

# WILDNEWS

Summer 2009/2010 Issue 55



*Jasmine's  
Story: One  
Small but  
Powerful Voice.*

*Vet Check:  
Aspiration  
Pneumonia*





# President's Report.

*Karen Scott*

**WELL, ANOTHER YEAR IS UPON US ALREADY – WHERE DOES THE TIME GO?** I hope that everyone had a relaxing Christmas with family and friends and all was quiet on the wildlife front.

The past year has been a particularly busy one for me and other members of the Management Committee and I would like to thank my fellow committee members for continuing to put so much time and effort into their roles even during times when I know that they are already inundated with other commitments. It is often very challenging being involved in the Committee and I sincerely thank everyone involved with making Wildcare "tick", for all their hard work.

This coming year I would encourage everyone to look at the bigger picture when considering our native wildlife. There are so many vast issues being faced by

our wildlife throughout the country. We are blessed in South East Queensland to have our wildlife valued by a large percentage of the community. Other organizations face more difficult challenges and are dealing with more issues than we could imagine. This was highlighted to me recently when I met "Twinky" a Southern Hairy Nosed Wombat that made a remarkable journey from South Australia to the SE Qld for veterinary treatment. The issues faced by fellow wildlife carers with these amazing animals are devastating. If you have some free time, read about Twinky and her friends at Wombat Awareness Organisation Ltd at [www.wombatawareness.com](http://www.wombatawareness.com).

I hope that 2010 brings fewer animals in need, for both our organization and wildlife in other parts of the world.

## *A Warm Welcome to Our New Members*

*Wildcare Australia welcomes the following new members:*

Andrea & Peter Berry, *Albany Creek*; Karen Griggs, *Ashmore*; Jeanette & Gavin Miles, *Biggera Waters*; Alana Legge, Susie Kitt, *Broadbeach*; Carl Fisher, *Bulimba*; Sally Davis, *Burleigh Waters*; Annie Van Der Meulen, *Caloundra*; Corkina Duke, *Canungra*; Seb Clark, *Carrara*; Jacinta Bull, *Cornubia*; Elizabeth Blyde, *Currumbin*; Lynda Ellis, *Currumbin Valley*; Deb Kennelly, *Currumbin Waters*; Kathy Hung, *East Brisbane*; Shelley Keehn, *Elimbah*; Joni Vinnicombe, *Greenslopes*; Kylie Tsagaris, *MacGregor*; John & Emily Dockray, *Manly West*; John Eckert, Michelle Wilson, *Maryborough*; Gloria Vagg, *Miles*; Brooke Thomas, *Moranbah*; David Gardner,

*Narangba*; Andrea Sheedy, *Nerang*; Melissa Derksen, *North Arm*; Sherryn Page & David Endres, *North Casino*; Jessica Marshall, *Ormeau*; Lynne Young, *Redland Bay*; Sara Wells, *Spring Hill*; Chloe Clark, *Upper Mt Gravatt*; Adele Swanton, *Varsity Lakes*; Brenda Ernestina Searle, *Victoria Point*; Danielle Dedman, *Wurtulla*; David & Shelley Tucker, *Wattleglen, VIC*.

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 our office and I'm sure we will be able to help you.

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

# Our Mission

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

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

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Newsletter submissions can be sent to  
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# Record Keeper's Rap.

**YOUR 2009 RECORDS, PLEASE!** It's that very busy time of year again, the time when everyone's 2009 records need to be put together, so please help out by getting all your 2009 carer records and road kill sightings into me as soon as possible (ASAP). ASAP, hopefully, means you have already done this by the time this newsletter comes out.

Thanks to those of you who do this very well, submitting your records regularly throughout the year. If anyone is struggling with doing their records, please contact me so I can help you sort them out.

These records are very useful to demonstrate the species and numbers of wildlife needing our assistance, and the effort put in by Wildcare volunteers to rescue and rehabilitate the thousands of animals that need our help each year. The records available for use in reporting now go back to 2003, and some even to 2000. Not a month goes by without a request for records from someone, either a Wildcare member or species coordinator, someone from a local council or organisation, or a member of the public concerned about the impact of a proposed development in their area. So the sooner your 2009 records can be collected and added into the database, the quicker and easier it is to generate these reports.

Data issued just in the past few months, based on Carer/Rescue Records:

- Jan to Jun 2009 Outcome records for Currumbin Wildlife Hospital (all records associated with CWH);
- 2000-2009 Gold Coast Koala Rescue/Carer Records – for Gold Coast City Council, Wildcare Koala Coordinator, and local Department of Environment and Resource Management ranger;
- Jan to Jun 2009 Road Trauma/Road Kill stats – For Qld Main Roads reps;
- 2008 Rescue/Carer Records for USC lecturer & student;
- 2003-Sep09 Burleigh Records for a member of the public submitting proposal for wildlife crossing;
- 2003-Oct09 Willow Vale Rescue/Carer Records;
- 2003-Oct09 Springbrook Road Trauma/Road Kill stats.

Wishing everyone all the very best for 2010.

Kiersten Jones  
carerrecords@wildcare.org.au

## Brisbane City Council Grants. \$\$\$

THE NEXT ROUND OF GRANTS FOR THE BRISBANE CITY COUNCIL "WILDLIFE CARER FUNDING PROGRAM" OPENS ON JANUARY 11TH AND CLOSE ON FEBRUARY 15TH, 2010.

To access information on the grant, visit the BCC website at [www.brisbane.qld.gov.au](http://www.brisbane.qld.gov.au) and search for "Wildlife Carer Funding". This grant is available to wildlife carers who reside in the BCC region or care for wildlife from that area. If you need any help with the Application process, contact the committee by email at [education@wildcare.org.au](mailto:education@wildcare.org.au)



*Dedicated to a better Brisbane*

## Volunteer Recognition.

- **Karen Feist** – For assistance at very short notice with the transporting of a badly burnt koala to the Australian Wildlife Hospital
- **Moreton Bay Koala Rescue** – For their assistance to Wildcare rescuers, to enable the prompt transfer of critically injured animals to AWH, including urgent transfers in the middle of the night.
- **Natasha Lewis-Millar** – For volunteering on the emergency phone, being keen to help with rescues and for becoming an active and great bird carer.
- **Jasmine Rasmussen** – For all the wonderful work that she has undertaken in encouraging her school mates to become more environmentally aware and promoting Wildcare and the work of our volunteers
- **Kerry Schilling** – For attending to so many rescues.
- **Patricia Van De Berkt** – For attending to so many rescues.
- **Rowley Goonan** – For his expert assistance in catching injured sea and water birds – particularly his great effort in catching a jabiru recently!



