



# wildlife matters...

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Sydney Wildlife Newsletter

Spring 2014 Edition

## Welcome to the Spring Edition of Wildlife Matters



Thank you your support of **Sydney Wildlife**. When you do a rescue or if you have an animal in care please take photos, high resolution if possible. Send them through with a story so I can showcase our members. See back page for more.

I wish you a Merry Christmas, and a happy New Year with lots of successful Native Animal releases in 2015.

Robyn Ball,

Marketing, Media and Fundraising.

Photo by Pat Laird, SW Member

## Ben Dessen wins Young Green Hero Award at the 2014 Green Lifestyle Awards

Wildlife advocate, Ben Dessen, has won the Young Green Hero Award at the 2014 Green Lifestyle Awards. Dessen was recognised for his lifetime commitment to wildlife advocacy and care, having raised over \$40,000 for various wildlife initiatives.

Ben's passion for wildlife advocacy was sparked when his parents bought him his first pet snake at age six. This soon grew to a menagerie of lizards, pythons, scorpions, insects, frogs and other animals that share his home today.

The 22-year-old now lives in the bush looking after native wildlife as sanctuary manager at Dural's Kangaroo Protection Co-operative Wildlife Orphanage and Sanctuary.

He is a long-term volunteer with his local wildlife rescue group, **Sydney Wildlife**, and has cared for numerous native animal species over the years. More recently Dessen was selected as an Australian representative to travel to Borneo to take part in the Orang-utan and rainforest conservation film *Rise of the Eco Warriors*.

In addition to studying for his Bachelor of Natural Science (Animal Science) at the University of Western Sydney (UWS), Dessen runs education courses on reptiles and amphibians at Kellyville Pets and also finds time to work at the Australian Reptile Park.

Said Dessen, "Animals give my life purpose and provide me with an ongoing source of curiosity and inspiration. I was completely surprised, but deeply honoured to receive this award. I can honestly say that I have never wanted to do anything else with my life than work towards protecting the amazing wildlife we share this planet with and educating and motivating others to do the same."

"Ben's activism on major environmental issues has positively influenced huge quantities of people both in Australia and abroad," said Green Lifestyle's editor, Caitlin Howlett. "Active conservation work to the extent that Ben Dessen has committed to is rare, and needs to be rewarded."

Dessen was honoured to be invited by Bob Irwin (father of the



late Steve Irwin) to help launch his new wildlife charity, the Bob Irwin Wildlife and Conservation Foundation.

Dessen will return to Borneo during his study break to see the progress made on the Orang-utan rehabilitation centre which he helped to establish. A production company from Singapore is accompanying Dessen on this trip and will be filming a new TV series as a follow up to *Rise of the Eco Warriors*.

## Update on Waratah Park

Through the Global Giving site we have raised over \$10,000 to buy building and other equipment for our Sydney Wildlife Waratah Park Rehabilitation Centre.

We have also had help along the way from:

- **PM Capital** for their donation, which will build an aviary to house native Birds, Bats and others that might need it.



- **Dell** who volunteer monthly to build and maintain our facilities.
- **VM Ware & EY companies** who organise company volunteering days.
- **Bunnings Narrabeen** for providing materials and for painting the front of our house.
- **JD Trophies** for donating the signs on the aviaries which thank The Barracks Vets and PM Capital for their kind donations to Sydney Wildlife.
- **Matthews Consulting** for their donation of \$750 worth of shade cloths.



- **The Barracks Vets** for your donation, which will build an aviary to rehabilitate very small animals such as Sugar and Feather Tail Gliders. Without these caring people and businesses our native animals would not be getting the areas they need to rehabilitate and build up their muscles, giving them the best possible chance in the wild once released.

When we first signed the lease at Waratah Park, the facilities were unusable. It took many months of hard work to get the Macropod rehabilitation facility to a point where it was secure and safe, ready to house Macropods. This will be ongoing to ensure it meets our requirements.

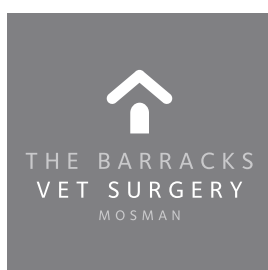
Once the Macropod facility was up and running, we installed some aviaries to provide rehabilitation for more varieties of rescued animals. All our aviaries need to be multi-functional as we don't know

which animals we will rehabilitate next. We may have a group of Lorikeets and once they are released, then it's a group of Bats in the same aviary. The project is still in its early days and work is continuing to get these aviaries up to the standards required prior to housing a variety of Native animals.



