

EMERGENCY WILDLIFE PHONE SERVICE - 07 5527 2444 (24 X 7)

# WILDCARE AUSTRALIA

EDUCATION

WILDLIFE REHABILITATION

RESEARCH

Spring 2007, Issue 46

## *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



Veterinarian - Dr. Jon Hanger  
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Wildcare Education and Training  
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| Assistant Secretary     | Dianna Smith                                  |
| Minutes Secretary       | Laura Reeder                                  |
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| Newsletter              | Eleanor Hanger<br>Renée Rivard                |

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|                   | J. Hanger    |
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|                   | T. Wimberley |

**HONORARY SOLICITOR**

Position Vacant

## SUBMISSIONS

If you are interested in submitting an article or photograph for inclusion in the next newsletter, please submit via the Wildcare Australia email address, subject "Wildnews", before

**23th December 2007**

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

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Wildcare Australia would like to send its  
condolences to the families of

**Lance Ferris**, the "Pelican Man" and founder of  
Australian Seabird Rescue who was dedicated  
to the rescue and research of our seabirds,

and

**Lyn Kearney**, a Wildcare member with a pas-  
sion for saving our flying foxes.

# PRESIDENT'S REPORT



## **NEWSLETTER NOTICE!!**

In an ongoing effort to consider our environment, Wildcare Australia will no longer provide unsolicited print copies of Wildnews to its members. As always, current as well as past issues of Wildnews are available on the Wildcare website at [www.wildcare.org.au](http://www.wildcare.org.au).

Members without computers should check with your local library as most will provide free, limited use of the internet. Alternatively, you can request that a print copy be sent to you by contacting the Wildcare Office on 5527 2444 (Monday to Friday, 8am to 4pm) **before the next issue is released.** Print copies will continue to be supplied to vet surgeries and other supporters.

As always, thank you for your understanding.

## **IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR BAT CARERS**

The Management Committee has recently changed the way in which bat carers within Wildcare are managed.

Those who have/are caring for or rescuing bats, will be aware that it has been a requirement that you provide to Wildcare a copy of your vaccination and titre level blood test results each year. It has been a difficult job maintaining a database of this information particularly in view of the fact that a large number of bat rescuers/carers have had difficulty in complying with this requirement.

The Committee has recently elected to change this procedure. In future, no evidence of vaccinations and titre levels will be required to be submitted to Wildcare.

You will be required to produce this information should you be requested to do so, however. If you wish to rescue or care for bats under Wildcare's Rehabilitation Permit then you **MUST** execute an Agreement (known as the "Bat Agreement") and this must be provided to Wildcare before being able to rescue/care for bats. This Agreement simply states that you agree to ensure that you have had the appropriate course of vaccinations and will ensure that your titre level remains above 1.5. It also states that Wildcare will not be held responsible for any illness, disease or condition that you may sustain should you not comply with the Agreement.

If you have not executed a Bat Agreement please contact either Laura Reeder or Karen Scott immediately so that the Agreement can be provided to you.

Gail Gipp

**Have you seen a koala?**

## **KOALA PHONE-IN SURVEY**

**27 & 28 October 2007**

**REPORT ALL SIGHTINGS**

**PH RSPCA Qld: 1300 ANIMAL (1300 264 625)**

**Or Email: [wildlife@rspcaqld.org.au](mailto:wildlife@rspcaqld.org.au)**

Participating areas include: Beaudesert, Boonah, Brisbane, Esk, Gatton, Gold Coast, Ipswich, Logan and Toowoomba.



The RSPCA, Logan and Albert Conservation Association and local councils working together to save koalas.





# FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT



## **POSITION VACANT!** **TREASURER**

Unfortunately our Treasurer, Vicki, has had to resign from her position as she and her partner are moving to Tasmania. Vicki has been an absolute wonder fulfilling the role of Treasurer for the past ten months or so. Thank you SO MUCH Vicki for all of your hard work and effort – it has been very much appreciated. We all wish you the best in Tasmania. We will be down to visit at the National Wildlife Rehabilitation Conference 2009, hopefully!!

We now have the dilemma of finding another Treasurer. If you think you have the following skills and attributes, please consider taking on this position.

- Sound knowledge of bookkeeping principles
- Experience with Quickbooks (or other computerised bookkeeping program)
- Knowledge of GST basic essential
- Good organisational skills
- A spare few hours a week

If you are interested in applying for this position, please contact one of the Management Committee members or the office.

## **Magazine for Rehabilitators**

The latest edition of the RnR publication produced by the Queensland Wildlife Rehabilitation Council is available for downloading from:

[http://www.qwrc.org.au/RnRNewsletters/Newsletters2007/issue\\_12.pdf](http://www.qwrc.org.au/RnRNewsletters/Newsletters2007/issue_12.pdf)

## **First Aid Kit for Rescues**

All wildlife rehabilitators that frequently (or even infrequently) rescue sick, injured or orphaned wildlife should have on hand a kit to provide basic first aid to rescued animals and birds. A suggested list of things that you should keep on hand include:-

- **Disposable gloves** – for those unpleasant jobs and to protect yourself from disease
- **Small scissors** – for cutting teats to remove small joeys from dead marsupials
- **Small tweezers (stainless steel and plastic)** – for removing debris from wounds and parasites
- **Cotton gauze bandage, Vet-wrap® and sterile non-adhesive dressings (eg Melonin®)** – all used to keep wounds clean
- **Betadine® solution** – to use as an antiseptic to clean wounds
- **Sodium Chloride for Irrigation (bottles or small plastic vials)** – flushing wounds and eyes

- **Sterile syringes of various sizes (1ml, 2.5mls, 5mls, 10mls and 20mls)** – flushing wounds, injections and feeding
- **Roll of cotton wool or Soft-ban®** – to provide support for fractured limbs
- **Alcohol Swabs** – for cleaning injection bottles and fluids and disinfecting skin
- **Glucodin® powder** – to treat shock in all animals and birds
- **Cotton Buds** – for cleaning wounds
- **KY Lubricating gel** – emergency covering for wounds

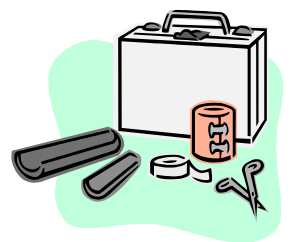
As you become more experienced you may wish to include in your kit the following items:

- **Diagnostic Torch** – good for checking pupil response, ears, pouches, etc
- **Stethoscope** – for auscultating heart and lungs

If you would like to learn how to use these products and how to provide emergency treatment to animals and birds, register to attend the First Aid for Native Wildlife. This course is free for members of Wildcare or is \$15 for non-members.

