

WILDCARE AUSTRALIA

EDUCATION WILDLIFE REHABILITATION RESEARCH

January 2006, Issue 40

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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Quote of the Month

"All around us is this amazing richness and diversity of native plant and animal life crying out for attention and care. Ignorance of the complex workings of the natural world is the main source of humankind's failures: increasing knowledge of and respect for them is the main hope for the future."

'Going native: living in the Australian environment' Archer & Beale (2004)

***New Years Greetings
to all of our members. May you have
a happy and fulfilling year***

In this issue of Wildnews you will find membership explained, an abbreviated workshop calendar for the first six months of the year and an up-to-date shop price list.

As well as our excellent, regular workshops you will note that we have a couple of exciting courses coming up, one on venomous snakes and the other on birds. These are not to be missed!

Bird carers will find some useful charts, which could be removed and laminated for quick reference.

Our intrepid Wildcare travellers have shared their fascinating tales with us and our veterinarians have reminded us that they are not averse to accepting the odd bottle or two!

We hope you enjoy this edition of Wildnews. We are always looking for articles and pictures to include in the newsletter, so if you have a flair for writing or skill with a camera, please keep us in mind.

Eleanor Hanger

IN THIS ISSUE

Important Information	4	The Vet Visit	12
Venomous Snake Course	5	Record Keeper's Rave	14
From the Vice President	6	The Christmas Party	15
Welcome New Members	7	Koalas	15
Education Calendar	8	Driving Miss Daisy	16
Special Bird Workshop	9	Some Observations	17
Poor Attendance..... Calling All Members	10	Not Your Normal Holiday Adventure	18
A Cage/Aviary Pool Bird Care	11	Bird Charts & Shop Price List	Inserts

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR ALL MEMBERS

In order to keep abreast of recent changes to Wildcare's policies, we thought the first newsletter of 2006 an opportune time to explain how memberships to Wildcare are processed and to clarify some issues regarding membership of the organization.

MEMBER VS. REHABILITATOR – WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE?

When an Application for Membership is received, the Application is considered by the Management Committee. Once the Application is approved you will be issued with your membership card and a receipt for your membership subscription. At this point you are considered to be a **MEMBER** of Wildcare Australia. Being a **MEMBER** of Wildcare entitles you to receive the Wildnews newsletter each quarter, but it does not cover you for wildlife rehabilitation activities.

Should you wish to become a **WILDLIFE REHABILITATOR**, it is necessary for you to complete the following additional steps:-

You will need to complete our Orientation Program. This is conducted on the first weekend of each month and the venue alternates between the Gold Coast and Brisbane. This Program is designed to introduce you not only to the world of wildlife rehabilitation but also provides information about Wildcare (such as its history, rules and regulations), recordkeeping requirements and covers basic care and rescue of native wildlife. ***ALL prospective Wildcare wildlife rehabilitators carers MUST complete this Orientation, regardless of any prior experience with wildlife.***

Once you have successfully completed the Orientation Program, your membership status is changed from **MEMBER** to **REHABILITATORCARER**. At this point YOU will need to let the Wildcare Office know of your availability to attend rescues (ie time, days). You will then be included in the next published "Carers List" which is provided to the Wildcare telephone operators. This means that you **WILL** be called to attend rescues/pickups. If, once you have completed the Orientation Program, you decide that caring for wildlife is not something that you can do at that point, then YOU need to let the Wildcare Office know so that your membership status can remain as a **MEMBER** and not a **REHABILITATOR** and so that you are NOT included on the Phone List.

Once you have completed the Orientation and your membership status has been changed to **REHABILITATOR**, then you will be issued with an Endorsed Rehabilitation Permit. This includes a copy of the Wildcare Australia umbrella permit and is endorsed by the Wildcare President and stipulates the species of animals that you can care for. Initially, your Permit will refer primarily to common bird species (provided that you have the appropriate facilities).

As you complete further training workshops and acquire the necessary equipment and facilities to care for other species, you can then request that your Permit be amended to include other species. In order to do this, it may be necessary for relevant Coordinators to visit your property to ensure that you have adequate facilities to care for that species.

Once you have satisfied the above requirements you will **THEN** be covered by:-

- Wildcare's Professional Indemnity Insurance cover
- Wildcare's Voluntary Workers Insurance cover
- Wildcare's Rehabilitation Permit as issued by Qld Parks & Wildlife

Note : There are some species of birds and animals, which require a Specialized Rehabilitation Permit. These include some sea birds and marine mammals, raptors, echidnas, platypus and koalas. These are not included on Wildcare's Rehabilitation Permit and rehabilitation of these animals should be discussed with the Management Committee on an individual basis.

PERMIT ENDORSEMENT

For existing Wildcare Rehabilitators, Endorsed Rehabilitation Permits will be issued shortly. If you have NOT submitted your request for a permit endorsement you will need to do so NOW!!! The Request Form was forwarded to you with your membership renewal in April/May 2005. If you cannot locate this Request Form then please contact Karen Scott immediately for a copy. Those **REHABILITATORS** who fail to lodge this form before 31st January 2006 will be considered to be **MEMBERS** only and will have their membership status changed to reflect this.

It is your responsibility to lodge this form.

(Continued on page 4)

As of 2006 if you do not have an Endorsed Permit – you are not covered under Wildcare’s Rehabilitation Permit and insurances.

WHAT IF YOU HAVE AN INDIVIDUAL PERMIT OR IF YOU BELONG TO ANOTHER WILDILFE CARE GROUP?

We are aware that there are some Wildcare members who are also members of other wildlife care groups or who hold an individual rehabilitation permit. Many members do this so that they can continue to avail themselves of the Wildcare training workshops.

For those members in this situation, Wildcare feels strongly that it is appropriate that you are a registered **REHABILITATOR** with only ONE group. If you choose to remain an active **REHABILITATOR** with an another care group but a financial **MEMBER** of Wildcare, you are still welcome to attend Wildcare’s training workshops at no cost. We are asking that as of January 2006 these members choose which group they wish to **REHABILITATE** with and inform Wildcare of this immediately.

We believe that most members in this situation will opt to choose the group that is more active in your geographic location. This means that you may be on the rescue list for that group but will NOT be included on the Wildcare

rescue list unless you specifically express a desire to do so.

