



wildlife matters...

PP# 100020200

Sydney Wildlife Newsletter

Summer 2015 Edition

Welcome to the Summer Edition of Wildlife Matters



Photo by Paul Saffrey.

Thank you for your ongoing support of **Sydney Wildlife**.

The 2014 Sydney Wildlife Calendar was a success and we raised over \$5000. Thank you all.

My projects for this year is to find a fruit sponsor, gain more media awareness and find new members who can help out on the hotline only. I will also be concentrating my efforts

on fundraising and acquiring new members in our black hole areas.

When you do a rescue or have animals in care please take photos, high resolution if possible. Send them through with a story so I can showcase all our members. See back page for more.

Robyn Ball,

Marketing, Media and Fundraising.

CHAMPION CHOPPERS NEEDED



The Kukundi Flying Fox Crèche and adult flight facility (situated behind the Sydney Wildlife office in Lane Cove National Park) is now open for business! We need anyone and everyone with two hands and a heart beat to come and join in the fruit chopping fun. The most exciting thing to know is that **YOU DON'T NEED TO BE VACCINATED TO CHOP FRUIT!!**

If you might be able to assist in any way, whether it be a one off or if you're brave and willing to take on a regular weekly shift the bats will love you.

We have a Kukundi mailing list so if you would like to receive monthly emails with the roster availabilities, please send SarahC or SarahT a text with your name, suburb and email

address and we will add you to the list of CHAMPION choppers.

All new volunteers **MUST** undergo at least one induction shift with an experienced volunteer who will explain the procedures, where to find everything and most importantly introduce you to Turk, the resident Brush Turkey and Drax the Water Dragon who oversee the running of the facility.

Contact details:

SarahC: 0424354395

SarahT: 0404059400

or email us directly

kukundi.bats@gmail.com



Online roster coming soon

Sydney Wildlife will be launching an online roster system soon.

It's an easy way for members to book and manage their shifts on the rescue hotline, for both in-office and after hours.

Using an online tool from Volunteer Spot, members can log in, view available spots and book a shift. This tool can also be used on a smart phone and there is even an app for the iPad.

You can manage your shift bookings, swap with other members and receive automatic email reminders of their shift bookings.

If you don't have access to a computer the Roster Co-ordinators (Carolyn and Jenny) can still book shifts for members who don't have internet access.

Weekdays

Jenny Sistrom 9456 3069

smwsweekdayroster@gmail.com

Weekends/After Hours

Carolyn Martin 9440 8233

smwsweekendroster@gmail.com

A stitch in time - saves lives!

Two weeks before Christmas I received a call from the Sydney Metropolitan Wildlife Services Head Office in Lane Cove that a member of the public had a baby bat needing rescue at their home in Berowra, in the northern suburbs of Sydney.

The member of the public was an elderly German lady who explained to me that she and her husband had found one live baby bat on the front lawn, and there was also a dead adult and dead baby nearby. She had the live baby inside her house on a heat pad. I told her that it would take me about 40 minutes to get to her place. When I pulled up in the driveway, I immediately spotted the dead mother bat hanging from a low branch in the front yard. She was facing in the opposite direction so it wasn't until I walked around the front of her that I saw a baby's head poking out between the mother's legs. The baby's eyes were shut and the mother was stiff and cold so my first thought was 'the mother has died while giving birth and the poor baby is also dead.' I looked towards the house. The front door was open as the people were expecting me. I thought I would go and have a look at the live baby that they had rescued. Before I turned away, I looked a little closer to see if there was anything obvious to explain why the mother had died. For no reason that I can explain, I tapped the dead baby on the head and it opened its eyes!

I quickly unhooked the mother's body from the low branch and took it (and the baby who was entombed in the mother) to the front door of the house. The German couple came out to meet me with the baby they had rescued. I said to them, 'Did you realise that this baby (inside the dead mother) is still alive?' They looked at me like I was crazy and said, 'No, that baby is not alive, here is the live baby!' and they pushed a wriggling baby boy with the umbilical cord still attached, under my nose.

I said to them, 'No, this baby is still alive! Do you have a scissors so that I



can cut it out?' The woman immediately went into the house and came back with her best dressmaking scissors, telling me they were very sharp and would work well.