Remember –  
be prepared!

Karen Scott



## **WILDLIFE FRIENDLY TIPS FOR YOUR FRUITS & VEG**

To help keep wildlife off your fruit trees or  
out of your veggie patch...

Use **COTTON BAGS** over individual fruits, like pawpaw,

Or

Use **COTTON MESH** (not nylon) pulled very tightly over fruit trees or around your veggie garden.

# FROM THE OFFICE

## Missing Our Secretary

We have sorely missed our wonderful, multi-talented Secretary/Office Coordinator, Trish Hales, who is off with friends on a well deserved overseas holiday. We look forward to her tales of their escapades in Europe!

We have managed to keep the office operating with help from the regular staff, who have worked extra hours and assistance from others, who have pitched in to give some time in the office, or to man the phones from home during office hours. Without your help we would have had great difficulty maintaining our service.

We are still taking orders for our new Wildcare shirts. A sample of all the sizes is available in the office for you to try. As well as shirts, there are vests, long-sleeved, fleece jackets and hats. Because of the involved logo, the embroiderer needs a minimum of about 10 so depending on how many are on order there may be a bit of a wait in getting them back. If you need them mailed, please add an additional \$8 postage.

We had a happy surprise when opening the mail recently - a \$500 donation from the Gold Coast City Council. Attached was the following note:

"On behalf of the broader Division 5 community then, I offer my thanks and appreciation to all of the management committees and helpers and carers and trainers, who help enrich our community and make it a better place.

Peter Young,  
Councillor for Division 5."

That means all of YOU!  
Dianna Smith  
Assistant Secretary

## Wildcare Shop News

### Christmas Pressies

Soon we will be stocking some beautiful Christmas decorations depicting Australian wildlife including possums, echidnas, koalas and green tree frogs. They would make great gifts for friends, particularly for those overseas. They will hopefully be in the Wildcare office in the coming weeks.

### Brisbane Shop Coordinator

We will soon have shop products available for purchase in the Moorooka area. Renay Robb has kindly offered to run a small shop for the benefit of Wildcare members. We hope that this will be up and running by the end of October.

### New Books

CSIRO Publishing have just released some fantastic books and have some more on the way.

Just released titles: "Shorebirds of Australia" and "Tawny Frogmouth".

Titles to be released in the coming months include: "Bettongs, Potoroos and the Musky Rat Kangaroo", "Platypus", "Native Mice and Rats" and "Cockatoos".



These new books will be stocked in the Wildcare Office as they are released. If you would like one put aside, please contact the Wildcare office volunteers.

Also, shortly to be released is the paperback edition of "Australian Mammals: Biology and Captive Management". This is a fantastic book. The hardcover usually retails for about \$240 but the paperback RRP is \$140.00.

Karen Scott

## **WILDCARE CHRISTMAS PARTY!**

16 December 2007 @ 11am  
Daisy Hill Koala Centre  
Outside picnic area

Please bring a plate.

We'll also have Secret Santa gift exchange, so please bring a gift valued at \$10.

Be prepared to have fun!  
Please RSVP to Trish Hales

## **OFFICE HELP NEEDED**

The Wildcare Office operates 8am to 4pm weekdays and is in DIRE need of volunteers. If you have a spare day or even half a day a few times a month, we would love to hear from you.

**PLEASE CONTACT THE OFFICE - 07 5527 2444**

# WILDLIFE PHONE SERVICE

## WILDCARE'S 24-HOUR EMERGENCY WILDLIFE PHONE SERVICE NEEDS YOU!!



We URGENTLY need phone volunteers to cover shifts, especially over the weekends.

The shifts are only 3 hours long and then the next person takes over. Considering we have more than 400 members and we all pitched in, each of us would only have to do around **one shift per month!** That would relieve the ever-increasing

pressure from the same 25 to 30 members who cover the 31 after-hours shifts per week, 7 days a week.

By just giving 3 hours each month, you would be assisting us greatly and you would be helping the wildlife that so desperately need us. With people committed to work and family, it is getting harder to find the help we so much need. You will be given all the correct training and help is only a phone call away.

Please call me on 5545 4799 or 0419 684461 for available shifts.

I look forward to your call soon!!

Liz Meffan

Telephone Coordinator

### Dart Gun

Wildcare has recently purchased a dart gun for the use in the rescue of large macropods. This will be used by Mark Alexander who as a lot of you know handles most of our large macropod calls. I am sure that Mark will put the dart gun to good use.

The dart gun was purchased from funds obtained via a grant from IFAW for which we are extremely grateful for.

Karen Scott

## YOUR DATA NEEDED FOR SURVEY

Nicci Window at the Queensland Department of Main Roads is conducting research on how landscape and road attributes impact on wildlife, specifically road kill.

### SURVEY DETAILS

Mt Cotton Road and Cleveland-Redland Bay Road.

Surveys will be conducted in two, six-week blocks:

- 3rd September 2007 - 12th October 2007
- 3rd December 2007 - 11th January 2008.

### DATA

For each rescue, please try to forward as much of the following information as possible to Nicci:

- Date; Time; Location; Sex; Age (adult, subadult, joey, pinkie); Young present; Any specific information regarding the road (crest, corner, etc).

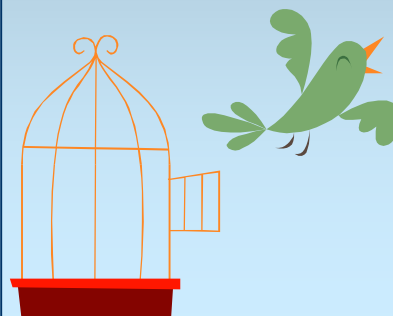
### CONTACT DETAILS

[Nicole.A.Window@mainroads.qld.gov.au](mailto:Nicole.A.Window@mainroads.qld.gov.au)

## CAGE & AVIARY LIBRARY

We continue to receive nice donations of much appreciated equipment. Please let me know if you need any cages or aviaries. We have some great aviaries still looking for a good home, so if you need any get in touch and we will work something out. "Baby bird season" is well underway so don't hesitate to contact me if you need more cages.

Please remember that any equipment borrowed remains the property of Wildcare Australia and can be loaned out for as long as needed.