Deciding to **REHABILITATE** through another care group does not however mean that you cannot accept animals that have been rescued through Wildcare. It simply means that the animal will be noted on Wildcare’s records as having been transferred from our organization to another and you will then record this animal when you lodge your returns with your care group. This animal will then be rehabilitated and released under that care groups Rehabilitation Permit and you will no longer receive a Rehabilitation Permit through Wildcare.

Note: you may need to supply a copy of your Rehabilitation Permit to Wildcare before an animal can be transferred to your care.

In terms of recordkeeping, this means that you should only need to lodge records with the care group with which you are **REGISTERED**. We are aware that in some instances, carers need to lodge records with up to 3 or 4 groups because they have animals through each of the groups. This should help streamline the process for everyone and ultimately assist the successful rehabilitation and release of these animals .

If you would like to discuss this or any other aspect of your membership with Wildcare further, please feel free to contact Gail Gipp, Kim Alexander or Karen Scott from the Wildcare Management Committee.

Venomous Snake Course

If anyone is interested in attending a comprehensive
three day
VENOMOUS SNAKE COURSE
please contact Karen Scott **URGENTLY**
on 07 5533 8125 (after hours)
for further information.



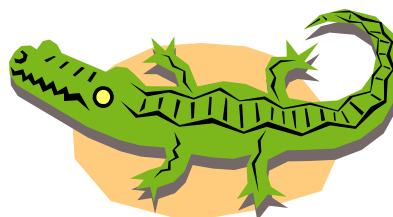
WILDLIFE CONFERENCE 2006

After the success of the **2005 National Wildlife Rehabilitation Conference** on the Gold Coast in August, preparations are well underway for the 2006 conference to be held in Darwin.

The conference will be held from August 28th to September 1st . One of the highlights of the conference will be a trip to a wildlife park as well as guest speakers from all over Australia. Further details will soon be available on the website at www.nwrc.com.au

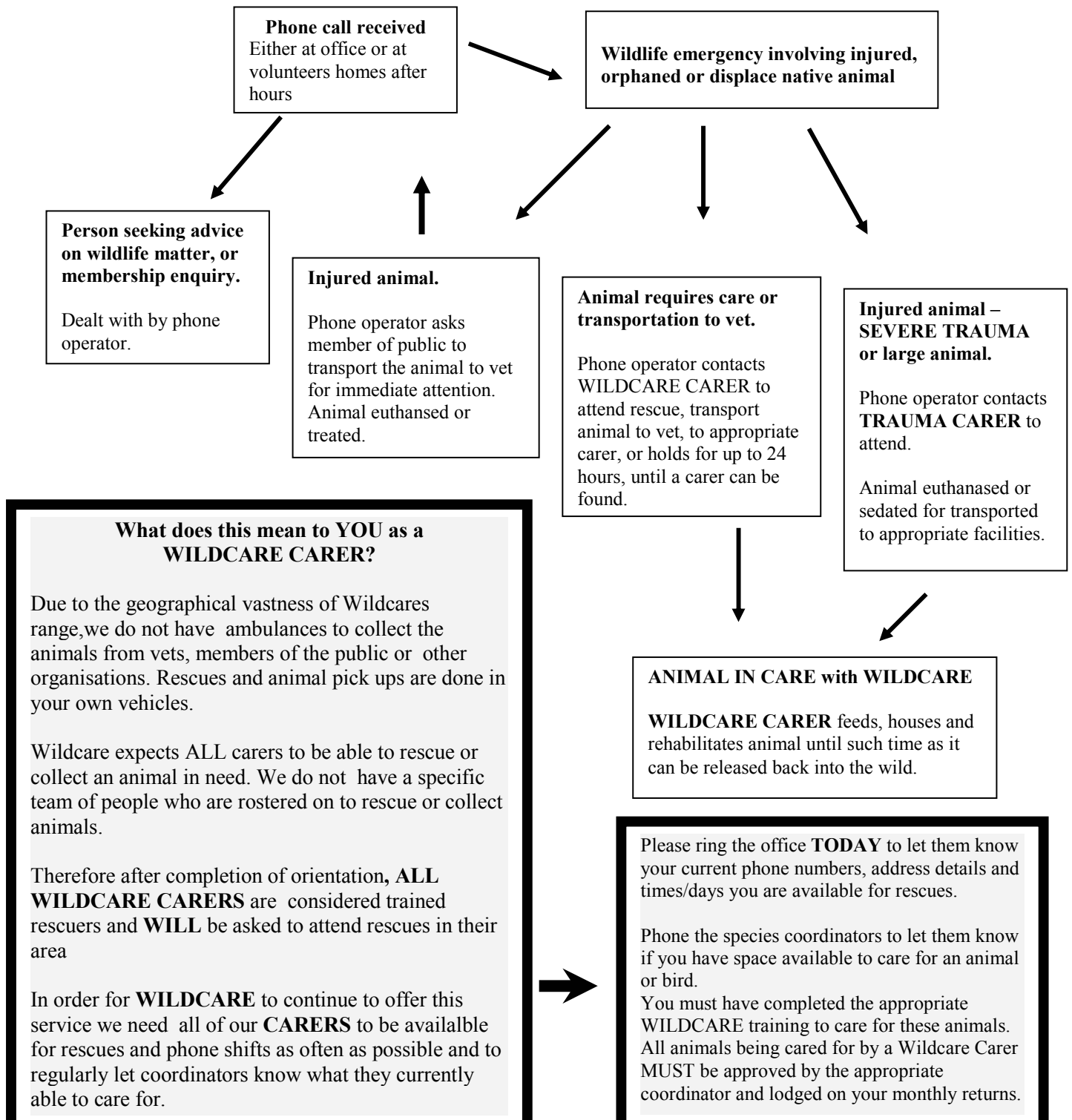
Papers from the 2005 conference are still available to download from the website.

So start saving your pennies for a trip to Darwin.



“WILDCARE RECEIVES OVER 10 000 CALLS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC, VETS AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS EVERY YEAR”

I’m sure that you have heard us say this before, but what does that really mean?
What happens when a phone call comes in?
Below is a flowchart by way of explanation.