They watched me intently while I did the surgery on their front doorstep. Luckily the mother had been dead for a couple of hours so there was no flowing blood. In less than a minute, a baby girl emerged covered in yellow birthing fluid. She was very cold but immediately started twittering. I detached her from the dead mother bat by cutting the umbilical cord. The German couple were amazed.....as I was!

It is extremely unusual for flying foxes to give birth to twins and if it does happen in the wild, one of the twins (usually the weaker of the two) will inevitably be dropped or fall to its death, because the mother bat cannot carry two babies when she goes to forage for food at night.

It was immediately obvious that the baby girl was larger and developmentally more mature than the boy whose umbilical cord had already shrivelled up. The only abnormal thing that I could see on the mother's body was a maggot infestation under one arm in the vicinity of the nipple.

Before I left with the twin babies (and mother's body for autopsy) the couple told me that they had an interest in

bats after watching a program on SBS Global Village about Tolga Bat Hospital in far north Queensland. How fortuitous for these little guys that the couple had some empathy towards bats!

On the way home I received advice from Mandi Griffith about how to tie off the umbilical cord with thick thread, and later she did an autopsy on the mother bat.

We found that the heart was abnormally large and deficient in not having a protective fatty layer that occurs around a normal organ. There was a massive congestion of blood in one of the arteries leading from the heart, and the mother bat had most likely died of a cardiac arrest or stroke while giving birth. Mandi expects that the stress of giving birth to twins was too much for this old girl (about 7-8 years) with a weak heart!

Rescue measurements for the baby boy were 57mm fa, 61gm and for the girl 63mm fa, 62g. The baby boy developed pneumonia during the first week and appeared to have a hernia, both of which have now resolved.

On New Years Day 2015 the twins are 21 days old and are both doing well, thanks to the vigilance of the couple from Berowra!

Marina Tretiach
IW/ES Member

Rescuing Rocky

My name is Peter Springett and I am a long time volunteer with Sydney Wildlife.

On the 10th November 2014, I was called to do a rescue at Wallace Street, Willoughby. It was a 5 day old Kookaburra chick, which had fallen from its nest at the top of a very tall palm tree. It's eyes were still closed and it was very cold and hungry.

As he was so scrawny I called him 'Rocky'. We put Rocky on a heat pad and began the rearing process, which includes 8 to 10 feeds per day.



Photo by Coleman Photo

Just over two weeks after Rocky's arrival I received a rescue call for another Kookaburra chick, which had also fallen out of its palm tree nest, this time in Centennial Road, Lane Cove. This chick was also about 5 days old, eyes closed, no feathers and very cold and hungry. We called this one Sachin. We gave him the heat pad, feeding, rearing process as well.

The picture right shows Rocky at 5 weeks old and Sachin at 3 weeks old.

Our local Mum and Dad Kooka, plus 'Spike', who they adopted from us three years ago, plus their two juvy's from this year, have now adopted these two orphans and are feeding 'our' two chicks on our balcony.

Rocky left our balcony nest and joined the local wild Kooka gang.

Although this story has a good outcome for these two young



chicks, if their parents hadn't lost their habitat due to the disastrous 10/50 (tree clearing) rule, they would have been raised by their own parents, in a more secure hole in a mature tree.

Australian Wildlife Rehabilitators Conference

Several Sydney Wildlife members attended the 4 day, Australian Wildlife Rehabilitation Conference in Tasmania during June, 2014. The theme was 'New Directions – Accommodating Change.'

300 people attended the Conference, including rehabilitators, veterinarians, researchers, officials from various organisations and a lawyer. Over the four days we listened to a variety of presentations which included:

- Post-traumatic stress disorder in Kangaroos
- Facial Tumour Disease in Devils
- Rescue and Hand Rearing of short-beaked Echidna's,
- Nutritional Considerations for hand rearing Possums
- Raising Ducklings
- Seabirds and Status of Shorebirds in

Tasmania

- Turtle Shell repair and Euthanasia of reptiles
- Flying foxes Case studies
- Sarcoptic mange in Wombats in Victoria
- IFAW: Lessons learned about Penguin rehabilitation
- Cat eradication on Tasman island
- Tasmanian Devil Conservation Park founder, John Hamilton, which raises and releases orphaned Tasmanian Devils.

