

WILDCARE AUSTRALIA

EDUCATION WILDLIFE REHABILITATION RESEARCH

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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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NEWSLETTER

In an effort to try to reduce our overheads, we are going to make our quarterly newsletter available on the Wildcare website. This will save a lot of postage costs not to mention the reduced impact on our environment by the reduction in the use of paper!!

We have already included on the website all four newsletters from 2004 which are available to download in a pdf format.

It is proposed that the newsletter will be made available on the website as soon as it is ready so that it can be downloaded. For members who would like to receive notification when the newsletter is ready to be downloaded, can you please send an email to:

wildcare@goldlink.aunz.com

Please include a brief note that you would like to get the newsletter by email. Please ensure that you include your name and membership number (if possible) and your full email address. This option is available to members, sponsors and non-members.

I sincerely hope that most members will take the opportunity to help save on postage and paper by taking up this offer.

Karen Scott
The ever continuing cost-cutting Treasurer....

Quote of the Month.....

We abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we use land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect.

Aldo Leopold quoted in Stewart Udall's *The Quiet Crisis* (1963)

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Hi everyone and a Happy New Year. I hope you all had a wonderful Christmas and a great start to the new year.

For those of you who are new to rehabilitating wildlife, it was one of the busiest seasons for this time of year that I think we have ever had....did someone forget to tell the animals that this is the quiet time!! The birds have fledged, the reptiles are sunning, and the macropods and koalas are supposed to be taking it easy due to all the wonderful new growth that we have around — thanks to the abundant rain in most areas.....But no! Someone slipped up and didn't tell the little guys this was our time out, we have been soooooooooo busy.

None of us was expecting it. We all had plans, plans that is, to catch up on all the other jobs we are supposed to do while the animals are quiet...the mountains of paper work that is sitting on our desks, the cleaning that's been neglected, the new enclosures to be built, and most of all, time off with our families.....mine vaguely remember what I look like!

But the little darlings have kept on coming in. One day last week we had two pelicans, three cormorants, two rainbow lorikeets, one lace monitor, two baby blue tongue lizards, one pink tongue lizard (who promptly gave birth to 22 babies) three koalas, an Eastern Grey kangaroo, one ringtail possum, one brushtail possum baby, one sugar glider, one greater glider, two carpet pythons and a curlew, one very cranky bobuck possum, and three tiny little noisy minors, and that was just the morning. We do have a great life!!

On a more serious note the Tsunami Disaster has had an effect on everyone and our hearts go out to all who have been affected by it. This week Dr Jon Hanger heads off to Sumatra to help the animals that have been affected, in particular the elephants.

There were fifteen people in Sumatra working with the elephant recovery programme. Elephants

are an important part of the culture in Sumatra, and a vital part of everyday life. They use them in their day to

day lives as we would use cars, tractors and cranes. They are their friends, as well as life-long companions. Two members of the recovery team were killed. The surviving thirteen have all lost members of their families, and the leader of the group lost his entire immediate family. All have lost their homes.

So we are going to help by giving them back their elephants health and wellbeing. We will in some small part be giving them back their lives. We have put together a large amount of medication, bandages, elephant pellets(1250 ton) food, water and basic things like tools, tarps and tents. We have also bought a troop carrier and trailer as well as a motor bike and boats, as most of the areas have no roads and are still under water. This will all be left there when we leave.

Jon will be over there for a couple of weeks treating the elephants that have become sick, and injured themselves as they are being used to clear up a lot of the debris left behind by the Tsunami. Hopefully with Jon's help this will be a small thing to help them in their time of need.

These fifteen people have played an enormous part in trying to stop the illegal trade in wildlife over there. They form the anti-poaching patrol which helps save tigers and orang-utans as well as other wildlife. Their presence has already been missed in the forests, as reports of wildlife traders taking advantage of the lack of law enforcement are already beginning to surface. There are now so few tigers left in Sumatra that in a month of poaching at its normal rate, without enforcement they could all be gone.....so here's hoping we can help get these amazing people back out and patrolling once again very soon.

Keep well,

Gail

WORKSHOPS

GYMPIE AND THE SUNSHINE COAST

There have been a number of workshops scheduled to be held in the Sunshine Coast / Gympie area in the coming 6 months.

A summary of the workshops is listed below. For more information please either see the Wildcare website www.wildcare.org.au, or contact either Paula Rowlands on 5483 7777 or Rachel Lyons on 0417 078 432. If you wish to book for a workshop please contact either Paula or Rachel.

Introduction to Caring for Orphaned Mammals – 12 February 2005

Possums of South East Queensland – 13 February 2005

Ringtail Possums & Greater Glider – 13 February 2005

New Carer Orientation – 5 March 2005

Frogs – 9 April 2005

Small Mammals – 10 April 2005

Assessment and Management of Sick and Injured Native Wildlife – 7 May 2005

Native Birds – Anatomy, Physiology, Diseases and Injuries – 8 May 2005

Bandicoots – 11 June 2005

Echidnas – 11 June 2005

New Carer Orientation – 12 June 2005

Special Presentation – Lynda Staker – Marsupial Workshop – 11 to 13 March 2005

Special Presentation - Frogs of Cooloola and the Sunshine Coast – 9 April 2005

Special Presentation - Diseases and Injuries in Australian Native Parrots – 8 May 2005

WILDCARE WEBSITE

Check out our “Nursery” pages on our website – we have now included a number of new photos.