# Management Committee Meeting Summary

## October/November/December

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### Business/Corporation

A one-off \$50 donation towards the cost of running and hosting OzArk would be made on behalf of all Wildcare members.

After the recent bushfires, the Management Committee decided to assemble an Emergency Response Team. The first meeting would be held in January 2010 with email invitations being sent to relevant members to attend.

### Education - Workshops

The Education Calendar for January – April 2010 will be available on the website soon.

### Education - Community Speakers Team

A Community Speakers Team had been established with Laura Reeder in charge. This team attends Community events to represent Wildcare and also undertakes education talks at schools, scout groups, rotary and lions groups, Landcare, church groups, retirement homes and libraries.

### Grants and Donations

Wildcare received another \$500 donation from Woolworths Region 10 Social Club. Our application for funding from the 2009 Volunteer grant was unsuccessful.

### Fundraising Events

Wildcare successfully participated in the Currumbin Careers Expo, Beaudesert Show and the Springbrook Fete.

### Members/Memberships

All new and renewing membership applications were approved. The Membership Kit currently sent out to all new Members would be upgraded to include all important paperwork needed by new members.

### Volunteer Recognition

This is a new initiative of the Management Committee. Recipients for December 2009 are: Karen Feist, Moreton Bay Koala Rescue, Natasha Lewis-Millar, Jasmine Rasmussen, Patricia Van De Berkt, Kerry Schilling and Rowley Goonan.

### Wildcare Publicity

Wildcare has continued to feature in some fantastic media releases which were organized by Liz Meffan.

Tracy Paroz  
Secretary

## Buying Seafood – food for thought.

Our oceans are not the pristine environments that many believe. Unfortunately they are also suffering from over-exploitation (According to the Australian Marine Conservation Society, 75% of world fisheries are overfished), pollution both intentional (when used as rubbish dumps) and unintentional (when polluted by shipping accidents and run-off from cities and farms).

If you want to become more aware of the environmental issues facing the oceans refer to the AMCS website: [www.marineconservation.org.au](http://www.marineconservation.org.au).

To help consumers choose sustainable seafood AMCS have produced a 3 Step Pocket Guide which can be downloaded free of charge. Alternatively you may wish to buy the Australia's Sustainable Seafood Guide which looks at many common Australian seafood species as well as 'at different fishing methods, aquaculture issues, seafood and your health and much more'.

Another website of interest is that of the Australian

Academy of Science which publishes NOVA, <http://www.science.org.au/nova>. There you will find an article which deals with acidity in the oceans.

Eleanor Hanger



PHOTO // JM HANGER

## Letter to the Editor

We have only recently joined the group so thought an introduction was in order. We live at St George, a small rural town about six hours west of Brisbane, and an hour north of the New South Wales border. The town is located on the Balonne River giving rise to a vast and varied wildlife population.

Mary was born in this region and has cared for wildlife since she was a nipper. She now works as a Dental Assistant. My interest in animals has only consumed me since moving back to St George, as previously I was an Ambulance Officer and Army Medic.

About seven years ago we sold our mango farm near Bundaberg to return here to build our own home on an acre of land. Currently we have six cats, four eastern grey joeys, one carpet python, one rat, twenty Australian parrots, twelve chooks, one dog and a beautiful vegetable garden. We are the only registered carers in this region hence we take in kangaroos, koalas, snakes, lizards and birds.

Over the past twelve months we have had some 120 animals pass through our care, some retrievals can take us up to four hours covering hundred of kilometres. One of our most unusual calls was to a baby Wedgetail eagle that "seemed injured" and was wandering around the person's yard. It turned out to be a guinea fowl. This was a great excuse to give an Aussie Wildlife Education Session.

The local veterinarian admits to having little knowledge of wildlife (although he assists where he can) so we have been fortunate that Australia Zoo, Bob Donnelley and Currumbin Wildlife Park assist us with diagnosing and treatments.

Reflecting on the animals we received last year, we feel that with the correct equipment many more could have been saved, so we have decided to build a wildlife hospital. We are looking to the local residents to assist in

funding this project, as not only will we treat animals, but we also want to encourage some of the local young adults to learn about the unique and wonderful critters that live on our doorstep.

I read the minutes of the last meeting and the management committee requested some of the members to think about helping; as they say many hands make light work. It is our choice but we are on call 24 hours a day 7 days a week and, as previously stated, travel many kilometres and why, because OUR WILDLIFE needs us just as the wildlife in your area needs YOU. So, please put your hand up; the animals do appreciate the help. We hope to meet some of you this year at some of the workshops, but if anyone would like to visit our world we generally have a spare bed, if not the chooks live in 5 star accommodation.

Bless you all for the wonderful job you have undertaken.

Kindest Regards,  
Bob and Mary Collier



### Editor's Note:

It is lovely to hear from our members especially from those where distance prevents us meeting personally. We congratulate you, Bob and Mary, on the wonderful job you are doing and wish you every success with the enormous project you are undertaking.

Eleanor Hanger


# Jasmine's Story:

## One small but powerful voice.

JASMINE RASMUSSEN ATTENDS ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI CATHOLIC COLLEGE AND SHE RECENTLY WROTE TO HER LOCAL COUNCILLOR, DONNA GATES, ASKING HER TO SUPPORT WILDCARE AND TO HELP PROTECT THE LOCAL WILDLIFE. COUNCILLOR GATES RESPONDED AND GAVE A \$50 DONATION TO HELP JASMINE KICK-START HER CAMPAIGN TO HELP WILDCARE.

JASMINE IS 8 YEARS OLD – SHE WROTE THE LETTER HERSELF, BUT THAT WAS ONLY THE BEGINNING...

