

WILDCARE AUSTRALIA

EDUCATION WILDLIFE REHABILITATION RESEARCH

April 2007, Issue 44

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

WILDNEWS

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



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



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DEADLINE

for articles for the next newsletter

15 June, 2007

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

Calling All Bird Carers.....

Gold Coast Baby Bird Workshop is on the 20th May

The Basic Bird Workshop scheduled for the 13th May on the Gold Coast has been re-scheduled to the 20th May as the original date is Mother's Day.

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solutely amazing and generous to a fault; without their support Wildcare Australia would not be where it is today, but it is time we grew up and left home and let Terry and Trish enjoy their family and friends without the constant invasion of people in their home.

However they are not getting rid of us altogether, workshops will still be held at Narrowleaf.

Terry and Trish "THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU" Wildcare is forever in your debt. Words cannot express how grateful we are for your support. Terry, you can now run naked through the house.....whoops, wait a minute, we don't move for a month or so, so keep those clothes on a bit longer!! Trish I am going to miss those wonderful coffees (does this mean I get two on workshop days?) Terry everyone will miss your practical jokes, teeth and all (well, maybe not everyone) but hey keep the emails rolling.

Gail

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

How fast this year is going! Easter has come and gone and Christmas seems to be rushing up with a vengeance. I am either getting old or appreciating each day more, and I think it's the getting old that's the answer.

This year I have had the wonderful experience of raising three baby platypus, and, though I have had the opportunity twice in the past, it was a long ago—before Wildcare was even a thought. I did not appreciate the significance of it or realize how special it was, until the three came into care this year. I have made the most of this opportunity to record a huge amount of information about them, as each was so different in behaviour, in their food preferences and in how they could be handled. Gathering this data was important because I now realize I will probably never have the opportunity to care for them again.

This year saw infant platypus coming into care from Victoria to Queensland, and whilst the drought has been mostly to blame, some were inadvertently dug up and were not able to be placed back in their burrows. The three that came into my care all arrived within a week of each other. All were males - Trey, Finn and Zeke.



Trey and Finn arrived after being found wandering down the main highway, both tiny, 332gms and 223grms respectively, and both very emaciated and dehydrated. Trey also had a nasty bacterial infection all over his body. Zeke arrived at 640gms. He was found floating upside down in a dam his underbelly covered in exudative dermatitis.

Over the next few months all except Finn gained weight, their skin recovered and all were feeding well, often consuming nearly their body weight in food and

formula each day. Zeke was the first to be released, followed recently by Trey. After seven weeks in care Finn on the other hand had not only failed to gain weight he had also not grown in his measurements at all, although out of all three he was the most ravenous eater and the one with the most energy. Tests did not reveal anything conclusive and he was placed on antibiotics as a precaution, but in his ninth week in care, after his normal formula feed, I knew there was something seriously wrong. Within a couple of hours of the first symptom he died. On necropsy we found absolutely nothing abnormal, other than that he had no body fat. Once his pathology had come back we discovered he had had encephalitis.

As with looking after all native wildlife I have truly appreciated this unique opportunity and hope it is another fifteen years or so before I get the chance again and that they stay safe where they belong with their mothers.

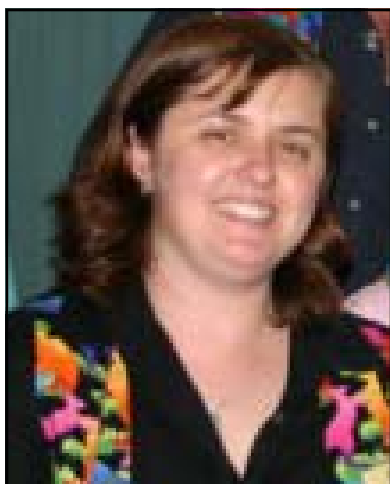
On other news there are big changes ahead for Wildcare Australia as we move to new premises at Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary. We were approached by Currumbin a few weeks ago, and after a lot of "will we or won't we", a lot of soul searching and numerous meetings, the committee has decided to take the plunge. It has not been an easy decision to make and it feels very much like moving out of home for the first time; both exciting and scary.

Those of you who have been with Wildcare for a few years will remember that when we were first invited to Narrowleaf it was to be for a few months while we searched for office space. Now, years later, we are still there, so when this offer came along it was too good to decline. We have relied on Trish and Terry's generosity for too long.

People often forget that Narrowleaf is Terry and Trish's home; imagine what it has been like for them having strangers walking in and out of their home at all hours of the day and night... every day of the year. I know I would go insane. The total lack of privacy that these two amazing people have had it must be extremely difficult to cope with, but they are just way to nice to say so. Terry and Trish have been ab-

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EMERGENCY TELEPHONE

An interesting statistic for you: as at 30 March 2007 there were 463 current members of Wildcare and only 21 of those members are on the telephone roster!

We are desperately short of volunteers to man the after hours telephone service. The shifts that urgently require filling are:-

Weekdays from 7am to 8am. This is an easy time slot. It is only one hour and filling this shift for just one day a week would be a huge help.

Weekdays from 4pm to 7pm. We have several afternoon shifts currently available.

Weekends - Various shifts. Shifts on the weekend are only for 3 hours.

Full training is provided and back up support is only a telephone call away if you get a tricky call. All of the outgoing telephone calls during your shift are reimbursed as well.