A WARM WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

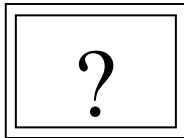
Wildcare Australia welcomes the following new members:

Anne Whitlock, Cooroy; Katharine Bridgeman, Nerang; Keren Jenns and Tim Evers-Swindell, Petrie Terrace; Daneile Holmes, Capalaba; Carmel Givens, Maleny; Wendy Jones, Numinbah Valley; John and Lynda Jacob, Capalaba; Jessica Hughes, Ormeau; Rose Keenan, Banyo; Paula Keogh, Glasshouse Mountains; The Feary Family, Tallebudgera; Delicia Williams, Nambour; Robert Cowling, Elanora; Rod Cordell, Lockhart River; Bettina and Samuel Schanfelberger, Eumundi; Helen Ayscough, Loganlea; Kylie Rewald, Warana; Sarah Whitehouse, Daisy Hill; Clare and Robyn Jans, Nerang; Sarah Smith, Coombabah; Joanne Slattery, Ashmore; Jacki and Nick Harrington, Eatons Hill; Kristin Thorpe, Chapel Hill.

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, who is in the office from 8.00am to 4.00pm on Monday and Friday and I'm sure she will be able to help you.

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

Wanted



JUNIOR WILDCARE COORDINATOR

Since Like and Sam ALEXANDER have now moved into the world of employment, they no longer have time to continue their activities with WILDCARE. So at this point in time WILDCARE is without a JUNIOR WILDCARE Coordinator.

If you think that you and /or your children have enough time to put together a few puzzles, word searches, colouring-ins or other activities every three months, in time for the newsletter, then perhaps you could be our next Junior Wildcare Coordinator.

If so please contact Kim Alexander on 07 3805 1815 or email thealexanders@austarnet.com.au. or leave your details with the office during office hours.

P.S. The use of a computer with email would be an advantage but not essential

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

JAN	8	Emergency Telephone Training
	14	Ringtail Possums and Gliders
	21	Basic Possum Care for Beginners (see pre-requisite)
	21 & 22	Intensive Possum Workshop
	29	Basic Bird Workshop for Beginners
FEB	5	Orientation Program
	12	Introduction to Caring for Orphaned Mammals
	19	Ringtail Possums and Gliders
	25	Flying Foxes
	26	Assessment and Management of Sick and Injured Wildlife

For a detailed schedule please download the Education Calendar from the Wildcare website — www.wildcare.org.au

Please register for any workshop well in advance so that you may be notified of any changes of time, venue or program. Thank you.

WILDCARE AUSTRALIA Workshops – January to June 2006

For a detailed schedule of workshops including times and description of each workshop, please download the Education Calendar from the Wildcare Website – www.wildcare.org.au. GC = Gold Coast BR = Brisbane GYM = Gympie/Sunshine Coast

NEW CARER ORIENTATION PROGRAM

Sunday 5 February 2006	GC	Saturday 8 April 2006	GYM
Saturday 4 March 2006	BRIS	Sunday 7 May 2006	BR
Saturday 1 April 2006	GC	Sunday 4 June 2006	GC

INTRODUCTION TO CARING FOR ORPHANED MAMMALS

Sunday 12 February 2006	GC	Sunday 21 May 2006	GYM
Saturday 22 April 2006	BR	Saturday 10 June 2006	GC

ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF SICK AND INJURED NATIVE WILDLIFE

Sunday 26 February 2006	GC	Sunday 9 April 2006	GYM
Sunday 26 March 2006	BR	Sunday 28 May 2006	GC

EMERGENCY TELEPHONE TRAINING

Sunday 8 January 2006	GC	Saturday 29 April 2006	GC
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FLYING FOXES

Saturday 25 February 2006	GC		
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SMALL MAMMALS, ECHIDNAS AND BANDICOOTS

Sunday 30 April 2006	GC		
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KOALAS – ADULT AND ORPHAN

Saturday 13 May 2006	GC		
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SNAKES AND LIZARDS

Sunday 9 April 2006	GC		
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WILDLIFE HABITAT AND NATIVE PLANT IDENTIFICATION

Saturday 17 June 2006	GYM		
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MACROPODS

Sunday 12 March 2006	Macropods – Basic	GC
Sunday 18 June 2006	Macropods – Basic	GYM
Sunday 25 June 2006	Macropods – Advanced	GC

BIRDS

Sunday 29 January 2006	Basic Bird Workshop for Beginners	GC
Sat & Sun 18 & 19 March 2006	Intensive Bird Workshop with Dr Anne Fowler	GC
Sunday 23 April 2006	Basic Bird Workshop	GC
Saturday 24 June 2006	Basic Bird Workshop	GC

POSSUMS AND GLIDERS

Saturday 14 January 2006	Ringtail Possums & Gliders	GC
Saturday 21 January 2006	Basic Possum Care for Beginners	GC
Sat & Sun 21 & 22 January 2006	Intensive Possum Workshop	GYM
Sunday 19 February 2006	Ringtail Possums & Gliders	BR
Saturday 11 March 2006	Possums of South East Queensland	BR
Sunday 14 May 2006	Possums of South East Queensland	GC
Sunday 21 May 2006	Basic Possum Care for Beginners	GC

EDUCATION CALENDAR

The 2006 Education Calendar has FINALLY come together!! A condensed list of the workshops available is included with this edition of WildNews. A full and more detailed list can be downloaded from the Wildcare website (www.wildcare.org.au) or you can ask one of our great office volunteers to post you a copy, by telephoning them, Monday to Friday on 5527 2444 (8am to 4pm).

SHOP NEWS

We now have the full range of Biolac milks in stock. The carers who have started using them have been happy with their animal's progress to date so I envisage that it will be kept in stock in the future.

We also have a new Shop Price List – however don't worry, no price increases just updating the list of items available through Wildcare.

SPECIAL BIRD WORKSHOP

I am pleased to let you know that we have arranged for Dr Anne Fowler to conduct an intensive bird workshop on the 18th and 19th March, 2006.

Dr Fowler is a well-known veterinary surgeon in Sydney. She has extensive knowledge and experience with birds, has presented papers at wildlife

conferences in the past and has also conducted workshops for wildlife carers.

Some of you may have heard Dr Fowler at the recent National Wildlife Rehabilitation Conference 2005 on the Gold Coast.

This is a fantastic opportunity to learn from one of the leading veterinarians in avian medicine in Australia. I encourage EVERYONE to attend this workshop. Even if you are not a bird rehabilitator, the workshop will give you a lot of knowledge to assist with the rescue, first aid and emergency care of our avian friends.

As two-thirds of our rescues are for birds, I urge you all to attend - PLEASE. There may be a nominal charge for this workshop however Wildcare will be covering the bulk of the cost of having Anne teach.

**MACROPOD COORDINATOR'S REPORT**

Nice and quiet – what a relief!

