

2018 Annual Report

DONATE TO ACT WILDLIFE

To support the caring for native animals please make a donation

Tax deductible donations (\$2 and over) can be made to

BSB 633-000 Account number: 152747457 Account Name: ACT Wildlife Gift Fund

Please use 'Your surname" as the reference and email treasurer@actwildlife.net to send you a receipt.

> **Not-for-profit Charity** For the Community by the Community

We have been in operation for five years and we continue to progress beyond expectations.

This year has seen three major milestones that allows the organisation to grow and integrate into the community more effectively; premises at Jerrabomberra Wetlands given to us by the ACT Government, Premises at Duffy rented from ACT Property Group to be used for training and meetings, and a shortterm paid administration officer to review the current operations plan to better manage the large volume of calls we receive each year.

Although we continue to face challenges with low resources and too few volunteers, it is great to see we have passionate champions within that help build our reputation. Programs, such as the Wombat Mange Program and Flying-fox Heat Event Emergency Plan, both demonstrate our strategic commitment to reduce the number of animals that enter into care, as well as consideration to overall animal welfare within our local environment.

I would like to thank all our volunteers who commit their time and expertise that help ACT Wildlife to succeed and grow as an organisation. Without phone operators, transporters, carers, coordinators, those who attend events, sew pouches, move aviaries to new carers and fundraise we would not be able to do the great job we do.

Thank you to the committee members who diligently attend meetings and spend much of their spare time to help the organisation grow to maturity. We are still a young organisation with great promise.

Yours in caring,

Marg Peachey, President

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Vision

The welfare and biodiversity of native wildlife in the ACT is protected and maintained

Mission

The purpose of ACT Wildlife is to:

- Rescue, rehabilitate and release injured, sick and orphaned native wildlife
- Educate the public about sharing the urban interface with native wildlife
- Provide professional training to carers to ensure a high standard of welfare for wildlife in care.

Program Impacts

Wombat Mange Program

Following the success in a scientific study on wombat mange treatment, which was supported by ACT government in 2017, our wombat mange sub-group has continued to create a local wombat mange program for Canberra and surroundings. The aim is to support our local community to access wombat mange treatments for use on their own properties.

This program aims to educate our local community, assist the return of a 'healthy' wombat population, and increase the number of 'mange free' areas for rehabilitated wombats to return back to the wild. This will reduce the number of orphaned wombat joeys requiring treatment for mange when they come into care. Further information is found on our website http://www.actwildlife.net/wombat-mange-information.html

To extend our knowledge further the wombat sub-group will also continue to monitor the sections of river that was part of the program over the next two years. In 2019 we plan to develop our website for the public to report sightings of wombats with mange.

Flying-fox Heat Stress Event Plan

Leading into summer devastating bat deaths occurred in northern Australia. The seasonal forecast of extreme extended heat in southern Australia prompted ACT Wildlife to question the ACT Government on their own action plan to address welfare of the bat population in Commonwealth Park, as well as health risks to the general public. This led to a sub-group within ACT Wildlife to develop a Flying-fox Heat Stress Emergency Plan.









Program Opportunities

Premises at Duffy and Jerrabomberra Wetlands

During the year ACT Wildlife formally secured two premises to better integrate with our community. The initial benefits will provide the public a centralised location to drop-off injured wildlife, access to educational material, and provide the public a 'feel good' part in the wildlife's journey to either ease the suffering of that animal or rehabilitate and release back to the wild.

The Duffy office has already become a great training venue and a 'hub' for volunteers to socialise, share their experiences and network, whilst the Jerrabomberra Office is ready to become the centralised drop-off and administration 'hub'.

Both premises will have a slightly different purpose and will be determined in 2019 how to morph our current operations with our new found opportunities.

Administration Officer

A temporary administration officer was appointed to review the current 24/7 helpline operations plan and to provide suggestions how we operate under a more enduring nature to manage the large volumes of phone calls we receive each year. This was a one-off short-term employment during the busy summer months, with funds provided by ACT Environmental Minister Mick Gentleman.

Operations Summary

In 2018 the number of animals that entered into care was 1,591. In comparison with last year this is a decrease by 46% (by 739 animals). The rate of decrease can be contributed to a combination of two main factors; lower than usual bird numbers in Canberra overall¹ and improved advice by our phone operators, reducing the number of animals entering into the Veterinary system and care under ACT Wildlife.