A telephone training workshop will be held at Advanacetown on the 6th May 2007 for anyone who is interested in attending. Please register with the Wildcare office.

If you are able to help with filling just one shift a month, please contact Liz Meffan on 5545 4799 or by email lizmf@bigpond.com.

HUMIDICRIBS

Several of our carers have recently purchased Vetario Intensive Care Units through an Australian distributor. If you haven't seen these units, they are basically like a small humidicrib and are excellent for small joeys, baby birds and sick animals.

We have been able to secure a distributor who has sold us the units at a reduced cost of \$1,100 each (plus freight) for the S10 model, which is several hundred dollars cheaper than the RRP. If anyone is interested in purchasing a unit, please contact me.

You can check the units out at www.vetario.com The model we have purchased is the S10 and there is also a larger model - S20.



RAPTOR WORKSHOP

WIRES is holding a **WIRES Raptor Care Course** at Dorroughby (near Lismore) over the weekend of 19th and 20th May 2007. The course covers the rescue, identification, handling, feeding and housing of raptors. As well as lecture sessions there are four workshops on raptor anatomy, identification, assessment and imping feathers. The course runs from 8.30am to 8.00pm on the Saturday (a barbeque tea is included in the course fee) and from 8.30am to 4.00pm on the Sunday. An agenda and some information about the venue are attached. The cost of the course is \$88.00.

If anyone is interested in attending you can contact Helen Taylor on (02) 6887 2309 or by email at taylorh@bigpond.com

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TREE STANDS

If anyone is interested in purchasing "tree stands" (designed to hold Christmas trees but handy for holding tree forks and branches in aviaries), can you please contact me and advise how many you would like to purchase. I will place another order with the Australian distributor if there is enough interest. The stands cost \$20 each. You can check them out on the internet at www.cinoplastics.com.

CALENDAR

The second semester Wildcare calendar should be ready by late May. We are hoping to include all Wildcare events, including workshops and meetings. The calendar will be posted on the Wildcare website as soon as it is ready.

CARERS MEETINGS

Those who have been members of Wildcare for some years may remember that we previously had bi-monthly Carers Meetings. This was an opportunity for members and carers to speak with coordinators and committee members. The meetings were discontinued, unfortunately, because of lack of interest: only a handful of people were turning up. Recently there has been some interest expressed by members in having these meetings recommenced. If you have any thoughts on this, I would be interested to hear from you by email to enquiries@wildcare.org.au

EMAILS

After some trouble with our Wildcare emails recently, I think that the problem has now been solved. If you have never received an email from Wildcare there is the possibility that we have an incorrect email address for you. If you would like to get updates from Wildcare by email - and haven't received

any previously - could you please email me at enquiries@wildcare.org.au so that I can confirm your email address as I tend to get a lot of emails bouncing back.

PHOTOS NEEDED

Would like to share some of your photos for education and training purposes? I am particularly looking for good quality photos of various mammal species at various stages of development, particularly small mammals, such as bandicoots and other small marsupials (antechinus, planigales, dunnarts) and native rodents. Also needed are photos of diseases and injuries (of varying severity) in all species of wildlife. If you have photos that you would be happy for Wildcare to use for education purposes, could you please forward them to me either by email or by post, in which case they will be returned.

DISPLAYING WILDLIFE

Just a quick reminder to all Wildcare members that you are not permitted to "display" ANY sick, injured or orphaned animal or bird. Displaying could include taking to community events, shopping centres, school and education talks. If you believe that doing so would be beneficial in some way then application must be made (before the event) to the Queensland Parks & Wildlife Service for permission. This application MUST be submitted to QPWS by the Wildcare committee, so details should be forwarded to the Committee for approval and a request will be made to the QPWS. Please note that the application can only be made for a specific animal that is not sick or injured and that would not be caused undue stress. The permit is only available for animals held under a GROUP PERMIT, such as Wildcare's, not to animals held on an INDIVIDUAL PERMIT.

GAMBLING COMMUNITY BENEFIT FUND

Wildcare has been extremely fortunate to receive a grant from the GCBF for specialised rescue equipment. The grant totalled approximately \$10,000 and was used to purchase specialised rescue equipment such as pole syringes, nets with telescopic handles, extendable poles for rescuing koalas, bats and birds and snake handling equipment. Unfortunately this type of equipment was too expensive for most wildlife carers to buy. We are extremely grateful to the GCBF for the funding.

Have you office skills languishing unused?

Have you talents waiting to be developed?

Have you a passion for animals?

Have you a great desire to help?

Would you like to meet new friends and help our native wildlife at the same time?

Have you a thirst for knowledge?

Have you a little time to spare?

If you can answer "yes" to one or more of these questions, we need you and can't wait to hear from you.

Please phone me on 07 5527 2444 between 8.00am and 4.00pm on Tuesday or Friday or leave a message and I will return your call.



SAFETY VESTS

A limited number of safety vests for use when rescuing animals, particularly from roads at night, are available from the Wildcare Office 07 5527 2444 or from Laura Reeder (Brisbane) l_reeder@bigpond.net.au

Redlands IndigiScapes Centre

at Capalaba is offering a number of workshops which may be of interest. Please direct your enquiries to IndigiScapes 07 3824 8611

April 21 Pest Animal Identification and Management

May 21 & 28 Native Grasses Identification (Beginner and Intermediate Level)

May 19 Native Garden Design

June 16 Batty Friends and Neighbours

July 7 Bird Identification (full day, including optional field trip)

POSITIONS VACANT



REPTILE CO-ORDINATORS

Experience required with both pet and wild reptiles.