Please continue to post or email in your photos with a brief description of the animal so that they can be included.

EDUCATION CALENDAR

The new Education Calendar is now available on the website www.wildcare.org.au

Again there is a very full and varied program so there should be something to appeal to everyone.

Please remember that **ALL** of the presenters for these workshops do this in their own time and are volunteers and carers just like you. They not only give up their time to deliver these workshops but also spend many hours researching and preparing the workshops, organising notes and displays.

It is important that you book well in advance for all workshops then mark it on your own calendar.

Please notify the office or the presenter as soon as possible if for some reason you are unable to make a workshop.

Workshops, that do not have a reasonable number of people booked to attend a fortnight before, will be cancelled in fairness to presenters and the venue owners.

Book in early to avoid disappointment on 5527 2444 during office hours.

WILDCARE EMERGENCY PHONE SERVICE

The past few months has seen a drop in the number of phone operators who man our Wildcare phones 24hr/7days. We are now down to a frightening 24 people, who collectively cover about 680 hours each month. Considering the number of members in Wildcare, it seems that there are a vast number of people content with the idea that "someone else will do it"... Well, those someone else's are slowly starting to burn out.

As coordinator I'm also starting to feel extremely apologetic every time I need to phone the same few people to plead for assistance with the countless shifts that are not filled. It's not a task I enjoy, and it's disheartening to think that so few people feel that manning the phones and being that vital first point of call for sick, injured, orphaned wildlife is important enough.

All I ask, all anyone has ever asked is that **EVERYONE PLEASE** consider helping out. We'd be thrilled if everyone just did their little bit to help us help our wildlife.

If you have just 3-4 hours a month, **YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE**. If you have more time, maybe you could help by doing one shift each fortnight, or if you're really keen one shift per week. **ALL** shifts are daytime shifts (between 7am and 7pm) and most are 3-4 hours in duration.

Please consider helping out. All training is provided (either via a workshop or one-on-one) and by helping out where you can, you'll help us continue to be that important first point of call. Somewhere an animal will thank you for it...

There are still numerous phone shifts that need to be filled.

REGULAR SHIFTS THAT NEED TO BE FILLED

Thursdays	7-8am
Fridays	7-8am
Every second Friday	4-7pm
Every second Wednesday	4-7pm
On weekends, various times between 7am and 7pm (see below)	

JANUARY		
SATURDAY	29th	7am-12noon 12noon-4pm
SUNDAY	30th	10am-1pm 1pm-4pm 4pm-7pm
FEBRUARY		
SUNDAY	6th	10am-1pm 1pm-4pm 4pm-7pm
SATURDAY	12th	7pm-12noon 4pm-7pm
SUNDAY	13th	10am-1pm 1pm-4pm 4pm-7pm
SATURDAY	19th	12noon-4pm 4pm-7pm
SUNDAY	20th	7am-10am 10am-1pm
SATURDAY	26th	7am-12noon
SUNDAY	27th	10am-1pm 4pm-7pm
MARCH		
SATURDAY	5th	4pm-7pm
SUNDAY	6th	10am-1pm 1pm-4pm 4pm-7pm
SATURDAY	12th	7am-12noon 12noon-4pm 4pm-7pm
SUNDAY	13th	10am-1pm 1pm-4pm 4pm-7pm
SATURDAY	19th	12noon-4pm 4pm-7pm
SUNDAY	20th	7am-10am 10am-1pm
SATURDAY	26th	7am-12non 4pm-7pm
SUNDAY	27th	10am-1pm 1pm-4pm 4pm-7pm

Whether you're an old hand at phones or long since "retired", or a new member willing to help out please contact Kathryn Biber on Home 5428 3632, Mobile 0411643 557 or email katbiber@yahoo.com.au

FUNDRAISING REPORT JULY 2004 – DECEMBER 2004

The last 6 months has been fairly successful for the fundraising team. We would like to share with you some of the achievements that have been made and some of our plans for the next six months. We would also like to place a call for more help throughout the coming year.

Chocolates sold, are a major source of fundraising for the organization. In the past six months chocolate sales have amounted to \$7,300 of which approximately \$3,650 is profit. This is thanks to 28 members who have sold chocolates during the past 6 months. (Imagine what we could achieve if more people sold chocolates....). This is a tremendous effort on the part of these members. If we had everyone selling two boxes of chocolates each year, plus the few who sell more, our bills would be a lot closer to being paid. However thank you sincerely to those who have sold chocolates. A reminder that for every \$200 worth of chocolates sold you are entitled to a \$20 voucher to spend in the Wildcare shop. A number of members have already taken up the opportunity to use these vouchers. If you want more ideas about how to sell chocolates, or just what we have, please contact us in the new year!

Other events that we have attended and from which we have raised funds include the Gold Coast Pet Expo (raised over \$100), Mt Gravatt Show (about \$150), Mudgeeraba Show (about \$500) and the Harbourtown sausage sizzle.

We have also received some revenue from Norco Pauls Milk from the collection of milk caps totaling \$56.00, the Gold Coast Community Raffle which raised \$1,226 this year, and donation boxes which in the last 6 months yielded \$884.55.