①



Hi my name is  
Jasmine  
Rasmussen. I  
have been a  
member of WildCare Australia  
for four years now. I am the  
daughter of Natalie Rasmussen, who is  
a Carer for Orphaned possums.  
In 2009, along with my sister Lily, and  
brother Jack, I have been raising funds  
for WildCare. I'm really looking forward  
to what we are going to do this year. In  
2010, for fundraising. But I'll quickly run  
over what we did in 2009.  
Last year we set up a stall outside of my  
School, Assisi Catholic College. We sold  
Ashdene Mugs and plates and many more  
lovely WildCare items. I also organised a  
colouring in competition with the help of  
some beautiful teachers in the Junior School,  
and it was a real success! We raised  
\$225-, and the high school donated

*Long-Tailed Pygmy Possum*

(letter continued on next page)

Jasmine's school obtained approval to clear an area of bushland to allow for the construction of new buildings. Jasmine, with the help of her mum Natalie, had been liaising with the principal, Dora Luxton, about ensuring that a wildlife spotter-catcher was on site. The school, unfamiliar with the role of a spotter-catcher, looked into it and contracted with one. During clearing, a tree was identified with an active Tawny Frogmouth nest in it; the tree was saved from destruction pending the babies fledging. Since that time, the school has installed about a dozen possum boxes near the area cleared for the new school building.

Natalie and Jasmine have had a lot of discussions with the principal, teachers and students, all of whom have been very supportive of Jasmine's efforts. They have already received over \$500 in donations from school children and parents. They have been selling Ashdene mugs after school and have already sold quite a few with orders for more. The students will be holding a free-dress day which will raise over \$1000 and they have started a colouring-in competition as well which will raise even more funds.

The school students are all very proud of themselves for what they have done...as are we!

Natalie says that Jasmine is "worn out from working so hard".

It's tough being 8 years old!



a \$500- cheque to go towards Wild Care Australia. Liz Meffan kindly gave her time to represent WildCare on the day, she recieved the cheque and gave a very important talk to the students about what WildCare stands for, and what we do as volunteers.

Another project that my family and I did in 2009 was putting glider, bird and Possum boxes up around my school where clearing had been done. The very next day a galah was inside one of our boxes! My family and I were sad about the clearing at our school so we asked our principle if she had organised a

'Spotter Catcher,' she hadn't heard of this type of work before, so she looked into it for us and organised one. In the clearing process many trees were saved that had active nests... how awesome!!

I also wrote to our councillor of section one on the Gold Coast, Donna Gates, and she too made a

donation of which we are very grateful for.

I know we have many exciting fundraising ideas for 2010, one of which will be a permanent add for Wild Care Australia on River 94.9 FM. There are so many people who have helped us along the way and I am grateful to all of you.

most of all I would like to thank the Volunteers of Wild Care Australia who put their hearts and souls into the protection and survival of Australian native species. We are all fighting for the precious lives of these beautiful creatures, and I know, if we all pull together we can make a difference.  
Jasmine Rasmussen.



possum with back young  
by Jasmine Rasmussen



PHOTOS // N. RASMUSSEN

**Left:** Possum drawings by Jasmine's brother, Jack, and sister, Lilly. **Right:** Jasmine's possum drawing; Jasmine and Lilly hugging tree with newly installed possum box; Jasmine, Lilly and Jack with nest boxes; Jasmine and Lilly picking browse for the possums.



# Non-toxic Ant Removal

**I RECKON THIS SUBJECT WILL BE OF INTEREST TO MANY PEOPLE.** How to get rid of those pesky ants without poisoning the poor little fellows. Well, I've got the solution and at the risk of appearing to be a complete fruitcake I'm going to share it with you.

Recently I found that black ants had nested under the floor boards of my front verandah. It's not a wide verandah, less than a meter and a half wide in fact. Every time I walked outside and trod on the boards above their nest the ants would pour up onto the verandah and swarm everywhere. They didn't bite me but it's not much fun sitting down to enjoy a cup of tea while big, agitated ants scurry all over your feet and up your legs.

Nope, couldn't live with that! They had to go.

The question was how to get rid of them without being unkind. Poison was out of the question of course. I thought about hosing them with water and disrupting their nest. I figured if I did it often enough they'd get the message and vamoose. While I was contemplating solutions to this dilemma, I remembered a woman I'd seen on TV years ago. She was psychic and could allegedly communicate with animals. She had a very big following of people who brought their pets to her for help. She seemed a genuine and compassionate person. During the TV show, she talked about a time when ants had invaded her kitchen. She solved it by 'communicating' with the ants and telling them they had to go. She gave them 24 hours to leave, after that she would take stronger action.

Twenty four hours later they were gone.

Not bad I thought. That looked like a truly painless solution...wonder if I could do it? I must confess to having some doubts. I've always thought of myself as being about as psychic as a wet sock, but what the hell.

I didn't fully trust my powers of telepathy and decided the better way to handle this would be to write the ants a letter, after all that's the way lawyers do it. If you put it all in writing there can't be any confusion, right?

So, I wrote them the following note.

Ants,  
You must leave my verandah  
I was here first.  
Please leave or I will remove you  
R

You'll notice that I didn't use any niceties like, Dear Ants or Kind Regards, R. I was p'ed off and didn't want them to think I was just some wimp they could ignore!

I folded the note and placed it under the front of the verandah next to a paver where they had been nesting. That was Sunday. Next morning I left for a workshop in Brisbane and returned two days later.

When I got home I checked the verandah. No ants.

Nah, this can't be happening. I walked around the verandah stamping my feet. Only one ant appeared. One ant, down from two hundred ants just two days before! Not a bad result I thought. I was even more excited to know that my ants had a high literacy rate and that only one of them couldn't read.

The next day that one ant had gone too and I haven't seen a black ant since. How extraordinary. If I hadn't witnessed this with my own eyes I probably wouldn't have believed it. Such an easy and painless fix.

Of course some people might have a teeny bit of a problem believing this story but I swear it's true. After all, who would be silly enough to publically admit writing an eviction notice to ants and then claim the ants acted on the message if the story wasn't genuine? Not me, I can tell you.

Rowley Goonan  
(The Ant Whisperer)

P.S. Sorry, not available for ant rescues, I only do birds.