The number of animals received on average per month was 132 animals, compared to 194 animals in 2017. In 2018 the most animals received was 271 in January whilst the lowest was 56 in July. Although we received less animals overall the ratio of animals entering into care hasn't differed significantly. During 2018 birds decreased from 77% to 69%, possums increased from 11% to 17%, flying foxes & microbats decreased from 7% to 5% and the wombats, lizards & turtles increased from 1% to 2%.

The number of phone calls received by our 24/7 helpline was similar to last year, with an increase of 1%. This equates to 90 additional calls (64 less calls during business hours and 154 calls increase after-hours). Compared to the year before phone calls increased in winter, decreased in summer and was similar in spring and autumn. In 2018 the number of animals that entered into care from the 24/7 helpline decreased from 16% to 13%, whilst the advice provided to the community increased from 41% to 44%.

The initial screening of sick animals by our veterinaries leaves our carers with the responsibility for the quality rehabilitation of viable animals, resulting in a higher proportion of animals to be released back into the wild. In 2018 the number of animals released was 46%, which continues to be the average since we started operations in 2013-14.

Wildlife enter into care for many different reasons and is highlighted in the animal report sections below. Figures 1 and 2 demonstrate the number of phone calls and animals received comparing the recent three years of operation (2016, 2017 and 2018).

¹ Fennell, P 2019, 'Annual Bird Report: 1 July 2017 to 20 June 2018', Canberra Bird Notes, vol. 44, No.1

OVERALL TOTAL ANIMALS COMPARISON BETWEEN SEASON AND MONTHS FOR THE LAST THREE YEARS



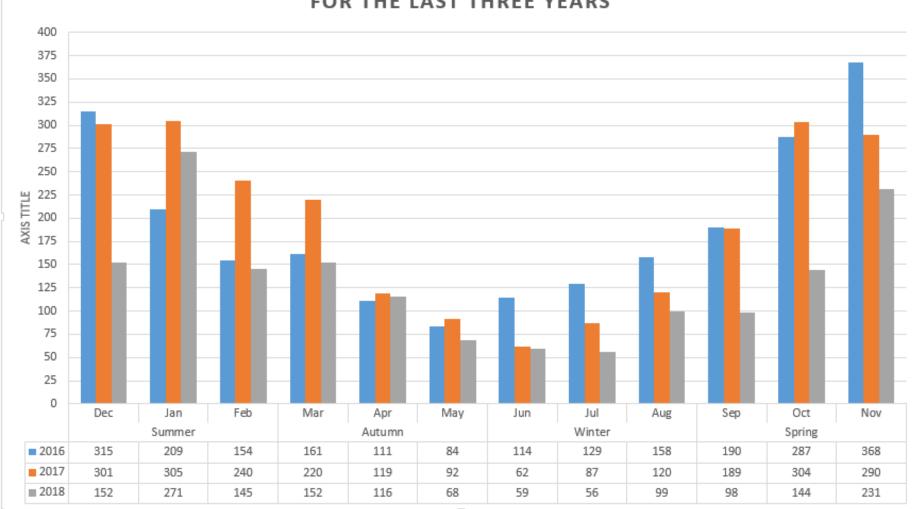


Figure 1: Overall total animal intake. Comparison between seasons and months for the last three years (2016 to 2018)

OVERALL TOTAL PHONE CALLS COMPARISON BETWEEN SEASONS FOR THE LAST THREE YEARS



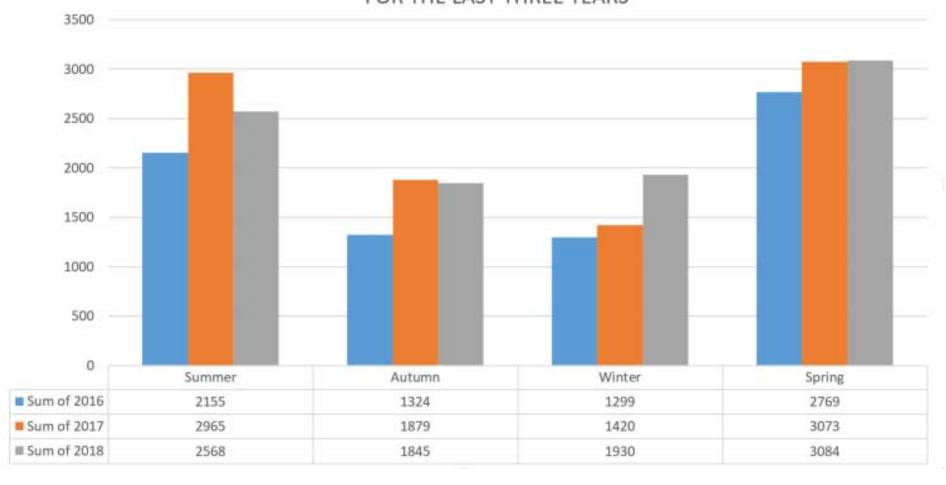


Figure 2: Overall phone calls received. Comparison between seasons for the last three years (2016 to 2018)

Helpline Facts

Our helpline is operated by our volunteers and is a 24/7 service.