Dianna Smith  
5530 7340  
0409 223 062  
[dianna@milroy.com](mailto:dianna@milroy.com)



# SPECIES SPOTLIGHT

## Possums

### THE GUT OF THE RINGTAIL POSSUM

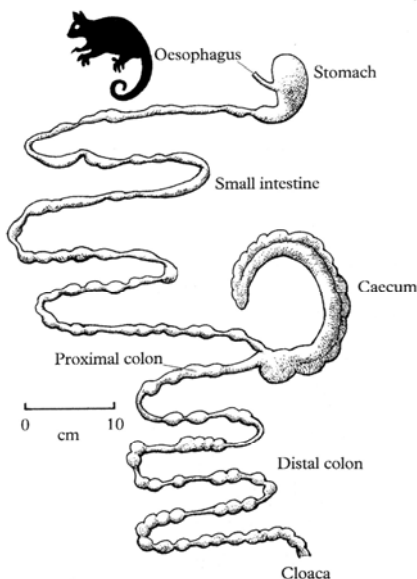
By Cilla Norris

The Ringtail Possum is a **Folivore**, which means that it eats almost purely leaves, such as Native Eucalypts. These are processed in the gut in an unusual and specific way, unlike that of other types of possum. Native leaves make up the sole diet of a Ringtail Possum, along with native blossoms and native fruits.

The energy source obtained from leaves is almost all from the cellulose in the plant fibres. However cellulose is not only a poor food source but is also difficult to break down and digest. So how does a Ringtail get enough nutrition from such a poor diet?

The problem is solved by specialised **Bacteria** in the gut, that break up, ferment and digest the cellulose. This process happens inside a very large fermentation chamber called the **Caecum**. The caecum lies towards the end of the Gastro-Intestinal Tract, hence the description of the Ringtail Possum as a **Hind Gut Fermenter**.

Diagram of the Gastro-Intestinal Tract of the Ringtail Possum.



© Copyright : Prof. Ian Hume

The caecum takes up a lot of space in the abdominal cavity, and can hold a large volume of matter. Within it the specialised bacteria break down, then ferment the cellulose leaf matter to make it easier to digest. Without these bacteria, a possum would neither be able to digest its food, nor receive essential nutrition. Ultimately this can lead to death.

A Ringtail chews and grinds the leaves very thoroughly. The chewed-up leaf-matter is broken down little by little, as it passes through the gastro-intestinal tract until it reaches the caecum. Once in the caecum, the specialised bacteria break down the cellulose further by fermentation. The matter passes into the large intestine, then is excreted through the cloaca in pellet-form.

However there are still more nutrients left in the excreted pellets. To extract the remaining nutrients, the possum 'recycles' the plant matter by eating the caecal pellets it has just excreted. Like this, the partially fermented and digested plant matter goes right through the Gastro Intestinal Tract all over again.

But it's not quite that simple....

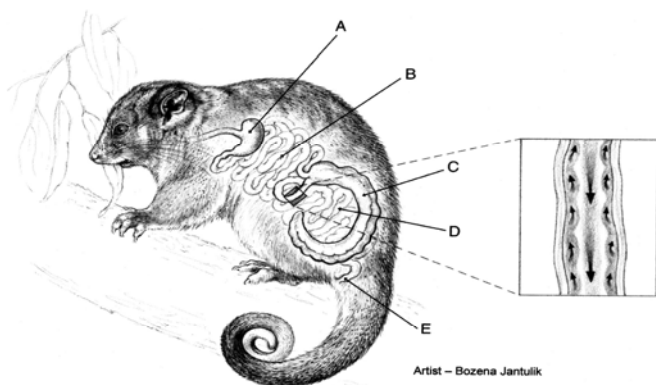
Ringtail Possums produce two types of pellets in the caecum, using a clever separation mechanism, discovered by Dr. Fiona Herron of the University of Sydney. These two types are Faecal pellets and Caecal pellets. Faecal pellets are hard, dark and low in protein, and contain the unwanted re-cycled matter. The possum excretes these at night while climbing through the trees. These are the dark hard pellets seen on the ground in the morning.

On the other hand, the Caecal pellets are soft, greenish and still contain undigested nutrients. It is these that are re-eaten by the possum while it is asleep during the day. A Ringtail sleeping curled up in a ball, with its nose next to its cloaca, consumes the caecal pellets. This caecal matter then goes through the whole digestive process again, so that the remaining nutrients can be digested by the possum. In addition, these nutritious, protein-filled, caecal pellets are fed to the tiny joeys to increase their gut bacteria, in turn enabling them to ferment and digest the leaves that they eat.

The diagrams below show the separation of the plant matter into Faecal and Caecal pellets. Following that, is an explanation of the "switch mechanism" used in the excreting of Faecal pellets by night, and Caecal pellets by day. Dr. Herron used Radioactive Markers as aids to this discovery.

*Continued on next page*



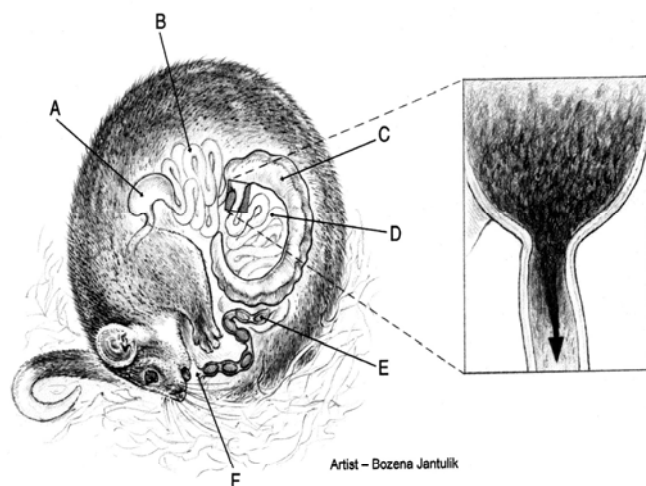


**Diagram 2: The separation mechanism ON**

Where A=stomach, B=small intestine, C=caecum, D=proximal colon and E=anus.

When the ringtail possum is out feeding at night the separation mechanism is 'switched ON'. This means that the small particles and easily digestible materials are returned back into the caecum (the storage tank) for further digestion and fermentation. During this time hard faecal pellets are produced. These are discarded and can be seen on the ground around the trees where the possums have been feeding (See Diagram 4).

© Dr. Fiona Herron 2003

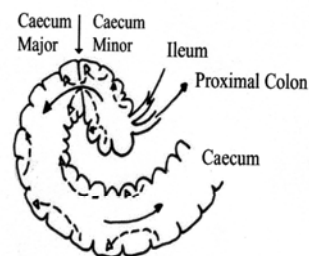


**Diagram 3: The Separation Mechanism OFF = Caecotrophy**

Where A=stomach, B=small intestine, C=caecum, D=proximal colon, E=caecotrophes and F=anus.