We would like to thank the many members who have assisted with fundraising in the past and to encourage you to continue to offer your support in the months to come. The fundraising team has prepared a calendar of the events in which we intend to participate throughout 2005. Please let Rochelle Manners know if you would like to help out at any of these events. We would appreciate it immensely.

Email: rochellemanners@yahoo.com.au
Telephone: (07)3879 2367

NATIONAL WILDLIFE REHABILITATION CONFERENCE 2005

"Watch this space"

3rd National Wildlife Rehabilitation Conference to be held in QLD.

Theme R.E.L.E.A.S.E. Research/ Educate/ Liaise/ Enthuse/

Advance/ Share/ Evolve.

Dates and venue not yet confirmed. Gold Coast/ Brisbane,

end of

August early September.

Start making your plans to attend.

Updates to be posted on Wildcare website: www.wildcare.org.au

RECORD KEEPER'S RAP

The WHY of WILDCARE Carer Records

Why do we keep Records?

All the wildlife statistics we are able to provide to new carers on orientation and to existing carers are obtained from our carer records. Carers tend to appreciate knowing what they look after as a whole, and how they as individuals are able to contribute to the wellbeing of our local wildlife. Feedback to carers on numbers in care and outcome trends is interesting and clear evidence of the difference we make, as well as helpful to new carers to know they are on the right track.

The Summary Reports of our carer and rescue records are used by Wildcare in grant applications, to justify the impact we make on conservation of our local wildlife.

Our Species Coordinators are able to obtain specific information relating to the animals in care, based on the rescue database and the carer records summary reports. E.g. If a coordinator wishes to know how they could obtain the number of a specific species in care over one year, and their most common reasons for needing rescue, they could obtain this information from the annual summary report for carer records. If a coordinator wants to know what animals exist in care at a certain time, they could look on the rescue database.

A range of students from all levels (school to tertiary/post-graduate) have requested information from our records over the last few years. For example, Wildcare has assisted Honours students seeking koala records for their research, including numbers of koalas rescued, reason for rescue and location of rescue.

Other key players in the community, such as councillors, project officers, and members of the public, have requested information from our carer records. One example was a project officer studying the impact of domestic pets on our local native wildlife. **Another** example was a member of the public seeking road trauma 'hot spots' (i.e. road

locations where a high incidence of road kills and road traumas have occurred). The records of road kills and road traumas in the specific 'hot spot' were used to argue for road modifications in that specific area.

Last but certainly not least, it is a legal requirement and a condition of our membership of Wildcare. We have all signed to Wildcare our responsibility to complete our carer records and submit them at the end of each calendar month. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has issued an 'umbrella' carer permit to Wildcare covering all our carers, and this is a condition of the permit. At any time, the EPA can request our carer records.

Why do we keep Rescue Examination and Progress Records?

Rescue Examination forms and their Progress Notes are not submitted to the record keeper. They are specific to a single animal, and are useful for the individual carer. These records can be used by carers to better understand the animal's needs and to recall successful strategies used in the past. They also record vital information that may be required during veterinary intervention.

For further information on carer records, please refer to the following:

Wildcare's Website - carers' section.
www.wildcare.org.au

Wildlife Carers' Code of Practice as per 1992 Nature Conservation Act (EPA / QPWS).

Your Record Keeper!

Regards,
Kiersten Jones
Record Keeper – Wildcare Australia
Phone: 07 5576 3625 (has message bank)
Email: kierstenj@bigpond.com

A SPECIAL THANK YOU

The Management Committee would like to say a very special “thank you” to some very important people who have contributed enormously to the organization.

Firstly to Don Langham, who has been volunteering in the Wildcare office for about 18 months. Don was initially working in the office two days a week, but more recently one day per week. Don resigned from his volunteer work at the office at the end of December after all of his hard work (and stress...).

Thank you, Don, for all of your efforts to help keep Wildcare running. Your contribution has been very much appreciated.

Secondly to John Mitchell, who has been a key member of the Wildcare office staff for about two years, also working for two

days and more recently one day per week in the office. In addition to his volunteer work at the Wildcare office, John and his wife Catherine, are kept very busy with caring for a wide variety of species and are always willing to do rescues. John is finishing up his volunteer work at the office at the end of January so that he and Cath can have a well deserved break. We thank you sincerely for your wonderful contribution to Wildcare. We wish you both well and hope you enjoy your holiday.

Despite Don and John’s parting, we are fortunate that we have in their place two more very dedicated, efficient and reliable volunteers helping out in the Wildcare office.

Kerry Chadwick, who has previously volunteered in the

office and Karen Hooke, a newer member, have also taken on the task of volunteering one day a week in the office.

A lot of you would know how stressful it is to volunteer in the office and we are all very appreciative of our fantastic volunteer staff. Without them the organization would be in a shambles!! A very special thank you also to Trish Hales who keeps the office running like a well-oiled machine.

Finally – Roy Webster...what can we say! Thank goodness you didn’t move further north and are staying put in SE Qld. Thanks so much for your continued support in the Wildcare office.

Karen Scott

A GOOD NEWS STORY

Well Tuesday afternoon, 450 kilometres and eight and one half hours later two more koalas are back in the wild. Luke and Glen, two sub adult male koalas, have been released at an Education Department Recreation Camp near Laidley.