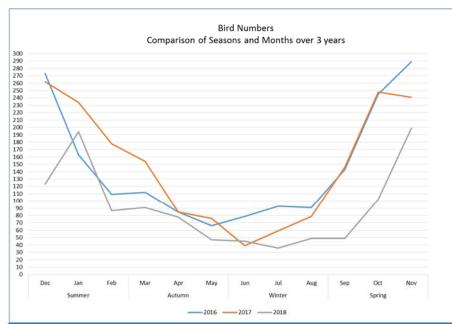
The majority of calls we receive are direct from the public, with a smaller number received from our vets - who have injured or sick wildlife ready for care, and Access Canberra - who redirect calls from the public.

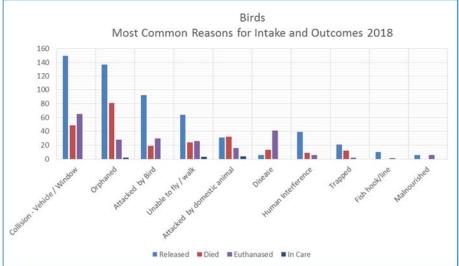
Our phone operators and transport crew are generally the first point of contact for those who have found wildlife needing assistance. The phone operators are trained to triage the call and determine if the animal requires to be removed from its environment and to; seek medical intervention and rehabilitation from an injury, rest from illness or raising if young with no parents. However, majority of calls are advice and no intervention is necessary. The outcome of the triage results in animals not subjected to stress unnecessarily by entering into the care system.

Animal logisitics from the wild to the care system is coordinated by the phone operator. They will request the public to take the animal to the closest vet in the first instance or organise one of our transport crew to transport the animal to a vet or carer. The transportation of wildlife is a combined effort between the public, rangers and ACT Wildlife carers and transport crew.

Phone operators and transport crew are rostered on for specific periods each day, however until we have a sufficient volunteer base our service may be limited at times when resources are inadequate to cover every shift, which means we may not be able to answer all calls and attend every situation.





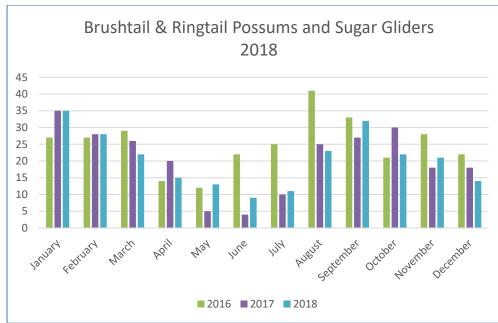


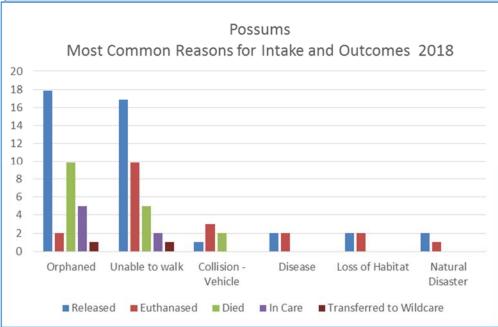
Birds

A total of 1,118 birds (87 species) came into care during 2018. This is a 39% decrease from last year (701 less birds) and a 37% decrease from 2016 (648 less birds).

The top 70% of species in 2018 is similar to that from last year. They are; Australian Magpie (137), Galah (98), Crimson Rosella (82), Crested Pigeon (78), Sulphur-crested Cockatoo (77), Pied Currawong (58), Australian Wood Duck (48), Eastern Rosella (40), Red Wattlebird (35), Pacific Black Duck (32), Australian King-Parrot (31), Barn Owl (29), and Magpie-Lark (27).

Generally birds make up about 80% of the total animals received by ACT Wildlife in general. In 2018 this was reduced to 69%, of which 52% were released. Thanks to our dedicated volunteers this figure is extraordinarily high mainly due to the re-homing young birds with their families. The main reason birds came into care was colliding with windows or vehicles, attacked by other birds or domestic animals (cats & dogs) or orphaned.





Possums

A total number of 245 possums entered into care during 2018. Of these, 89% were Brushtail possums, 5% sugar gliders and 6% ringtail possums. The total is a similar number received last year.