Please direct enquiries to: enquiries@wildcare.com.au

SUBSIDY AVAILABLE

Are you interested in attending the National Wildlife Rehabilitation Conference in Western Australia in August? If so, Wildcare Australia may be able to subsidize your costs.

Please direct your enquiries to Karen Scott enquiries@wildcare.org.au

FAUNA FRIENDLY FENCING & other structures

Here are two websites with suggestions for making our wildlife safe
www.redland.qld.gov.au/NR/rdonlyrew/
www.wildlife.org.au

BOOK DISCOUNT WITHDRAWN

Please note that Collins Bookshop at Robina no longer offers Wildcare members a 10% discount.

PHONE LIST UPDATE

We need to update the phone list and to ensure that your details are correct. It can be very frustrating for a phone operator who has an emergency with which they are trying to deal, as well as answer other in-coming calls, when details are not up to date on the phone lists. As you can imagine every minute wasted on a phone call that is a wrong number or the carer is no longer able to rescue, is critical for an injured bird or other animal waiting for help. If any of the following apply to you, please ring the office or email Wildcare as soon as possible.

Have you:

Changed your phone number/ numbers

Moved house (or are about to)

Started a job or changed jobs, which means you now have limited rescue times

Any other changes, which may mean that you temporarily need a break from rescuing or rescuing at certain times

If you do not inform us of these things you **WILL** be on the rescue list and you may receive calls to attend rescues in your area, both day and night. Most of our animals and some of our birds are nocturnal, which is unfortunate for people who like their sleep or who like to entertain after dark. If you are listed as “All animals – Anytime”, then that is what you will be called to do. If you cannot do this then you need to let us know immediately

If you are one of the few who feel that they have received very few calls for rescues, then perhaps you could give the office a call to get them to check your details.

Remember, “many hands make light work” or is it that “one good electrician makes lots of lights work”..... I never know.

Phone the office on 5527 2444 during office hours (please remember this is an emergency line too) or email wildcareaustralia@bigpond.com to update your details.

HELP OUR WILDLIFE FROM THE COMFORT OF YOUR OWN HOME



- WOULD YOU LIKE TO HELP?
- CAN YOU SPARE 3 HOURS A MONTH?
- DO YOU LIKE TO CHAT?



Wildcare operates a 24 hour telephone service to provide help and information to the general public. Volunteers can help with as little as 3 hours a month by manning these phones from home. We all understand how busy life can be, but sparing so little time can be such a great help to our native wildlife. Free training is available to all our members.



Please contact Liz Meffan
our friendly Telephone Co-ordinator on 0419 684 461
or by email: lizmf@bigpond.com
or you can call 07 55272444 during office hours.

RECOGNITION OF PAIN IN WILDLIFE

Anne Fowler BSc(Vet)(Hons) BVSc, MACVSc (Avian Health)

Reproduced with the kind permission of Dr Anne Fowler

Introduction

As wildlife carers, we deal with a variety of species that present to care for a diverse range of causes - everything from predation and trauma to starvation. Our challenge is to recognize how pain is expressed in this diverse group of animals, and to understand what conditions could result in pain.

But first, some definitions so that we begin from the same point in this discussion.

What is pain? In humans, it is an unpleasant sensory or emotional experience which we primarily associate with tissue damage or describe in terms of tissue damage, or both. If pain is so bad, why do we feel it? Well, pain is the body's tool to prevent further damage to itself. It is a warning system.

Suffering is not pain. It is defined as a state of emotional distress associated with events that threaten the biological and/or psychosocial integrity of the individual. Suffering often accompanies severe pain but can occur in its absence; hence pain and suffering are distinct.

Pain can come from different parts of the body - and the body acts differently with each of these locations.

- "Somatic pain" comes from the skin, bone, muscles and tendons.
- "Visceral pain" comes from the

internal organs: heart, gut, reproductive organs.

- "Nerve pain" comes from nerves, spinal cord and brain.

Pain may also be short or long-term in its nature.

Acute pain follows injury and has gone when the injury has healed - such as a skin wound or broken bone.

Chronic pain occurs when the injury is taking longer to heal, or may never heal completely, such as arthritis.

Understanding the pain pathway

Pain begins in the skin, muscle and bone where many tiny nerve endings are found. Stimulation of the nerves causes an electrical impulse to move along the nerve and finally ending up in particular regions of the brain and spinal cord. The response from the brain then stimulates a reaction to the pain - such as moving away or crying out. The 'pinch test' - where you pinch a toe, and the leg withdraws is an example of this pathway at work. How many nerves are stimulated governs the intensity of the pain - a pin prick on your finger is a different sensation to having your hand crushed.

All of these parts of the body must be intact to feel pain: an animal with a broken leg or spine

may not be able to withdraw the leg if it is given a painful stimulus.

The great pretenders

Many of the species we deal with are prey species. They have evolved to use the pretence of being okay as part of their defence to avoid being eaten as is the plight of most sick animals. Birds have perfected this 'Preservation reflex' and are well-known for coming into care in their terminal stages, overwhelmed by the disease or trauma and no longer able to cope. Because they are prey species, many species of wildlife is 'conditioned' to hide their pain.