## Wildcare Australia Thanks...

**GREENCROSS VETS AT NERANG** for their kind donation of three 500g containers of Impact. It was greatly appreciated as it is such an important but expensive item for joey carers.

**THE BURLEIGH JOEY SCOUTS** who presented Wildcare Australia with six Ringtail Possum dreys which they made with the help of their leader, Regina King. The Burleigh Joey scouts have been helping Wildcare by making dreys for many years now and the little Ringtails have been very comfortable in the homes the children have made. This year I received the dreys on behalf of Wildcare and gave the group a short presentation on Wildcare, the local wildlife and the reasons the animals need our help.

On behalf of the Wildcare and the Ringtail Possums, I would like to thank the Burleigh Joey Scouts for their kind donation.



PHOTO // S. GRIFFIN

# Glimpsing the Future

Jacquie DeVond

As a reptile carer and Wildcare Australia's Reptile Coordinator for the Sunshine Coast, one of the most disturbing trends emerging is the increasing number of unwanted "pet" reptiles. With reptiles being suddenly the coolest of pets for children and supposedly easy to care for in the eyes of the public, plus the fact that they are readily available at most pet shops, their ownership is soaring. Like most fads or trends the novelty eventually wears off, or, as children become teenagers, their interests begin to change.

Calls are becoming more frequent with callers saying their teenager doesn't have time for their pet lizard anymore and the poor thing just sits neglected in its tank, can we find a new home for it? I guess at least we should be grateful that these people are being responsible and want to do the right thing, as opposed to the other type of phone call. Every time I hear someone say they released a pet reptile will it be 'ok' my heart sinks, to think of a captive bred reptile having to fend for itself in the wild. Its chances of survival aren't great.

Aside from the fact that the person is potentially introducing disease into the wild population, affecting the genetics, or placing species in ecosystems that they don't occur in naturally, it is a cruel and irresponsible thing to do. All reptiles have feelings and no doubt suffer stress at suddenly having to find/catch their own food when they have been reliant on regularly supplied meals. Not to mention having no idea of the potential dangers from dogs/cats, roads and not so nice humans.

My personal view would allow no one to keep reptiles as pets, but that is never going to happen so at least limit supply to a few select breeders and no selling through pet shops. I feel a lot more responsibility should fall on pet shops and backyard breeders to advise potential owners of the basic facts about the species they sell. Members of

the public can simply purchase a pet reptile as long as they have the appropriate eco access permit and the cash. For many pet shops and breeders it is quick easy money and if the reptile dies through lack of care, well there is the chance of another sale. Displaying species specific information would allow for a more informed decision from a potential buyer, this should include:

- Species requirements to keep the reptile healthy and happy (e.g., how many reptile owners have been advised they need to replace the U.V. globes every six months otherwise the U.V. component isn't effective).
- Is it practical to keep more than one reptile in an enclosure – will they fight, breed, stress?
- Estimated feeding and housing costs over the life time of the reptile.
- The full size the reptile will reach as an adult (e.g., very few new owners are told the 20-cent size freshwater turtle will grow to the size of a dinner plate or the cute 30 cm python will end up weighing over 8 kgs and will be incredibly strong).
- The life span of each species (e.g., how many Blue-tongued skink owners realise they have a pet for at least 25 years).

I can see there will be a need for re-homing services and sanctuaries for unwanted pet reptiles in the future. As I write this, another freshwater turtle has arrived, the father saying his little girl "doesn't want it because it isn't cute anymore." I read on an animal welfare website that people give their children "live toys" and as sad as that is I think in a lot of cases it is true.

My advice for anyone thinking of purchasing a reptile is to do some species research so you can make an informed decision, you might find a reptile isn't quite as appealing as you first thought.

## THE GOLD COAST REPTILE CENTRE (G.C.R.C)

We offer the following services:

Removal and Relocation  
Education  
Demonstration  
Reptile Courses

Handling  
Husbandry  
Identification  
Enquiries

For more information, phone 0430 288 826.



Aspiration pneumonia is a relatively common condition in hand-reared wildlife. Also commonly referred to as inhalation pneumonia, aspiration pneumonia occurs as a result of foreign material inhalation. This subsequently results in inflammation of lung tissue often followed by infection and tissue necrosis. In hand-reared wildlife, the inhalation of milk formula is by far the most common cause of aspiration pneumonia.

The severity of the pneumonia often depends upon the type of material inhaled, the amount inhaled and the response time between the event, diagnosis and appropriate treatment. The lungs are not a purely sterile environment and bacteria and fine particles are inhaled continually. In a healthy lung there is a system in place to rid the lung of these fine contaminants. However, when larger particles or substances such as milk are inhaled, the lung cannot clear this effectively and this foreign material provides the perfect environment for infection, thereby causing serious respiratory complications.

The clinical signs of aspiration pneumonia can include one or many of the following:

- Coughing or sneezing
- Unwillingness or inability to feed
- A 'clicking' noise whilst breathing
- Depression
- Lethargy
- Open-mouthed breathing
- Purple/bluish tinge to nose

Unfortunately by the time an animal shows some of the last signs above the lungs may already be badly compromised and can carry a poor prognosis.

**Recognizing the signs of aspiration and obtaining prompt veterinary attention is essential in improving outcome.**

Immediate signs of aspiration may include:

- The animal appearing to "choke" or "cough" whilst drinking
- Fluid coming out of the animal's nostrils
- Excess fluid coming from the animal's mouth immediately following feeding

In some instances, these signs may be very subtle and a carer may not necessary notice that the animal has aspirated.

It is imperative that when an animal aspirates, prompt veterinary treatment is sought so that a firm diagnosis and appropriate treatment can be prescribed.

Veterinary diagnosis of aspiration pneumonia is aided by a thorough and detailed history. Vets rely on the wildlife

carer for this. Other diagnostic techniques can include radiographs, chest auscultation and bronchi alveolar lavage. Treatment by a veterinarian generally involves prescribing a broad-spectrum antibiotic. Further treatment for more severe cases may involve oxygen therapy, anti-inflammatories, sedation, bronchodilators and nebulisation. It is important for carers to understand that in some cases euthanasia is the most humane treatment.

**By far the most effective method of treatment is prevention.** The vast majority of cases of aspiration pneumonia occur because of incorrect feeding technique or incorrect feeding equipment.

