

WILDCARE AUSTRALIA

EDUCATION WILDLIFE REHABILITATION RESEARCH

October 2004, Issue 35

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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Christmas Party



Join us at
"Narrowleaf"
to celebrate the festive season
and
to relax after another very busy year
Saturday 27th November
at 5 pm



Further details from the Wildcare Office
07 5527 2444

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Quote of the Month.....

*The earth is not a mere fragment of
dead history, stratum upon stratum
like the leaves of a book, to be
studied by geologists and
antiquarians chiefly, but living poetry
like the leaves of a tree, which
precede flowers and fruit— not a
fossil earth, but a living earth.*

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Hi Everyone,

Over the past couple of months I think I have had my eyes rudely opened to the real plight of our native animals in Southeast Queensland, northern New South Wales and in fact all over this planet.... "What?" I can hear you say. Yes, I admit it. I have always thought I was up to date, well aware of all that was going on around me and a strong environmentalist..... What a wake up call I have had!

Here at the Steve Irwin Conservation Foundation Koala and Wildlife Hospital we have had an enormously busy few months. We have treated over 3000 animals, received over five thousand phone calls and given advise on animal care and welfare to people all over the world. All of this since March this year, and we have yet to officially open.

At 2.32 am one night last week, I received a call from a lady in America, who desperately needed advise on how to care for a turtle she had found on the road. She couldn't get a Vet to take an interest in it, let alone treat it for its wounds. I found it amazing that she had to phone us here in Australia after she said she had made endless calls over there to get help.

Last month we treated eighty-three koalas and over three hundred and sixty other native animals.... I have gone back in time to the first couple of years after we formed Wildcare, to manning the phone seven days a week. While we do a lot of good and in fact have some amazing miracles, we also see and hear some horrible things. One such was the lady who rang a couple of weeks ago, at about quarter to eight in the evening, to ask for help for her family, as the snake on her back veranda was very

aggressive and biting itself, due to the fact that she had poured two kettles of boiling water over it.

Was I upset? Yes. Did I feel like biting her head off? I certainly did, but instead I nicely said that what she had done was incredibly inhumane and cruel. She then gave me a lecture on how she and her family were gifts from God and how they couldn't be replaced. I informed her that neither could that particular snake nor its future family and that they too were God's gifts if that is what she believed in. She then proceeded to ask me whose philosophy that was and then hung up on me four more times because she didn't like my answers. On the final call she said she had finally rung some other people and had got the same response from them. She wanted to know why everyone was picking on her!!!!!! Needless to say I couldn't help her or the snake as she refused to divulge any information.

This incident left me wondering, with the massive land clearing, habitat destruction and people like her, what kind of species we are. We take no values but our own into consideration . Whether we want a new house, a new car or whether we let our dogs loose to roam without restraint at night to protect us, without considering all the other species that call our backyards home too. Thus I have always liked the following and try to live my life by it

In one hundred years from now it won't matter how big my house was, what sort of car I drove, or how much money I had in the bank because I was a positive influence on the life of this planet

Keep well, Gail
President Wildcare Australia

It should not be believed that all the beings exist for the sake of the existence of humanity
Maimonides *Guide of the Perplexed* (1190)

COMING EVENTS

Wildcare Australia Education and Training

To confirm the date and venue of any workshop or course the **Brisbane** community should contact Kim Alexander or the Wildcare office. The **Gympie** community should contact Paula Rowlands or the Wildcare office, and people from all other areas should contact the Wildcare office (between the hours of 8.00 am and 4.00 pm Monday to Friday) on 07 5527 2444

Costs

Please note that all Wildcare workshops are free to members. There is a fee for courses and workshops run by other persons or groups.

Lunch

Please bring your own lunch to workshops and courses. Only coffee, tea and biscuits are available.

October	23	Possums of SEQ Brisbane
	24	Carers' Meeting GC
	30	Macropod—furred to pre-release
	31	Basic Baby Bird 2
November	6	New Carer Orientation GC
	12	Brisbane Trivia Night
	20	Assessment and Management of Sick and Injured Native Wildlife
	27	Christmas Party
December	4	Snakes and Lizards GC
	5	New Carer Orientation Brisbane
	11	Introduction to Caring for Orphaned Mammals GC
	18	Carers' Meeting Brisbane

Workshops - Dates and Venues

PLEASE

remember to register for any workshop you may wish to attend and always check dates, times and venues of events with the office 07 5527 2444 or check the website a few days before the event

CHANGE TO WORKSHOPS

You may have noticed in the last WILDNEWS newsletter that there was a number of changes to the bird workshops however many members are still attempting to register for workshops that are no longer being conducted. There have been some slight changes to other workshops as well.

Enclosed with this edition of WILDNEWS is a brief list of workshops for the remainder of the 2004-2005 education year for your records. If you have previously registered for upcoming workshops can you please check the updated list carefully to ensure that there have been no changes.

A reminder that the Wildcare website is kept up to date with any changes to workshops, so please if you have registered for a workshop, check the website a few days before to ensure that no details have changed or telephone the Wildcare office (Monday to Friday) to check the details and your registration.

As all of our trainers are volunteers and all have very busy lives, there are sometimes situations that arise that result in workshops having to be changed. We appreciate your understanding in this respect.

WEBSITE - www.wildcare.org.au

Wildcare Nursery

If you have any photos that you would like included in the Wildcare Nursery section of the website please email them through to admin@wildcare.org.au with a few words about the animal ie species, age, why it came into care etc.

Carers Resources

You will find most of the forms and documents that you will require as a Wildcare member in this section of the website including record keeping forms, progress charts etc.