How do we humans approach pain in other species?

Factors may include age, culture, one's own pain experiences, level of empathy for others and overall understanding of the species. Studies show that even 'consistent' groups, such as veterinary students have different appreciations of levels of pain based on education and experiences.

Historically, many pain-relieving medications were associated with serious side-effects and, consequently, a degree of pain was perceived as preferable to exposure to medication side-effects. Country veterinarians and doctors, particularly, may still be influenced by those perceptions.

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So how might we understand whether an animal is in pain?

Several approaches include:

1. **Structural.** Animals from fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds to mammals all have a brain, spinal cord and nerves thus enabling the ability to feel pain. How the animal expresses that pain, however, may differ, e.g. fish cannot vocalize, snakes cannot withdraw a limb. Melissa Kaplan's website (see References) contains in-depth research into these differences.
2. **Anthropomorphism.** The question of "If this hurts when I feel it, then it must hurt when another being feels it" has a technical name: critical, justifiable anthropomorphism.
3. **Test and measure.** Observe and measure the animal by whatever means to determine whether it is in pain. Providing pain relief should result in alteration of those measurements towards the 'normal' if the animal was suffering pain.
4. **Experiential.** Experience leads to knowledge. A broken leg in a joey is painful. Therefore, a broken leg in a bird must be similarly painful. Over time, we collect a mental list of painful conditions through observation, personal experience or shared experiences.

What situations are likely to be painful?

Any damage to the tissue is likely to be painful, including but not limited to predation injuries, vehicle trauma, breaks in the skin, damage to muscles, amputation of limbs, concussion and burns.

What are the adverse effects of pain?

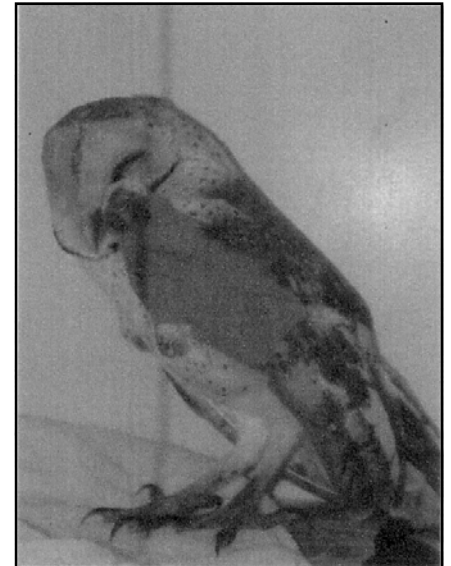
Healing of wounds may be detrimentally affected by pain.

Metabolic Effect	Clinical Result
Increased metabolic rate	Increases energy requirement—when not likely to be eating
Increases catabolic hormones	Breaks down muscle tissue for energy
Dehydration	Affects renal function and electrolytes
Releases inflammatory mediators	May lead to inappropriate inflammation that damages tissues
Adrenal gland is stimulated	Stress hormones slow healing
Ileus—intestinal immobility	Gut does not move forward so animal does not want to eat. Gas build up

Acute pain is unlikely to have an adverse effect, however, chronic pain or pain that cannot be relieved become welfare issues for our wildlife. Fortunately, we have the ability to euthanase animals in severe and intractable pain.

How might we understand whether an animal is feeling pain?

We can start to recognise pain by looking at different areas and making observations which are documented on a daily basis. Also



This barn owl with a broken wing is hunched up, eyes shut - rather than watching me (predator)

look for response to medication or other supportive measures.

1. Objective measures

Laboratory measurement of cortisol in the blood or faeces. Measurement of heart and respiratory rate pre and post trauma.

2. Behavioural

Behaviours different from normal. Hand-rearing of orphans gives invaluable insight into behaviour of adult of the species. Observation of orphans helps define 'normal' behaviour for that species.

Some examples of behavioural changes:

- Lying on the side and trembling
- Lying flat-out on the side
- Not curling tightly
- Lying on side with hind legs extended and rigid
- Sitting or lying to keep the affected area from touching the ground
- Standing or walking with swaying, leaning, falling over,

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stretching, or walking
sideways/backwards
Foot flicking in reptiles
Feather or body picking in
birds
Obsessive grooming of one
place in mammals.
Tucking up the abdomen -
hunched posture



Photo: Lizzie Corke

Joey protecting right front leg after muscle injury from predation. Right arm is dropped, left arm is guarding the injured side.

3. Gait

Changes in gait will differ with the species. Look for careful placement of gait, stilted movements, shuffling. The animal may not use a limb, or protect a limb when moving.

4. Activity

Level of activity - may see either complete inactivity - staying in one spot - more common in our prey species (playing dead); or possibly manic movements.

Anorexia - not eating is another common expression of pain - in all species, common in birds, herbivores and reptiles post-surgery.

5. Facial expression

Humans easily communicate pain through facial expressions. Different species use

different 'faces', often less expressive than those of humans, to convey pain.

Ears - Commonly, 'ears back' rather than pointing forward and erect.

Eyes - may appear dull, dry, half-closed or not focussed on us (and don't forget, we are predators, they should be watching us!).

Head and neck - may appear hunched up.