Thank you to the **Sydney Wildlife** members who have helped out, the public volunteers and our amazing corporate donors. Without you, Waratah Park would not be the amazing rehabilitation centre it is today.

Joan Reid





# Annual General Meeting November 2014

Held on the 5<sup>th</sup> November, the Sydney Wildlife AGM, hosted by the Northern Districts branch was packed to the rafters. Two awards were made to members as well as a terrific presentation from our Guest Speaker, Dr. Howard Ralph.



The **Liane Poulton Award** was awarded to **Chris Balmond**. This annual award is presented to a member who has shown commitment and dedication above and beyond the call of duty.

Chris is the Secretary and Chairperson of the IW/ES Branch and is extremely committed to **Sydney Wildlife**. She helps out in the Rescue Office and on the After Hours phones.

In addition to this, she helps at Mandi Griffiths' Flying Fox Rehabilitation Facility to collect and cut fruit, clean up and take compost away. This is an enormous task and hard physical work and during crèche time equates to feeding out up to 85kg of chopped fruit a night.



We gave a **Special Sydney Wildlife Award** to **Lana Wedgwood** from the Northern Districts branch. She is an outstanding member with her commitment to **Sydney Wildlife** as a rescuer, carer and branch member. Lana is also the Branch Coordinator for Flying Foxes and Brushtail Possums, fulfilling both roles admirably. She has completed every available course and liaises with 'expert' animal carers to learn more about particular species and gives her time freely to discuss individual cases or issues with newer or less experienced members. She also manages to find time for our education events and is an invaluable asset sharing her knowledge with children and adults.



**Dr Howard Ralph**, BVSc (Hons), MBBS (Hons), MVS (Wildlife Medicine), Dip TESL JCCA, Accredited (Anaesth), A/Dip FA. Cert Ed NSW was the guest speaker.

In 2007 Howard established **Southern Cross Wildlife Care** and works on a voluntary basis 24/7 to treat injured, ill and orphaned wildlife. He has worked extensively with wildlife groups for many decades operating, treating and caring for wildlife whilst providing wildlife workshops to train carers.

His presentation was titled "RESPECT" and it was fascinating. Not only did he cover the respect we need to have for all animals, but also the respect we need to give **Sydney Wildlife** members and to ourselves. Keep up the good work **Sydney Wildlife**.

## Possums love all sorts of pouches

I have a young Brushtail, nearly 500g that is still a very stressful baby. I took her out of her cage to clean it and gave her a large teddy bear to cuddle because her other toys were too small. She grabbed the bear excitedly so I put her and the teddy bear back into the cage and covered her up.

A short time later I heard a small squeaking noise coming from her direction, I looked in to see just her toes poking out from underneath the teddy bear.

I didn't give it much thought at the time until I noticed the bears tummy was moving and realised she had made her own pouch by pulling apart the stitching and had climbed inside only to get stuck in a whole pile of stuffing. I did an emergency caesarian on the teddy bear to remove her. She wasn't happy at all being taken out so we now have a solution.

She loves her teddy bear pouch!

Pat Laird.



## Sydney Wildlife Members photos

Thank you to **Sydney Wildlife** members who sent photos for the calendar. I would have loved to have used them all, however there wasn't enough room, so I will showcase your beautiful photos throughout Wildlife Matters.



Dannie Ward, SW Member



Jo Hebden, SW Member



Malcolm Fisher, SW Member

## I rescued a possum and I'm only 5!



Mum, my sister, Eliza and me were at Middle Harbour Reserve, Nth Balgowlah when I spotted something tiny jumping around in the long grass. There were birds swooping at it. We ran over to it and a little tiny, baby Ringtail Possum looked up at me. I knew it was really scared and very frightened.

We covered the Possum in a towel, and held it close to our body for heat on the way home in the car. When we got home we put the tiny Possum into a box with a little blanket and kept it safe and warm.

I think it was only a few days old and I knew that the birds would have hurt it, if I didn't make it safe.

We called **Sydney Wildlife** who sent out Jodie who came and fed it, and made sure it was ok. It only weighed 370 gms.

I have raised \$588 for the Elephants and Corroboree frogs through the Conservation Society. Instead of presents for my 5th birthday I asked my friends and family to donate to my Everyday Hero page.

Georgia Lalli, 5 from Fairlight.



## A very prickly rescue!

AFTER HOUR rescues are always the most exciting, aren't they?

A quick change from my pjs into something a not as comfortable and off I trotted. We always knew that there would be wildlife victims from the new Frenchs Forest Hospital site but we imagined that they would be mostly Possums, Birds and Blueys.



But wombling up and down the footpath adjacent to the construction fences was this adorable little Echidna.

