Accessed 23/04/2017 via <http://www.abc.net.au/science/features/bags/>

WDC (World Dolphin Conservation). (2017). ‘Litter In The Seas And Oceans’. Accessed 23/04/2017 via http://www.wdcs.org/wdeskids/en/story_details.php?select=879



Monthly Mission

Brainstorm ways to help make your waste sustainable. Perhaps consider recycling some of your rubbish to make a cool art project, or establish a compost system using a worm farm! :)



Colouring in competition

1st place: Alyssa Meier
2nd place: Taylor Morris

Congratulations to the winner of the colouring in competition! Thank you so much for all of the fantastic entries. We received so many creative submissions, making it a very difficult decision, but it was so great to see everyone getting involved. It is also wonderful to see so many of you completing the monthly missions. Remember, education is so important when taking action for our wildlife. The more we know, the more we can do to help, and every little action counts towards making a big difference.





Cleanup Scavenger Hunt

By Jasmine Rasmussen

Over the next few months, see if you can find and tally the following objects and put them in the bin! Make sure to send in your results to jasmussen@mybce.catholic.edu.au using the checklist below!

	How many?
<input type="checkbox"/> Plastic bottles	<input type="text"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Plastic bags	<input type="text"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Cups and cans	<input type="text"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Wrapper/container	<input type="text"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="text"/>

Grants

As a non-profit organization, we rely heavily on the generous support of the community as well as the funding opportunities provided by local councils, private businesses and corporations. Wildcare kindly acknowledges the following councils, businesses and individuals who have provided essential support for our volunteer work.

AND ALSO...



Dedicated to a better Brisbane

BRISBANE CITY COUNCIL - Wildcare successfully obtained a grant for \$3,400 from the Brisbane Council under The Lord Mayor's Community Sustainability and Environmental Grants Program 2015-2016 – Native Wildlife Carers Grant. These funds are being used to deliver three specialised training workshops in Brisbane and to offset some the costs associated with the printing of training manuals.



COMMUNITY BENEFIT FUND – Office of Liquor and Gaming Regulation - Our thanks to the Queensland Government's grant for \$14,780 which is being used to purchase nine new intensive care units and ten aviaries.



NOOSA CITY COUNCIL - Funding received of \$4,778 under the Noosa Council's Community Grants Program to help cover consumables associated with attending trauma calls in the Noosa area as well as construction of a mobile release aviary.



AURIZON COMMUNITY GIVING FUND - Funding received of \$3,890 to fund the purchase of a trailer and construction of a mobile release aviary to be used for all species of wildlife to enable successful release back to their natural habitat.



SUEZ - Our application for funding for a mobile release aviary, to the value of \$3,830, was successful under Suez's Community Grants program.



GOLD COAST AIRPORT - Funding was received through the Gold Coast Airport's Community Benefit Fund to enable us to re-print our series of wildlife brochures for distribution to the public, veterinarians and community groups.



CITY OF GOLD COAST - Funding was received from the City of Gold Coast under their Community Grants Program to support Wildcare's work with wildlife rescue and rehabilitation in the Gold Coast region.

Support Wildcare's Members & Supporters



Our sincerest thanks to Greenleaf Images for the use of several of their beautiful photographs in our promotional material. The quality of the material would not be what it is, without the use of these professional images.

The logo for Print by Design Australia features the words "PRINT BY DESIGN" in a white, bold, sans-serif font, with "AUSTRALIA" in a smaller, white, bold, sans-serif font below it. The background is an orange rectangle with a white border.

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Thank you!



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 Tamborine Mountain Natural History Assoc.
 The Pines Shopping Centre

TO THE FOLLOWING VETS FOR THEIR DEDICATION AND TREATMENT OF OUR WILDLIFE

ALBERT STREET VET CLINIC
Beaudesert 5541 1233

ANIMAL EMERGENCY CENTRE
St Lucia 3365 2110

ANIMAL EMERGENCY SERVICE
Carrara 5559 1599
Underwood 3841 7011

AUSTRALIA ZOO WILDLIFE HOSPITAL
Beerwah 5436 2097

CURRUMBIN VALLEY VET SERVICES
PETER WILSON
Currumbin 5533 0381

CURRUMBIN WILDLIFE HOSPITAL
Currumbin 5534 0813

DR. BRIAN PERRERS
Southport 5591 2246

ANIMAL EMERGENCY CENTRE
Varsity Lakes 5593 4544

GREENCROSS
Burleigh Waters 5520 6820
Helensvale 5573 3355
Mudgeeraba 5530 5555
Nerang 5596 4899
Oxenford 5573 2670
Robina 5593 0300
Southport 5531 2573

GYMPIE & DISTRICT VETERINARY SERVICES
Gympie 5482 2488
Tin Can Bay 5486 4666

KENILWORTH VET CLINIC
Kenilworth 5472 3085

MANLY ROAD VET HOSPITAL
Manly 3396 9733

MT. TAMBORINE VET SURGERY
5545 2422

NOOSA VETERINARY SURGERY
Tewantin 5449 7522

TOOWONG FAMILY VET
Toowong 3613 9644

TUGUN VETERINARY SURGERY
Tugun 5534 1928

VETCALL
Burleigh 5593 5557
Mudgeeraba 5530 2204

WEST CHERMSIDE VET CLINIC
Stafford Heights 3359 0777

Note: UQ Small Animal Clinic St. Lucia has now moved to the UQ Gatton Campus.