Jacqui Marlow and Eira Battaglia gave a presentation "Roadkill – its impact on Australian wildlife and how we can help Prevent Roadkill" which was well received.

One talk, focused on data collection. With statistics from Australian Wildlife Hospital, Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary

and the RSPCA rescue centre in Brisbane. The number of animals being treated has risen each year. There is little consistency of data, no central code for each species/animal, no central classification of injury/illness of how the animal came into care. This leads to different statistics, one centre may classify species or conditions differently. The presenter called for a national database with consistent codes for each animal and condition.

If you get a chance to attend one of the conferences, I advise you to take the opportunity to do so; learning how other rehabilitators rescue and care for wildlife, how new research is progressing and other stimulating topics can only benefit us.

*Eira Battaglia
NB Branch*

Sticky Trap Misery

As a veterinary nurse and wildlife carer, I've seen some very distressing things that can cause harm to animals, naturally, accidentally and intentionally.

One routine morning at work turned to chaos when a member of the public presented to us a micro bat. These tiny bats are about the size of a mouse and feed mainly on insects. Unfortunately this little bat was completely stuck to a large sticky fly trap. One wing, an ear and the whole right side of his body was stuck. Sticky traps are designed to catch insects and rodents and once they come into contact with this aggressive adhesive, no small creature from a fruit fly to a small bird, has any chance of freeing itself. The stress from being stuck causes the animal to struggle and as a result, more body parts are adhered to this death trap.

Death comes excruciatingly slowly, if the initial stress or larger predator snatching up a free meal doesn't kill the poor defenceless animal, it could take up to a week for dehydration and starvation to finally put it out of its misery.

Extreme caution needed to be taken to free this bat, not only so we wouldn't cause injury to him, but the vet and I have not been vaccinated against the Lyssa virus and one bite from his tiny teeth could potentially be fatal. After about 20 minutes of peeling millimetre by millimetre of

his paper thin wing membranes, ear and fur, he was free and seemed to be in one piece.

A dedicated wildlife carer, Lana, who is vaccinated and trained to care for bats, came and picked him up, took him home, cleaned the excess adhesive off and monitored him overnight.

The next day all seemed well with this little trooper so Lana prepared for his release. After a thorough check over she just had to see if he could fly and then she was going to take him back to the same area where he was found.

Unfortunately he was unable to fly, so Lana headed straight to her local vet to assess if he had any injuries to his wings, but on the way to the vet, his little eyes started to close, and his tiny heart started to slow down and finally took its last beat.

It was such an unnecessary and sad ending for this little guy. It's still not known what the bat died from, it could have been the stress of being trapped, the trauma of the vet and I peeling him off, the possibility of ingestion of the plastic and/or adhesive when he was desperately trying to chew his way free (if you look closely at the picture, you can see tiny chew marks) or it could be a combination of all of the above - we will never know.

This story is only one of many - I've seen Willie Wagtails, Noisy Minors and numerous other creatures



stuck to these inhumane traps and it is gut wrenching to imagine how many thousands of animals suffer for days and days before they slowly die, never having a chance at all.

I am urging everyone who reads this to please never use sticky traps and if you know anyone who does, tell them this "little bat" story and convince them that they are inhumane.

We need to make these traps illegal not only in Australia, but around the world, so show this story to everyone you know, even if they are not really an animal person, I'm sure if we get enough people sharing this, maybe, just maybe, animals won't suffer in the future, like this brave little micro bat did.

One voice can make the difference; a million can change the world!

Cindy Talbot

NW Branch

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:)

Community Education Update

Community Education is an important service offered to the public by a dedicated team of members who give a lot of their time and effort to get information about our wildlife and its habitat out there – at venues like pre-schools, schools, scout groups, kids' holiday programs, adult groups, TAFE migrant programs, seniors & retirement centres. The main effort is to educate however the extra benefits can be new members, promotion of Sydney Wildlife's work and donations – both money and materials like possum pouches.

There is a Community Education Committee which meets about once a year, but members liaise frequently and although most presentations are arranged at Branch level, there is considerable cooperation between educators across the whole organisation. The committee had a meeting in August at which some guidelines were set to ensure that we deliver professional and consistent messages, and members were able to discuss sharing of resources (hand-outs, presentations, etc). Each branch has a Community Education co-ordinator whose role includes organising and keeping records of

venues and speakers, recruiting new member speakers and offering training if required, and liaison with the other Branch coordinators.