Brisbane Trivia Night

Where:

Filtronics Building, Metroplex Avenue, Murrarie (Same place as the meetings and workshops)

When:

Friday the 12th of November, 7pm.

How much:

\$8.00 and that covers dinner as well.

**RSVP**

(preferred) by 5th of November to Kim Alexander,
Rochelle Manners or the office.
thealexanders@austarnet.com.au
rochellemanners@yahoo.com.au



It will be a night of fun and entertainment, with prizes galore.

Bring your friends and come along for a social evening!

NEW OFFICE COMPUTERS

Anyone that has worked with non-profit organizations in a fundraising capacity, will be aware how hard it is to secure funding. There are many grants available to the non-profit sector but in some instances, there are thousands and thousands of equally-worthy organizations vying for the limited funding available. But we continue to submit grant applications wherever we can but like thousands of other organizations, are generally not successful.

Imagine my surprise in June while sitting in a management committee meeting, when our secretary Kylie Patrick casually announced that we had been successful in obtaining a grant for just over \$5,000!!! Several cheeky committee members had been keeping this to themselves for several days just so that they could see the look on my face!

Our grant application was for 2 networked computers and a laser printer for the Wildcare office. The new equipment was a welcome relief for our office volunteers who have persevered with old temperamental computers for so long. The networked computers mean that 2 office volunteers can coordinate rescues during the busy season without delays.

The new computer equipment was proudly funded by the Queensland Government's Gambling Community Benefit Fund.

A huge thank you also to Comparto Pty Ltd of Toowong who provided us with a very competitive quote for the equipment and installed the equipment at the Wildcare Office.

NATIONAL WILDLIFE CARERS CONFERENCE 2004

Several members of Wildcare attended the second annual NWCC which was held at Penrith in Sydney in July and it proved to be a huge success.

This year emphasis was placed on forming a national body to further wildlife rehabilitation throughout the country. Queensland has already made headway in this respect with the formation of the Queensland Wildlife Rehabilitation Council (QWRC) and after this years conference other States will hopefully shortly follow in Queensland's footsteps.

This year the conference consisted of speakers in the morning sessions with the afternoon sessions consisting of workshops on various species.

Some of the papers that were presented included:-

- Dr Rupert Woods - Wildlife Investigations and Wildlife Carers: An introduction to the Australian Wildlife Health Network. (This network is a fantastic opportunity to keep up to date with developments in wildlife health across the country).
- Karen Trendler - Illegal Wildlife Pet Trade (Karen is the Founder and Director of "Wildcare Africa Trust" and gave us an insight into their organization. If you are interested in their work (ever imagined hand-raising an orphaned rhino or elephant?). Have a look at their website - www.wildcareafrika.org

The workshops provided a great opportunity to learn from highly respected wildlife carers and veterinarians from across Australia including:

- Libby Hall - Seabird Transport, Housing and Rehabilitation
- David Vella Bsc - Wound Care in Reptiles
- Heather Parsons - Land Birds – Food Composition and Diet
- Dr Mike Cannon - Land Birds - First Aid and Wound Management
- Dr Anne Fowler - Common Presentations of Injured Native Turtles
- Libby Hall - Rehabilitation and Release Techniques for Wildlife
- Audrey Koosman - Emergency Training and Procedures

If you are interested in any of the papers from the conference, most of them will be available for download from the Fauna Oz website – www.fauna.org.au

Next year the conference will be held in Queensland. A steering committee will be formed to organise the conference which will consist of members of various wildlife rehabilitation groups from across the State. If you are interested in helping with next years conference please contact Karen Scott on (07) 5533 8125.

PUMPKIN FESTIVAL

Recently several of our members from the Gympie area attended the Gympie Pumpkin Fest which is a huge event in that area. They made a variety of handmade items to sell at the Festival and set out to educate the public about wildlife issues and Wildcare. They raised a total of \$350.

Thanks should go particularly to Barbara and Marie Newson, Paula Rowlands and the rest of the Gympie crew.

KOALA LEAF

If anyone has a property that has accessible koala food trees growing on it and they would be happy for koala carers to come occasionally and "trim" a little could you please contact either Karen Scott (Gold Coast region) or Kim Alexander (Brisbane/West region). Finding good quality leaf for sick and injured koalas is becoming harder and harder to come by.

Record Keeper's Rap

Keeping Records of Animals in your Care

Record Keeper Position up for grabs

You will see the position is advertised in this Wildnews edition. Please feel free to contact me if you are interested in applying and finding out more about what the job entails. It is a great way to learn about our wildlife and the trends of what enters care and why. I'll still be managing all **emailed** carer records and finishing the annual reports to date, so keep emailing your records to me. The handwritten records are also still being collected and entered onto the database by some data entry helpers.

Submitting Electronic Carer Records

Thanks to all the carers who are submitting their records to me electronically. There are now 38 carers sending their records as MS Excel files and 6 submitting their records in MS Word. This saves me re-entering each individual record, particular if done in Excel, hence saving a lot of time and duplication. I know even some of you who regarded yourselves as 'computer-illiterate' are managing very well! So well done, and I hope you are finding it just as convenient to submit your records this way. If anyone else is interested in converting, let me know and I'll get you started.

Some carers have been querying the format with the Excel – I know this is very specific – it is all to do with data sorting and formulating the summary figures at the end, for the annual report. Even the difference between having a space in the code or not

alters the sorting order. Yes, computers aren't quite that intelligent yet... So, bear with me, and up until now, I have been happily making these adjustments to everyone's reports as I receive them until the sender notices and follows the format. But for this reason, it is always best to use the records file that I send back to you to add on your next months' records. That way you can also see if I'm querying anything that you've sent.