Possums followed a similar trend to last year, although there were slightly more possums requiring care in winter.

A third of possums were young to be raised. The other two thirds were sick or injured, which are directly from living in close proximity to humans, particularly in an urban environment. The types of injuries include; collisions with vehicles, cat or dog attacks, poisoning and electrocution.

Possums remained in care for varying lengths of time. Over half (56%) were in care for less than 30 days, whilst 19% were in care between 1-3 months and 22% between 6-12 months.

The hard work and dedication of our volunteer carers was reflected in the subsequent release rate of 48%, similar to last year. In the 38% euthanased or died, the injuries were unavoidable due to excessive poisoning or injury in adults and juveniles.

Bats

A total number of 108 bats (87 Flying Foxes and 32 Microbats) entered into care during 2018. The number of bats that visit Canberra fluctuates each year, however for comparison; 14% decrease from last year and a 104% increase compared with 2016.

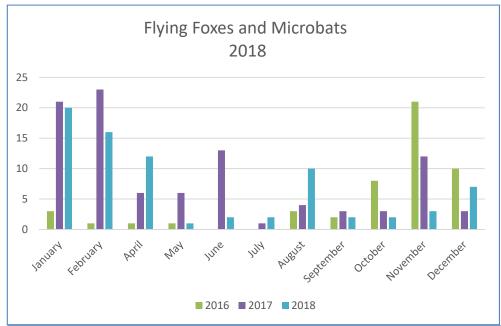
Flying Foxes

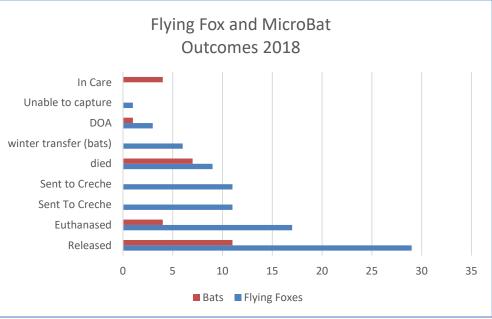
The Grey-headed Flying Fox was the only species that came into care during 2018, with the exception of one Black Flying Fox. Of these 43% were caught in fruit nets, which is a decrease from 52% recorded in the previous year.

Microbats

Are local residents and are mainly located in areas surrounding suburbia with little interaction with humans. Due to this we receive similar numbers into care each year.

Seven species of Microbats came into care in 2018, which is a decrease by two species from 2017. These were; Goulds Wattled Bat (10%), Lesser Long-eared Bat (8%), Little Forest Bat (6%), Chocolate Wattled Bat (3%), Large Forest Bat (1%), Southern Forest Bat (1%), and Unidentified Bats (1%).





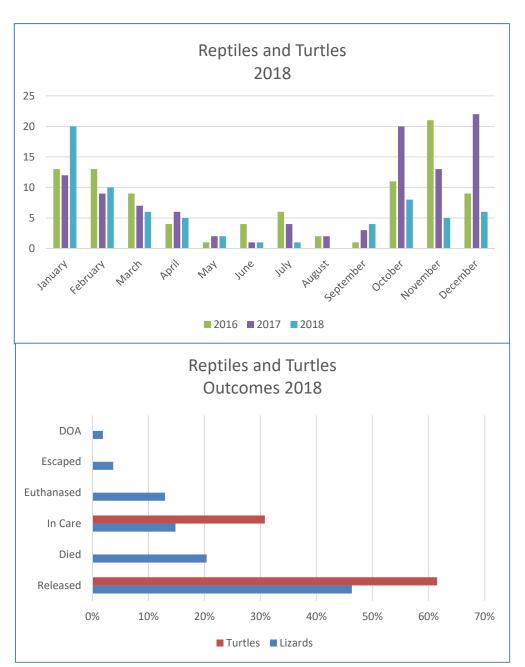
Reptiles

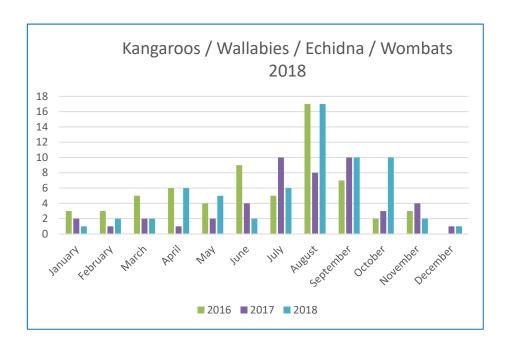
A total number of 67 reptiles entered into care during 2018. This is a 30% decrease from last year and a 28% decrease from 2016.