The following guidelines should be followed whilst feeding young animals:

- Administration of fluid (whether water, milk or medications) should not be given faster than the animal can swallow. The smaller the animal the smaller the quantities that should be offered at each interval. Remember also, if the animal is debilitated (eg, dehydrated, weak, malnourished) the animal's responses may not be as quick as a healthy animal and the rate of administration should be adjusted accordingly.
- Use the appropriate sized feeding equipment. The smaller the animal, the smaller the feeding equipment. Use small-gauged syringes, cannulas and fine teats to feed small animals.
- Ensure that the appropriate sized hole is placed in latex teats. An inappropriate sized hole is by far the most common cause of aspiration in bottle-fed joeys. Joeys are not designed to drink milk quickly – look at mum's teat – the supply of milk is slow and steady. Joeys are designed to drink slowly and although it may be more convenient for us, humans, to place a bigger hole in a teat so that the animal drinks more quickly, it is not good for the animal. Check teats before each feed to ensure that the hole has not become too big or has split. As a general guide, for a joey less than 1kg the diameter of the hole should be no more than 0.5mm. For a joey 1kg to 2kg, the hole should have a diameter no more than 1mm.

Despite the best efforts of wildlife carers, there will still be some instances where aspiration pneumonia may occur. To ensure the best prognosis for the animal, it is always best to be honest with your veterinarian and provide a thorough and detailed history so that appropriate treatment can be prescribed.

The quicker treatment is obtained, the better the prognosis.

# Coordinator Reports

## *Echidnas and Small Mammals*

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IT HAS BEEN A VERY QUIET TIME FOR ADULT ECHIDNAS WITH HARDLY ANY RESCUES (touch wood...) and still only one puggle in care. "Cami" is just about ready for release. Special thanks to Gail who brushed off her echidna caring skills this past month to help raise her when things were so busy for me. Hopefully early 2010 will see no burrow-young or dispersing young getting into trouble.

It has been raining antechinuses of late! We have had quite a number of litters of both Yellow-footed and Brown Antechinuses coming into care as a result of orphaning.

It is amazing that such tiny creatures can quickly turn a sane well-rested wildlife carer into a walking zombie in a matter of only days. So tiny but so much work! Many thanks to the handful of carers who took some of these litters on, including Natasha, Naomi, John and Dianna. Many thanks also to the staff at Currumbin Wildlife Hospital who also took on a few litters for our sleep-deprived carers!

Karen Scott

## *Koalas*

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THE KOALA SITUATION IN SE QUEENSLAND HAS EASED OFF SOMEWHAT SINCE MY LAST REPORT.

The number of trauma-related koalas coming into care has slowed considerably. Unfortunately though, we have seen an increase in the number of diseased koalas coming into care. Most of these animals have been in the advanced stages of the disease and have been euthanased.

The past few months have seen a considerable increase in the number of koala infants coming into care. This has placed a lot of pressure on me. At one point I had 7 infants in care and had already passed on another 7 to other koala carers. It has been many years since we have seen such a high number of koala infants coming into care. Many thanks to a wonderful network of koala rescuers who assisted me tremendously in the past few months, taking care of many rescues and releases which left me time to tend to the joeys in my care. Special thanks to Kiersten, Shawn and Mimi for the extra travelling and night-time rescues they did.

Just a quick story to share of one very lucky little koala called "Simpson". Simpson was only 900 grams when he fell from his mother, from a height of 20 metres up a large gum tree. On the way down he hit the roof of a house and then the concrete driveway. He sustained some internal bleeding and an injury to his hind leg. The resident rushed him to the Currumbin Wildlife Hospital where he was x-rayed, given pain relief, antibiotics and intravenous fluids. He came home with me that evening. After just 3 hours of resting, he decided he had had enough bed rest, climbed out of his basket, climbed the tree forks and joined the other koala joeys (limping and all...) and started to eat. He still hasn't stopped eating! He recovered from his injuries within a week and is now a cheeky little koala that does nothing but eat!

Karen Scott

## *Reptiles*

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THANKFULLY THE FIRST HALF OF REPTILE SEASON HAS BEEN A LITTLE QUIETER THAN USUAL. With a few months still to go, we have scheduled a few 'Introduction to Caring for Reptiles' workshops for the beginning of the year. Additionally, we will be holding new species-specific courses for those who have attended the introductory course and wish to specialise in a particular group of reptiles (eg, Basic lizard course).

If you have attended the Introductory Reptile workshop and would like to care for reptiles, please contact us. Also, if you require any assistance with getting set up please let us know.

Kristie Remmert & Jai Hennessey

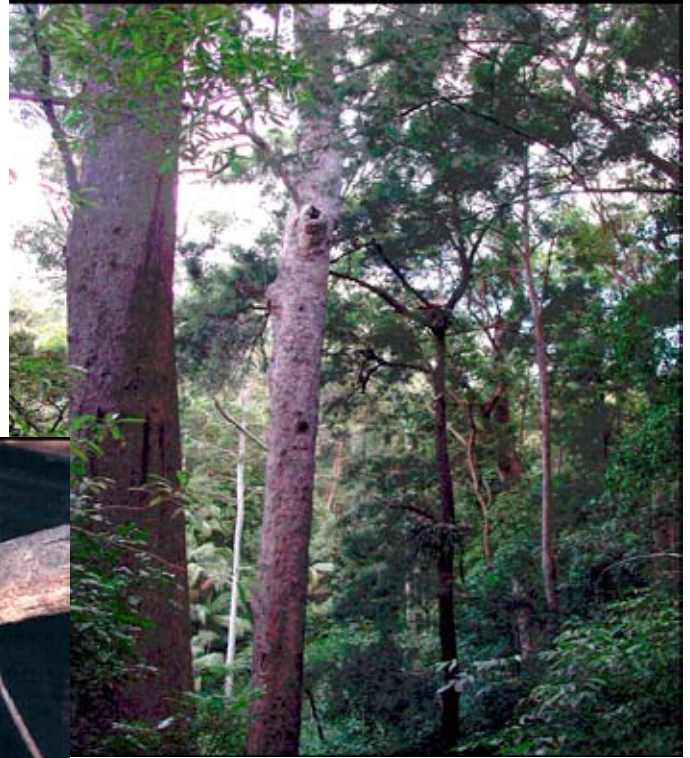


# *BUSHWALK: focus on feeding*

Possum carers who are interested in learning more about providing appropriate natural diets for possums and gliders may like to join our "Focus on Feeding" briefing and walk in the bush at Lower Beechmont to identify possum food sources. These sessions will last about two and an half to three hours and will be limited to six people per session.