Emailing records on Excel also allows me to clarify any unusual details or missing info with you immediately after. With handwritten records, in the past, this has been happening months down the track, when the carer has long forgotten the animal concerned.

Friendly Reminder

Please make sure you have handed in all your records for the 2002-3 and 2003-4 records years – I'm still waiting on just a handful of carers- *you know who you are* – to submit their outstanding records before I can finish the reports for the last 2 years (that's records for the months of April 2002 to March 2003, & April 2003 to March 2004).

If you are having any difficulty getting all this info together, please contact me and I'll arrange a time to visit you to help you sift through it all.

Kiersten Jones

Record Keeper – WILDCARE AUSTRALIA.

PH 07 5576 3625

kierstenj@bigpond.com

NEW MEMBERS to 19th October

WILDCARE AUSTRALIA welcomes the following new members:

Amanda Inglis, Ashmore; Shaun Cox, Southport; Emma Hutton/Duncan Emery, Currumbin Valley; Judy Jambas, Nerang; Stephen Outran, Capri; Jenean Jackson, Highland Park; Christopher Gowland & Narelle Smith, Thornton; Lynda Hepowrt & Neil Smith, Currumbin Valley; Mathew & Neil Coulcher, Eight Mile Plains; Zoe Shipley, Redbank Plains; Sean & Sophie Robbie, Robina Town Centre; Kerry Clifford, Sinnamon Park; Robyn Parker, Nerang; Nalda Paterson, Imbil; Laura Reeder, Karana Downs; Jo Amey, Jimboomba; Kathleen Gillians, Mudgeeraga; Michelle Dowson, Miami; Desleigh Marks, Helidon; Kay Walker, Southport; Elizabeth Pitt, Shailer Park; Tao Lee, Burringbar; David Whiteoak & Toni Lyons, Manly West; Sarah Chilton, Narangba; Richelle Haack, Thornlands; Belinda Kidd & Mathew Chesire, Advancetown; John Gowland, Springwood; Uwe & Hildegard Struenkmann,

Tallai; Kylie Lang, Logan Central; Lisa Owen, Holmview; Graham & Caron Mitchell, Dakabin; Michael & Carmel Adamson, Cleveland; Julie & Simon Bannister, Crows Nest; Jacki Seam Hinchey, Tuchekoi; Caron Isaac, Hatton Vale; Judy Donovan, North Tamborine; Angela Evans, Redbank Plains; Donna Hayes, Jimboomba; Alison Deahm, Modanville; Kate Farrugia, Lismore; Rhianna Blackthorn, Ballina; Katharine Kumberly, Margate; Lenore Bastow, Murwillumbah; Debbie McGowan, Barellan Pt; Susan Scott, Mornigside; Leonie Galvin, Reedy Creek; Kristie Remmert, Upper Coomera; Joshua/Jeanette Birse, Sunrise Beach; Family Owen-Jones, Willow Vale; Michele Malt, Wellington Point; Vicki Pender, Capalaba; Craig Fitzgerald, Tamborine; Kristy Kay, Fortitude Valley; Terrie Van Mens, Capalaba; Louisa Kunze, Wellington Point; Christopher Slag, Booval; Anne Russell, Kholo.

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

MT GRAVATT SHOW REPORT

Our first stint at Mt Gravatt Show went off quite well. While we didn't make a huge profit for Wildcare, we certainly made sure that plenty of people in the Mt Gravatt area and surrounds are now aware of Wildcare and what we do.

Kim, Luke and Sam set up the display on the Friday evening, and what a wonderful job they did. By the time I got through the Logan Road carpark everything was done. I timed it very well (even if I do say so myself).

On the Saturday, Ken Bridge was handing out information packs and key rings like a demented monkey. It was very entertaining for the rest of us watching him work the crowd. He could easily have sold at least another 100 key rings but unfortunately we'd run out. Ken really is the ultimate showman, as Trish has said before.

Rochelle spent the weekend sitting on the cold concrete helping children to put their newly purchased birds together. The look of pleasure at their completed birds was wonderful. Many happy little faces, thanks to Rochelle.



We were able to sell some of the raffle tickets and the chocolates were very popular with people coming to take a look at our exhibit.

Kim and Mark were back on the Sunday afternoon to pack everything up and take it all back to Narrowleaf.

Thank you to everyone who manned the exhibit over the two days (and all those who helped out in other ways). You know who you are, and Kim and I certainly won't forget. Please keep the event in mind for next year! We have high hopes for the second time round.

Margaret Christison

POSITIONS VACANT

Many of these positions are currently being filled by Wildcare members who have several roles in the organization and who are already pushed to their limits with their paid employment, other Wildcare commitments, animals and rescues (oh, and their families). Any small contribution that you can make to the organization in any of these positions is a huge help.

OFFICE VOLUNTEERS

With the busy spring season already upon us, we need more members to volunteer to help in the Wildcare office. If you can spare one day a week, one day a fortnight or even just a few hours here or there it would be very much appreciated by our already overburdened office volunteers. Some of the duties of the office volunteers include answering the telephone, updating the membership database, helping stock the

Wildcare Shop, photocopying etc. If anyone is interested in helping out, please contact Trish Hales, our Assistant Secretary and Office Administrator.

GRANTS

We are looking for someone to help with submitting grant applications. We need someone to actually help write the applications but we also need the assistance of someone to simply obtain quotations for items for which we wish to submit applications. Most applications are fairly straight forward, quite often being questions requiring short answers or 'Yes' and 'No' answers. If you are interested please contact Karen Scott.

GOLD COAST PET EXPO



Rochelle and Andrew Manners

As many of you know, and some may not know, Wildcare had a stand at the recent Gold Coast Pet Expo, held on the 25th and 26th of September.