A total of six species came into care during 2018, which is 5 species fewer than 2017. This was made of the Eastern Blue-tongue Lizard (39%), the Eastern Long-necked Turtle (12%), the Shingle Backed Lizard (6%), the Bearded Dragon (4%), and one unidentified turtle.

Reptiles are cold blooded and rely on the sun and local rainfall to survive. The air temperature and rainfall patterns usually dictate when we receive reptiles for care.

A third of the lizards that came into care were contributed by dog attacks, another third was a litter of young and the other third were sick or picked by the public unnecessarily. Turtles are either hit by cars (54%), picked up unnecessarily (31%) or attacked by other animals or trapped (16%).



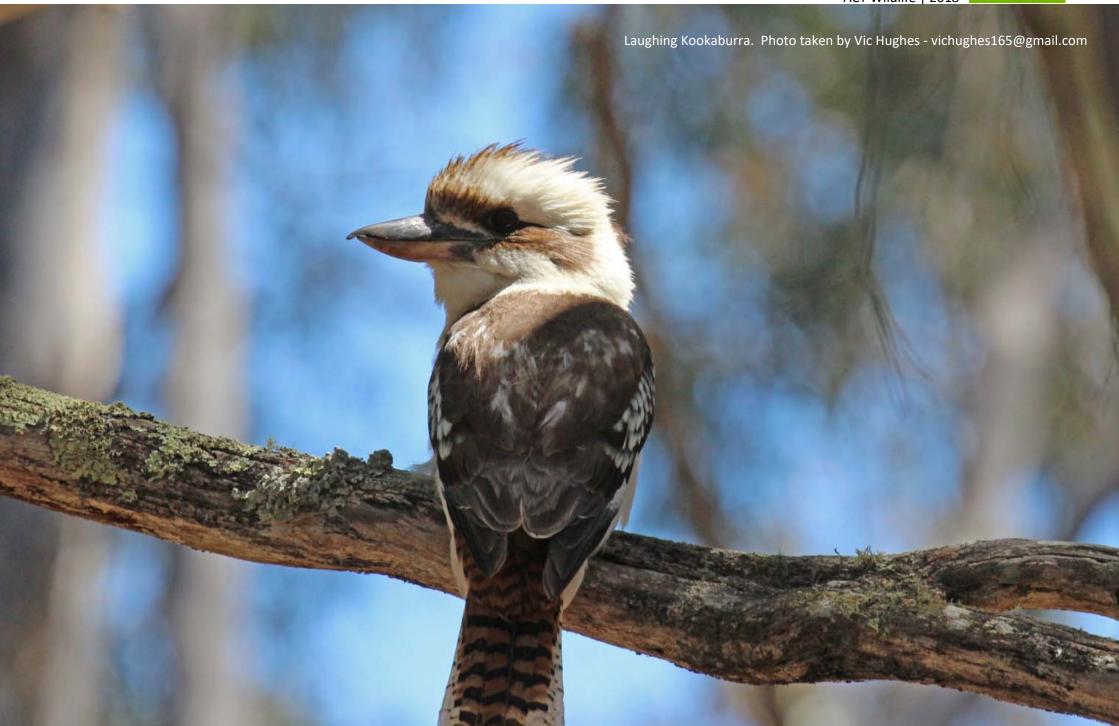


Wombats, Wallabies & Echidnas

In 2018 a small number (2%) of marsupials came into care. This was made up Eastern Grey Kangaroo (33), Common Wombat (18), Short-Beaked Echidna (6), Wallabies (5) and Wallaroo (2).

Eastern grey kangaroo and wombats are located within suburbia, whilst wallabies are more elusive and generally found on the outskirts of suburbia. The most common cause of injury is vehicle strike. Joeys are found with their dead mothers and will be brought into care by those who stop and check the pouch. In 2018 eastern grey kangaroo joeys were either transferred (78%) to our neighbouring wildlife group (Wildcare Queanbeyan), or euthanased due to excessive injuries or too young to survive (22%).

Of the wombat joeys that came into care 69% were raised by our carers, 13% transferred to Wildcare Queanbeyan and the remaining 13% either died or were euthanased. The wallaby joeys were euthanased as a result of badly sustain injuries from vehicle collisions, and the Wallaroo joeys transferred to Wildcare Queanbeyan.





Memberships

In our fifth financial year, ACT Wildlife had 260 members, which has increased since last year. A single membership is defined as a household, so the number of people is actually larger. Anyone who provides support to ACT Wildlife as a volunteer must become a member.