The Member of the Public (MOP) who called us had observed, for quite some time, this poor little chap wandering up and down the same stretch, with diggers and excavators rumbling just beyond the fence. Somehow, using his jacket and a nearby gardening spade, he

managed to wrangle the little Echidna into a box and take him home. Pretty brave! Anyone who has done an echidna rescue will know that they have some kind of suction-activated pads on their feet and they can literally surgically attach themselves to any substrate and be impossible to lift! I arrived at the MOPs house at around 9:30pm and he had fallen in love with the little creature and was gently cradling him in leather gloves whilst wearing gladiator-style body armour!

Thankfully, Joan Reid had pre-warned me about their tendency to escape from any container so I had a giant smooth-sided container with a lockable lid and plenty of dirt for burrowing. He ate a concoction of food recommended to me by Mandi Griffiths and Joan. With his home gone, the big decision was:

Where to relocate the little creature? After speaking to my



trusty coordinator, Helen Merkel, our panel of **Sydney Wildlife** experts and Australia's leading Echidna specialist, we picked the perfect location and released him 3 days later. Thanks to Jacqui Marlow for helping to find the ideal relocation site.

It takes more than one person to rescue an animal. Someone needs to answer the call, someone to collect the animal, a dedicated coordinator gives advice, experienced carers give food and housing advice, another suggests relocation sites and someone else enters the paperwork afterwards.

**Sydney Wildlife** is such a great team!

Thank you all for helping out such a dear little animal.

Lynleigh Greig.

## THANK YOU TO OUR WONDERFUL VETS!

**Sydney Wildlife** is so lucky to be supported by the Vets of Sydney. Without your dedication to Native Wildlife, there would be hardly any native animals released to continue their journey.

So many of you give lifesaving help to ensure our native animals have the best chance possible.

Our furry, feathered and scaly Native Animals thank you:)



## Branching about

In October, Northern Districts branch were invited to the Lindfield Public School Fete. We were asked if we could exhibit snakes and other reptiles. So, Jeff Lynne, Karen Pick and Lynleigh Greig arrived with a terrific selection of Pythons, Lizards and a Turtle\*. With another seven members assisting during the day, **Sydney Wildlife** educated many people about our Native Animals and **Sydney Wildlife**.

Our exhibits were an outstanding success! Dozens of children were lining up to have their photo taken with the reptiles for a gold coin donation. Half the takings were for the Lindfield Public Schools fund raising and half went to **Sydney Wildlife**.



There were other exhibits, including an adult Tawny Frogmouth and our Rainbow Lorikeets, all registered educational animals. And there was also a clutch of chicks that required constant feeding, brought by the members that could not leave them at home unattended. There were



baby Butcherbirds, and a pair of just feathered Tawny chicks who almost stole the thunder of the 'snaky' people, however the attention for our registered adult Ringtail Possum 'Ivy', was a clear winner after the reptiles.

The interest from the children was amazing. The questions they asked, and the personal observations of the fauna and bird life in their school and homes, was very positive. Every child had a story to tell about the Echidnas, Turtles and the odd



Wallaby straying up from Lane Cove National Park, not to mention the high variety of bird life they could identify. It clearly shows that there is a lot of interest in wildlife with the younger generation, and that is so hopeful.

It was a very successful day, with **Sydney Wildlife** getting valuable public exposure with numerous enquiries about how to join and become a member of **Sydney Wildlife**.

Needless to say the Northern Districts Branch had a great day at the bank first thing Monday morning.

Garry Marsh.

\*All these reptiles were on each member's private Herpetology licenses.

## Kukundi Update

Kukundi is winding up for a few weeks for maintenance and repairs. Kukundi will be closed around 19th October, after which we have six weeks until it is needed.

We need volunteers to help clear and prepare the land. Any members who can volunteer a few hours would be awesome.

Our recent Global Giving project had a good start, thanks to Maryanne Large.



This will assist in the funding of our new cage, flight aviary floor and for ongoing costs of running Kukundi.

Sarah Thorpe, Diane Jenner, and Sarah Curran.

## MYOB Volunteer NEEDED

Our Treasurer Lindsay Bridgland needs someone to assist with data entry of income/expenses and filing of invoices for a few hours a month. All that is required is a bit of MYOB Essentials experience, access to the internet and a sense of humour.

Full training will be given.

Contact Lindsay:

Lindsay@lindsaybridgland.com.au



## 2015 Sydney Wildlife Fundraising Calendar

The **Sydney Wildlife 2015 Calendar** is now available! Featuring beautiful photos taken by our members they are \$12 each. The profits raised will help buy animal food and fund our 24-hour Rescue Hotline. Printed on high quality stock, with a handy hole for hanging, they are crammed with information about our native animals and **Sydney Wildlife**. There is plenty of space to write your appointments and public holidays are listed.