It started off a bit shaky with only two weeks notice. But there was a great opportunity of a stall inside so we decided to take it. I was fortunate to be able to run the stall for the weekend!

Kim and I set up on the Friday evening to make an outstandingly presentable stall for all to see. On Saturday Stewart MacDonald came down to help and did an

outstanding job talking about snakes and lizards to all the interested patrons. On Sunday Andrew Manners came for the day, giving out more brochures than any one else and talking to people about wildlife care. Kiersten Jones also came to assist for a number of hours and helped us find a home for a baby lorikeet someone had brought in for care. Their help was much appreciated.

We handed out about 20 information packs over the weekend where some people were interested in becoming new members. Also we made a great number of people aware of our 24-hour emergency phone line through



Stewart MacDonald

the brochures and sales of the great new pens!

Takings at the show amounted to about \$200 so there was a bit of money to help with the fundraising, but the real success was being about to talk to dog and cat owners and advise them on wildlife issues.

Thanks again to those who helped and just a reminder to get in early if you would like to help out at any shows next year, help is much appreciated. We'll be doing a few events next year, in order to get our name out there, fundraise and educate.

Rochelle Manners



Kiersten Jones

POSITIONS VACANT

CHOCOLATE SELLERS

As most of you know, our most consistent fundraising activity is the selling of Cadbury chocolates. It takes little effort to leave some chocolates at your place of work and there is no hard sell that goes with it. We make 100% profit on the sale of chocolates so it is a fantastic way of helping Wildcare pay the administration costs of the organization, that helps keep us afloat financially and helps to cover the cost of our education program (workshop notes, refreshments etc have to be paid for somehow). The chocolates are available on consignment so there is no initial outlay required by you. If you think you can sell some

chocolates please contact either Trish Hales on the Gold Coast or Rochelle Manners in Brisbane.

REPTILE COORDINATOR - GOLD COAST

As Brett Gray has recently moved to Brisbane, the Gold Coast needs a new Reptile Coordinator. If you are interested in taking on this role, please contact a member of the Management Committee to discuss the duties of the position. You do not necessarily need a huge amount of experience with reptiles, just an keen interest in the species and the willingness to learn more about them.

DO YOU KNOW THE REASONS WHY?

I would like to take you through a few points on the importance of reporting animals you have in care.

Unfortunately both new and old carers are not always reporting in. As co-ordinators we are responsible for the health and well being of the animals in your care. All carers are required as part of their obligation to Wildcare to report all animals that come into their care as soon as possible. In the case of birds they will not automatically be removed from new carers unless it is for one of the following reasons.

1. The species co-ordinator does not feel the carer has the correct facilities to house that species or the time it will take to care for it. eg. (the bird may need feeding every hour and the carer works full time or their aviary is too small for the size of the bird).
2. The carer does not have the experience to properly care for that species e.g. the carer has not attended a workshop on a particular species which may have special requirements.
3. The carer is not listening to advice given to them by the co-ordinator.
4. The bird is not being fed the correct diet or fed at the correct times. (We have had cases where baby magpies which require feeding every hour have been fed twice a day).
5. The bird is sick or injured and has not been vet checked e.g. the case of a bird with a badly broken wing being left three weeks without seeing a vet, when it should have been euthanased immediately on rescue.
6. The bird has been kept in too small a cage and has feather damage. (Feather damage can lead to the bird being kept in care much longer than necessary, so should be avoided at all costs.
7. The bird is of a species that needs to be grouped together. This applies to most species of baby birds. It is not always necessary for adults, but babies of most species do better if raised together.
8. Migratory species. Black faced cuckoo shrikes and pheasant coucals **MUST** go into a good sized aviary (the smallest being 12 – 15 ft long) as soon as they can perch. These birds can fly at a very young age and damage feathers or can break bones, or cut the skin at the top of their beak if kept in incorrect facilities. If you do not have these facilities contact me immediately.
9. Birds in your care are being exposed to domestic pets, excessive noise, such as television, radios, mowers, children screaming, or handling by children.
10. You do not contact your co-ordinator prior to release of hand raised birds, to check they are self sufficient and to ensure a suitable release site.
11. Animals are becoming imprinted by being allowed to fly around the house instead of being housed in an aviary.

Any information or advice about a bird in your care should be coming from the species co-ordinator for that group of birds, NOT from other carers. Too much conflicting advice is spread around if you don't get your information from the correct source. Your species co-ordinators are experienced in the diseases and dietary problems birds in the group under their supervision have.

Some veterinary surgeons don't have training in bird diseases and injuries, so do not automatically assume the bird is fine if coming from a Vet surgery or animal refuge. Observe the bird yourself and if you are not sure of the vet's diagnosis, ring your co-ordinator or take the animal to another vet. Don't wait as once a bird is showing signs of illness it usually dies quickly if not treated. Broken wings start healing in two to three days so urgent treatment is necessary.

In the near future we will have a list of species and their housing requirements for you to look through and decide which species you think you would like to care for. We don't encourage new carers to take on too many different species at once. I would like new carers

DO YOU KNOW THE REASONS WHY? (cont.)

to contact the co-ordinator of this species and spend a few hours with them learning how to set up aviaries and cages and to go through diets. Inspections of facilities will be carried out to assist all carers new and old to ensure birds are being housed correctly.

You will also find a list of Workshops that will be offered over the coming year in Brisbane and on the Gold Coast. We would encourage all carers to attend as we are going to try and make them as interesting and informative as we can. Anyone attending the first two workshops in May, please be aware we will be working with bodies, if you intend to bring children.