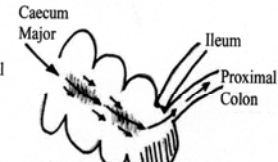
During the day the ringtail possum returns to its nest and curls into a ball. It is at this time that the separation mechanism is 'switched OFF' and the contents of the caecum are released as soft faecal pellets (or caecotrophes) and are eaten directly by the possum (See also Diagram 4). It is in this way that the possum is able to gain maximum nutrients from its feed by this second digestion, without having to exert any extra energy.

© Dr. Fiona Herron 2003



During Hard Faeces Production

During Soft Faeces Production



Fluids and Small Particles

Large Particles (>300 um)

Possible Storage of Fibrous Particles

**Diagram 5: Proposed digesta flow in the ringtail possum**

Initially, it was proposed that separation mechanism was in the proximal colon. However, my studies suggest that due to lack of anatomical structure in the proximal colon, the separation mechanism is more likely to be in the caecum minor as illustrated in the above diagram. However, further studies must be undertaken before this can be confirmed.

© Dr. Fiona Herron 2003

Thanks to Scientists like the eminent Professor Ian Hume, and Dr. Fiona Herron, we can now understand the specialised digestive mechanism of the Ringtail Possum.

© Copyright Cilla Norris 2007

Copied with permission by Cilla Norris.

## Research into Dermatitis in Brushtail Possums

Kathryn Biber

Next year, I will be undertaking a research project on Exudative Dermatitis in Brushtail Possums (both Commons and Mountains). This research is being undertaken in conjunction with The University of Queensland's School of Veterinary Science. The study will look into the pathology of the wounds which will finally give us an idea as to possible causes of the disease and also improve the welfare of the species. I will also be looking at the zoonotic potential of the disease. More information on the project will be made available shortly, as I will be contacting many of you in relation to your possible input into the project. I will also endeavour to hold a couple of information sessions.

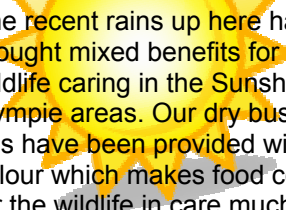
I look forward to working with everyone in hopes of shedding some light on this disease. If you would like to know more, please email me: [katbiber@yahoo.com.au](mailto:katbiber@yahoo.com.au).



# COORDINATOR'S CORNER

## SUNSHINE COAST / GYMPIE

Paula Rowlands & Rachel Lyons



The recent rains up here have brought mixed benefits for our job of wildlife caring in the Sunshine Coast / Gympie areas. Our dry bushland areas have been provided with life and colour which makes food collection for the wildlife in care much easier. On the down side, we had more macropod road hits than expected in the days immediately after the rain stopped. This caused a lot of running around by the trauma carers and a few joeys being brought in for raising.

Fortunately, we are not seeing the huge numbers of possum joeys coming into care as we had last year. Most of our possum carers do have a couple in care at the moment, if you don't.....please call us.

This month we said a sad farewell to two very dedicated carers, Robyn and Neil Taske, who have relocated to North Queensland as a result of land acquisition required for the proposed Traveston Dam. Robyn and Neil dedicated not only their time and land to care for and release macropods but also contributed greatly to the group and our local wildlife causes. We all wish Robyn and Neil the best in establishing their new life up north.

There are a few conservation projects happening around the ridges in the Gympie and Sunshine Coast region at the moment in which we urge our carers to participate. By assisting in conservation actions, we can help protect our native wildlife habitat, reduce the numbers of species coming into care and reduce our workload!! Please contact one of us for further details on these projects.

## POSSUMS

Kathryn Biber

HELP!! We have been inundated with possums over the past few months, with most of our carers being stretched to the limit. Thankfully, or-

phaned Ringtails are not coming in too often, but we seem to have a huge increase in the number of orphaned Brushtails. If any carers are interested or able to care for possum orphans, please contact one of the possum coordinators to let us know. Also, if any carers have a property that they think would be suitable for releasing possums, please let us know as we are getting very short of sites as well.

On a brighter note, we have had quite a few new carers jump on board. These people are now caring for their first orphans. It is always lovely to have new carers join us and we look forward to welcoming more new faces.

Finally, a very big thank you to the new Possum Coordinators. They have taken on their roles brilliantly and have done an exceptional job over their first few months. Also, a huge thank-you to Rachel Lyons for taking over the teaching of the Basic and Advanced Possum Workshops for the Gympie carers. From all the coordinators, thank you to each and every carer for assisting us through this busy season.

## REPTILES

Kristie Remmert & Jai Hennessey

We would like to say thank you to the few members who have contacted us since the last newsletter. There are many more out there we would like to hear from.

Reptile season is in full swing now with lots of lizards, snakes and turtles coming into care, most of which have been due to road traumas, cat attacks (especially whip snakes and green tree snakes) and shovel attacks! Just a friendly reminder to please contact us when you take a reptile into care.

We've scheduled the Reptile Workshop for the 9<sup>th</sup> of December this year at Advancetown so be sure to book your spot by calling the Wildcare of-

fice. Details of the course will be posted on the Wildcare website soon.

We would also really like for the rest of the reptile carers to contact us. We want to get a better understanding of what facilities and/or experience you have so that we can pass on animals to you as they come in. It's shaping up to be a busy season so we're going to need all the help we can get.

## MACROPODS

Karen Scott

Unfortunately, since the last Newsletter, the situation with macropod joeys has become desperate. We have had a huge increase in the number of orphaned joeys coming into care. Fortunately, most have been healthy and have been placed into foster care with our dedicated team of carers.

## BATS

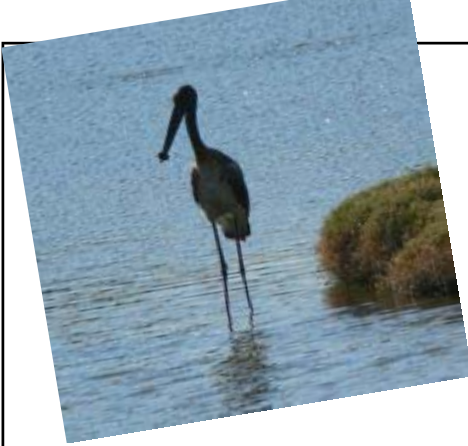
Trish Wimberley

We had a busy winter as the lack of food due to the drought led to a high number of flying foxes coming into care. In the last 2 weeks of winter alone, we had over 40 flying foxes come into care. Luckily, thanks to the great efforts of our carers, we only lost 4! Now that food is more plentiful, we're looking forward to our upcoming release.