6. Vocalization

Pain scoring tests reveal that vocalization is usually reserved for severe pain. This is less likely to occur in prey species to avoid alerting predators. Lack of vocalization is not necessarily an indication of lack of pain in an animal. Vocalization may be voluntary or not. The sound will vary with the species: whimpering, growling, grunting, and screeching. *Bruxism*, or teeth-grinding is common in herbivores.

7. Mental State

Animal presents in a dull, depressed or unresponsive way; more timid than usual; aggressive when approached and/or handled.

Interaction with others of the same species may differ from the norm.

Treatment of Pain

Care of wildlife requires measures to reduce stress and provide comfort. There is no magic injection that will make a cold, hungry, scared animal feel better - we need to care for the patient, as well as its pain.

Supportive care

Provide a warm, dark and quiet place for the injured animal.

Avoid loud noises, e.g. television, radio, household activity. Provide an enclosure that is away from and safe from predators. All of these animals are prey species! You will find it harder to assess pain if the animal thinks it needs to defend itself not only from you (a predator) but your pets as well. Provide food that the animal can recognize. Handle the animal quietly and gently - keep voices down and movements calm.

First Aid Measures

- Treat animal for dehydration.
- Immobilization of fractures will reduce the pain by 50% by preventing the sharp ends of bone from further damaging muscle tissue.
- Clean and cover wounds - nerve endings in the skin are irritated if they dry out.

Provide antibiotic cover if appropriate - uncontrolled infections result in painful inflammation and release of chemical mediators into the bloodstream.

Drug Therapy

Non-steroidal Anti-inflammatory drugs e.g. *Meloxicam (Metacam®)*, *Carprofen (Rimadyl®, Prolet®)*. These drugs have come a long way from the days of Aspirin. Newer drugs are safer and target parts of the inflammatory cycle specific to pain. The drugs are scheduled as "prescription animal remedy" - requiring a veterinarian to prescribe the medication.

Provide anti-inflammatories for acute mild to moderate pain (trauma, skin wound) for 1- 2 days. More serious tissue trauma, such as broken limbs, require 3 days' administration. One dose of most drugs in this category will last for 24 hours.

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Side effects may include gastric ulceration, however this has not been seen in birds, marsupials or reptiles at recommended doses for these periods.

Many of our wildlife are dehydrated upon arrival, and rehydration for 4-6 hours at least prior to administration of pain relief is recommended.

Opioids (e.g.: *Morphine, Fentanyl, Pethidine*)

This category of drugs is scheduled as addictive. The duration of action of some of these drugs is variable in different species - the same dose of morphine, which in a dog lasts for 12 hours, lasts 1 hour

in a rat. Other species such as birds require many times the dose rate as mammals and may have receptors that work well for some drugs, and not well for others.

The most significant side effect of this group of drugs is depression of the heart and lungs, with resultant death. However, these drugs are used as a component in pre-medication for surgery in wildlife species.

References:

Bradley T. *Recognition of Pain in Exotic Animals*. Exotic DVM 31 (3) 21-26. July 2001

www.anapsid.org/herppain2.html.
Melissa Kaplan's reptile site. Article on "Perception of Pain in Rep-

tiles" by Roger Klingberg, in *The Vivarium*, 10(4) 45 - 49, 1999. Lots of other references to work done on recognition of pain in reptiles on this website.

www.vet.ed.ac.uk/animalpain
Guidelines for the Recognition and Assessment of Animal Pain.

Fowler A. *Pain Relief in Native Animals*. In *Wildlife Matters*, newsletter of Wildlife Victoria, 2004.

Barnett JL. *Measuring Pain in Animals*. Aust Vet J. Vol 75, no 12, p 878-879, Dec 1997

Simpson M. *Pain Management in Avian and Exotic Pets*. Conference Proceedings of UEP SIG of AVA from AVA National Conference, 2004.

Silva's Donations

One of our members, Silva, has recently sourced a free supply of up to 4000 day old chickens to be used for food for our meat eaters in care. They are being donated by Steggles at Rochedale. This is a magnificent donation and will be of enormous help to carers. As a result of this donation, Silva was anxious to get a freezer for storage.

About an hour ago she emailed the amazing news that a friend, who wishes to remain anonymous, from an online herpetology group has donated a brand new LG

chest deep freeze. So by the end of the week she will be ready to distribute the free bounty.

A very special thank you to Silva for organizing the donations and to Steggles of Rochedale and the anonymous donor of the deep freeze for their generosity.

Bird and reptile carers should contact the Wildcare Office 07 5527 2444 for more information.

BIRD WORKSHOPS

- 15th July - Baby Birds (Eumundi) 9am - 3pm
- 19th August - Baby Birds (Gold Coast) 9am - 3pm
- 30th September - Baby Birds (Brisbane) 9am - 3pm
- 25th November - Diseases & Injuries (Gold Coast) 9am-4pm

Please note that the workshop scheduled for Mother's Day, 13th May, has been changed to the Sunday, 20th May.



JMHanger

NATIONAL WILDLIFE REHABILITATION CONFERENCE

CALL FOR PAPERS

5th Annual National Wildlife Rehabilitation Conference, Fremantle, Western Australia, August 6-9, 2007

PLEASE CIRCULATE TO ALL INTERESTED PARTIES

The wildlife rehabilitation industry which largely consists of volunteers, and Australia-wide involves thousands of individuals and groups, is unfunded relying on sporadic grants, donations from rescuers and grass-roots fund raising. These conferences have not only increased our knowledge base but, perhaps most importantly of all, have fostered friendships and networking between a wide range of like-minded people from all over Australia. For many in the wildlife industry these conferences have become important as a source of encouragement and inspiration; reaffirming that we are all part of an important growing worldwide movement; that we are part of a much larger worldwide picture.