The owners and staff at the camp were ecstatic at getting Luke back and even more pleased at gaining Glen, who had come from a nearby area. They took heaps of photos of both of the boys settling into their new abode.

Luke had come into care in July when we received a midnight call from Gail who was on duty at Steve Irwin Conservation Foundation. He had been wandering around the house on the property and when the people opened the door Luke came right in and made himself at home in the study

It was obvious however that he had very little vision as both of his eyes were affected by Chlamydia. So that night we drove out to Laidley and then took him straight up to SICF at Beerwah for his initial treat-

ment. Glen was even luckier, he was found in August, wandering the road with absolutely no sight in either eye, again due to Chlamydia. It was initially suspected that a car had hit him, but if it had, there were no apparent injuries.

So when Gail phone on Monday afternoon to say that after six or so month of treatment these two guys had given the all clear and were ready to back to the wild, I couldn’t have been happier.

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HEROES

When I was young my first hero was my dad. My dad could do no wrong even when he disciplined me with his thundering velvet hand. As I grew older my heroes were on the T.V. (who were at that time) Flash Gordon, Mighty Mouse and Superman. Soon I realized that these heroes were someone else's imagination and were not real. My heroes then were sporting stars of baseball, football, and track and field local and national.

Through my high school years my heroes still revolved around sport and some political leaders John Kennedy and some of my teachers who could bring subjects to life. To my disappointment all of these heroes are in the end just human, subject to all the temptations of mankind, some can move mountains,

move nations, run faster, hit a ball more often but in the end they may not be the person you want them to be. Innocence is lost somewhere and reality sets in. For me reality was Vietnam and probably still is, in war you meet many heroes but at the end of the day heroes are made by circumstance. In harm's way no one knows how they will react, you get the worst and the very best in people. I am proud of the 571 heroes who died in my Unit. Fortunately some of us are still around that remember them and their sacrifice. 'Wolfhounds forever'.

Well you probably are asking yourself what does this have to do with Ecology or Wildcare. It is actually very simple for me my heroes today are those that give freely of themselves with no monetary gain to make this world a better place. There is

nothing nobler than the heart of a volunteer, no agendas, no tangible rewards, and just ordinary people doing wonderful things. This is my tribute to you – you are all my heroes when you are rescuing, teaching, caring, and answering phones you do this so nobly with only the reward that you give yourself. That feeling you give yourself for a job well done when you know that you have made a difference. These animals we help can't send us a card or say thank you, however if I may I would say thank you for them and I know that they feel as I do, You are our Heroes.

It is just great to be part of something so good that has lasted so long.

Terry Wimberley

NEW MEMBERS

WILDCARE AUSTRALIA welcomes the following new members:

Thomas Irvine, Margate: Debbie, Taylor & Matthew McGowan, Barellan Point: Yvonne Schuman, Barellan Point: Leonie Galvin, Reedy Creek: Courtney Galvin, Reedy Creek: Stuart MacDonald, Loganholme: Paul Kaye, Brendale: Jennifer Graham, Eungella: Paul McCarthy, Gold Coast: Heather Stewardson, Gold Coast: Ruth Mepham, Jesse, Sarah & James, Cornubia: Megan Tennent, Belli Park: Christine Kent, Tallai: Jaap Vogel, North Tamborine: Jedda Van Os, North Tamborine: Gwenda Sullivan, Clagiraba: Zoe Mobbs, Clagiraba: Paul Kaye, Brendale: Karen Carruthers, Mullumbimby Creek: Leah & Grant Peterson, Upper Coomera: Betty Kaufmann, The Gap: Cindy Neville, Currumbin Valley: Lynette Perrin, Thornlands: Trudy Jardine, Annerley: Kelly Clark, Oxford Park: Jenny Forster, Ashgrove: Gabrielle Brydon Auchenflower: Glen Chambers, Tugun: Sharon Rhoades, Tamborine: Simone, Ashley & Autumn Hally, Hollywell: Diane Wobeke, Labrador: Sonya Joyce, Bardonia: Clare Gaven, Beerwah: Natasha Zraikai, Broadbeach: Ian Perston & Yinika Sarita, Uki: Coral Schulz, Nerang: Karen Hooke, Tamborine:

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

WILDTRAVELS to BARGARA BEACH

Late November we set off for Bargara Beach near Bundaberg to test our new caravan. We had often travelled through this area but had not taken the time to visit the Turtle Rookery at Mon Repos (French for 'my resting place'). This was to be the time.

We arrived safely and set up the van and annex late in the evening and settled down to enjoy a drink with cheese and biscuits before dinner. No sooner had we broken out the nibbles than across the park came a Brushtail Possum with one purpose in mind and that was to join us. He really wanted the cheese and biscuits and was not at all interested in the apple that was on offer for him. He was happy to be touched but soon gave me a nibble on the foot when I wouldn't part with the biscuit. Children from a nearby van joined us to see him but when he realised he was not to be fed as he wanted, he moved off to try his luck at other vans. I might add that there was plenty of trees and bush nearby.

The next day saw us out at Mon Repos beach at the Turtle Rookery. The rangers have a wonderful Education and Research Centre there and the public is able to wander through and see all the great displays and learn about the turtles that come to Mon Repos to reproduce.