I must apologise to anyone whose call I have not returned as my darling husband thinks I spend half my life on the phone and deletes some of my messages before I hear them.

Please everyone be aware I work all day Wednesday and Saturday and Friday as from the 16th of April. If you leave an urgent message for me I won't get it until I come home at 7.30 pm that night. I had one case where a baby Magpie lark was left on the back verandah in a box on quite a hot day. We also had a

storm that afternoon. There is no shade on that side of the house and the box was soaking from the storm. Unfortunately that poor little bird died that night. In an EMERGENCY you can contact me at work on Wednesday and Saturday on 55466205 or Friday on 55806205. We can be quite busy at work so please understand if I say, "Could you please ring me back in a few minutes." Please try to use the number for Wednesday and Saturday for important matters only, Friday is OK.

Please don't think any of the co-ordinators are too busy to speak to you. We would prefer you ring us than do something that could harm the animal. If you can't contact the co-ordinator you need, ring one of the other BIRD co-ordinators and they may be able to help you.

I look forward to hearing from you or seeing all the new faces at the workshops.

Karen Barney
Head Bird Co-ordinator



POSITION VACANT: Record Keeper Summary & Selection Criteria

WILDCARE AUSTRALIA seeks a member to take on the role of HEAD RECORD KEEPER, following Kiersten's resignation in June 2004.

Duties:

- Collection and collation of all carer records with the help of assistant and area record keepers.
- Entry of all carer records onto a main records database, and collation of these into annual reports for Wildcare's Executive Committee and for referential access by the EPA.
- Ensure information via statistics meets the criteria expected by the EPA and for the care and optimal release of all animals in care (Eg. Providing exact location where found).
- Keep updated lists of all carers. Ensure that every carer is aware of their record keeping responsibilities, in completing their carer records

correctly and submitting them at the end of every calendar month.

- Be a member of Wildcare's Main Committee, and participate in related duties, including providing a records report at each meeting.
- Revise and update all records forms and records-related information in accordance with improvements and any associated changes to governmental legislation.
- Provide individual reports upon request using data from the carers' records summary report.

Essential:

1. Knowledge and application of MS Office programs (MS Excel, MS Word, MS Access)
2. Effective time management & organizational skills

MACROPOD REPORT

2004 has been an extremely busy year for macropod carers, particularly the past few months. There has been a huge increase in the number of adult macropods hit by cars and attacked by dogs resulting in an increase in the number of orphaned joeys requiring rearing. It has been particularly busy in the Gold Coast region, most likely because of the increased land clearing coupled with the drought.

The pademelons in the hinterland areas have been especially hard hit with an increase in the number being killed by cars. Unfortunately most of the pademelon joeys have also died.

Some of our macropod carers have reached their limit with macropod joeys at present much to the horror of the flying fox and possum coordinators (some of our macropod carers also care for orphaned flying foxes and possums - some coordinators think I am poaching their best carers - perhaps???).

One big development with our hand-reared macropod joeys is that we have just commenced ear tagging our orphans prior to going to pre-release. The ear tags are yellow and are numbered to identify



the individual animal and have Wildcare's telephone number on them. Hopefully this will mean that if a member of the public finds a tagged animal they will contact us to let us know. It is important to know whether our orphans are surviving in the wild after release and this should give us an insight into their movements and survival rates. The tags are large enough to be visible but not large enough that they

will cause the animals any problems in the future. The tagging process was quick and relatively painless (I think the carers needed to be sedated more than the animals did!).

Anyone interested in learning more about what is required for caring for orphaned macropods should contact Karen Scott. We

will be holding a further Macropod workshop on the Gold Coast in the coming months for anyone interested. This will be a full day workshop covering all stages of development. Early next year we will also be holding a workshop on the rescue of adult macropods.

Karen Scott
Macropod Coordinator

KOALA SEASON

Koala Season 2004 is well and truly upon us.

For the first half of this year, most rescue calls for koalas ended tragically. Almost all of the koalas hit by cars died either shortly before or after rescue.

July saw koala season come into full swing. The adult males starting roaming further afield in search of females, the females roamed further (perhaps to get away from the males??) and the usual annual pilgrimage of young dispersing males commenced. We saw koalas turning up in areas where there was not a gum tree in sight. These were predominantly young males trying to find their own niche after being driven out of their mother's home range by older dominant males. These young fellows were

relocated to suitable habitat nearby and were hopefully able to find their own "patch" safely.

Thankfully though the last few months have brought about fewer deaths and we have been able to successfully treat and release some of the sick and injured koalas and to help those koalas that get "lost" while their hormones are raging.

Unfortunately in the coastal Gold Coast region, development has impacted hugely on the koala population and trying to find suitable habitat is getting harder and harder to come by. Koalas are having to travel further to find mates and suitable food trees.

(cont. page 12)

KOALA SEASON (cont.)

There are very few people in Wildcare that have the facilities, equipment and experience (or even the desire!) to attend koala rescues which means that koala rescues generally fall to myself and my partner Shane, Leigh and Kristine Koppman, Jim and Greer McNeill on the Gold Coast and Kim and Mark Alexander in south/west Brisbane area. It is quite common for us to attend rescues in the dead of night and to travel over 150kms to rescue and seek veterinary care for a single sick or injured koala.

We are extremely fortunate that we have the support of wonderful vets who have supported our koala rescuers over many years. The vets at Currumbin Sanctuary, Dr Michael Pyne and Dr Vere Nicholson, have always been available to see wild koalas that

needed treatment. Dr Kobi Donohue of Coastvet Burleigh Heads is always thrilled to see a koala in his practice and Dr Geoff Wilson of Coastvet Robina has also kindly offered his professional services to our koala carers. And of course our own Dr Jon Hanger who has been instrumental in the care of sick and injured koalas in South East Queensland for many years.