The 2007 National Wildlife Rehabilitation Conference is being organised under the auspices of the Western Australian Wildlife Rehabilitation Council Inc. which is a self-funded, not-for-profit organisation. The conference will be held in Fremantle, Perth's port city, and is expected to attract at least 200 delegates.

We would like to include presentations on as many aspects of wildlife rescue, rehabilitation and release as possible including research into medical treatments for wildlife, rescue and release techniques, administration, management and care of staff and volunteers, and wildlife conservation.

Each speaker will be given up to 45 minutes in total including a 10-15 minute question and answer session. To facilitate your attendance we are happy to offer free registration for the day of your presentation if necessary.

Please send your abstract of approximately 200 words, a biographical statement of 100 words and indication of your audio-visual requirements by email to jane.mulcock@uwa.edu.au or by post (if you do not have computer access) to the following address:

Dr Jane Mulcock
ARC Postdoctoral Research Fellow
Anthropology & Sociology (M255)
University of Western Australia
Crawley, Western Australia
Australia, 6009

**ABSTRACTS ARE DUE BY MONDAY APRIL 30th.
FULL LENGTH PAPERS ARE DUE BY FRIDAY JUNE 1st.**

For more information please visit our website:
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We look forward to meeting you in Perth in August!

"LIFE BLOOD OF WILDCARE"

Kim Alexander

We often use this phrase to refer to Wildcare Australia's 24 hour phone service and the phone operators who man (woman) it, but do we really know what it means. I have often been accused of blowing our own trumpet when it comes to the dedication of the phone operators and other volunteers, but I feel it is well deserved and I will unashamedly continue to do so.

Wildcare Australia runs a 24 hour, 7 day a week, 365 day a year phone service, which is constantly manned by one of our trained volunteers. When the volunteer receives the call, be it day or night, from a member of the public, a veterinary surgery or another animal organisation, our phone operator takes the details and then phones the details on to one of Wildcare's trained rehabilitators. The caller doesn't have to make a series of calls to find the right person, Wildcare does this for them. The appropriate rehabilitator then phones back to the original caller and arranges the rescue of the animal. If the animal requires immediate veterinary treatment they will often, in the case of birds and some smaller animals, enlist the aid of the caller to get the animal to a veterinarian. This usually results in the veterinarian

contacting Wildcare to collect the animal for rehabilitation once it has been assessed and treated. With larger or more difficult animals and rescues, the Wildcare volunteer attends the rescue, travelling in their own vehicle, at their own expense, with their own equipment. The animal is then taken to a veterinarian for assessment and if suitable is placed with a rehabilitator for care until it can be released. ALL of this work and more is done by Wildcare volunteers, many of whom work in fulltime jobs to enable them to pay for the expenses they incur doing this voluntary work.

Yes, there are other organizations out there that do a similar job, but few operate in quite the same way or over such a large geographic area as Wildcare. All of these services do a wonderful job and we all rely on one another, to make sure all animals are quickly and efficiently dealt with, but I believe that Wildcare Australia system of dealing with wildlife emergencies surpasses all others. Whenever I hand out a brochure or a card to a member of the public and tell them that there will always be a "live person" at the end of that phone day or night to take their call and see the relief on their face, I know that Wildcare, its phone

operators and its rescuers are something special.....They ARE the lifeblood of this organisation and they give life to all the wildlife out there that they are called on to help. If I am blowing Wildcare's trumpet then so be it. It deserves to be blown to herald a job well done.



Rowley Goonan helping another victim of careless fishing practices.

MY FAVOURITE THINGS

Kim Alexander

Having been a Wildlife Carer or more recently Rehabilitator for the past 15 or so years, I am often asked of all the different types of animals I care for, do I have a favourite. To be honest I don't really think I do. Mind you, it doesn't mean I haven't a soft spot for some in particular.

I must admit that whenever I have in an Eastern Grey Kangaroo joey (or usually two), in care I am completely besotted with them. That is after the week or so of taking antihistamines and slathering myself in calamine lotion, as initially I am allergic to their fur. Their endearing, clumsy ways and their complete and devoted trust is something that you would not expect to get from an animal that will grow into such a huge and powerful creature. So while they are

sharing my bedroom, lounge room or backyard I am under their power. But by the time they go to release, usually after 12 to 18 months in my care, I am happy not to have any macropods in the yard to feed.



It's the same with koalas. Having only dealt with koalas for the past five years and the joeys for the past three years I guess the fascination hasn't yet worn off. It can be tempered, sometimes, es-

pecially on a rainy night when you are still out cutting leaf wearing gumboots, a headlight and the clothes you left for work in at 7 am that morning. Having a lounge room that smells like a eucalypt forest can be nice, but picking up hundreds of little pellets that have bounced around the room from a pair of romping koala joeys is not as nice.