Orphan baby bat season kicked off for us on 10 October, for the 4th year straight! So far we have an equal number of Blacks and Grey-Headed orphans and the microbats are chipping in as well.

Thank you to everyone who helped with the bats at Advancetown while we attended the bat conference in Mexico. Great information was gleaned from recent research which will help us with our rehabilitation and release efforts.

# RESCUE STORIES



## LORD OF THE RING

by Helen (Hammy) Forrest

Finally, at 8pm last evening in miserable weather conditions, we managed to snare Dunlop the Jabiru at the Port of Brisbane. Thanks to everyone who helped us with this very special rescue, either by sharing their knowledge or giving up social commitments to assist us.

Dunlop was going into her 6<sup>th</sup> week with a rubber ring on her beak and it was becoming very critical to catch her. It is a mystery how she survived so long without food but she must have gotten just enough with the water through the beak to sustain herself.

It would appear she had been travelling between Narangba Wetlands and the Port of Brisbane. She returned to the Port each Saturday for the past three weeks and stayed until Sunday when she had had enough of us trying to catch her and would leave.

The overcast and rainy conditions appeared to have worked in our favour for the rescue but didn't help us much as we have more wet cloths around the place than dry ones.

Dunlop's condition was poor but because jabirus become very stressed in captivity we felt she had a better chance of a full recovery in the wild. She has been released at

the port and is just wandering around the lake...but looking a lot more grand without the silly rubber ring.

We will get the ring framed.

We decided that Dunlop must have been a girl as no boy could have endured the situation for so long, but as Wayne Young pointed out this was possibly true, because if she had been a boy she would have gotten the ring off. Pretty good comeback!

A very special thanks to Kym at the Port Visitors Centre who rang us at 3pm to say she had spotted Dunlop at the Port (even though we had been there twice that morning without a sighting). Also, thanks to Julia at the Port Visitors Centre who was watching out for Dunlop as well.

There is a five week story to go with this rescue which might be of some use towards the research of this wonderful bird. If anyone is interested let me know and we will send you details.



*Photos and story compliments of Pelican and Seabird Rescue Inc.*

## SEABIRDS

by Rowley Goonan

I was called out to a pelican at Tallebudgera; it was tangled in fishing line and unable to fly. That didn't stop it from swimming though, and they swim VERY quickly.

It took two hours to get close to the

bird. I set the snare and began filleting the first of five large mullet. The bird came waddling in and was looking like an easy catch. Yeah right!

Over the next 30 minutes, it took all the mullet and did not step in the snare once! I started with five big fish and was now down to two tiny pieces. I had that feeling you get when you go to the casino, blow a wad of money and are down to your last two bucks.

The bird was now back in the water relaxing with a belly full of MY FISH!

I followed it along the bank holding up the last two meagre offerings. Against all odds, it came ashore.

I threw the first piece of mullet to bring it in closer. It was still five meters away when I threw the second piece...very high. As it looked up, I charged and dived. Normally a pelican will easily outrun a person from that distance, but it didn't have full use of its right wing. As I went face down in the water, I was just able to catch hold of the tips of two wing feathers. That's all it takes. He was toast!

We carried the bird a kilometre to the car and rushed it to Currumbin Animal Hospital. Two days later Currumbin's head vet, Michael, gave it the all clear. Dianna Smith and I, along with two Asian friends, drove it back to the capture site for release, but not before a quick photo.

These students were thrilled to have had such a close encounter with a big seabird.



# OFFICIAL BUSINESS



## Business arising from Projects

- **Land for Wildlife Program** Wildcare is to conduct a presentation to Land for Wildlife landholders. To be held at Narrowleaf 15<sup>th</sup> September. To be prepared by Karen Scott and presented by Laura Reeder.
- **Rehabilitation Permit** Wildcare has previously requested EPA to consider amending Wildcare's group permit to include echidnas and koalas. Gail Gipp currently liaising with EPA in relation to conditions associated with amended Permit.
- **Rehabilitation Permit Endorsements** Noted that Permits issued to Wildcare carers expired 30 June 2007. Waiting on outcome of group Permit (as above) before further Permits issued.
- **Possum Traps** Six more traps have been ordered using funds from the IFAW grant. (Karen Scott)
- **Disposal of Dead Wildlife** Correspondence forwarded to all local councils in South East Queensland region requesting confirmation as to the appropriate method of disposal of dead wildlife. Only 3 responses received to date. (Karen Scott)
- **Carers Meetings** The format and scheduling of meetings is under review. Noted that previous newsletter requested members to contact Wildcare if they were interested in these meetings re-commencing. Received only 3 responses from members. (Kim Alexander and Laura Reeder).
- **Leighton Contractors** Grant for equipment for use in rescues. Equipment has been purchased and is being distributed (Karen Scott).
- **Drug Permits – Queensland Health Department** Applications for approval were reviewed (Committee)
- **University of Queensland Project** This project is almost complete and has been successful. (Karen

Scott and Kathryn Biber)

- **Bat Register** Discussed difficulties with maintaining the register in view of non-compliance by numerous bat rescuers/carers. (Laura Reeder and Karen Scott)

- **Telephone Roster** Reported that ten new telephone operators have been trained (Liz Meffan)

## Reports

- **Membership** Listed new and renewed memberships (Trish Hales)
- **Treasurer** Report tabled and approved (Vicki Collins)
- **Community Awareness** Tabled. Entertainment Books are still available. (Daneile Holmes)
- **Education** Discussed education and training issues and updates (Karen Scott, Kim Alexander, and Kathryn Biber)

## New Business

- **Coloured Wildcare Brochures** Approved the printing of another supply of 2000 brochures. (Karen Scott and Tonya Howard)
- **Information Booklet** Consideration given to printing an information booklet to take the place of our photocopied "information kit". This will provide details about Wildcare Australia and becoming a wildlife rehabilitator. Draft submitted to committee members. (Karen Scott and Tonya Howard)
- **Petrol Expenses for Trainers** Proposed and approved to assist trainers with prohibitive cost of travel outside their area. Trainers conducting workshops outside their region will be reimbursed petrol expenses. (Gail Gipp, Kim Alexander, Karen Scott and Kathryn Biber)
- **Trainers Fees** Noted that Wildcare charges \$20 per person to external groups for training (minimum 20 people). As most of these workshops are quite time-consuming and require the trainers to take time off from their paid employment, it was

proposed and approved to make a fee payable to trainers when presenting to outside groups. The fee was capped at \$200 per day. (Gail Gipp, Karen Scott, Kim Alexander and Kathryn Biber)