If anyone is interested in learning more about what is involved in attending koala rescues or would like some "hands on" experience, you can contact either myself or Kim Alexander.

Karen Scott
Koala Rescuer

Additional Macropod Workshops

If anyone is interested in attending a full day workshop on the care of orphaned macropods please contact the Gold Coast Macropod Coordinator Karen Scott.

The full day workshop would include all stages of development from unfurred through to release. It is proposed that the workshop will be held on the 28th November 2004. If you are interested in attending please register your interest with the Wildcare office or directly with Karen.

It is proposed to run a workshop on the rescue of adult macropods. This workshop will only be suitable for more experienced carers. If anyone is interested in attending such a workshop on the 22nd January 2005 please let either the Wildcare office or Karen Scott know.

CHOCOLATES

Don't forget that for every \$200 worth of Cadbury fundraising chocolates you sell you are entitled to a \$20 gift voucher from the Wildcare shop.

Disposal of dead Wildlife—Response

I read your article in the Wildcare newsletter about the disposal of dead wildlife. I am a volunteer in the Vertebrate Zoology section of Queensland Museum as well as being the coordinator of The Gap WildlifeCare.

In fact the Museum does not only want rare species but is grateful to receive bodies of often quite common species. In order to have a picture of the distribution of species the Museum needs a specimen - a fairly undamaged body to skin, or the skeleton or skull if the rest is badly damaged (this is what I often do!). If there is no record for an area, then they will accept the animal/bird/reptile/frog/bat etc. They are quite keen to get tiny unviable pouch young where the adult has been identified as they are hard to ID without an adult. It is essential that they have data - the exact location where the animal was found, the date, the collector, the circumstances eg road kill. The animal should be placed as soon as possible into a freezer, then ring Heather Janetzki or Andrew Amey who are the collection managers on 3804 7715 to see if the Museum would like it. Unfortunately the Museum does not have adequate staff to collect donations.

There will be an article in the next R'n'R on the subject.

Penelope Hacker

WILDTRAVELS

TRISH & TERRY'S AMAZING BAT ADVENTURE

It had been seven years since our last real holiday, other than two days here one day there. We wanted to get away, but not just to sit on a beach or sight see endless big cities, so we researched through our bat resources as to where we could go to observe and learn at the same time and of course we needed to do this out of baby bat season. When we had finished we were booked through 17 cities and 3 countries in 9 weeks all in time to attend the 2nd Annual Wildlife Carer's Conference in Sydney at the end of July.

I won't bore everyone with the logistics of finding helpers to look after our bats or the last minute release of 70 micro bats filmed by Totally Wild, or the last minute rescue on the eve of departure, except to say we were very happy campers when we boarded our plane in Brisbane secure in the knowledge that we were ready for anything and hopefully prepared for most things.

Our bat adventures actually started in Arizona via trips to Kartchner Cavern and the Sonora Desert Museum. Those were of particular relevance to me as I grew up in the area and attended University in Arizona. Like Australia, Arizona has a quite unique flora and fauna diversity found nowhere else and these trips started to prepare us to fully experience our first Bat Conservation International (BCI) workshop on echolocation techniques in the Chiricahua Mountains of Arizona. The BCI course was over eight days and was conducted at the Western Research Station in Portal, Arizona. Portal is at the 5000 ft elevation and is world renowned

for its bio diversity of plants and animals. We shared the station with 15 other bat enthusiasts and as a bonus, researchers were carrying out ongoing research with owls, rattlesnakes and mountain lizards. The natural beauty of this area was breathtaking and we cherished every opportunity that we could to get outside .

Daytime had us learning the nuances of Peterson, Anabat and Sonabat echolocation systems and evening saw us mist netting and harp trapping bats,

then light tagging them and recording the echo imprints into our computer programs. We felt that by knowing these systems we could identify various bat species in a given area before releasing our own micro bats back in Australia after rehabilitation and they would stand a better chance. We trapped 271 bats in total, accounting for 16 different species, including the Lesser Long Nosed Bat that pollinates the agave plants and the sugaro cactus. No bats no tequila equals no fun on Cinco de Mayo.

Our next big adventure was a hurried arrival in Miami to catch our plane to Brazil with a dozen other enthusiasts plus the BCI staffers assigned to the Amazon trip. We landed in Sao Palo and toughed out a 7 hour layover before boarding our plane to Manaus at the convergence point of the Amazon and Rio Negro Rivers. We then boarded our "see the world from the treetops" airline to the little village of Tefe some 250 kilometres up the Amazon River. At Tefe we boarded our home for the next few weeks, the riverboat of Captain Mo under the instruction of BCI founder Dr Merlin Tuttle.



Hoary Bat

This adventure organized by BCI targeted encounters with a wide variety of bats from fish, nectar and fruit eating bats to frog eaters and vampires. In addition focus was also put on native flora as well as the abundant bird life. BCI provided a local bird expert and our guides were very familiar with all the monkeys, sloths, reptiles, fish and dolphin species encountered.

A typical day would have us up at 4 am and into the canoes for sunrise photos and bird watching, then back to the boat for breakfast, more exploring in the canoes after breaky, back for late lunch. A snooze for those that felt it was needed in preparation for the nights events, while the others went back out to search out sights for the evening bat netting. During this time of the year the river is at its high water mark some 35 feet up which puts one into the

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TRISH & TERRY'S AMAZING BAT ADVENTURE (Cont.)