The membership fee is minimal and increased from \$25 to \$40 during the year.

Training

Training provides the opportunity for our volunteers to learn new skills, assist in the rehabilitation of wildlife and be a wildlife champion in their community. This year training consisted of 15 courses with over 322 people attending, which is double number of attendees from 2017. In 2018 we had 62 households qualified to care for our wildlife.

	Orientation & Phone	Adv Birds	Basic Birds	Basic Possums	Baby Birds	Reptiles	Total
Run	5	2	3	2	1	2	15
Attendees	136	19	80	35	19	33	322

Training courses are also offered by Wildcare Queanbeyan and WIRES Goulburn as part of their organisation. ACT Wildlife acknowledges their training undertaken by them and for efficiency we invite each other to the others training. This is particularly useful when species specific trainers are not available in one organisation.

Training has two purposes; an introduction on ACT Wildlife (orientation) which allows the public to assess whether they are able to provide their support, and specific species training to upskill our carers, phone operators, and transport crew and educate our general members.

Our training schedule is found on our website http://actwildlife.net/wildlife-training.html





A number of carers attended the 2018 biennial Wildlife Rehabilitation Conference, which is hosted by one of the many wildlife groups within Australia. The Australian Wildlife Rehabilitation Conference Committee is made up of one or two representatives from each state and territory, and coordinates and assists the host to run the conference https://www.awrc.org.au.

The conference is a great opportunity to network with other carers and professionals, including veterinarians and scientists, to share their experience and be informed on the latest welfare practices and lessons learnt from other groups.

Our committee incorporates this information into ACT Wildlife training modules for all carers and members to improve on their own animal welfare and rehabilitation practices.

Flying fox facts

- Protected species under the EPBC Act 1999
- Live mostly on the eastern coastal strip
- Nocturnal lifestyle and travel long distance each night to find food
- Natural diet is eucalypt pollen, nectar and fruit
- Similar to birds flying foxes pollinate through faeces
- Population is decreasing due to urbanisation, habitat loss and extreme heat events, which is forcing flying foxes to move further west
- A small proportion carry Lyssavirus which is fatal to humans
- Lyssavirus is only passed via saliva and blood (bite or a scratch)
- Flying fox carers are vaccinated for rabies, a closely related organism to Lyssavirus.

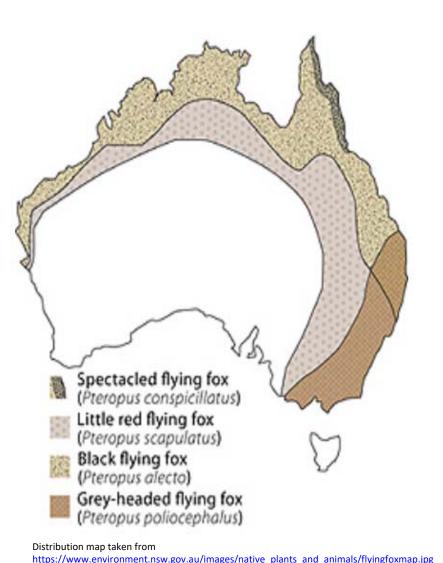
The Grey-headed flying fox started visiting Canberra in the 1990's and continue to visit each year from October to April to feast on the bountiful fruit grown in urban backyards.

ACT Wildlife vaccinated volunteers regularly rescue flying foxes from fruit netting. Unfortunately, they are caught on barb wired fences and netting over fruit trees. Both cause injuries to their thumbs, wings and feet.

- Injuries can take up to 3 weeks to emerge and take longer to heal
- Have a 60% 75% chance of survival

A simple way to reduce the likelihood of bats getting caught in netting is based on two major factors. The netting squares are small enough your little finger can't fit through, and erecting the net over the fruit tree tight enough that its not loose. This may involve pegging the net to the ground.

For more information visit the wildlife friendly backyard fruit netting webpage.







Events and Education

Events

It was a busy year of events for ACT Wildlife, getting out in the community and talking to people about what we do and how people can volunteer with us. These events are essential to ACT Wildlife to raise funds, educate the public, and encourage new carers and volunteers. At each event we talk to people who are passionate about their backyard wildlife.

The events and stalls that were attended by our volunteers were;

- Canberra Show (February)
- Jerrabomberra Wetlands Open Day (February)
- Connect and Participate Volunteers Expo (March)
- Belconnen Bunnings Spring Launch (September)
- Scout and School talks
- Several departmental talks

Each event attracts different types of people to ACT Wildlife and many have joined our ranks as volunteers.

