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ACT Wildlife

AUTUMN - SUMMER 2022

Message from the President

Yumalundi (welcome) everyone

To the new Committee in July 2022, including new President, new Vice President, and ordinary member. Add to that what appears to be a new record. Yes, we now have over 400 members and with the festive season upon us we have good reasons to celebrate.

I'd like to thank Lindy Butcher, Jane Whyte, Amy Seath, Brett Davis and Paula Bosch for their contribution and time serving on the Committee. I originally joined ACTW back in the days of Wildlife Foundation (1995-97) as a Possum Carer. Maybe I might do full circle in the future when time allows me to look after possums again, although those wombats, wallabies, flying fox, dragons and birds are all pulling at my heart strings. In the short time I've been President I have witnessed so many individuals just giving and giving some more. Our carers, phone operators, transporters and rescuers are all amazing and are testament to our community that compassion, kindness, and care can save native wild lives.

Your new committee has it's work cut out for them and will be focusing on improving the due diligence of the organisation by reviewing our systems for better compliance and service, monitoring our performance through feedback and documenting procedures and policies to provide the detail on 'how we do', 'what we do' and 'why we are doing it'. I encourage all members who have skills and experience in any aspects of business administration to consider becoming a Committee member or joining a working group.

If you are good at communication skills and enjoy engaging with the public on a one-on-one basis, please consider joining our telephone and/or transporting teams. You will be contributing directly to the effectiveness and efficiency of the organisation. You will also be saving lives and helping injured or orphaned wildlife get the best care to recovery and release.

Thank you to all our members for your continued support and patience as we work together and towards continuous improvements and the best outcome for the animals in our care.



Yana del Valle
PRESIDENT



Do you need craft or medical for your rescue?

CLICK HERE FOR CRAFT OR MED

Whether you've been affected by the floods, or the constant rain is making washing and drying a problem, have all your pouches been moved on to the next carer with the animal, or you just need some more supplies because what you have is on its last legs, we can help.

The Craft Guild is a massive team of crafters that hand-make items for animal rescue, that has been working over 2 years now to support rescue and animals.

If you need supportive items for your animals, please log a request. We have the following items available, please specify the sizes you need suitable for the animals you have in care. Or let us know the weight/stage/size and species of your animals and we can work it from there.

**Sarah Jane + Maree, Michelle, Trish, and the craft team
Craft Shed - ARC Craft Guild**

Find Us at Eventbrite

ACT Wildlife regularly hosts Training, Get Togethers, Sewing Groups and much more through our Eventbrite found here <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/o/act-wildlife-17191430489>

While we have no events scheduled for December, 2023 is sure to be packed

Here is a guide to events, like the difference between orientation and training: <https://actwildlife.net/training/>

Events Coordinator Needed

ACT Wildlife is currently in need of an Events Coordinator. This can be for entry level or an experienced volunteer, but experience is preferred. Details of what an Events Coordinator role includes: Enjoy planning and organising. Available to do events on weekends. Access to a car to transport marquees and supplies. Comfortable speaking to members of the public and event organisers. The previous Events Coordinator is happy to talk to anyone that might be interested in this position and would need help getting started. If you are interested in this role, please contact info@actwildlife.net

New Landscaping at Duffy ACTW Center

Hello ACT Wildlife landscapers,

A big thank you to all 17 of you who helped at Duffy to plant 1500 native plants, protect the plants using recycled milk cartons and place mulch around the plants. Such a HUGE effort by all. In all it took 6 full days. The milk cartons will likely stay until summer, and we have a full roster of volunteers who will water the plants twice a week over 6 weeks to help them establish and decrease mortality rate.

We will open the garden to the public to introduce the three different habitat types you can create in your own backyards using Canberra local native plants to attract wildlife.

More pictures can be found [here](#)

Thanks again,
Heather and Victoria
ACT Wildlife
Project Managers, Duffy Landscaping Works





Volunteer Assistance Program

WILDTALK is a local initiative and extended to all of Australian Wildlife associated volunteers. Please, if you are feeling fragile, confused, angry, depressed or overloaded contact a Wildtalk counsellor. It is free for you and your family. The counsellors are wildlife carers or have a great understanding of the wildlife carers world and animals. Confidentiality is assured.

wildtalk.org.au

Wildbark: the gateway to Mulligans Flat

ACT Government; OurCBD

Canberrans of all ages can discover more about native landscapes and wildlife with Wildbark, an innovative nature-based learning centre, now open. Located in Throsby, Wildbark serves as the gateway to the Mulligans Flat Woodland Sanctuary. The Sanctuary is Australia's first fox, cat and rabbit free conservation area dedicated to restoring critically endangered Box-Gum woodland. Visitors can learn about the conservation work taking place and the threatened plant and animal species the Sanctuary serves to protect.