(Continued from page 14)

canopy of the trees and at times finding land was not as easy as just pulling up on shore. Once the nets were set we would await the bats. Most nights yielded very interesting varieties of bats and in addition to those previously mentioned we captured disc wing bats, tent bats and perhaps even a new species (yet to be confirmed). When our bat bags were full we made our way back to the canoes then on to the main boat where we identified, weighed and measured the bats. After dinner the whole party got a quick discovery lesson on each species and the bats were given a feed of banana or nectar water and released.

Highlights of the trip were many – Trish did a new dance when Captain Mo threw an alligator into the canoe. The Cayman was about a meter long however Trish was not wearing shoes at the time and by the time this is read, the Cayman will be some 3 meters long and she yelled, “crikey”, as she subdued the beast.

I had a similar experience with an iguana that jumped out of the trees and landed next to me, I can honestly say I did not say ‘crikey’ and I do believe the iguana was more scared than I.

We all swam with, caught and ate piranha and Trish had a number of encounters with very large spiders which somehow are very attracted to her.

I did magic tricks for the children and was a big hit with the natives, however Trish thinks they saw only a stupid, white man that would feed their village for a month if they could find a cooking pot big enough. I still can't figure out why my shipmates kept pointing out to Trish the poisonous mushrooms.

Well, all good things must come to an end and as we boarded our torture flight back to Miami, we were on a high, secure in the knowledge that we had made some great fiends, assisted bat conservation and learned so much in such a short time, truly amazing. After a rest in Miami we visited the bat exhibit at Disney and had a wonderful two days at the Lube Foundation in Florida (a research centre for old world fruit bats). We then headed to South Texas to volunteer our services in Uvalde, where we caught up with Dr Gary McCracken, from the University of Tennessee, who stayed with us at Narrowleaf Retreat after attending the ABS conference in Toowoomba in April, earlier this year. Gary is

working on the effects of the micro bat, Mexican free tails, feeding habits over the cotton crops in Uvalde and as an addition looking at the effect of genetically modified crops on insect and bat populations. In conjunction some research students are looking at thermal imaging and bat behaviour. During our time in Uvalde we were fortunate to assist in these experiments and many more and in addition we were taken on private land to observe a bat emergence of some 15 – 20 million free tail bats exiting Frio Cave for the night foraging over the cotton fields.

Next stop Austin, Texas and a trip to BCI Headquarters and an evening at the Congress Street Bridge with BCI's cave specialist Jim Kennedy and his partner. The city of Austin has adopted the roosting colony of free tail bat and has promoted it as a tourist attraction. People in the hundreds flock to the bridge at dusk and cheer on the bats as they emerge to feed. The town's ice hockey team is called 'The Bats' and their theme is 'Bat to the Bone'. I don't think George Thurogood had that in mind when he sang, 'Bad to the Bone', but who knows.

We were fortunate enough to be invited to spend a day with Merlin Tuttle BCI's founder out in the field and later at Bracken Cave now owned by BCI. A great experience, sharing of knowledge, stories, Mexican food, humour and watching some 30 million free tail bats emerge to feed. A truly amazing and unplanned experience. Thank you so much Merlin.

Our next adventure was Bat Boot Camp at Bat World in Mineral Wells, Texas. Yes Trish, even though I was using a Florida road map, all roads go somewhere and even though I was going the wrong way, we were making great time.

Amanda Lollar, who is the co-author with Barbara French of Captive Care & Medical Reference for the Rehabilitation of Insectivorous Bats (the red book bible), also runs Bat Boot Camp. Barbara French who we also had the pleasure of meeting resides in Austin with her bats. Barbara also works for BCI and when you log on to visit the bats on line those images come from Barbara's home in Austin. These two ladies are absolutely amazing people. What a pleasure it was to meet and spend time with them. Bat Boot Camp was very intense, and full on 17 to

TRISH & TERRY'S AMAZING BAT ADVENTURE (Cont.)

(Continued from page 15)

18 hour days was the norm. Again great people, hard work and invaluable hands on experience. The Red Book was our text book. Fortunately I had read the book twice before classes started. Trish, as usual, knew much more than I and helped me keep up with the pace. As the only male in the class I was a bit lost and, mind you, received no pity.

Bat World concluded our Bat holiday in America and we arrived back in Australia to attend the Wildlife Carer's Conference in Penrith NSW.

Now that we are back we have reflected and have been asked to describe the highlight of our trip. We both agree – the opportunity to meet so many great people dedicated to Bat conservation, all doing what they can – truly kindred spirits.

Terry Winberley



AN UNUSUAL LITTLE FELLOW

John Mitchell telephoned me on Saturday evening a few weeks ago to tell me he had picked up an orphaned Swamp Wallaby at Elanora. "Not another one" I thought to myself. We had been inundated with orphaned macropod joeys over the past months and placing them was becoming increasingly difficult. I hoped that the joey was a good viable size that could easily be matched up with others in care the same age. (It is easier to convince someone to take "just one more" if they already have some the same age - if you have got one you might as well have two, or three, or four!).