If you require more information or would like to participate, please email [news@wildcare.org.au](mailto:news@wildcare.org.au). Please also indicate whether you would prefer a weekend or weekday, morning or afternoon.

Eleanor Hanger



PHOTOS // ELEANOR HANGER



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## The Importance of Home.

Home is a great place. It offers protection, a place to harvest food and a comfy resting place to put down your head. Around our home we know our neighbours and we know the trouble makers on the fringes.

Animals are no different. They all have home ranges. They all have an area with which they are more familiar. Some animals like kookaburras fiercely guard their home ranges and work in family groups to protect it. Beware any new kookaburras that come along. Yet others are quiet and seem to casually greet animals as they move through. These animals have home ranges but are not territorial. Echidnas fall into this group. Interactions show there is no behavior shown by individuals to defend their territory. It seems the only interest shown by echidnas toward each other is during the breeding season and that can certainly bring a trail of them together.

So does this mean that apparently less territorial animals regard their home and territory with a lesser degree of

importance than more aggressive territorial animals do?

No, definitely not. Home still has familiarity. It has recognized food sources, burrows and areas to avoid. Even if the animal has been away from that area for a while, original home ranges still often provide the best chance of survival for that animal.

Another consideration and an important reason for returning an animal speedily to its home territory is the possibility that it may have dependant young. Milk-dependant young may be waiting in burrows or hollows and may perish if the parent doesn't return. Most babies need regular feeding, however there are a few exceptions. Echidna young can live for days without feeding. If you are caring for echidnas always talk to your species coordinator if you have any concerns.

Vicky Carlsson

## Frogs – Queensland Frog Society



It's a nice warm evening and it has been raining for most of the day. The wallabies have taken cover, the possums are a little cautious coming out in the rain, the birds have been sitting idle most of the day waiting for short periods when the rain eases up, but....the frogs are loving it! Whether you live in suburbia or the bush, chances are you will hear the chorus of frogs on balmy rainy nights through summer.

Although frogs make up only a miniscule percentage of rescued wildlife, we receive a lot of enquiry calls from members of the public wanting information about frogs.

Some of the more frequently asked questions include the following:

### **Where can I buy frogs or tadpoles?**

This is by far one of the most common questions asked! We have even had people wanting to purchase tadpoles in winter. So the answer... you don't! As with all native wildlife, they are protected and it is illegal to move protected wildlife, and that includes spawn (eggs), tadpoles and mature frogs.

Moving frogs at any stage of their development is irresponsible as this contributes to the spread of the Amphibian Chytrid disease which is responsible for killing adult frogs. This is a serious disease which is thought to be responsible for the decline of many of our native frog species. Do not contribute to the spread of the disease. Under no circumstances should tadpoles or frogs be moved to satisfy someone's need to "have frogs".

### **So how do you get frogs – the legal way?**

Set up a frog friendly garden with a pond of course! The frogs will come to you. Even if you live in suburbia, they will still find it. Be patient though – don't expect a lot of frog activity in your new pond in the middle of winter. Get the pond well established, and at the right time of the year you will be rewarded. And remember, even if you could purchase frogs, without a frog-friendly garden, they wouldn't stay for long would they?

### **What to do with a frog that has been accidentally transported in a produce box?**

Yes, you get home with a beautiful hydroponic lettuce and low and behold there is a tiny little stow-away hiding in the leaves. What to do? Don't be tempted to just pop the little fellow in your garden. Remember the Amphibian Chytrid disease? These little stow-aways have the potential to spread the disease to local disease-free frog populations. And besides, our local conditions are not suitable for a frog that came from 1000+ kilometers away.

Contact either the Queensland Frog Society (07 3366 1868) or the Department of Environmental Resource Management. They will arrange to have the frog collected.

### **Toads – What is the most humane method of euthanasia?**

Like all non-native species, it isn't their fault that they were brought to Australia. Any method of eradication must be humane.

The Department of Natural Resources advocates freezing as a humane form of euthanasia. The RSPCA advocates placing the toad in a plastic bag in the refrigerator for 3 hours and then placing it in the freezer. This seems to be the most aesthetically acceptable method for us, humans. Under no circumstances should toads be killed with topical chemicals.

And the most important question. Is it a TOAD? Remember that we have many species of frogs in Australia that are brown. Some small brown frogs can be easily mis-identified as young toads. Check carefully before you dispose of them.

If you would like more information on frogs, visit the Queensland Frog Society website at [www.qldfrogs.asn.au](http://www.qldfrogs.asn.au). The website contains lots of useful information on local frog species, attracting frogs to your garden and details of frog related activities.

*Information extracted from Queensland Frog Society website.*



# Special Presentation *Small Mammals and Reptiles*

by Geckoes Wildlife Presentations



**Sunday 7th February 2009**

## **Morning Session – Mammals**

Learn more about some of our unique mammals. Learn identification tips, behaviour and get up close to some of these secretive animals.

## **Afternoon Session – Reptiles**

Learn to identify various reptiles and see firsthand some of these remarkable animals.

This a great opportunity for wildlife carers to see firsthand some of our remarkable wildlife, that you might not otherwise get to see, and to learn more about these unique groups of animals from an expert.

There will be live animals on display.

Children welcome with adult supervision.

***Presented by Geckoes Wildlife Presentation***  
***[www.geckoeswildlife.com.au](http://www.geckoeswildlife.com.au)***

### **Cost for day:**

Members - \$5 per adult – \$2 per child.  
 Non-members - \$10 per adult - \$2 per child

**Please register by emailing – [education@wildcare.org.au](mailto:education@wildcare.org.au)**

## *Info Sessions* ***Exudative Dermatitis in Brushtail Possums***

After recently completing an Honours degree looking at exudative dermatitis (ED) in possums, I would like to invite wildlife rehabilitators (particularly possum carers) to a short information session about the findings of the study as well as what this means for possums with ED, rehabilitators and veterinarians. The ED information session will run for about one and a half hours and I am happy to offer a few sessions at different times on different days to try to cover the needs of individual carers.