Wildbark offers guided tours, daily animal talks and story time, and educational and creative experiences run by leading experts and artists. There is also a café and a children's nature play area. Wildbark is a joint effort of the Woodlands and Wetlands Trust (WWT), the ACT Government, Odonata Foundation and the Australian National University. "Wildbark will offer the Canberra community the opportunity to connect with nature", Woodlands and Wetlands Trust president Alison Russell-French said. "Mulligans Flat Woodland Sanctuary is unique and now home to species like the Eastern Bettong and Eastern Quoll that have been extinct in this region for over 100 years." Wildbark profits will help fund the Woodlands and Wetlands Trust's conservation efforts.

Wildbark.org

ACTW Container Deposit Scheme



We are set up with the ACT Container Deposit Scheme. To donate to ACT Wildlife you need to use the drop off code E012893 and our phone number is 0432 300 033. There are more details on this page: <https://actcds.org.au/>

To donate to a charity- You can return eligible drink containers to three different types of return points: Drop & Go Point, Drop & Go Pod and Cash-Obac Depot. There are a number of return points located across the ACT- there is one near you!

Essential Services for Wildlife Care in Australia

Wildlife Health Australia

More information on SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19, including what is known about risk of infection from humans to animals, is available in the Wildlife Health Australia Fact Sheet “Novel Coronavirus disease (COVID-19)”. There is no evidence of SARS-CoV-2 virus in Australian wildlife and no evidence to suggest any animals in Australia might be a source of COVID-19 infection for humans. I

It is safest to assume that any mammal wildlife species may have the potential to be infected with SARS-CoV-2 from close exposure to an infected human. Appropriate precautions are always recommended before, during and after contact with animals (see National Wildlife Biosecurity Guidelines).

People diagnosed with COVID-19 should not have any contact with Australian wildlife. If you care for wildlife, you should have a plan in place for the animals in your care in the event you become sick or have to self isolate

[Click here for more information](#)

All members are welcome to come to committee meetings which are held on the first Monday of each month. If you have something to contribute, suggest, or complain about please express an interest to Dorothy at info@actwildlife.net at least a week beforehand.

We welcome member contributions.

Minutes and Agendas will be posted in the members, password protected, area of the website. Password are sent out with your membership card.

Don't Forget your 2023 ACT Wildlife Membership

If you are a Wildlife Carer it is a legal requirement to have an ACT Wildlife membership. If membership is not renewed by January 1st, the right to care is no longer valid.

Our members get discounts on all training and specialist wildlife food.

Duration of membership privileges:

Our members get discounts on all training and specialist wildlife food.

Duration of membership

From 1st January to 31st December

Memberships are renewed annually

New members joining after 1st October receive the following year free.

<https://actwildlife.net/become-a-member/>

2023 Calendars for Sale



2023 Calendar

This beautiful calendar showcases twelve of our rescued animals, one for each month and an extra two, one for the cover and one for January 2024. Each animal has its background story included. It is a perfect gift for family or friends who are passionate about saving our precious wildlife. Money from purchased calendars goes towards feeding, medicating and housing wildlife in care.

<https://actwildlife.net/shop/>

Help reunite
tawny frogmouth
families



**Support the
Raptor Recovery Australia
summer fundraiser**

Scan the QR code to make a tax deductible
contribution to the care and rehabilitation of
injured birds of prey