So John arrived with this little fellow and as we transferred him quickly to another pouch, something just didn't seem right. The fleeting glance that I had of him going head first into a pouch sent alarm bells ringing. There was something very unusual about this little animal. I asked John "Are you sure it's a Swamp Wallaby?". Unlike some of our macropod carers (who shall remain nameless...), John is particularly good at identification and as he has Swamp Wallabies in care, I was confident that he had accurately identified the mother. On close (and careful) inspection so as to not stress the poor little guy more than needed, it became clear that he was very different. His fur was "strawberry blonde" - not

the usual dark chocolate brown of a Swamp Wallaby and he had no pigmentation at all. For his age, a Swamp Wallaby should have dark ears, dark pads on his hands and feet, a dark cloaca and a black nose. This little fellow had nothing - pink ears, pink hands and feet and a pink nose! He did however have the unmistakable smell of a Swamp Wallaby! At first I thought he was an albino but he had dark eyes. So I have since determined that he is a Golden Swamp Wallaby. There have been reports of an adult male Golden Swamp Wallaby around the Elanora area which no doubt is his little guys father. Golden Swamp Wallabies are generally found on Stradbroke Island, they are generally not found on the mainland. He has now bonded with my 2 little male Red Necked Wallabies who are the same age. All are at that "cute" stage where they are learning to hop but haven't quite figured out how to stop once they start hopping and generally end up running into things ie furniture or each other! They are all real little stoogers, hence their names - Larry, Mo and Curly.

For those that have seen him, comments range from "My God, what is that?" and "Oh, isn't he ugly" to "Can I have him?" (and no Roy, you still cannot have him!!). I think he is a very handsome little fellow. I

(Continued on page 17)

POCO THE LITTLE GLIDER



Was it only last Friday, the 20th August that Poco came into my life? I had been having a bad possum time, as I had been a constant visitor to the vet for the previous few days.

Firstly it was a little ringtail girl, given to me as a mate for my little female, Jodie round the same size. I was quite devastated to find that she could not grip, then to realise she actually had very few claws. According to the vet, either a genetic or nutritional problem, but of course she had to be euthenased, as National Parks rules are that if wildlife cannot be released when grown, they must be euthenased. This seems tough, but understandable, as this little girl would never have survived in the wild. She was only 70 gr. when she came in so would not have been able to cling to Mum, hence her coming into care.

Secondly came a baby brushtail that had come from a member of the public, a victim of a cat attack, and also must have had a fall as he appeared to be badly brain damaged. There was no way this little one could survive. Then just after making the vet's appointment for the latter, a phone call came from the Redland Wildlife Care Network pager. 'Can you go to Indigiscapes, there's a pinkie possum about as big as a matchbox.' Disaster! Pinkies that size just can't survive. Do I pick it up and take it with me to the vet? No, I can't do that, so vet first, then Indigiscapes.

When it was unwrapped I was amazed. This pinkie possum had a five o'clock shadow. I whispered in hushed tones, 'It's a glider.' And so Poco, which is Italian for little, came into my life. She is a tiny female weighing only 14gr and my very first glider, after many, many possums. She is probably a squirrel glider, as these are seen in this area.

It is now Monday 23rd and Poco is lapping off a syringe now, like a veteran, having graduated from a catheter. I am feeling woozy, feeding little and often round the clock makes one feel like that, but she is still alive. She needs such a small amount of formula, somewhere between 3-5 mls per 24 hours, so imagine how little she takes each feed. I drag out of bed at night to feed a little creature whose tongue is already flicking in and out as soon as she feels my touch, even though she has only been in care such a short time. Each time I tend to her, wriggling around, upside down, downside up, I feel a great welling up of love for this wee little creature.

Who knows what the outcome will be, but I do know that I will do my best to help her to grow into a big glider and be released with other gliders some time in the future?

Jan Smith



(Continued from page 16)

will have some photos of him on the Wildcare website and will keep posting photos of him as he grows. He has already changed colour from a blonde to a real ginger just over the past few weeks that he has been in care.

Karen Scott

PAULS MILK BOTTLE TOPS

Please start saving the yellow and red "collect-a-cap" milk bottle tops from Paul's milk for WILDCARE. The fundraising committee will arrange a drop off box for these at the office.

WILDLIFE ECOSYSTEMS

New Dates



In order for you to provide the best possible care to your animals for successful release and survival, it is vital that you understand how those animals interact in their natural environment.

Wildlife Ecosystems offers you a fascinating insight into how environmental ecosystems work, the intricacies of environmental interactions, an overview of the southeast Queensland environment, and how you can contribute to environmental protection and conservation.

The trainer, Kylie Patrick, is an experienced environmental trainer. She has worked in the field of environmental education for several years and currently works as an environmental consultant specialising in urban wildlife and management issues.

Cost:- \$176.00 per person. 8 week course on the following dates:-

10, 17, 24, 31 Jan 2005; and 7, 14, 21 Feb 2005; and 26 Feb 2005	6.30pm - 9.30pm 6.30pm - 9.30pm 9.00am - 12.00pm	Gold Coast Gold Coast Gold Coast - FIELD WORK
7, 14, 21, 29 March 2005; and 4, 11, 18 April 2005; and 23 April 2005	6.30pm - 9.30pm 6.30pm - 9.30pm 9.00am - 12.00pm	Gold Coast Gold Coast Gold Coast - FIELD WORK

To register, please contact the Wildcare Office during office hours on 07 5527 2444.



Koala Census

Are you interested in assisting in a "phone-in" koala census?

The **Wildlife Action Group SEQ*** are **looking for volunteers** to operate the Call Centre, taking sightings from the Gold Coast, Beaudesert & Boonah areas.

When?

20-21 November 2004 (Saturday-Sunday)

Where?

QPWS South Coast Office, Kabool Road, West Burleigh

How long?

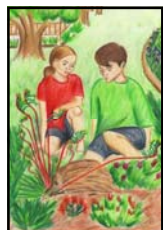
Choose a 4-hour shift, morning or afternoon, Sat or Sun.

Please contact Desley Gyetvay by 16 November, on 5543 6329, to register.

*The Wildlife Action Group SEQ comprises representatives from QPWS, RSPCA, Wildcare, Bat Rescue Inc and WPSQ, amongst others.

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28 DECEMBER 2004**

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