Members working in the office or after hours should be aware that any requests for talks should be referred to the Community Education coordinator for the Branch involved. We really like to welcome new presenters – we ask that you contact us if you are asked to do a talk for Sydney Wildlife. We can offer support and training if you wish, as well as good shared resources for presentations. Even if you don't wish to speak, there are other support roles that you can help out with – preparing hand-outs, picking up and returning education animals, for instance.

We've had a busy and productive year! ND, NB and IW/ES branches have done more than 70 presentations in the past year. Unfortunately NW and SW branches were not represented at our meeting so not yet on our distribution list. It is very likely their numbers would put the total of presentations over 100 because we know there are some active and experienced speakers in those branches. Do get in touch.



Photo by Joan Reid

If you are interested in joining the Community Education team, you should contact your branch Community Education co-ordinator, or contact:

Bev Young
youngbevg@gmail.com

Eira Battaglia
battagli@tpg.com.au

We particularly need speakers for weekday daytime events.

*Bev Young, Chair,
 Community Education Committee*

A gentle soul is Baloo



"Sometimes the smallest things take up the most room in your heart."

Winnie the Pooh

Baloo was one of the first little babies to come into care in October when the bat season started. He was passed to me after being found on his dead mother on the ground in a soccer field. It looked like his mother had been electrocuted as she was very stiff and 'cooked'. This is a very common reason why our beautiful baby bats find themselves orphaned.

Baloo was a beautiful baby boy around 10 days old. whilst he was always a handful and up to no good

he had a gentle soul and we had a very close bond together. He was very small when he came into care but he grew quickly and by the time creche was opened for the season he was one of the biggest bats around. He was a very special boy who grew up to be a wonderful friend to all the other baby bats that drifted in and out of our place on the northern beaches. He was successfully released in the first round of creche and has gone out into the world.

*Sarah Thorpe
 NB Branch*



Photo by Mandi Griffith

Know your Board

Chair and Northern Districts Rep	Maryanne Large
Secretary	Helen Kennedy
Treasurer	Lindsay Bridgland
Statistics/Office Co-ordination	Open
Media, Marketing & Fundraising	Robyn Ball
Inner West Representative	Bill Haskin
Northern Beaches Representative	Sian Waythe
North West Representative	Chris Thompson
South West Representative	Deborah Kerr

Thank you Sue Bates

Many members will remember our late, highly respected, colleague, Sue Bates. Sue was an original member of Sydney Wildlife, and a dedicated, caring person to animals and carers alike. Over her years with Sydney Wildlife she contributed to many facets of our work - in Branch and Committee responsibilities, regular office and after hours, training and education roles as well as rescuing and caring.

Sue died in May 2013 after a battle with cancer, and many of us miss her very much.

Sydney Wildlife has now been notified that Sue left a bequest - \$20,000 - to Sydney Wildlife. This is a wonderful gesture and I'm sure we all appreciate her thoughtfulness in doing this.

Thank you Sue!

by Bev Young.



Photo by Lorraine Woodward

Are you helping out on the hotline?



Photo by Neville Plumb

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
	smwsweekdayroster@gmail.com	
Weekends/After Hours	Carolyn Martin	9440 8233
	smwsweekendroster@gmail.com	
	smwsafterhours@gmail.com	

TRAINING COMMITTEE UPDATE

The new Training committee is up and running. Besides the four Rescue and Care Courses, they are planning many specialised course for you to refresh and update your skills. The Training Committee is always looking for people to help out at the courses and are open to any suggestions.

Our Code of Practice requires all members to refresh Specialist Training

at least every 3 years. Specialist Training refers to training other than the entry level Rescue and Care Course. It ensures you are kept up-to-date with current practices, trends and legislative requirements. Please express interest in attending these courses by either contacting the relevant course co-ordinator or by phoning Sydney Wildlife to be added to the course list. Most courses are held at Northbridge.

The Training Committee members are: Neville Plumb, Linda Wilson, Irene Callahan, Pat Corbitt (Chair), Eira Battaglia (Secretary), Deborah Fleet, Robyn Ball (Board Liaison). Please contact Pat or Eira if you can help out.