- **Wildlife Expo** Regret that Wildcare will not be able to send a representative this year.
- **Wildcare Letterhead** Noted that no letterhead remained. Two designs were tabled. Final decision yet to be made (Karen Scott and Tonya Howard)
- **Animal Welfare League** AWL is seeking a Wildcare representative for a panel discussion in October at a companion animal conference. (Karen Scott)
- **Brisbane Shop Coordinator** A coordinator will be appointed to operate a small shop in Brisbane for the benefit of local carers. Several people have applied and it was agreed that Renay Robb would be appointed in view of her central location. (Committee).
- **Great Southeast Program** Filming to take place at Wildcare Office in September (Dianna Smith).
- **Voucher in Recognition** Proposed and approved that monthly award to telephone volunteers in recognition of outstanding service be reintroduced. Renay Robb and Renee Rivard were selected as the recipients for August and September.
- **Long Grass** Consideration given to utilising the software as offered by Peter Richards and Gabi Friebe. (Karen Scott and Record Keepers).
- **Dart Gun** Purchase of Dan Inject dart gun approved for purchase. To be registered in Mark Alexander's name and utilised for the purpose of sedating large macropods.
- **Minimum Standards of Care** Suggested that these be enacted to cover all species. Draft to be provided to committee and coordinators for comment (Gail Gipp and Karen Scott).

*Continued on page 14*



# WILD WORLD: Kenya



## THE HIPPO & THE TORTOISE

A baby hippopotamus that survived the tsunami waves on the Kenya coast has formed a strong bond with a giant male century-old tortoise in an animal facility in the port city of Mombassa, officials said.



The hippopotamus, nicknamed Owen and weighing about 300 kilograms (650 pounds), was swept

down Sabaki River into the Indian Ocean, then forced back to shore when tsunami waves struck the Kenyan coast on December 26, before wildlife rangers rescued him.



"It is incredible. A less-than-a-year-old hippo has adopted a male tortoise, about a century old, and the tortoise seems to be very happy with being a 'mother'," ecologist Paula Kahumbu, who is in charge of Lafarge Park, told AFP.

"After it was swept away and lost its mother, the hippo was traumatized. It had to look for something to be a surrogate mother. Fortunately, it landed on the tortoise and established a strong bond.

They swim, eat and sleep together," the ecologist added. "The hippo follows the tortoise exactly the way

it followed its mother.

If somebody approaches the tortoise, the hippo becomes aggressive, as if protecting its biological mother," Kahumbu added.

"The hippo is a young baby, he was left at a very tender age and by nature, hippos are social animals that like to stay with their mothers for four years," he explained.

This is a real story that shows that our differences don't matter much when we need the comfort of another.

NAIROBI (AFP)



## Deadly Palm Oil in your Shopping Trolley

Palm oil costs the lives of about 50 orangutans every week and its cultivation is a major cause of global warming.

### What is Palm Oil?

Palm oil is the world's second largest oil crop. It is used extensively in food, body care, and industrial products. Palm oil is made from the fruit of oil palm trees which are usually planted in large plantations. Malaysia and Indonesia are the world's largest palm oil producers. Australians consume an average of 10kg of palm oil per person per year.

### Environmental Impacts of Palm Oil

An expansion in oil palm plantations is causing massive deforestation and this is the greatest threat to orangutans.

They and other endangered species such as the Sumatran rhino and tiger need the rainforest to survive. It is estimated that 80%-100% of the forests' birds, mammals and reptiles can not survive in palm oil plantations. We must protect the remaining rainforest habitat.

For more information on how to help the palm oil action group visit their website at [www.palmoilaction.org.au](http://www.palmoilaction.org.au)

All of these products contain palm oil or palm oil derivatives, but the labelling isn't clear.





# ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

## HUMOUR IN THE HOUSE

*Caller:* I have a crocodile on my roof, can you come get it?

*Phone Volie:* Are you sure it's a crocodile?

*Caller:* Yes, I know a croc when I see one and this is definitely a croc!

Here's Australia's latest



species....the Water Dragon Croc!!

*Caller:* We have possums in our roof.

*Phone Volie:* Are they Ring-tails?

*Caller:* No, they're glider possums!

*Caller:* We caught a flying fox possum in our cupboard and aren't sure what to do with it.

*Phone Volie:* Is it a glider?

*Caller:* No, I'm pretty sure it's one of those flying fox possum things.



## THE KOALA WHISPERER

The large male koala hung at the top of the lattice panel on the patio. He looked around in that myopic way that a koala has, as though amazed and astonished at everything that was going on around him.

The patio was a jungle of potted palms, hanging baskets, watering cans, garden gnomes, garden shoes, cane furniture and an enormous collection of potted triffids that swung their spine-covered branches (when you weren't looking) with murderous intent and pinpoint accuracy. The owner of the jungle patio and I pushed, lifted, moved and bled to create a space close to the koala.

I judged him to be about 8 kilos and hoped that his quiet disposition was not a front for murder and mayhem, as I was still sporting the scars from an encounter with a koala that had attitude and was more than prepared to use it. The large, blue airline dog crate with the door open was placed to one side, and with a thick blanket over my shoulder I took a deep breath and went through my battle plan.

The koala had watched the whole operation and looked from me to the dog crate and back again. Suddenly he be-

gan to climb down the lattice. "Bewdy", I thought and changed my plan from a "grab and scrag" to one in which I would envelop him in the blanket on the ground and stuff him into the crate....but the koala had it all planned.

He descended with dignity, glanced up once at me and calmly walked into the crate. He then turned around and sat down. "I'm hallucinating", I thought (and wondered if those triffid things could be responsible.) A quick blink of the eyes and a shake of the head and the koala was still sitting patiently in the crate. With a casual air, I closed the door.

The owner of the deadly jungle was most impressed and heaped praise after praise upon me and offered me a cup of tea but when she said she'd get her husband to put the triffids back I thanked her and bolted, before she changed her mind.

The place to release him was, of course, nowhere near the car and the trip consisted of twenty paces, put down the crate, change hands and go again. A rough trip but the koala stayed unmoving in one corner. At the end when the door was opened, he casually strolled out, sniffed my leg, as though this was a very common event, ambled over to the nearest tree and slowly climbed to a comfortable fork and sat surveying the world.