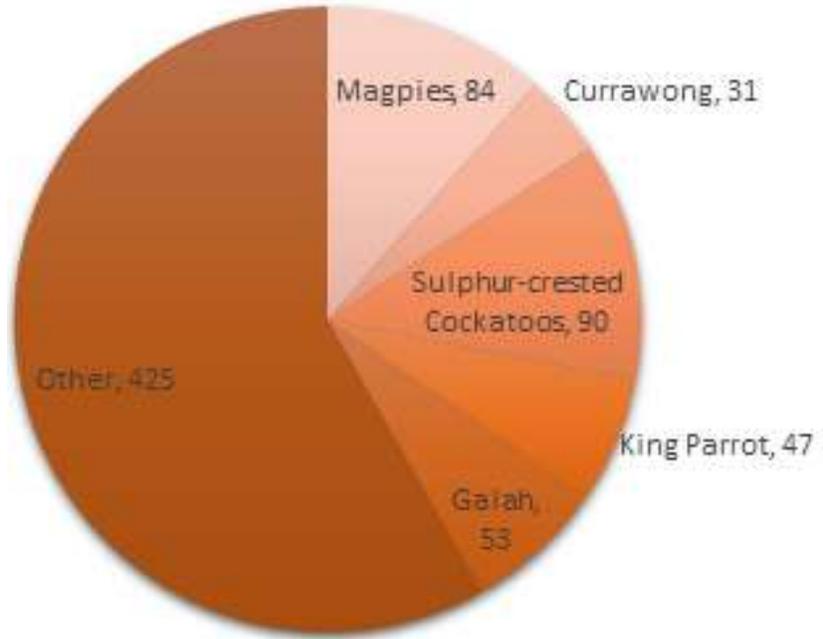


Animal Intake Report: Autumn-Winter 2022

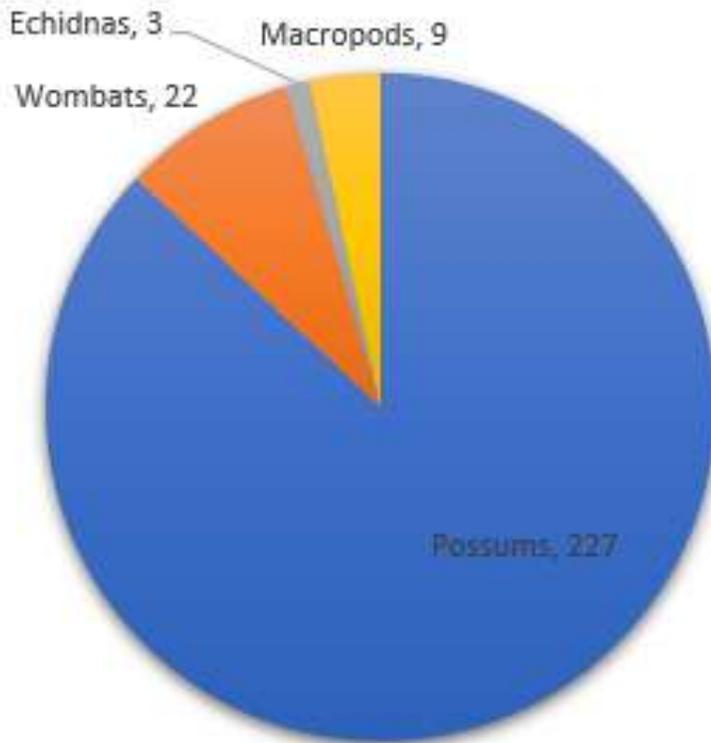


A Tawny Frogmouth in care

Birds 730



Misc. Mammals 261



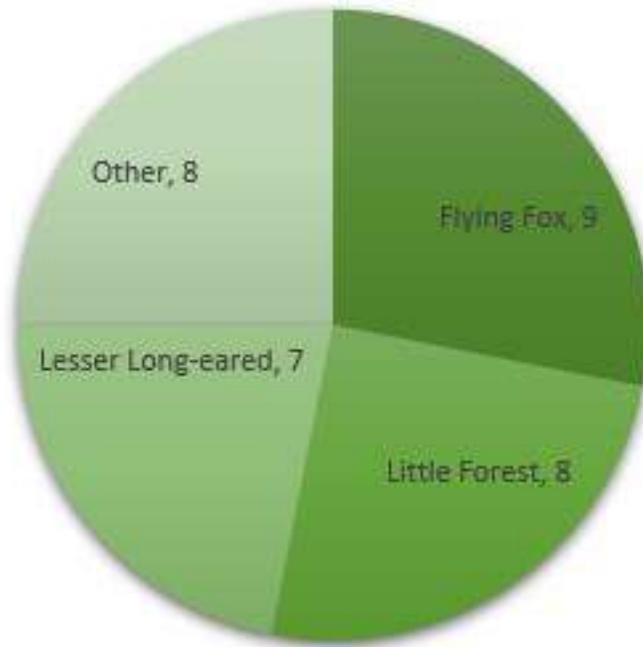
Watson the Brushtail Possum

Animal Intake Report: Autumn-Winter 2022

Bats 32



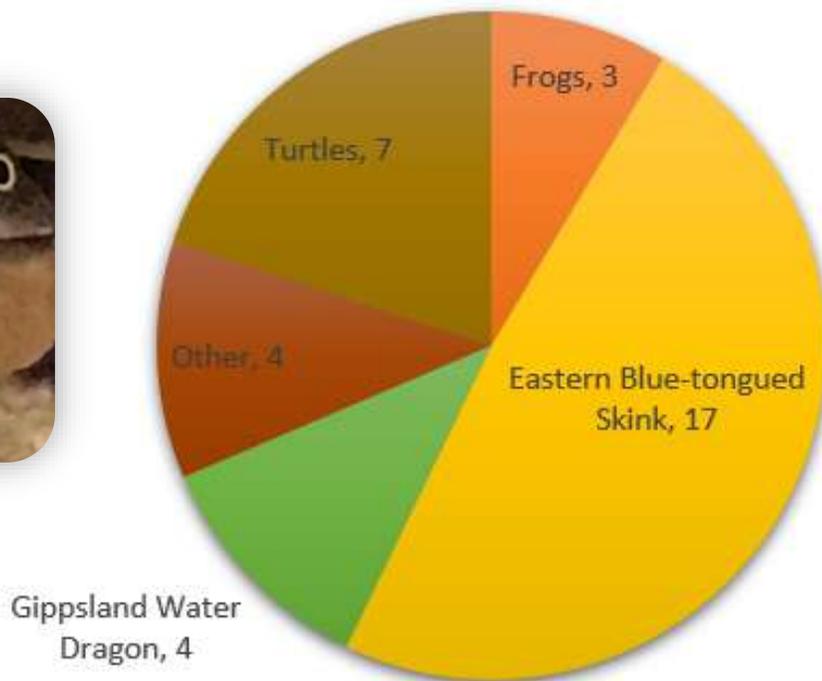
**Nadja the
Lesser-Long eared
bat**



Reptiles and Frogs 35



**Sasha the
Eastern
Longnecked
Turtle**

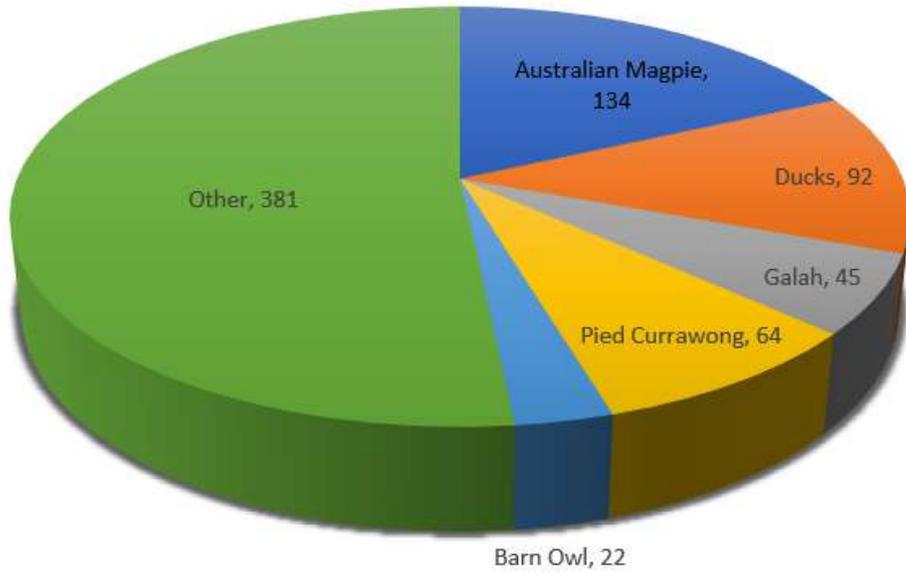


Animal Intake Report: Spring 2022

Birds 738



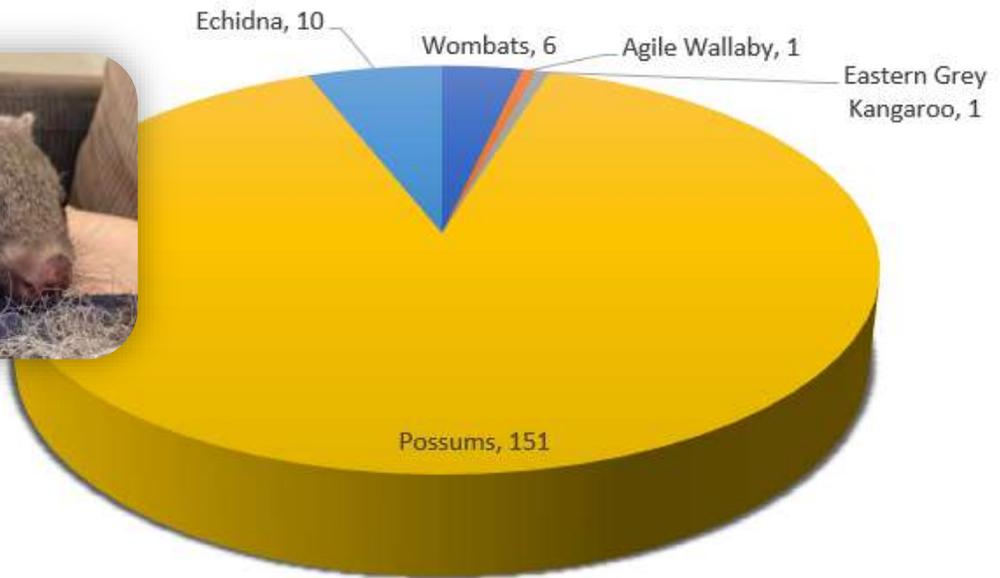
A Dollarbird
In care



Misc. Mammals 169



Ollie the
Wombat

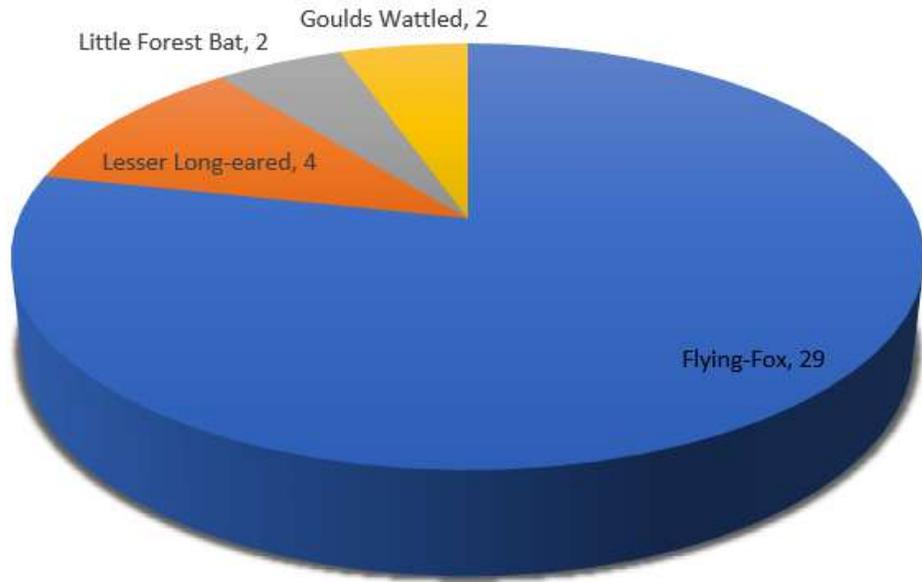


Animal Intake Report: Spring 2022



Bartrick Swayze
The Grey-headed
Flying fox

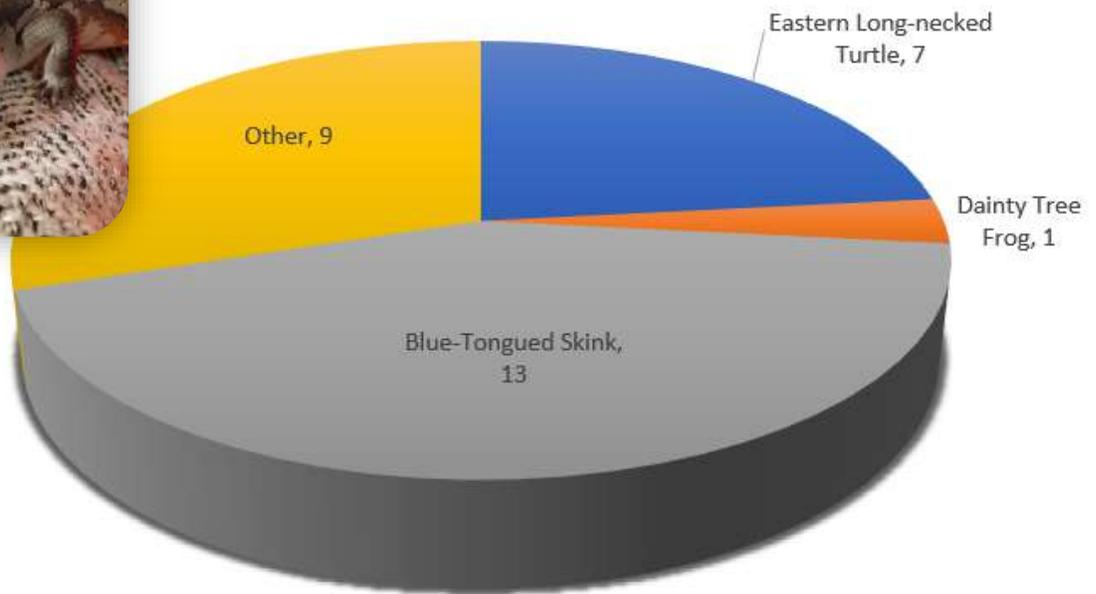
Bats 37



Reptiles and Frogs 30



Crocodile the
Eastern
Blue-Tongued
Skink



Action Plan to Prevent the Loss of Mature Native Trees

Ian Fraser



I'm sure everyone reading this is aware of the value of native trees, and especially the big old ones, both to wildlife and to the landscapes (including urban ones) that define Australia for very many of us. Their protection is among the most