During the daytime the beach is

open to the general public but no beach umbrellas or dogs are permitted. We walked along and could find evidence of turtles coming ashore the previous night.

We booked at the Tourist Centre to go on the evening tour. It costs about \$6.00 and that goes towards research and running the Education Centre.

We returned about 6.30pm for a 6.45pm start, armed with our cameras and spray jackets and joined at least another 100 people all intent on seeing turtles come ashore to lay their eggs. That night a group of youngsters from the local Guide hut were there and also some other families with young children.

The Rookery was run by two Rangers ably assisted by many volunteers. We were arranged into groups of about 70 people (we were Group 2, the children all being in Group 1) and taken through to the amphitheatre, where we were shown videos and given talks by the rangers while hopefully we waited for the turtles to come ashore.

Spotter Volunteers were down on the beach looking for turtles coming ashore. The spotters radio back to the Centre nominating when the various groups are able to go on the beach. We were not allowed on the beach until after the turtle had come ashore. As these are wild creatures and do not run to timetables no one had any idea if any

would in fact come ashore, or at what time this might happen. We settled down to wait.

After about an hour we got the call for Group 1 to assemble and off they went to the beach. Ten minutes later Group 2 got the call and we hastily assembled to head off. Thirty minutes later we were still standing there – the word came – three turtles had come ashore – three turtles had turned back to the ocean. How disappointing! Group 1 would remain on the beach and the other groups would stay at the Education Centre.

We settled down to wait again – then, a sprinkle of rain which suddenly turned into a downpour and we headed very quickly back inside. We waited some more – getting a little more anxious that perhaps they would not come tonight.

Suddenly activity – the rangers and volunteers got the word that more turtles had come ashore and in fact Group 1 was currently watching a turtle lay eggs but she had elected to make her nest below the high tide mark and the eggs would need to be shifted further up the beach and help was required to do this. Also another turtle was making her way up the beach. Group 2 was ready to go. It continued to rain – who cared – we were off to the beach in the dark – rangers had a light on their head.

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(Continued from page 10)

We walked briskly to the surf then along the beach making sure that we did not cross the path of any incoming turtles. We approached the first turtle who was covering up her nest. It was an incredible feeling to watch her work. She moved so much sand and by the time she was ready to go back to the sea had in fact moved at least a metre from her nest site. This helps disguise exactly where the eggs are laid. The rangers had marked her nest when she began to lay her clutch. We were able to take photos of her until the time she started to head back to sea. Her tag had been checked, she had been measured and any barnacles removed and the way was lit by torch for her to get back. When people are not present the turtle uses the lighter horizon over the sea as her direction finder compared with the dark horizon over the land. She made her way slowly to the ocean pausing occasionally and then she was gone. She had been ashore about an hour. It is expected

that she will come ashore twice more this season at about two week intervals and lay another clutch of about 150 eggs each time. While we were watching her go back to sea, the ranger had dug up the eggs and laid them on the beach and another volunteer had dug a new nest further up the beach. We formed a line and carefully carried two eggs at a time up the beach to where they were placed in the new nest. The eggs are soft and shaped like ping pong balls. It takes about two hours for the embryo to attach in the egg so they need to be shifted quickly so as not to endanger the young.

As soon as this was done we were off to the surf and across the beach to the next turtle. She had just started to lay. Her nest was marked, and once again the process of checking her began. Once the turtle starts to lay, the lights do not disturb her, so we were able to take photos and move around to see her at all angles. What a privilege! While laying her eggs the turtle appeared to be

crying but was really keeping her eyes moist. This turtle, born at Mon Repos about 35 years ago had previously been back to lay eggs. This loggerhead will come ashore again this season but then may not return for three years or so. Her eggs also needed to be shifted. If they are below the high tide mark it is possible the young turtles will drown. Turtle numbers are dwindling but the ongoing research conducted by Dr Col Limpus and his team of University students and local volunteers, together with the rangers, may eventually be able to reverse this trend.

We made our way back to the van about 1.30 am still soaked to the skin. Had a shower and fell into bed but feeling on top of the world, knowing that we had experienced the thrill of a lifetime being part of this wonderful natural occurrence. The hatchlings should make their way to the sea sometime between January and March. Another trip coming up? Maybe next year.

Beryl Wallace

(Continued from page 8)

Although this would be our third trip up to SICF in five days it was worth it, to be collecting two koalas for release. We had been up to the hospital the day before with a beautiful sub-adult Greater Glider that we had been called to rescue in Logan Village. Unfortunately he hadn't made it, so at least this was a good news call. When we arrived at the release site, we were even happier. It is a beautiful spot. With 160 acres of natural bush, its own escarpment with a small waterfall and

lots of natural gullies it was a perfect site for their release. Also, and I suppose more importantly to the koalas there was a huge and varied amount of Eucalyptus so the boys wouldn't go hungry. Obviously we had not taken in much of the surrounding beauty the last time we were there.

True to his form, Luke pleased the crowd that had gathered with a flying leap from one branch to another as he headed up the tallest tree. Whilst Glen took a more laid back approach

and found the first comfortable fork to take a well-earned rest. I feel sure that these two koalas will live a long and stress free life, though we will have to get the boys some girlfriends soon so it doesn't end up and "alternate" community.