And as always, in this sort of situation, without photographic evidence no one is EVER going to BELIEVE me!

Greer McNeill

## FAUNA FRIENDLY FENCING & other structures

Here are two websites with suggestions for making our wildlife safe  
[www.redland.qld.gov.au/NR/rdonlyrew/](http://www.redland.qld.gov.au/NR/rdonlyrew/)  
[www.wildlife.org.au](http://www.wildlife.org.au)

# KEEPING THE DREAM ALIVE!

Education Highlights

## WORKSHOPS

We are approaching our “quiet” time of the year in terms of training. We generally do not schedule too many workshops for the October to December period in view of the busy spring season and school holidays.

Kim Alexander is already working on next year's education calendar and we hope to bring you several new workshops and training opportunities.

Karen Scott

Wildcare Workshop attendance in the Sunshine Coast / Gympie area has improved greatly of late thanks to Sharon Ingersole's diligence in reminding people of their occurrence. We recently had a regional meeting whereby it was decided to start sharing the workshop delivery load around, so over the next few months you may see some new faces delivering workshops.

There are still a few workshops to be held this year including:

Introduction to Orphaned Mammals, 3<sup>rd</sup> November – Gympie

Wildlife Habitat & Native Plant ID, 2<sup>nd</sup> December – Pomona

There are still a couple of Possum workshops to be run this year if anyone is interested. Also, a few Glider workshops scheduled for November and December for those who would like to venture into the gliding members of the possum families.

Next year will see a slight reduction in the number of possum workshops being offered as Kathryn Biber will be commencing a full-time research project (see article in this newsletter). The format of possum workshops might change a bit with new course material and presentations. Watch this space.

Paula Rowlands & Rachel Lyons

## AVA PetPEP PROGRAM

Laura Reeder visited three schools in September, representing Wildcare Australia as part of the Australian Veterinary Association's school programs. Ipswich Special School, Brookfield Primary and Walloon State School prep classes were all introduced to Wildcare and some very special species.

To provide some visual stimuli, Laura borrowed some “props” from the Queensland Museum. As part of threatened species week, a Brush-tailed Phascogale, Squirrel Glider, Scarlet-sided Pobblebonk and a Rose-crowned Fruit-dove were displayed in perspex boxes. The children were fascinated more by their names than by the slightly bedraggled specimens! The children had many questions and stories of their own as Laura spoke to them about wildlife in their backyards and the importance of responsible pet care.

Laura Reeder

## COMMUNITY AWARENESS

The Community Awareness Committee has been a bit slack this year. Unfortunately, with Daneile living so far away in the Gympie area, it is difficult to arrange meetings or catch-ups. However, we have had some wonderful opportunities put forward to us.

Entertainment books are available and can be sold to the general public at a cost of \$50 on the Gold Coast and \$60 for the Sunshine & Brisbane areas – Wildcare will get \$10 for every book we sell.

We have been invited to attend several wildlife forums / expos over the next few months as well as the Spectacular Petacular in 2008.

We are looking into basic community awareness activities for the communities here in the Gympie area, providing general information and school talks, as well as information for the local veterinarians.

Trish Hales is still looking after chocolate sales which, to my knowledge, are still one of our greatest fundraising activities. Everybody loves chocolate!

I would like to ask for your help with some of the fundraising. Over the next few months, a couple of events are taking place in and around Brisbane. So if people are interested and are available to help out from time to time, please contact me. The only thing I can really say is any help is a great help.

Daneile Holmes  
Community Awareness/Fundraising/  
Grants Coordinator  
[BeAware@wildcare.org.au](mailto:BeAware@wildcare.org.au)  
0409 067 384

### *Management Committee Meeting Summary continued...*

- **Gold Coast City Council** Discussion of proposed translocation of koalas in the Coomera region discussed. Further contact to be had with the Council in due course. (Karen Scott).
- **Minutes and Reports** Discussed members access to Management Committee minutes and meetings. Minutes will be made available on request (Laura Reeder).
- **Records** Discussed need for committee to receive status updates from the Record Keepers (Karen Scott and Laura Reeder)



# A WARM WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

**Wildcare Australia welcomes the following new members:**

Leanne Rawlings, *Alexandra Headland*; Anne Nerichow, *Ashgrove*; Yvonne Gray, *Austinville*; D.R. Sharman, Vicki Black, *Beachmere*; Jolene Mooney, *Beenleigh*; Lise & Elsa Browning, *Beerwah*; Erica Stromsoe, *Belmont*; Martina Salovac, *Benowa*; Kate Wilson, *Birkdale*; Jene Ashley, *Bongaree Bribie Island*; Lindy Meath, Paula Kelly, *Buderim*; Jessica Mehan, *Bulimba*; Jodie Hislock, *Bundaberg*; Clare Gover, *Cabarlah*; Gillian & Molly Howell, *Clagiraba*; Rachel Kousek, *Coolangatta*; Leanne Tucker, Richard Sinclair, *Coomera*; Amanda Dawson, *Cudgera Creek*; Jill Thirkell, *Dunwich*; Barbara Bower, *Glenwood*; Karenne Graham, *Grange*; Basil & Margo Burne, *Helensvale*; Rebecca Ladner, *Hope Island*; Rhonda Sparkes, *Karana Downs*; Sarah Gray, *Kingston*; Angela Ritchie, *Lower Beechmont*; Kylie Hough, *Main Beach*; Susan Schwartz, *Mermaid Waters*; Marilyn Wyatt, *Nambour*; Christine Hunter, *Nerang*; Rhonda Quinn, *Noosa Heads*; Erica & Phil Hoeksema, *Ocean View*; Geok Poh Lim and Philip Knopp, Karen Feist, *Oxenford*; Joanna Hamalainen, *Pacific Pines*; Denise & Emma McMillan, *Rochedale South*; Michelle/Bryan Petersen, *Runcorn*; Tania Francis, *Springwood*; Beth Symonds, *St Lucia*; Jane Keane, *Tallai*; Julie Sharrock, *Tamborine Village*; Inez Duiker, *Tewantin*; Jeannie McCloud, *Toowong*; Monika Tiesenhausen, *Twin Waters*; Louise Pearson, *Upper Caboolture*; Alecta De Piazza, *Upper Coomera*; Natasha Banville, *Warana*; Shani Dodd, *Windaroo*; Tracy Roads, *Woombye*; Maree Gwynne, *Wynnum*.