There have been very few joeys coming in since our last newsletter which has meant that our macropod carers can concentrate on the joeys that they already have in care. Most will be ready for pre-release in the coming months and hopefully our carers can take a well-earned break before the busy winter season starts again.



POOR ATTENDANCES AT WORKSHOPS

It is with great dismay that I raise this issue.

Over the past few months there have been a LARGE number of workshops where OVER 50% of those who have registered to attend HAVE NOT TURNED UP nor have they telephoned to advise that they would not be attending. For some workshops this non-attendance has been close to 75% of those registered.

As a workshop presenter myself, this has been very disappointing. While I appreciate that you all have busy lives, I would urge you to give consideration to those people who give up their time to conduct these workshops, workshop presenters who also have very busy lives.

A lot of work goes into preparing a workshop – it is not just a matter of the trainer turning up and teaching. There are notes to update, notes to photocopy and bind, CD copies of notes to burn and PowerPoint presentations to update. As a lot of our members will realise, workshop notes are updated on a regular basis so there has been a lot of wastage of notes that cannot be used at following workshops.

To further our disappointment, we have even had instances where members have registered or confirmed THE DAY BEFORE the workshop that they are coming only to find that they DO NOT TURN UP ON THE DAY – less than 24 hours later.

If you register for a workshop and then realise that you cannot attend, PLEASE telephone either the Wildcare Office or the relevant Coordinator as soon as you know that you cannot attend. This is simply a matter of COURTESY.

You may notice from the new Education Calendar, from January to June 2006, that there are fewer workshops scheduled for the semester. This is as a DIRECT RESULT of members registering and not turning up.

To those members who do REGISTER and TURN UP for workshops, I extend to you my apologies that the workshop calendar is not as comprehensive this semester.

I sincerely hope that this trend does not continue.

Regards
Karen Scott

CALLING ALL MEMBERS—AN IDEA FOR THE NEW YEAR

When I was pondering the apparent reduction in species and numbers of birds visiting my property, and the need to commence record keeping again, to see what changes have taken place over the last ten to fifteen years, I thought that it might be a good idea if all Wildcare members recorded the bird species and numbers that visited their properties.

What will this achieve?

This will not only improve your identification skills but will also provide valuable information as to where species are at any particular time. You may like to go further and record their food preferences, their feeding, grooming and courting behaviour, their interaction with their own species and with other species. Your observations could be published in the newsletter (pictures are always most welcome) and could furnish bird carers with much useful knowledge.

The method I have used in the past is to jot down on a calendar, the maximum number of each species that I see together at any particular time on any particular day (so as to avoid counting the same bird twice). The date is important if you want to look for patterns or trends down the years and needless to say correct identification is imperative. It is sometimes tempting to record something for which your identification is a little suspect; however it's better to err on the side of caution and wait until you have a positive identification. I remember having a moral battle with myself over a member of the cuckoo family! For those with a little more time, weather can be recorded too.

Eleanor Hanger



A CAGE/AVIARY POOL

Yes, Wildcare recognises the needs of new and existing carers when it comes to the expense of acquiring cages and aviaries.

Yes, we do have a limited number of cages available. The library means a loan service to you and at no cost.

Sometimes we are fortunate enough to have cages and aviaries donated to us and we want to pass the advantage on to you.

We are hoping to be able to advertise what is available in each Newsletter. A reminder though, as soon as they come in, they go. We are also hoping for photos of the cages so you can see for yourselves if they fit your requirements. I must also add that the responsibility of picking up these cages is yours, so if you want one it is up to you to organize its collection.

Since these cages and aviaries were donated to Wildcare they remain the property of Wildcare. We will ask you to sign an agreement and if you agree to sign then the cage and aviary is yours for as long as you need it. If you no longer need the cage and aviary then we ask you return it to Wildcare in a reasonable condition so the next carer can use it.



Enclosure dimensions:
240cm wide x 150cm deep
x 90cm tall.

Enclosure is divided into
four smaller cages, each
with front and back doors.
May be able to remove
divider/s to make one or
two larger cages.

Now let's face it, how many carer groups offer you a free service like this? Please don't abuse it. If you choose to take a cage or aviary then please take care of it and think of our new carers who also need some help.

Also I would ask all of you, as you go about your day to day activities, please always ask if ANYONE has any cages or aviaries to donate to a good cause. You might be surprised at what people have to donate. We have a reasonable supply of small cages with small openings and there is not a great need for them. It's not just cages that are needed. Unused possum boxes or nesting boxes of any kind would be gratefully accepted.

Areas where cages and aviaries are available now: Jimboomba and Mt Tamborine

The people to contact for the cage pool are Dianna Smith 55 307340 or Cerri-Lee Van Bruen 55 307998

BIRD CARE

with Karen Barney

Hope you all had a merry Christmas and are looking forward to a busy new year with the birds.

We have had a few cases of incorrect identification of young birds recently. This has meant that they have been fed the incorrect diet, which can compromise their health. **Please, if you are not one hundred percent positive what the bird is, ring and ask your coordinators.**

A couple of the coordinators have mentioned to me that carers are using Hand-rearing mix for all different species of birds. The only babies, for which Hand-rearing mix should be used, are grain eaters (Pigeons, Doves, Galahs, Cockatoos, Rosellas and Parrots). The only other species would be lorikeets, when they are young (because they also have a crop). All other groups of birds either eat nectar or pollen, insects, fruits and berries or carrion as their diet in the wild. Put simply, if it lifts its head, opens its beak and begs for food, it doesn't need Hand-rearing mix.

For Brisbane carers we are going to hold our workshop in conjunction with Biro in March/April (date to be confirmed). Please contact me on (07) 55486614 for further details. Just a reminder about the basic bird workshop in January. We are going to be covering all species of birds: anatomy, housing, feeding, identification and handling of adults. Please read through the following table. This sets out what each species eat in the wild, and how often they need to be fed. For information about captive diets please ring the species coordinator.

IMPORTANT POINTS

**Correct identification of the bird
is essential**

Use Hand-rearing Mix for grain eaters only

THE VET VISIT (Extract)

Dr Andrew Tribe
School of Animal Studies
University of Queensland
Gatton Queensland 4343

Dr Jon Hanger
Steve Irwin Conservation Foundation
PO Box 29
Beerwah Queensland 4519

“The Vet Visit” has been abridged and printed, with permission, from a paper presented at the National Wildlife Rehabilitation Conference 2005. It was presented by Dr Tribe in his usual, very entertaining way, which unfortunately cannot be reproduced in print. The full text is available on the website.