I must admit I still hold a soft spot for the bandicoots and other small mammals, which I now rather infrequently get to rehabilitate. This is mainly my own fault as I have told so many people how wonderful they are that now everyone else wants to do them. And as an animal that literally grows before your eyes, with the appetite of a tiger and ferocity to match they are in a league of their own. I tend to be a little reluctant

(Continued on page 14)

A WARM WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Wildcare Australia welcomes the following new members:

Narelle Adams, Kingston; Rene'e Rivard, Currumbin Waters; Megan Dan, Gympie; Tammy Huckel, Beachmere; Sandrine Cherrier; Marc Purnell; Nicky Haessig, Canungra; Leon Verhage, Amaroo; Tony Cole & Wendy Rudd; Amy Whitham, Loganholme; Ron & Fran Large, Burpengary; Angela Evans, Jeanette O'Shea, Peter Luxton; Ann Phillips, Coochin Creek; Marian Lane, Clagiraba; Gail Robinson, Zillmere; Sheryl Bastin, Sandstone Point; Holly West, Dunwich; Kathy Barnsdale, Mt. Cotton; Diane Breedon, Mudgeeraba; Anne Janelle Dickman, Clear Island Waters; Stephanie Hannan, St. Lucia; Sandra Beynon-Dick, The Gap; Virginia Dennis, Colin Barthel, Cedar Vale; Joy & Ronald Shanley, Jimboomba; Rebecca Stephenson, Brad Binstead, Regents Park; Ennio & Barbara Tomasiello, Bonogin; Ian Christian, Ormeau; Julie & Phil Hendey; Stephanie Etourneau, Currumbin Waters; Ashleigh Heron, Windsor; Alicis Bampton, Regents Park; Sharon Farley, Eagle Heights; Anne Stephens, Kandanga; Robyn Cox, Greg Edwards, Carrara; Camilla Morris, Colleen Brosnan, Woondum; Claudia Rumph, Bribie Island; L'Oreal Steytler, Gareth Marshall, Tallai; Elke Buhrich, Suffolk Park; Sue Nealis, Mudgeeraba; Virginia Lonsdale, Daisy Hill; Andrew Banham, Clear Island Waters; Peta Newcombe, Nerang; Erwin Geyer, Yandina; Renay Robb, Shane Galvin Moorooka; Danielle Outram, Joshua Crawford, Bribie Island; Aniko Scarabello, Tamborine; Michelle Vincent, Carrara; Tracy Moore, Highland Park; Chelsea Gauci, Nicholas Hurst, Forest Lake; Marly Woods, Lyn Woods, Worongary; Julia Skilbeck, Collingwood Park; Rhonda Trotter, James Trotter, Jimboomba; Julie Wilson-Hirst, Mooloolah Valley; Karolyn Campbell, Cleveland; Lianne Cooke, Bell's Bridge; Jan & Brenda Nilsson, Elanora; Heather Frankcom, Alexandra Hills; Allandra McLaughlin, Emma Lillie, Moorina; Emily Power, Browns Plains; Rowley Goonan, Mudgeeraba; Margot Dean, Carrara; Rine Frouws, Cashmere; Camilla Williams, Corinda; Sandra Simpson, Labrador; Terrence & Michelle Duffy, Cornubia; Michaela Griffin, St. Lucia; Deborah Turnbull, Wavell Heights; Ayshea Short, Kenmore; Hideyasu Nakayama, Auchentflower; Liam Flanagan, Boondall; Amber Leonard, Meldale;

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 is in the office from 8.00 am to 4.00 pm on Monday and Friday.

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



J Hanger

(Continued from page 13)

to release these bundles of fur and teeth as they seem so vulnerable, but then I watch them rip apart a cockroach or a stick insect and I'm glad they don't have a taste for human flesh.

Then there are the birds. It was a magpie that first got us into all of this and whenever I hear a magpie chortle it brings back the memories of the cheeky magpies that ran our family for many years. Then there are the ducklings that mean endless hours of cleaning bowls and making up a greens mix, and trying not to let them imprint, to have them fly off one morning when a group of their friends passed overhead.

So without even mentioning the possums, the cheeky wallabies or the doe eyed flying foxes that we have cared for over the past 15 or more years, I would have to say that like children they are all individuals and you love them all differently, yet all the same. You smother them with love when they are little, you try to teach them independence as they mature and you fret and worry when you release them.

I have no favourites. I just feel favoured that I have been able to be a part of some of these unique animals' lives and I hope that I have perhaps enriched their lives as much as they enriched mine.



EMHanger



EMHanger

Photo Gallery



Who is this, I wonder?



J Hanger

What am I?



Kerry Johnson

Pheasant Coucal

(the only Australian member of the cuckoo family to build its own nest, incubate and raise its own young)



J Hanger

What am I?



J Hanger

What am I?



J Hanger

Stephens' Banded Snake (a beautiful, small-ish - to 1.2m, nocturnal and arboreal, live bearing species with a neurotoxic venom—so admire from a distance!)


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PJ's Wildcare for KIDS



Hi there! My name is PJ and I'm seven years old. With my mum's help, I'll be bringing you the Kids page for every newsletter. I hope you'll send me some pictures of yourself with some Aussie wildlife.

Here's are some pictures taken of me last weekend at Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary feeding the beautiful lorikeets. It was the most fun I had over Easter!! I even ended up with birdfeed all over me but I didn't mind. Their claws are very sharp though and I was glad when they hopped off me and onto the dish. My dad is very tall so he held up his arm with the dish so the birds would see it. Then he would hand me the dish once some birds had landed on it. The birds kept hopping on my dad's head and it was very funny. I'm glad they didn't poop on me. I

would love to do it again really soon and think that everyone should go and visit the sanctuary—it has the best kids' playground I've ever seen so I hope you all get a chance to visit it very soon. There's lots to do for everyone.