After all the leaf cutting, pellet counting, medicating and general stressing we do as koala carers, this is the easiest and the best part of being a carer.

Kim Alexander

FISHING

The Eastern Grey kangaroo was big. Had he been standing, he would have been taller than either Jim or myself, but he lay limply on the ground, the late afternoon sun tipping his fur with gold. His breathing was laboured and his eyes dull and I fancied I could see Death standing by his shoulder.

A small group of bystanders gathered with heads bowed and a young woman comforted a child with tear-stained cheeks.

"Thank goodness you've come," gushed a small plump man." We didn't know what to do," and he hovered in agitation as we quietly examined the animal. He had no sign of injury, but by general condition and the battle scars he carried, we knew he was old.

"You'll be able to save him once you get him to your hospital," said the plump man, "...won't you?" he added hopefully. "Well....," said Jim about to launch into the no hospital/no funding/volunteers speech.

"We'll all stay to help," enthused the plump man looking around. "I already went home and got a blanket and we'll all help you get him in the car. You'll have to save him," he almost pleaded.

The blanket was duly spread on the ground and the plump man, a conscripted bystander, Jim and myself struggled to fit the by now dead kangaroo into the boot of the car.

We drove to a place in an area of bush where we often laid the bodies of bird and animals so that they can return to the earth and continue in the great cycle.

Now there was only Jim and I to lift the kangaroo and it has always been a wonder to me how things in death can be so much heavier than in life - and he was heavy! After struggling with a recalcitrant tail and stiff legs we finally had him in the blanket, poised on the edge of the boot, all illuminated by the last rays of the setting sun when, the "Lone Jogger" appeared.

"Company"! I hissed. A mischievous smile came over Jim's face. "Let's bait the hook," he said, and with that quickly lifted his end of the body and started for the fence. I struggled to lift (why do I always get the heavy end?) and followed, stumbling over the rough ground.

The "Lone Jogger" did a double take and slowed down. Trying

not to laugh, we heaved and dragged the draped body and just as we reached the fence a front paw hung out of the blanket. The "Lone Jogger" was transfixed and his face said it all! "What the..... oh my.....oh it can't be...it is!.....help help.....oh God I'm witnessing a MURDER!"

We dragged the kangaroo into the bush, laid him to rest in the tall grass and left with the blanket. "I think the hook is well set," said Jim "let's reel him in".

We raced to the car and drove off. In the rear window we watched the "Lone Jogger" frantically trying to memorise our numberplate as we vanished over the hill.

We exploded in laughter. "I hope he has the sense to take a look first," I said through the tears, "otherwise we'll be doing some explaining to the police".

For the rest of the night Jim smiled - a lot.

Greer McNeill



GOLD COAST TRIVIA NIGHT

Date: 16th April 2005

Place: Narrowleaf

Time: 5pm

Enjoy a spit roast and an evening of fun!

TWO TRUE WILDCARE HEROES.



Thursday the 20th of October started out the same as any normal day. That is until I received a call at 8pm. A koala had been hit by a car on the Nerang- Beaudesert Rd near Canungra. I am not a skilled koala rescuer and I don't normally tackle the difficult rescues, so it was an interesting night. I phoned the people who had called in the rescue to the Wildcare office to find out about the situation. The koala was mobile and had made his way up a dead tree. "About 5 or 6 metres" I was told. So I was onto the phone to Kim and Mark Alexandra at lightning speed. I don't have a ladder that long, I don't have a suitable cage to transport it, Help!! So they said that they would meet me there. Kim yet again was to miss out on her evening meal. If only they had known.

Kim and Mark live at Logan

Village and were at least 45 minutes away. I got there in 10 minutes. The koala was indeed up a tree. The tree was dead and about as thick as your arm. So I sat and waited with Chantelle, the girl who had originally stopped when she saw him hit. She was on her way home from work, so I suggested she not stay, as we would be able to handle the rescue. She went to start her car, but the gods were not with her, it was dead. The RACQ was contacted and she settled in to wait.

Kim and Mark eventually arrived. I have never seen so much organised chaos. They have this fantastic ladder that just goes on and on. Not far enough though because the koala was still a couple of metres above Mark's head when he climbed up. However he started to "flag" the koala

down. This is done with an extension pole and a plastic bag tied to the end. The bag makes a noise and the koala moves down, or in this instance up to the top. Mark was up a ladder leaning against a dead tree, that would have fallen over in a slight breeze, with a pole in one hand and the other hand hanging on. Kim and I were down on the ground shining torches up at the koala so Mark could see what he was doing. Eventually we decided that it was too dangerous and we started to pack up. By this time the RACQ had turned up. Parked on the side of the road in the middle of nowhere, were three cars with hazard lights flashing and one RACQ guy. He probably thought he was going to get mugged. The cars passing by probably thought there had been a major car crash.

We had just about packed everything up when Mark said, "there is too much blood, I'm gunna get him". The ladder was set up and Mark was at it again. Determined to get this koala he worked with amazing skill, until he had him bundled in a blanket and was back on the ground. I stood there in disbelief. Mark had been bitten half a dozen times on the arm while trying to get a very injured, terrified koala down the ladder. How he managed it still has my head spinning. Kim and Mark then gave the koala a quick assessment while in the carry cage and decided to take it to visit Dr Jon. He works at

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Australia Zoo! So Mark – dripping blood, Kim – starving to death, and the koala were off to the Sunshine Coast at 11pm.