Veterinary assistance is an essential component of the process of wildlife rehabilitation. Thankfully, a proportion of private practitioners regularly assist carers with wildlife. It is important that wildlife rehabilitators become as knowledgeable as possible about the species with which they are dealing, as well as becoming proficient in performing a thorough examination. These skills can greatly assist your veterinarian and will help to build a lasting and useful relationship between you and your local veterinarian. Below are some ways that you can make a visit to the veterinarian as smooth and productive as possible.

BUILDING A RELATIONSHIP WITH A VETERINARIAN

Professional veterinary assistance is an important, even essential, component of wildlife rehabilitation. In many cases, veterinary assistance will be required to accurately diagnose, treat and manage sick and injured wildlife. It is important that all wildlife rehabilitators develop a healthy working relationship with a registered veterinarian. Patience and understanding are important virtues to possess when building a relationship with a veterinarian. Most practices are very busy, so being demanding of time or impatient is the fastest way to destroy a relationship.

Preparation for the veterinary visit:

- If possible, give some thought to making preparations prior to the visit to the veterinarian.
- Always ring first to make an appointment – turning up unannounced can be annoying to a veterinarian, particularly on a very busy day.
- Take the animal in an appropriate container or box, so that it is secure, warm and not visible to, or able to see dogs etc
- Prepare a clear, concise and succinct history and description of the problem. The veterinarian will not want to listen to a long-winded and irrelevant account of the life of the animal.

- If possible, conduct and record the details of your own examination to reduce the chance of lesions or injuries being overlooked.
- Make sure that you have a current and accurate weight of the animal, so that accurate drug doses can be calculated. Take with you a list of commonly used drugs (particularly anaesthetics, analgesics (pain relief) and antibiotics) for that species.
- Take along any samples that may be required such as a recent urine and faecal sample. These should be in clean specimen containers that are appropriately labelled with the animal's ID, time of collection and type of sample. Samples should be refrigerated (not frozen) unless they are to be examined immediately.
- Take along any daily records and containers of drugs previously prescribed for the animal.
- DO NOT give food or oral fluids to animals that may need an anaesthetic – it dramatically increases the risk of regurgitation and aspiration (inhalation). If possible starve adult animals for at least 12 hours prior to anaesthesia.

Expectations and Attitudes:

On arrival at the veterinary clinic check in with the receptionist and advise how urgent your case is. If the surgery looks busy, it may be worthwhile asking the receptionist what the waiting time is likely to be, and be prepared for a long wait.

Having a “know-all” attitude, being disrespectful, being critical of lack of knowledge and failing to use diplomacy and tact, will all lead to a breakdown of the carer-veterinarian relationship, and ultimately limit the standard of care provided. Try to nurture and encourage a veterinarian that shows interest by providing knowledge, scientific papers and articles, being patient and understanding,

(Continued on page 12)

(Continued from page 11)

and providing a list of telephone numbers or email addresses of experienced wildlife veterinarians who can provide professional advice to the veterinarian.

Finally, try not to stretch the friendship. Recognise that wildlife work is generally not a lucrative line of business for practicing veterinarians, and their priorities are generally to full fee paying clients. Overusing a veterinarian who is providing wildlife services for free will end up leading to resentment and possibly breakdown in the relationship.

Costs of veterinary care, diagnostic aids and medication

Costs of veterinary services for wildlife are generally borne partly by the veterinary practitioner and partly by the wildlife carer. Most veterinarians will give some level of discount for services and/or drugs for wildlife work.

Blood tests, cultures, histology and other lab services that are performed at external laboratories are expensive and these expenses cannot be expected to be borne by the veterinarian.

Veterinary services are not cheap, so be thankful if your veterinarian gives significant discounts for wildlife work. Gifts of alcohol, chocolate, morning tea etc will help to cement a developing relationship, and I certainly encourage that in the carers that I deal with.

Responsibilities of the veterinarian

Veterinarians have certain inherent obligations to act in a professional, compassionate and ethical way towards animals. In effect, it is unethical for a veterinarian to refuse to treat or euthanize a seriously injured or sick animal if it is presented to a veterinary clinic or surgery. However, under current legislation (at least in Queensland) that obligation is not enforceable from a statutory point of view, unless there has been clear and gross misconduct by the veterinarian.

For example: if you have just rescued a kangaroo suffering from motor vehicle trauma and take it to the nearest veterinarian for euthanasia, then that veterinarian has an ethical obligation to provide assistance. However, if he or she refuses to see the animal, then there is little recourse for the rescuer other than to try another veterinarian.

The Animal Care and Protection Act (Queensland) applies the general principle of “duty of care” to all persons “in charge of” animals. This includes veterinarians

and wildlife carers. The act states that a person in charge of an animal must take all reasonable steps to ensure that its welfare is looked after, including the provision of veterinary care if required.

Responsibilities of the carer

Similarly, wildlife carers and rehabilitators have certain inherent responsibilities from an ethical standpoint. Animals that have serious injuries or illness must be given the benefit of veterinary attention if it is reasonably available.

It is so important to develop a working relationship with a veterinarian based on trust, mutual respect and shared learning, so that urgent and critical cases can be assured of a high standard of care. Animals in care should not be forced to suffer without veterinary care because of a breakdown in the relationship between a carer and veterinarian, particularly if that breakdown has occurred because a carer has been overly demanding, disrespectful or a know-all.

It is also very important to carefully and diligently follow the prescription instructions for drugs used to treat wildlife.

It is also good form to give feedback to the treating veterinarian on how the treatment is progressing, whether it is going well or poorly. It is gratifying to be advised when a treatment is working well, and very important to know when a treatment is not working, so that it can be reviewed.

A note on dropping off samples and necropsies:

Sometimes it is necessary to just drop off a sample (such as faeces or urine) for a follow-up test, or to check for Candida, worms or other parasites. In these cases it is recommended that you

Call the veterinarian to check whether they will need to see the animal as well – let the veterinarian make that decision based on his or her clinical judgment.

Supply the freshest sample possible. Store refrigerated and transport to the veterinary surgery in an esky with a cold block.

Supply samples in clean jars or containers with tight-fitting lids.

Mark the containers with ID, date collected and nature of the sample.

Provide a brief history with the sample. Clearly state the nature of the problem, duration of clinical signs and previous treatment. Make suggestions about what the problem might be eg: “Please check for Candida.”