If you are interested in attending, please contact me via email

[k.kielly@yahoo.com.au](mailto:k.kielly@yahoo.com.au) and let me know whether a weekday or weekend would be preferable. I will also have a report available for the next newsletter, so stay tuned.

Kathryn Kielly



# Community Involvement

## Community Speakers Team

IN OUR EVERYDAY ACTIVITIES MANY WILDCARE MEMBERS PROVIDE COMMUNITY INTERACTION AND EDUCATION WITHOUT EVEN THINKING ABOUT IT. We carry the Wildcare banner and represent the organization even as we pick a bandicoot up from the road, collect a possum from a veterinary surgery or detangle a bird from fishing line.

Our members speak at schools, Scout and Guide groups, Rotary, Lions and Land for Wildlife, the Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary Careers Day, TAFE and more. We represent Wildcare at community events such as the Beaudesert, Beechmont and Mudgeeraba Shows providing a valuable service to the community and more specifically to those members of the public who wish to increase their knowledge of our unique wildlife.

Some of our school visits are done in conjunction with the Australian Veterinary Association Program – AVA PetPEP, which sends a team of speakers to a given school. The speakers may include local veterinarians, the RSPCA, local council animal control officers and of course, us! The message is always about responsible pet ownership and our message is all about minimising the negative impact of domestic animals on wildlife.

The Community Speakers Team was initiated in 2008 to coordinate and ensure a “best match” of Wildcare representatives to an event. The team is led by Laura Reeder with invaluable support of Eleanor Hanger and Liz Meffan.

There are a few activities already on the 2010 calendar with more on the way. Our focus, wherever we participate, is to get a wildlife care message out there – and we need you to deliver it.

Can you approach your local school and offer to speak to a class or two? If the teachers don't know about us and what we can offer, we don't get asked. We need to be proactive. The local gardening group might like some input on wildlife friendly gardens. The local sports club might be encouraged to plant native trees and shrubs around the oval, thereby offering not just food but refuge for birds, lizards, bats, possums, koalas.... you get the picture!

Those lovely bats need help with their public image. If you have a soft spot for bats, we have a spot for you.

Maybe public speaking is not your forte. Can you prepare materials for use? Can you help by putting a program together with one of our speakers which is age and content appropriate? Can you help with Powerpoint? Do you have artistic skills for display boards and worksheets?

We hope to eventually have a few animals which are kept under a display permit. The children's smiles and their absolute fascination with a live animal are amazing to see. It is guaranteed that there will be more questions and greater interaction with the speaker who brings an animal along.

The Community Speakers Team welcomes Amy Low, Meghan Halverson, Sally Purbrick-Illek, Shelley Keehn, Deborah Turnbull, Deb Melville, Jodie Alderton, Lana Tremayne, Corinne Lendon, Kelly Pringle, Naomi Mumford, Louise Robinson, Nicole Lechner, Alecia De Piazza, Tonya

Howard, Natalie Rasmussen, Kylie Tsangaris and Kyron Armour. Your offers of help are really appreciated. While it seems that there are many helpers, we cover a great geographic distance and have sometimes found that Wildcare can't send a representative. So we are always in need of more people. Hey – the more the merrier, many hands make light work....and all that!

We REALLY need a “meet and greet” of all team members. It would be best to offer several dates and times, perhaps piggy backing on the workshops so that everyone finds a convenient slot. The following sessions are proposed but to be confirmed:

- 21 March (after Intro to Orphaned Mammals) - Gold Coast
- 28 March (after Possums workshop) - North Brisbane
- 10 April (after Orientation workshop) - Beerwah
- 

If you have not already done so, a “Positive Notice blue card” is required for work with children, whether it be in paid or voluntary employment. For more information refer to the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian [www.bluecard.qld.gov.au](http://www.bluecard.qld.gov.au) or 1800 113 611.

I'm in Canada until 2 March, coordinating events from there. (Three cheers for email!) However, due to another commitment I can't attend the Greenbank Show on 13/14 March. I need volunteers to setup/dismantle the display, interact with the public, sell Wildcare shop goods and have a good time – it's a show after all! If you can help, please let me know as soon as possible. Many Thanks.

Laura Reeder  
talks@wildcare.org.au



Pam Elliott and Karen Barney at Beaudesert Show

PHOTO // LAURA REEDER



## Beaudesert Fair

**WILDCARE AUSTRALIA WAS INVITED TO APPLY FOR A STALL** (\$15.00 for community/not for profit groups) at the Beaudesert Our Habitat, Our Home sustainable lifestyle fair and we were successful in our application. Set-up time was 6.00am so Carla Harp, Michelle Hanger, Brett O'Reilly and I made our way to Beaudesert and with some difficulty, due to the lack of signage, found the park where the event was to take place.

As we were one of the first groups to arrive, we were able to select a wonderfully shaded site and set about erecting the marquee. Brett discovered tree climbing skills he didn't know he had, until the Wildcare sign needed to go up. Soon after, more helpers arrived; Natalie Rasmussen with her husband and three children, Jasmine, Lilly and Jack. We waited and waited but the crowds didn't materialize, however we had a lovely day speaking with the few people who passed by and the other stall holders.

The Scenic Rim Regional Council provided free trees and other environmental products and there were lots of activities for the children, which they enjoyed immensely, in between assisting at the stall. My sincere thanks to those who helped. I enjoyed your company and your assistance was greatly appreciated.

Eleanor Hanger



Natalie and Jasmine Rasmussen



Carla Harp, Natalie and Jasmine

PHOTOS // EM HANGER

## Beechmont Markets



PHOTOS // C. MCDONALD

**THE SMALL FRIENDLY COMMUNITY OF BEECHMONT HAS A LOCAL MARKET DAY ONCE A MONTH.** Once or twice each year, Wildcare Australia is invited to have a stall at these markets and on 15th November 2009, Eleanor Hanger, Carla Harp and I went along. It was just for half a day and was really a lot of fun ..... plus we were able to get our message to lots of people in the area.