So back to the kids' page.....please send me any funny jokes you have, any great information you have found out about some animals in your area and any stories you have about your adventures or experiences with Australian wildlife. Have you cared for any sick animals? Why not share your story with us so other kids can read about it.

Don't forget to write your name and address on the envelope. If we publish your story, we will send you a special little thank-you gift which you can enjoy!

Well, I hope you enjoy my first Kids Page. My email address is: pjdick@ozemail.com.au if you would like to send me stories or pictures by e-mail; or mail them to me C/- the Wildcare Office.

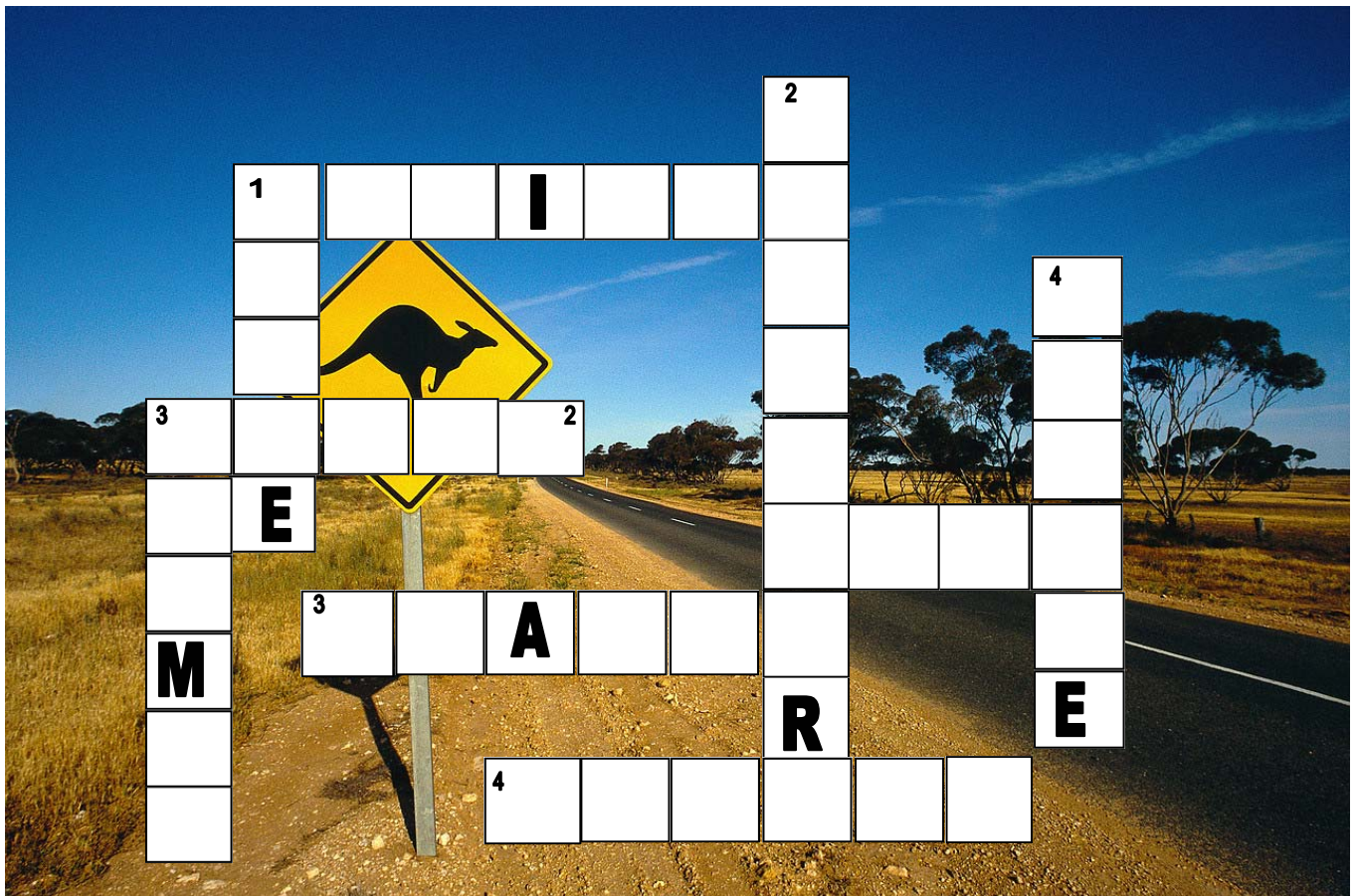
Bye for now!

P. J.



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DOWN

1. Wedgetail - - - - -
2. Flightless bird with black feathers
3. Wild horse
4. Black and white bird



ACROSS

1. Spiny ant-eating mammal
2. Long-eared nocturnal mammal
3. Large lizard of the monitor family
4. Mythical Australian creature that lives in billabongs



WORDSEARCH

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

WOMBAT, ORB SPIDER, MARSUPIAL, COCKATOO,
PYTHON, GALAH, WILDCARE, NUMBAT, TREES,
LILY, STINGRAY, FROG, TURTLE, GECKO, PREDATOR

WHAT AM I?

I live in dark places. I have big ears and small eyes. I sleep upside down.