By joining Wildcare Australia you are demonstrating your commitment to the welfare of Australia's native animals. Please don't hesitate to get involved in this, your organization. If you are unsure of where your personal niche may be, Call Trish Hales, our secretary, and I'm sure she will be able to help you. Trish is in the office from 8:00am to 4:00pm on Monday and Friday.

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

## Answers to PJ's Native Bird Watcher puzzle:

1. Rainbow Lorikeet
2. Noisy Miner
3. Tawny Frogmouth

# PJ's Wildcare for Kids

Hi everyone,

I can't wait to tell you about all the animals I saw and fun stuff I did at Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary on school holidays. I went with my mum and dad and we saw eagles and cockatoos, snakes and lizards, koalas and kangaroos and even some dingos!

While we were there, mum found out about the cool clubs they have for kids. So the next day, I got to spend the day as a Currumbin Eco Ranger while mum and Aunt Tina went shopping. For breakie, they gave us juice and pikelets and then we went to feed the lorikeets. There were hundreds of them all around us, one even landed on my head! Then we went to feed the kangaroos and got to pet them too!

Later, the Ranger took us to the animal hospital and kitchen and told us all about how they take care of all the animals there; we even got to make these cool toys for the bird-keepers to give to the cockatoos.

After lunch we got to play on Wild Island. There was a Tree House, tunnels and even a giant spider web I climbed on. I learned how to climb a big rock wall and even dug up some ancient fossils! But my favorite part was the ice block they gave us before mum picked us up. I hope we go back next year so that I can go to the Eco Ranger Camp Out or maybe even be a Creature Keeper!

When we got back home there was a big thunderstorm, it was pretty scary but when it was over we saw a baby bird on the ground in the back yard. Mum said it had probably been blown out of its nest by the storm.

It wasn't hurt so we didn't need to take it to the vet. She said the best thing to do was to put it back in its nest as quickly as possible. We could see the parents flying around but couldn't find the nest so mum showed me how to make a little nest out of stuff around the house. We used an empty ice cream container but she said she has also used one of her hanging plant baskets before.

After we washed out the ice cream container, we poked some holes in the bottom of it, just in case it rained again so the water would drain out. Then we put some soft leaves and grass in the bottom of it like a little nest. Dad used the ladder and tied our new nest as high in the tree as possible on a branch that had a bunch of leaves around it. Mum said once we put the baby in the new nest, all the leaves would help to keep it from getting too hot in the sun and would also keep other birds from attacking it.



When Dad was done, Mum put the baby bird in the new nest and said we would need to watch it for a few hours to make sure the parents came back to feed it. We watched from the kitchen window and pretty soon we saw the parents! They found their baby in the new nest and started feeding it right away.

I learned so much about animals on my holiday and had a lot of fun. I hope you did too! I hope to hear from you or receive your stories and pictures at [pjdick@ozemail.com.au](mailto:pjdick@ozemail.com.au).

Till next edition,  
Bye from PJ

# PJ's PUZZLES

## THE NATIVE BIRD WATCHER

Search the web or use your animal or bird book to figure out what I am.

### 1. Clue: I am a type of Parrot

- I am bright green and have the colors of a rainbow on my head and breast like blue, yellow and red.
- I have a bright orange, hook-shaped beak.
- I eat nectar from flowers but sometimes I will eat fruit, insects and small seeds from plants.
- Some people feed me bird seed but should not because too much seed will damage my delicate tongue.



### 2. Clue: I am a type of Honeyeater

- I am grey with a patch of yellow skin around my eye.
- I am very noisy.
- I eat insects as well as nectar from flowers.
- People often confuse me with the Myna, a brown bird that was not born in Australia but was brought here from India years ago.

### 3. Clue: I am a Nocturnal bird (which means I sleep during the day and eat and fly around at night)

- I am brownish-grey with black speckles and streaks on my feathers.
- I have a beak shaped like a frog's mouth.
- I eat insects, worms, snails, small lizards and frogs.
- Most people think I am an owl but I am not.

(Answers on page 15)

## NON-NATIVE ANIMAL WORD SEARCH

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

Non-native animals are those which were not originally born in Australia but were brought here from another country. See if you can find the following non-native animals in the word search puzzle.

Red Deer  
House Gecko  
Rat  
Indian Myna  
Dingo  
Mallard Duck  
Fox  
Cane Toad  
Rabbit  
Cat



# Photo Gallery



What am I?



Squirrel Gliders are nocturnal and feed on nectar, insects and gum sap. They live in groups of up to 10 and they nest in tree hollows.



Welcome Swallows have adapted well to the urban environment and use the security and support of buildings for their mud nests. Pairs tend to return to the same nest site year after year.



The Southern Right whale is a baleen whale (as opposed to a whale with teeth) that feeds on plankton in the colder waters far to the south of Australia in summer, and in winter migrates to the warmer waters closer to the coast to breed.

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Unit 3, 55 Dover Drive Andrews 07 5576

## A Bird In The Hand



A photographic guide to identifying  
nestling, fledgling & juvenile  
birds of the  
Blue Mountains & Eastern States  
of Australia  
by  
Lynda Hyde



"A Bird in the Hand" is now available from the  
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INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR ANIMAL WELFARE  
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JOHN & MARGIE SPIES  
JOHN WILLIAMSON  
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LEWIS LAND CORPORATION  
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WOMBAT BOTTKS

## WILDCARE VOLUNTEER CARERS

WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE FOLLOWING VETS FOR THEIR  
DEDICATION AND TREATMENT OF OUR  
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OUR CARERS ARE VERY GRATEFUL FOR THEIR SUPPORT

|   |  |
|---|--|
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| AUSTRALIA WILDLIFE HOSPITAL<br>1300 369 652   | MEDIVET<br>HIGHLAND PARK 5574 9622   |
| DR BRIAN PERRERS<br>SOUTHPORT 5591 2246   | MEDIVET<br>NERANG 5596 4899  |
| COAST VET<br>ROBINA PARKWAY 5593 0300   | MT. TAMBORINE VET SURGERY<br>5545 2422                                     |
| COAST VET<br>BURLEIGH WATERS 5520 6820  | MUDGEERABA ANIMAL HOSPITAL<br>5530 5555                                    |
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| COAST VET<br>HELENSVALE 5573 3355   | SOUTHPORT VETERINARY CLINIC<br>& HOSPITAL<br>5531 2573                     |
| GYMPIE & DISTRICT VETERINARY<br>SERVICES<br>GYMPIE 5482 2488<br>TIN CAN BAY 5486 4666 | TUGUN VETERINARY SURGERY<br>5534 1928<br><br>VETCALL<br>BURLEIGH 5593 5557 |

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