(Continued on page 13)

Hi everyone. I hope you all had a great Christmas and may an awesome new year await you all.

In this newsletter I am taking the opportunity to catch up with a few carers and where they are right now in terms of caring. I know life gets busy and sometimes we can forget our commitment to Wildcare. Don't we all know how busy this season can get? However, my concern is with carers who have not submitted carer records since March 2005. We can't blame Christmas for this. If you are no longer caring and have contacted the office but your name appears below, I am sorry, the carer's list will be amended.

My main concern is with carers who submit hand written records. Kiersten Jones takes care of the emailed records.

First of all: Trish Smith – I know you are now working and may not have anything in care, but please let me know.

Roy Webster – My dear friend. Hey you started out like a bullet from a gun and now nothing. I know you have babies in care so how about letting me know about them on paper?

From here is a list of "Carers" on the Gold Coast according to our list. Now I have not received any records from these carers since March 2005. The main reason for this list is obvious, Wildcare cannot afford the phone bill to call all these people to ask for an update. Are you still

caring or not? Please let the office know of your latest status. If you have contacted the office to give them an update and it has not appeared on the data base then that is simply because we have been so busy that we have not had the time to change your details. Here is your perfect opportunity to change your details.

GOLD COAST:

Alison Bott, Robyn Dredge, Jill Fellows, Susan Lambert, Nicole Manteit, Rosemarie McCabe, Jamie Strauss and Lorelle Tomlinson

BRISBANE:

Sara Chilton, Denise Davidson, Emily Gould, Lyn Hampson, Rebecca Hardcastle, Anita Hodak, Kerry & Andrew Johnson, Stuart McDonald, Lee McMichael, Katrina Ryan and Kim Schultz

SUNSHINE COAST:

Katheryn Biber, John & Retta Cashen, Joyce Coates, Teresa Cronin, Ann-Marie Dineen, Rachel Lyons, Lynda Olsson, Laurie Parkes, Paula Rowlands, Jan Warne

Now there could be several reasons why these good carers have not submitted records, please let me know.

To those great carers who submit their records on time – what can I say but a big THANK YOU !!!!!!!

MAY YOU ALL HAVE A GREAT NEW YEAR.

(Continued from page 12)

Ask the receptionist when you should ring for results.

Be patient if results are not ready on time – performing faecal examinations are rarely a priority on a busy day. If culture of faeces or urine is required, then method of collection, sample jar required and the reason for the test should be discussed with the veterinarian prior to sample collection. The sample should then be clearly labelled "For culture and sensitivity". Otherwise the wrong tests may be conducted.

In summary: the Golden Rules of working well with the veterinarian.

1. Be patient, understanding and respectful, especially on busy days.
2. Be informed and educated and share that education with the veterinarian.
3. Be prepared: accurate history, fresh samples, recommended drugs and doses.

4. Give feedback on how treatment is going and final outcomes for every case that the vet has been involved in.
5. Use of restricted (S4) or controlled (S8) drugs for treatment of animals must be in accordance with the prescription of a registered veterinarian.
6. Shower the veterinarian with gifts if you are getting good discounts.



THE CHRISTMAS PARTY with Trish Hales

The 2005 Wildcare Christmas Party was held on the 27th November 2005 at Mudgeeraba. As Santa (Terry W) was unwell and Mrs Claus (Trish W) herself was recovering from illness, caring for Santa and for a house full of orphaned and injured bats, it was decided to hold the party elsewhere to give Santa time to recover for Christmas.

Wildcare member, Cerri-Lee Van Buuren, her husband Gaven and son Casey, very generously opened their home to Wildcare members.

Wildcare Australia would like to say a huge thank you to Cerri-Lee, Gaven and Casey for making us all feel so welcome. A great time was had by all, who enjoyed comfortable surrounds, an extensive menu and fun and games.

Whilst Wildcare supplied ham, turkey and cold drinks the rest of the menu was supplied by those attending. We enjoyed five different salads, nachos, pizzas, vegetarian quiche, cheese and fruit platters, dips and nibbles of many varieties. This was followed by an abundance of cakes with an International flavour. Dianna Smith prepared an American Pumpkin Pie to die for, and Gena Summer-greene a traditional Dutch Christmas Cake which was delicious.

The Christmas Tree was smothered with Secret Santa presents and we were surrounded by lovely Christmas music. There were fun and games with an egg on spoon race and a throw and catch an egg (raw) competition fittingly won by Cerri-Lee and Gaven.

Thank you to Kerry Chadwick, Eileen Lucre and Karen Scott who helped to make the day a great success. All enjoyed the chance to get together on a purely social basis with New Members meeting others and able to put faces to names.

I wish you all Love, Peace, Good Health and Happiness in 2006.



Wildcare at play

KOALAS with Kim Alexander

WHO'D HAVE EM!!!!

"Oh, do you care for Koalas?" It's a question I have constantly been asked ever since I first started caring for wildlife some 15+ years ago. Up until three or so years ago I would say quite honestly, "No, I never have". But that all changed a few years back with a couple of koala girls called Phoebe and Karlee and a big boy called Max.

Now we have cared for numerous adult koalas either after a road or other trauma or sometimes during their treatment for chlamydia or some other medical problems. Usually it is only for a matter of weeks or perhaps a month or two. Mostly they successfully go back into the wild for release though unfortunately some have died from complications from their injuries.

Recently though we have had two young female koalas in our care. Guinness and Georgie came into care within a day of each other at the end of November. Both were found without a mother and both were considered at 2.7 kg and 2.9 kg, to be too young to be on their own. Georgie also had early signs on conjunctivitis and thrush. And so it was that the girls came into care.



Georgie and Guinness (the salt and pepper shakers)

But what does it mean to have a koala, or in this case two koalas in care? The following is my formula for koala care.

1 Koala = 1 branch (at least a metre long) X 6 types of food tree
X 4 changes of leaf a day X 7 days a week
X 4 - 8 weeks
= 2 station wagons + 1 trailer + numerous "secret sites"
+ 100's kms to collect fresh leaf
+ a very friendly relationship with your local green waste tip.

Not to mention the housing (I'm sure our neighbours thought we were building a granny flat and the kids lost their cubby and fort), the cleaning, the counting of pellets, the scrubbing of water tubes and forks, the twisted ankles, the green ant bites, the strange looks, the soakings in the summer storms (while collecting the leaf).

But when these girls go, will I put my hand up for more?.....Yes, of course I will.....Though maybe not straight away.