They were generally a wonderful, friendly group of people - stall holders and public alike. The local member even came along and showed considerable interest. One member of the public also delivered an injured lizard that Carla quickly attended to. Besides the shaky start with difficulty setting up the marquee, it was a worthwhile few hours spent.

Dianna Smith

## Education Report

**MANY THANKS TO OUR NUMEROUS COORDINATORS AND TRAINERS** who have helped put together a great calendar for January to April 2010 which is provided on the next page.

Please remember to register for the workshops at least 5 days before hand. This makes it easier for us to plan workshop venues and training material.

We are now including more half-day workshops to accommodate the busy lifestyles of many of our volunteers. Most of these workshops are scheduled for early morning starts so that we can be finished by midday - lots of time left in the day for shopping, the beach...or just feeding animals and cleaning enclosures?

We are also very fortunate that we are able to offer the Wildlife Anatomy & Physiology workshop with Dr

Tania Bishop again this year in March. If you have not had an opportunity to attend this workshop as yet, I would strongly encourage you to find the time to do so. It is a great opportunity to learn new skills and learn from a very experienced wildlife veterinarian.

We have also scheduled a special presentation by Martin Fingland from Geckoes Presentation to be held in February. I would strongly urge everyone to take the opportunity to attend this special presentation and see up close some of our amazing wildlife. Many of the animals that will be there are species that you don't really get a chance to see up close. Please remember to book early to avoid disappointment.

Karen Scott

# WILDCARE AUSTRALIA

**Training Program - January to April 2010**



## January 2010

Date	Workshop	Venue
Saturday 30th January	First Aid for Native Wildlife	Gold Coast

## February 2010

Saturday 6th February	*	Orientation Program	Gold Coast
Saturday 13th February		Introduction to Caring for Reptiles	Gold Coast
Saturday 13th February	*	Orientation Program	Murgon
Sunday 14th February		Possums - Basic	Gold Coast
Saturday 20th February	*	Fluid Therapy for Wildlife - Basic Course (Morning)	Gold Coast
Saturday 20th February	*□	Fluid Therapy for Wildlife - Advanced Course (A'noon)	Gold Coast
Sunday 21st February		Introduction to Caring for Reptiles	Brisbane
Saturday 27th February		Native Birds - Basic Course	Gold Coast
Sunday 28th February		Gliders	Brisbane

## March 2010

Date		Workshop	Venue
Sunday 7th March	*	Orientation Program	Brisbane
Saturday 13th March	*	Echidnas	Gold Coast
Sunday 14th March		Introduction to Caring for Reptiles	Banrawah
Saturday 20th March		Flying Foxes – Adults and Sub-Adults	Gold Coast
Saturday 20th March		Introduction to Caring for Orphaned Monkeys	Gympie
Sunday 21st March		Introduction to Caring for Orphaned Monkeys	Gold Coast
Saturday 27th March		Wildlife Anatomy & Physiology Workshop <i>See separate flyer – \$45.00 fee applicable</i>	Banrawah
Sunday 28th March		Possums – Basic Course	North Brisbane

## April 2010

Date		Workshop	Venue
Saturday 10 <sup>th</sup> April		Orientation Program	Banrawah
Sunday 11 <sup>th</sup> April	*-G	Reptiles – Basic License	Gold Coast
Saturday 17 <sup>th</sup> April		Native Birds – Basic Course	Banrawah
Saturday 17 <sup>th</sup> April		Macropods – Basic Course	Murgon or Gympie
Sunday 18 <sup>th</sup> April		Gliders	Gold Coast
Saturday 24 <sup>th</sup> April	*-G	Reptiles – Basic License	Gold Coast
Saturday 24 <sup>th</sup> April		Possums – Basic Course	Gympie
Sunday 25 <sup>th</sup> April	*	Komax – Rescue, Triage and Assessment	Gold Coast

\* Indicates half-day workshops.

□ Introduction to Caring for Reptiles Workshop is compulsory before attending these workshops.

□ Experienced wildlife carers only - limited places available.

**Please try to register for workshops at least 5 days before the scheduled date.**

**Please register by emailing [education@wildcare.org.au](mailto:education@wildcare.org.au) or telephone 07 55272444 during business hours.**

# Basic Anatomy & Physiology

*Presented by:*

## **WILDCARE AUSTRALIA**

PO Box 2379 Nerang Mail Centre Q 4211

Telephone: 07 5527 2444

Facsimile: 07 5534 2617

Email - education@wildcare.org.au

### Date

Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2010

### Time

9.00am to 4.30pm

### Venue

Australian Wildlife Hospital,  
Steve Irwin Way, Beerwah

### Cost

\$45 per person.

Cost includes training notes and consumables associated with the practical section of the workshop.

### Training Material

The training material will be posted or emailed to you prior to the workshop to enable you an opportunity to review it prior to the workshop.

### What to Bring

Notebook

Pen, pencil, highlighter

Lunch and drink

### Lecturer

Dr Tania Bishop BVSc (hons) MACVSc (Avian Health). Dr Bishop has 10 years experience as a wildlife veterinarian and has been a wildlife carer for the last 16 years. Dr Bishop has worked at Currumbin Wildlife Hospital and Australian Wildlife Hospital.

### Workshop Format

The Morning Session will consist of theory covering the basic physiology and anatomy of all the major body systems with reference to major species differences. Session will also include conditions you are likely to encounter as a wildlife carer and will cover the relevant physiology behind these to give a greater understanding of the mechanisms behind them - eg pain, shock etc.

The Afternoon Session will consist of a practical component including a post mortem session to reinforce the morning theory session. We will aim to give an understanding of what is normal and also emphasise the difference between post mortem changes and true pathology. The session should give you an idea on how to conduct a basic post mortem and to be able to identify some of the most common causes of death that wildlife carers will be confronted with.

## **REGISTRATION FORM**

### **Wildlife Anatomy & Physiology – 27<sup>th</sup> March 2010**

*Please note that registrations will be limited to 20 people per workshop.*

*Registrations will not be accepted without payment.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Postal Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Post Code \_\_\_\_\_  
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 Email: \_\_\_\_\_

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☐ Cheque/money order enclosed.

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