Media

The social media coverage has expanded again this year to complement our radio coverage. The media we participated in this year were;

- Continuation our facebook coverage https://www.facebook.com/ACTwildlife/
- New facebook page for carers only
- Continuation our twitter account https://twitter.com/ACT Wildlife
- New Instagram_https://instagram.com/act_wildlife
- Continuation of our youtube channel 'ACT Wildlife Australia' https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCY80YUm8xzoPLRu_Q1WCJ9Q
- Several news articles on ABC news
- Several newspaper articles in the Canberra Times and Chronicle, and
- Radio interviews with ABC 666.







Fundraising

Fundraising is one of the avenues social media coverage has expanded again this year to complement our radio coverage. The fundraising events we participated in this year were;

- Bunnings BBQ at Belconnen
- Christmas Markets at Epic
- Fundraiser Cadbury chocolates
- Goodwill Wines http://www.goodwillwine.com.au/charities
- Production of our first calendar
- 'Donate now' links on our facebook page

To find out how you can support us contact our fundraising coordinator fundingsupport@actwildlife.net

Financial Report

This year our income exceeded expenses by \$33,603.

Income and Expenses

Income was predominately attributed to donations of \$29,616 - of which \$15,000 was donated by three individuals. Donations has increased from the previous year by \$11,430. Other income was attributed to fundraising (\$11,877), membership fees (\$6,600), funding from Transport Canberra and City Services (\$6,000), and training fees (\$4,469).

Expenses were mainly contributed from the purchase of general consumables and specialised food (\$7,050), fundraising (\$6,126), Administration Officer salary (\$4,526), the Duffy building rent (\$3,622) and volunteer insurance (\$2,561).

Grants

In 2017 we successfully won a grant from the ACT government for \$36,142. This has assisted ACT Wildlife to move into the Jerrabomberra Wetlands Centre. This will be acquitted in 2019.

In 2018 the ACT Government provided funds of \$27,000, which is assisting us to employ the Administration Officer over the busy period in 2018 and 2019.

Total Income	35,956	65,124
Sales	83	0
Miscellaneous	552	20
Annual Funding TCCS (QTR1, QTR2)	6,000	6,000
Wombat Mange Treatment Program	0	1,471
Clothing	690	
Interest	273	278
Fundraising	4,412	11,877
Training	2,096	4,469
Donations	18,186	29,615
Membership subscriptions	3,664	6,600
Income	2017	2018

Total Expenses	15,744	31,521
Wombat Mange Treatment Program	0	568
Salaries (Admin Officer)	0	4,526
Jerra Office – Maintenance & Repairs	0	74
Duffy Office – Utilities	0	272
Duffy Office – Rent	0	3,622
T-Shirts	364	0
Depreciation	2,692	1,348
Insurance	355	2,561
Miscellaneous	758	1,235
Flying Fox Food / Expenses	1,500	953
Food/consumables	5,644	7,050
Mobile Phone	1,074	531
Fundraising Expenses	1,427	6,126
Printing and Stationary	1,372	85
Freight	77	257
Consulting and Accounting	381	481
Advertising	100	0
Expenses		

Total Income minus Expenses	20,212	33,603
•		

Looking Forward

We have started using the buildings at Duffy and Jerrabomberra Wetlands and excited to strategise the best way to maximise the benefits. The buildings provide opportunities to increase education and awareness programs involving the; community, veterinarians, support 'partners', such as the rangers, RFS, Actew/Icon Water, and Access Canberra.

During the year the Committee will also look at;

- How to improve the training modules
- Establishing an online hub for volunteers to access
- Preventative measures to reduce the number of animals entering into care, ie change in spillway designs or signage in hotspots, awareness programs etc.



The Committee Members

Marg Peachey - President,

Martin Lind - Vice President

Dorothy Brown - Secretary

Jim Peachey - Treasurer / Public Officer

Agnes Mesple - Member

Heather Peachey - Member

Luke Robbie - Member

Felicity Eylward - Member

Ashley Sloan - Member

Corin Pennock - Member

Species Coordinators

Marg Peachey - Birds (South)

Denise Kay - Birds (North)

Ingrid Singh - Microbats, Lizards & Turtles

Marg Peachey - Flying Foxes

Lindy Butcher - Wombats and Macropods

Cheryle Le Fevre - Possums (North)

Michelle Johnson - Possums (South)

Dorothy Brown - Amphibians

Operations Coordinators

Marg Peachey - Phone Coordinator

Marg Peachey - Transport Coordinator

Marg Peachey - Training Coordinator

Activity Coordinators

Dee Harmer - Events

Lindy Butcher / Emily Birks - Media and Social Media

Heather Peachey - Fundraising

Jane Halsey - Sewing Coordinator

Dorothy Brown - Food Coordinator

Lindy Butcher / Corin Pennock - Wombat Mange Project Manager

Patrons

We have three Patrons who are happy to help at our request. Further information on our Patrons achievements and biographies can be found on the Internet.

lan Fraser – a prestigious Australian Natural Historian known for his work in conservation and education.