Being a macropod carer means planning your life around feed times; from work, to shopping, to eating out, and sometimes just being able to find time to get into the shower. Planning a holiday means the need to plan way in advance, because quite often joeys can be in care for four months or more, before finally leaving you to go to pre-release.

Craig and I wanted and needed a holiday, so we decided to hire a Motorhome and drive up north to Cape Tribulation, to generally have a look around and have quality time together.

Having just sent a wallaby to pre-release we figured we could receive more little babies into our care in the near future. We would, however, need to estimate how long it would take to raise another one or two from a predefined age, and then add on a few more weeks for good measure, to arrive at a departure date. Our calculations brought us to the 26th October so that was decided on....(very mathematically tasking!)

We let the macropod coordinator know our plans, booked the camper, mapped our trip and started counting the days.

As expected for this time of year we received a call to take a rednecked wallaby from the Cleveland area. "He is really, really cute," said Karen Scott, the macropod coordina-

tor and oh my goodness, he was the cutest one I have seen so far, such a beautiful red colour all over, with snow white markings. We called him Rusty.

Not long after getting little Rusty, little Rusty got a little brother named Dusty. Everything was moving along nicely. They would be at pre-release by the time we were due to go on holiday and everyone would be happy.

As everyone in Wildcare knows, things don't go according to plan and as our holiday approached we still had Dusty with us. He was being very sooky and neurotic and 'a pain in the bum' so to speak.

On top of this Karen Scott had rung asking if I could take a little female rednecked wallaby of 500 grams. She had been lying with her dead mum for two days. The poor little baby was severely dehydrated. Leigh Koppman had worked her magic on her and brought her through the worst of it. Leigh's description to me of how she looked when she had first got her was "like a Shar-pei dog with all the loose wrinkly skin".

At first I said I would not take her as I figured she would be too old to take away with me. She would be out of pouch by the time we went on holiday and that would not be fair to her. However Karen rang back a couple of

days later and said she was desperate and in the worst case scenario we could maybe get her babysat while we were away.

This would not be the ideal situation however we were so short of Carers and as previously mentioned, this time of year is so stressing for everyone, I said yes, we would take her and **consequently** called her Miss Daisy.

Pretty soon Miss Daisy got a younger sister who had also come into care very compromised, after being in the care of someone from the public for ten days. We called her Lilly.

As our holiday drew very close panic station alarms rang, Dusty the neurotic little rednecked baby went to Leanne Burgess with much relief **and gratitude** and then the feelers went out for a babysitter for the two little girls Lilly and Daisy. Unfortunately by this time all the Macropod carers were pretty much overloaded with injured or young babies. Consequently I realized that having the gorgeous little wallaby babysat was not going to be possible and they would definitely have to come with us. Luckily neither of our little bundles of jumping joy had yet left the pouch so, even if they did while we were away, they would not be wanting to go too far.

Finally the big day arrived and with much excitement we left on our journey.



K Hooke



K Hooke



K Hooke

(Continued on page 16)

(Continued from page 15)

The Motorhome was a lot bigger than we thought, luckily, and the girls' large basket fitted snugly between the armrests of the recliner type chairs so that it did not move around while we were travelling.

I certainly think I must have packed more stuff for the two of them than for Craig or myself.

We stopped for the first night and, yes you guessed it, low and behold Daisy decided it was time to leave the pouch, her timing was impeccable (NOT).

A few days later Lilly decided she would not be out done and followed her. "Oh good grief!"

After a very short while the girls seemed to adjust quite well to the travelling and we soon settled into a routine of stopping every four hours to feed them, although Craig had a bit of trouble adjusting as it seemed to him we were stopping every five minutes.

We were slightly amused when we stopped at the end of the day, watching them trying to get their balance on the slippery floor. At least we had entertainment and it was good muscle building for them with the added exercise. They certainly did not appear to be phased by it.

We ended up going all the way to Cooktown, telling the girls how special they were, as they were probably the only rednecked wallabies in Cooktown and we emphasised the fact that not many wallabies get to travel and see as much as they were (I don't think they understand somehow).

We saw a lot of road signs saying that Tree Kangaroos crossed here but, alas, we never saw any. I imagine

Lilly and Daisy were very disappointed.

It seems that we humans weren't the only ones who gained additional weight on the holiday as my mere 900 gram Daisy put on a lot of weight very fast. By the time we returned home after two weeks away she weighed 1800 grams. At least I felt a fraction better knowing that I wasn't the only one who put on weight whilst away soaking up the sun and enjoying the frivolities of holidays.

Most of the van parks we stopped in said "NO DOMESTIC PETS". Lucky we didn't have any domestic or pets.... hey. In fact not a single soul even knew they were with us the whole time we were traveling.

Well, we are now back home. I think the girls are pretty happy about that. The first night they tore around the house like mad blurred things.

Thinking back I was probably pretty lucky and very pleased not to have had any problems with them while away. I will probably not attempt it with babies again. Although in some ways it was fun having them with me in other ways I was restricted greatly as to what I could do or for how long I could be gone, especially if we wanted to look at something or do some sightseeing. Caring for them and attending to their needs didn't leave much room for us to relax. I now need to go on another holiday to recover.

So that was our adventure - Driving Miss Daisy - and I guess we will always remember it..... I wonder if she will? Just maybe she will have a lot to talk about when she gets released.... MMmmm!

Karen Hooke.

OBSERVATIONS OF A BIRD WATCHER

9.30am, 6 December, 2005.

Clear sky, sunny, intermittent light breeze. Two juvenile magpies lying against an embankment at an angle of about 40 degrees, bodies against the ground, wings outspread, beaks slightly opened—sunbathing?

OBSERVATIONS OF A PEOPLE WATCHER

11.30am, 30 November, 2005.

Sunny with some cloud, about 28 degrees

Two fair-skinned females lying face down on a towel on the beach, mostly unclad, arms parallel to bodies, legs outstretched, head on side, eyes closed - sunburning?

OBSERVATIONS OF A CHILD



"Yesterday it got down by itself"

NOT YOUR NORMAL HOLIDAY ADVENTURE WITH TRISH & TERRY

In our quest for knowledge and in aid of Bat conservation Trish and I once again headed overseas. If you remember last year we attended schools and seminars at Bat World in Texas, Bat Conservation International (BCI) Echolocation School in Arizona and then again with BCI for a trip up the Amazon. This year our destinations were South Africa and Madagascar.