They got as far as the Canungra turn off and received another call. So it became Sunshine Coast via Boonah because there was another koala, that had been torn to shreds on razor wire.

Kim rang me at 7am the next morning. Mark was in the shower and she was waiting her turn, so they could both go off

to work. They had been home for ten minutes.

The male we rescued has lots of injuries including a broken arm, and one eye had popped. Kim did list the other injuries but the list was too long for it to sink in. Mark decided that he was to be called Joseph. Didn't he have a coat of many colours that was dipped in blood-Marks?

The other little girl was called Barbie (barb wire) and had to have all of her pouch and body sewn back together. Kim said

it was like a jigsaw puzzle trying to find which piece of skin went where. Both Kim and Mark will forever be heroes in my eyes.

You don't have to be as crazy as Kim and Mark, but if you would like to make a difference, then please think about joining Wildcare and taking on a few injured or orphaned birds and animals. There is always full training and support. The Wildcare number is 55272444.

Lee-Anne Burgess

TRIVIA NIGHT

Brisbane's first attempt at a Trivia Night was a big disappointment.

Karen Ney, Rochelle Manners and a few others worked hard to organise what should have been a fun filled evening, however, unfortunately due to them receiving no response by the day from anyone planning to attend the evening was cancelled.

Just to make sure that no one was turned up to an empty building Mark and I went up and sat outside the venue for an hour. Luckily we weren't picked up by the security.

We realize that there were a few hiccups in the system and not everyone was aware of the night, but this is where we rely on you networking with each other to get the word out.

The Fundraising Committee (and there are very few of them) work hard to plan events to not only increase the coffers to pay some of the bills, but also our members together for social occasions.

Please keep a look out in the up coming newsletters for social and fundraising events to be held at both the Brisbane and Gold Coast and try to include them in your calendar.

WOMBAROO

Wombaroo recommends that their milk powder is stored in a dark, airtight container in the pantry, or if preferred the refrigerator. It should not be stored in the freezer.

When warming the milk up do not allow it to boil.

Wombaroo recommends that water is given between milk feeds, not added to the milk formula.

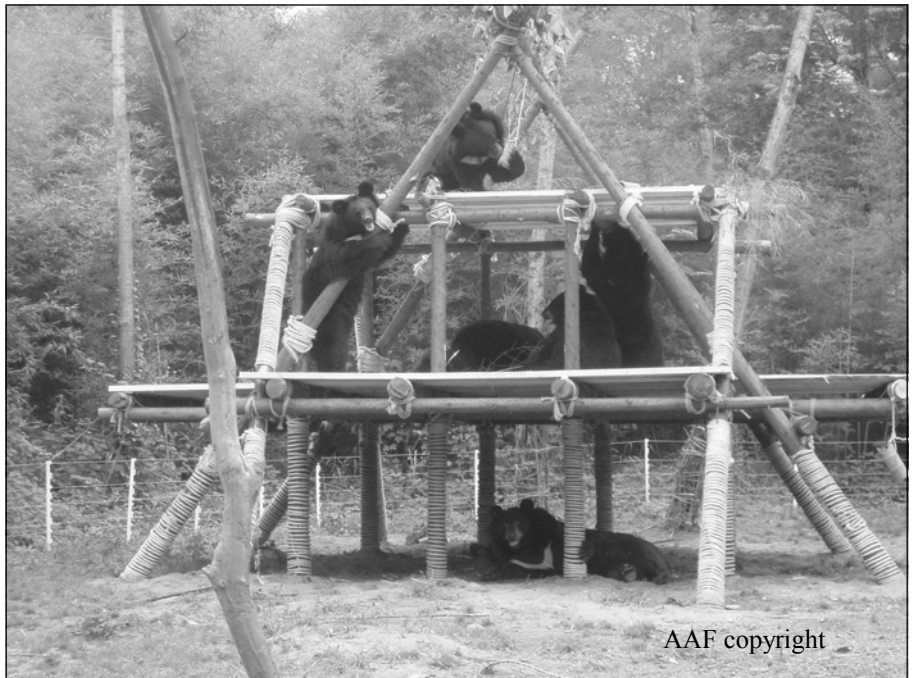
SOUTHEAST QUEENSLAND ANIMAL BEHAVIOUR CONSULTANT HELPS ANIMALS ASIA

Sharon Holden, an acclaimed animal behaviour consultant from South East Queensland, has been giving her time to help Animals Asia and the Asiatic Black Bears, also known as “Moon Bears”, in China.

Animals Asia is an organisation dedicated to ending bear bile farming in China, and in early 2003 Sharon was invited by Jill Robinson (MBE), founder of the Animals Asia Foundation, to visit the China Bear Rescue Centre in Chengdu, Sichuan Province, China.

At the time of her first visit in 2003, AAF’s Bear Rescue Centre in Chengdu was already home to over 85 rescued Moon Bears. After seeing first hand the tremendous work Jill and her team were doing to save the bears from the horrific and cruel conditions of bear bile farming, Sharon was determined to get involved.