If you are doing any fetes, stalls or fundraising please ensure you take a box or two to sell. There are some in the office for purchase and they make beautiful Christmas presents.

If you have any friends living interstate, (not overseas), calendars can be purchased online from the **Sydney Wildlife** web site with a P&H fee. They can pay by PayPal or credit card. And the best part? I will pack and post to your friends so you don't have to schlep to the post office!

Thanks to the team at **Horizon Press** for their amazing, quality printing.



Contact your **CalendarPARTY** branch member to get some!

NB Anne Cherry

ND Paul Saffrey

IW/ES Kristin Brown

SW Deborah Kerr

NW Chris Thompson.

## Good Morning. A poem from Peg.



Anne Cherry, SW member

Kookaburra, Kookaburra, what boisterous laughter,  
Echoing like thunder and raising the rafters.

Waking your neighbours from their peaceful slumber,  
They'd ring you and complain if they had your phone number.

They are not impressed, no, not at all,  
By your unsought early wakeup call.

But of course, there are others, many like me,  
Who just love to hear your chortles of glee.

Peg Parish.

## Are you helping out on the hotline?

Answering the hotline is both interesting and rewarding, exposing you to a wide range of rescue situations. Our hotline answers over 12,000 calls a year and we need your help.

Members are needed seven days a week, including overnight. Daytime shifts are in the Lane Cove office 9am - 1pm and 1pm - 5pm. Overnight shifts from the comfort of your own home with all information and lists provided.

You can be scheduled for a shift with an experienced operator to get the training necessary for the busy Spring months. Please check your diary to see when you can help.

Weekdays	Jenny Sistrom	9456 3069
Weekends/After Hours	Carolyn Martin	9440 8233

smwsweekdayroster@gmail.com  
smwsweekendroster@gmail.com  
smwsafterhours@gmail.com



Dannie Ward, SW member.

## Send in your stories

Without your valuable support, the work we do rescuing and rehabilitating native animals would not happen. Thank you for everything that you do for **Sydney Wildlife**.

Have you done a rescue lately or raised funds for **Sydney Wildlife**? Did you volunteer on the hotline and have a funny story? Are you educating the public about our native animals or know of any companies that might sponsor us? Do you know some interesting animal facts, write poetry or have taken some great photos?

I am looking for all your wonderful stories and more. Please send to [robysmws@hotmail.com](mailto:robysmws@hotmail.com).

Robyn Ball

Marketing, Media and Fundraising.

NOTE: by sending your stories and images, you are granting the release of copyright of content and images as they may be published in Wildlife Matters, SMWS Members only Facebook page, general Facebook page, other media and fundraising opportunities that may arise. They will only be used to promote Sydney Wildlife. I will contact you directly if a media outlet wants a particular story for print media, TV or radio.

## Outside of Sydney and found native wildlife in trouble?

**Sydney Wildlife** supports the collaborative initiative of IFAW (International Fund for Animal Welfare) and NSW Wildlife Council in the release of a new Smartphone App that identifies the closest licensed wildlife rescue group to where your phone is situated. The App has a post code or town search facility and its Call Now facility will directly link you via your phone for quick help for any sick, injured or orphaned wildlife. It also gives tips on how to initially deal with the animal until help is at hand.

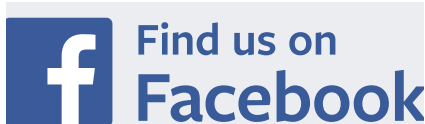
The App, called **Wildlife Rescue** is downloadable from the Apple Store or the Android Market and also available for mobile devices from [wildliferescue.ifaw.org](http://wildliferescue.ifaw.org)

## Who gets the news?

Ever wondered who receives copies of **Wildlife Matters**? All members receive a copy as well as our wonderful vets.

It is sent to all Local Councils in the Greater Sydney Metropolitan area.

So next time you're talking with your local council or vet, check to see if they have read **Wildlife Matters**.



**Sydney Wildlife** now has an official Facebook page. Called **Sydney Wildlife** (Sydney Metropolitan Wildlife Services), it's the page with our Kookaburra logo. Please like and share with your Facebook friends.

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## Hoo is calling?



Ever looked at your mobile, not recognised the number and didn't answer it? To find out that you missed out on a rescue?

Our phone system diverts outgoing calls to mobiles through 2 mobile numbers, helping to lower our phone bills.

Please enter these numbers into your mobile so you can recognise that the hotline is calling you for help.

The numbers are

**0437 094 130**  
**0438 194 137**



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