We were fortunate to make contact with the Bat Conservation Group in South Africa Gauteng & Northern Region Bat Interest Group represented by Nigel Fernsby, their chairman.

Nigel and his remarkable wife Rose made available to us a cabin on their property which is in the Hennops Valley between Johannesburg and Pretoria.

The Fernsby property was filled with bat boxes, bird boxes and all manner of wildlife. We felt right at home. We were able to study many species of bats without leaving the property. Nigel and Rose were great hosts and truly kindred spirits.

On our first full day in South Africa Nigel and Rose took us to visit the Rescue centre "Free Me" run by a dedicated group of volunteers and headed up by Margie Brocklehurst. We lucked out and arrived when they were having their annual conference and we were able to exchange ideas and learn from each other. At about this point Trish and I started to unwind and realize the following:

1. We were so happy to have our

conference behind us - best wishes next year Northern Territory.

2. The spirit and energy of wildlife carers everywhere is inspiring.

many of their issues are the same as ours, i.e. volunteers, fundraising, facilities, government regulations, education

3. Rehab groups' innate ability to self destruct over meaningless petty issues usually centred around personality clashes – **wake up its about the animals.**

The next day Nigel, Trish and I met up with Dr Dean Penkie from the Department of Agriculture and his two co workers, Mike and Gareth, for a trip to Thawazimbi near the Botswana border. The purpose of the trip was to investigate a cave on private land that the locals were using for religious practices and perhaps endangering bats.

That afternoon and evening we explored the cave and collected a number of very rare bats including the little *Cleotis percivali* species a find of huge implications for the future of this cave. The next day Trish and I met with the property owner to discuss the importance of bats and conservation and to show the pictures we had taken the night before. The guys met with local religious leaders and explored other possible cave entrances.

As we wound up our investigations and discussed solutions it became apparent that a win win situation was to develop for the bats, the property owners, the re-

ligious groups and conservation in general. We were proud to be a small part and wondered how many caves/mine sites there are in the world that we need to be look into. A big job, however it starts one at a time.

The next few days flew by as we explored more caves, *well Trish did ,Terry managed to get stuck in some parts and had to be pushed through and landed on the cave floor looking like a beached whale. Everyone enjoyed the humour even Terry* (Trish slipped this part of the story in while Terry wasn't looking) We enjoyed sharing our common passions for Bat Conservation. On our last night we gave a talk at the University of Pretoria to the Bat Group and the next day set out for the three hours flight to Madagascar to meet up with the Bat Conservation International Group arriving via Paris from USA.

We arrived in the capital of Madagascar Antananarivo (Tana) about 11pm- what a circus. Welcome Terry and Trish and my only French was Bon Jovi which produced a smile and a knowing look that I was not the rock star. After a wild car ride and when we kissed the ground (our hotel room floor) we tried to work out the local currency. We were still working this out weeks later when we left and by then it didn't matter that there were two currencies and we couldn't figure out one, thankfully we didn't run out of either, mainly because it is actually quite difficult to spend

(Continued on page 18)

(Continued from page 17)

money when everything must be filled out in triplicate then reviewed four times (jobs for all). Somewhere in Madagascar is a large warehouse filled with mounds of meaningless papers – when recycling comes someone will make a fortune.

Notwithstanding the ten hour drives, the forced marches, barely adequate food – one evening yours truly remarked “wow the green stuff on the zebu (a local cow) tonight looks especially runny “. We had a great time 18 kindred spirits led by Drs Merlin Tuttle , Fiona Reid and Fanja Ratrimomanarivo and Dr Steve Goodman all remarkable in their own way.

As we criss crossed the island by bus, four wheel drive and by plane we experienced conservation at its grass roots. The country has so many problems and yet is so full of hope and undiscovered plant and animal species. Our time there really made

us appreciate what we have in Australia. This country’s conservation challenges and potential solutions need to be quite unique. We were privileged to be with locals, Fanja and Steve, as their passion, spirit and dedication were inspiring.

We saw so many species of unique flora and fauna and found that the diversity started to be common – frogs, lemurs, chameleons, birds, ants and of course bats far too many to list and to remarkable to cover in this article. Some evening we may have a showing of all the photos and toss in the Amazon as well.

Could this be a fundraising exercise?

There is one story that needs telling and I would call it the Great Mizapoda roundup.

Our illustrious leader Dr Merlin Tuttle, the founder of Bat Conservation International, had as yet not photographed two remaining species of bats in the world, one of which is the Mizapoda, the sucker footed bat of Madagascar. Merlin’s focus was on this rare bat. Rarely seen and almost impossible to net as its habit is not really known.

This particular evening most of the group went in search of lemur in the high rainforest. Eight of us set out for a coffee plantation that years before yielded one Mizopoda.

Merlin picked the location for all the various nets and traps and braved the village where some months earlier some researchers were stoned because the villagers thought they were stealing the spirits. I suggested Trish might like to work in the village. At any rate there was one mist net left over and I suggested a spot across a road near a rice paddy. I was left to tend the net, if by some chance a bat was to get itself caught, but was not given a bat bag, could this be an oversight? or a reflection of my abilities to extricate bats from netting?

As night fell all of a sudden the mysteries of fate worked and bats started to hit my net I yelled for Trish to help as we had a dozen bats to untangle Trish was at her efficient best and soon my pock-

ets and Trish’s one bag was full and Trish had to then resort to basics and down her shirt and up her sleeves the remainder went.

It all happened so fast we really didn’t have time to identify the bats except to note the big ears and to not mix the species. The net was closed and we were still catching bats I had gone to check Trish’s nets as she had left a rookie watching those and this was where the action was supposed to have happened.

I passed Merlin and he asked how it was going. It is here I point out that I love to tease Merlin so when I told him we had so many bats he asked, “What species?” I said, “Dammed if I know, but they have big ears.” He said, “If you are kidding me you’re dead meat.”

I don’t think I have seen Merlin run so fast or be so happy – yes, the bats were the Mizopoda. Trish had eight and let go another three, a record catch in one netting of Mizapoda in Madagascar.

There were many other highlights in our time in South Africa and Madagascar, however we gained most from the sharing of information and the meeting of wonderful dedicated conservationists. Their energy and spirit help Trish and I to redefine our place in our work.

A Kenyan proverb - “We don’t inherit the earth from our ancestors we borrow it from our children”.

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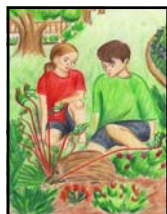
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27 MARCH, 2006

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