Genevieve Jacobs – recently appointed to the board of the Canberra International Music Festival, a facilitator and broadcaster for local events, Riot Act journalist, and previously a well-known local personality on the ABC 666 Canberra radio.

Karen Viggers - a Veterinarian and has a doctorate in Australian Wildlife Health and is currently a novelist.

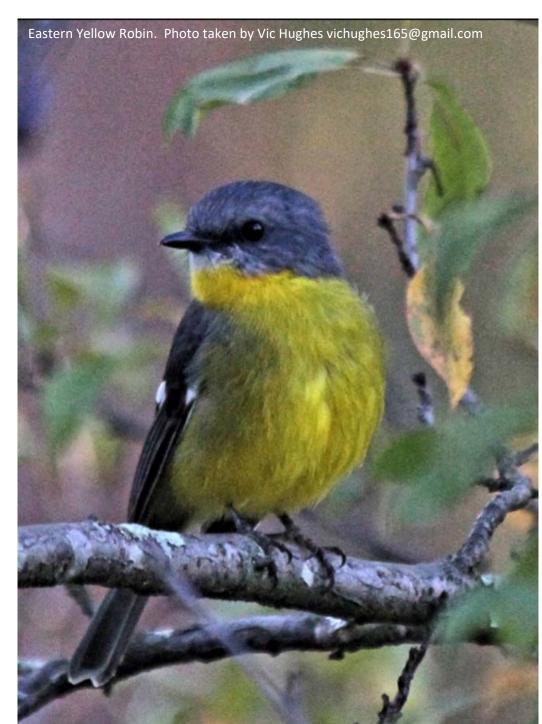
Thank you for your help in 2018.



We Need Your Help in 2019

We welcome your support in any capacity to help ACT Wildlife grow as a not-for-profit organisation. If you're interested in an opportunity to gain a better understanding on our local wildlife and how a not-for-profit organisation works we welcome you. Please contact us via http://actwildlife.net/get-involved.html to find out how you can get involved.

We will welcome any contribution you can offer.





Wish Lists

To keep costs down we are always looking to recycle old items that you no longer need.

The main items are:

- Carry cages a must for transporting animals. The top-opening lids are the most convenient for containing wildlife.
- Artificial grass fantastic for placing on the bottom of carry cages. This provides the animals with a less slippery surface to stand on and helps to keep carry cages clean.
- Aviaries and other small cages a must for housing injured and sick wildlife

To enable ACT Wildlife grow into a bigger not-for-profit organisation we are looking for;

- An honorary veterinarian who can provide services free of charge
- A well-equipped transport vehicle so volunteers have all the necessary equipment on hand and do not have to use their own vehicle.
- An administration person part time or full time to keep all administration up to date.
- Monetary and equipment donations, and
- Annual funding assistance to pay for the above items.

A paid administration person would enable ACT Wildlife to undertake one of the following tasks:

- Answer the phone during the day
- Follow up with new members to ascertain their role as a volunteer
- Enhance the organisations profile, and seek sponsorships
- Maintain records (assets, grants etc) as required.

Thank you to....

- TCCS for support with phone calls over the Christmas and New Year holidays (2017-18) and the challenging animal rescues.
- ACT Government for providing ACT Wildlife the Jerrabomberra Office free of charge.
- ACT Fire and Rescue for hard-to-reach animal rescues.
- The Tuggeranong, Belconnen and Kambah Mens' Shed for making possum boxes and hotboxes.
- Parks and Conservation Rangers for their support, in particular Brad Green and Michael McConachie.
- Steve Kraus for providing all ACT Wildlife members free IT support.
- Bunnings for opportunities to raise funds.
- IGA Drakeford and Fyshwick Markets Trugold Fruits for supplying fruit for flying foxes and lettuce for swans and ducks.
- ACT Roads who helped us to rescue waterbirds stuck in overflow areas from ponds and lakes or drains.
- All the generous donors who help us provide a better service to our community.
- Air Master for donating two air conditioning units.

And of course, to all the ACT Wildlife volunteers, coordinators and committee members who have contributed to making 2018 a success.