Having endured years of physical pain as well as spatial and behavioural deprivation, the majority of bears arrive at the Centre in appallingly bad physical and psychological condition. Firstly, the vet team perform initial health checks, prioritising the bears for more intensive surgery. The gall bladders need to be removed from all the bears (due to the damage caused from years of tapping into the organ for bile), plus each bear has individual health concerns that need to be addressed. After surgery the bears spend time in recovery



for healing and quarantine.

Following recovery, the bears enter a “rehabilitation” period, and this is where Sharon’s work comes into play. An expert in animal conditioning and behaviour, Sharon’s primary focus is that of creating a comfortable and enriching environment for the bears after their initial health assessment and treatment, and to ensure that the local Chinese bear keepers are managing with their new charges.

Together with the AAF team, Sharon has implemented a specialised enrichment program at the Centre. Due to the negative environmental conditions the bears have endured, the main objective is to encourage healthy exercise to strengthen their muscles and limbs and to provide opportunity for the bears to partake in a wide range of natural behaviours similar to their wild counterparts, such as foraging for food, climbing, digging,

playing, swimming and making nests to rest in to name a few.

The results of the enrichment plan have been remarkable. The AAF team rotates a number of enrichment choices for the bears and according to Sharon, it is truly heart-warming to see each bear enjoy their enrichment in a unique way. By allowing the bears to have complete control over their environment through giving them the opportunity to choose, to interact, play and behave naturally, the individual personalities of the bears have been able to shine through.

In addition to this enrichment plan, training the Centre’s staff to manage the bears cohesively in a group has also been a priority for Sharon. The bear keepers have learned basic conditioning techniques to recall the bears between their dens and outside enclosures to enable them to

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physically check the bears as well as clean, maintain and enrich their environments.

During this “rehabilitation” phase, bears are also integrated into small groups of up to 20. Once the bear groups are established and the bears are comfortable together in the Rehabilitation area, they are relocated to their final destination – the Forest Sanctuary. Spacious and covered with a variety of trees and plants, the Forest Sanctuary further enhances the bears’ enrichment experience through the use of environmental enrichment furniture on which the bears are able to play and explore.

During her time at the centre

Sharon was also called upon to assist with those bears identified as having “special needs”. These bears have either physical or mental disabilities that require special attention. Using operant conditioning principles, the “special needs” bears are managed together. Voluntary inspections - as well as medical behaviours - have been taught such as mouth and teeth inspections, paw presentations for trimming claws and shoulder presentation/needle desensitisation for possible injections.

“It is truly amazing to see these bears offering different medical behaviours when considering the conditions and previous negative human interactions (or inflictions)

they are so accustomed to. It is this time, forming a bond and mutual trust between the bears and myself, which I treasure the most,” says Sharon. “Being part of the development of the China Bear Rescue Centre has been an invaluable experience that I shall cherish for years to come. I can honestly say I will never truly leave the Centre, the memories and gifts the team and the bears shared, remains with me still.”

Kylie Rothero

For more information go to:

www.animalsasia.org

e-mail:

info@animalsasia.org

phone: 1800 666 004

ORCHIDS SEE THE LIGHT OF DAY!

Some years ago, while walking on my property, I noticed a host of little orchids scattered over an otherwise undistinguished area. Each stem carried a single pink flower and arose from the ground isolated from its neighbour and with no other plant parts to indicate its presence.

The flowers lasted for about two weeks and then disappeared leaving no trace. By watching out for them over the years it became apparent that the flowering only occurred for a brief period each September.

While reading of the recent discovery of a new species* of fairy lantern or *Thismia* that along with many other botanical gems lie concealed beneath our

feet I thought of ‘my’ orchids. This led to a consideration of the many species that must be lost by the present methods of clearing and redesigning of the landscape for urban development. These involve the removal of all vegetation and surface soil, the cutting and filling of large areas, the removal of all streamside, pond or gully vegetation and the lining of these areas with sharp edged rocks and stones, so they are no longer feeding and breeding grounds for ducks or waders. Along with the losses of the larger and more obvious species, I suspect the damage goes much further with the loss of whole micro communities of flora and fauna.

It was reassuring subsequently

to hear of a sand mining company which has over the years developed a technique for revegetating which involves removing the surface layers and reusing them immediately on already mined areas. This has resulted in a high rate of successful regeneration, particularly of species which have been difficult to germinate. It has also overcome the significant loss of viable seed and the poor rates of regeneration which occurred when the soil was stored for lengthy periods to be reused on the area from which it was removed.

Eleanor Hanger

**Scratching the Surface*, Dr Tim Entwistle, in the Spring 2004 Nature Australia

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Quote:

"We need another and a wiser and perhaps a more mystical concept of animals.

Remote from universal nature and living by complicated artifice, man in civilization surveys the creature through the glass of his knowledge and sees thereby a feather magnified and the whole image in distortion.

We patronize them for their incompleteness, for their tragic fate for having taken form so far below ourselves. And therein do we err. For the animal shall not be measured by man.

In a world older and more complete than ours, they move finished and complete, gifted with the extension of the senses we have lost or never attained, living by voices we shall never hear.

They are not brethren, they are not underlings: they are other nations, caught with ourselves in the net of life and time, fellow prisoners of the splendour and travail of the earth."

Henry Beston "The Outermost House"

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