To register your interest for these courses please contact the office on 9413 4300 or send an email to training@sydneywildlife.org.au

UPCOMING COURSES

Rescue and Care Course

2-3 May

1-2 August

31 Oct - 1st Nov

Possum Course

29th March

13th September

Baby Bird Course

23rd August

Bat Course

10th October

Koala, Lizard, and Snake (TBA)

As well as these courses, the NSW Wildlife Council Inc offer training in all sorts of wildlife rescue and rehabilitation. Go to nwc.org.au/resources/training-calendar for more information.

Emus afoot!

Just north of Penrith, there used to be vacant land owned by the Australian Defence force. This site, has been home to kangaroos, emus and other wildlife. The land has changed hands, now to Land Lease, and is home to the new suburbs of Ropes Crossing and Jordan Springs.

On a rainy Tuesday morning, Sydney Wildlife rang to say there were emus afoot. Six of them, in fact - one adult with five babies.

Once I heard this I knew exactly what had happened (this wasn't my first emu call). Emus in the area are a common sight, especially in areas that back on to the ADI site.

Knowing where the emus came from and how to get them back there are two very different things and that was exactly the problem.

An emu wasn't going to fit into my tiny car, let alone a rescue basket. Even if it was just a baby, there were still a lot of baby emus. This was going to be a job for more than one rescuer. The office tried to see if they could find another rescuer, while the MOP and I were getting ready to herd some emus back home.

With the lack of emus in the surrounding area, I knocked on the door of the MOP. We talked about how frequently different kinds of animals had visited her back yard. She also talked about how people cut holes in the fence and that's how the emus most likely got out. She told me about the sighting of the

emu just outside her house, and how there were the emus and a man walking his dog. The emu was not fond of the dog, and was putting up a fight. The MOP called us, as well as the Police, who had gotten multiple calls about emus on the loose.

The emus had moved on, but the MOP gave me a tip on where to find them. Off in my car I went, following the directions I was given.

Just up the road, there was a vacant grassy area, with a fence to the ADI site. There standing by the fence, were six emus.

One adult and five juveniles. They didn't have the stripes of the babies, but they weren't as big as the adult there. I had found the emus. Next step, herd them into the fence.

But there was one of me and six of them. And they were wild emus.

I decided to keep my distance. They knew I was there, and I knew where they were, but I kept my distance so I wouldn't scare them off. I rang up the office to let them know that I had found the mysterious emus. Bronwyn in the office asked if I had an umbrella. I thought this was because I would eventually have to stand in the rain, but no. She suggested it just in case I needed something to defend myself with against them if they decided I was a threat.

The office was going to call the RSPCA (after all, they had an inspector that was aware of these emus) and I was going to

call the Fire and Rescue service to help me with the herding the emus back through the hole from which they came. As I was looking for the number for the Fire and Rescue, I got a notification that I had a voice mail. Andrew from Land Lease had heard of my legendary Emu Wrangling Skills and had tracked me down to find out where the emus were so that he could get them back in. He asked me where I was and where the emus were and I told him I was at a safe distance.

Clearly a seasoned professional when it came to dealing with these emus, Andrew arrived on the scene, saw the emus and came running up with a bag of bread. The emus clearly knew that this was a man that could be trusted, or at least could give them some food, and they flocked towards him. Meanwhile, Andrew went closer to the fence and cut a hole in it so that they could get back in. It took quite a bit of food to lure them in, as well as some gesturing, up against a lot of resistance from two of them that really didn't want to go back through the fence, but eventually they made it all back in safely.

With the emus back home, it was time for this Wildlife Rescuer to go back home too. But a rainy Tuesday morning spent watching a family of emus being out and about was a certainly a better way to spend my day off

Elyse McKenzie

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**.

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 robynsmws@hotmail.com.

Robyn Ball

Marketing, Media and Fundraising.

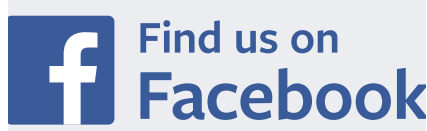
NOTE: by sending your stories and images, you are granting the release of copyright of content and images as they may be published in Wildlife Matters, SMWS Members only Facebook page, general Facebook page, other media and fundraising opportunities that may arise. They will only be used to promote Sydney 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



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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