important issues for conservation of wildlife, perhaps especially in a landscape like Canberra's which has been dramatically altered and diminished in the nearly 200 years of white Australians' generally dubious custody. Our Indigenous predecessors had certainly altered the land to some extent but we appropriated from them a far greater richness of biodiversity than we have managed to retain.

The stimulus for this article is the long-awaited call for comments on the ACT Government's Draft *Action Plan to Prevent the Loss of Mature Native Trees in the Territory*. *A little more on that soon, but this is a 'stand-alone' article, whose purpose is not to harass already overtaxed wildlife carers into taking on yet another job!*

The most obvious habitat value of mature native trees is in the hollows which they provide as they age, as spouts in hollow branches or in the trunk itself as branches break or fall and fungi or termites create useful spaces. In general it takes at least a century for such hollows to form – for larger animals such as black-cockatoos or large owls or possums it may require at least 200 years for a big enough hollow to develop. On the other hand, trunk hollows with an access the size of a borer hole are big enough to provide essential shelter for several local bat species. Local hollow-nesting species (most of which entirely rely on them) include all locally breeding species of cockatoo and parrot, Kookaburras, Sacred Kingfishers, Dollarbirds, Wood Ducks, Boobook Owls, Owlet-nightjars, both treecreeper species, Kestrels and Tree Martins, among others. Quite a few local mammal species, including Brush-tailed and Ring-tailed Possums, Sugar Gliders and at least half a dozen microbat species rely on them all year round.

Dead trees are of at least as much habitat value as live ones – in fact there is evidence that at least some bat species prefer hollows in dead trees, or in dead branches on live trees.

Trees with ground level hollows are often removed as being at risk of falling, but we could spare many by assessing them on a case by case basis as many such trees are perfectly stable – wood is a superb building material! The trunk hollow provides excellent Brush-tailed Possum roosting (and thus avoiding the inevitable conflict when they seek an alternative in nearby roof cavities), and many birds, frogs and lizards forage and even live in them. However, hollows are far from the only resource offered by old trees. Dead branches, whether on live or dead trees, are likely to be found only on big old trees, and are surprisingly important as perching sites for many bird species, quite a few of which locally are rarely seen perched elsewhere. They may be using them as calling sites to proclaim territory or as vantage points to watch for flying prey. Some such species locally include Sacred Kingfishers and Laughing Kookaburras, Dollarbirds and Rainbow Bee-eaters, Kestrel and Hobbies, five species of cuckoo, Dusky Woodswallows, Tree Martins and Welcome Swallows. Leaden Flycatchers tend to only nest on short dead branches.



A 300 year old Grey Box 20 metres tall and with a 1.5 metres trunk diameter was measured as having ten times the bark area of a 20 year-old tree of the same species. (This is not a local species, though it is common in woodlands nearby, but it's reasonable to extrapolate to other rough-barked eucalypts.) Several local bird species, including White-throated Treecreepers, Eastern Shrike-tits, Varied Sittellas and White-eared Honeyeaters, feed intensively in bark crevices, and many others do so sometimes. A large tree providing extensive bark foraging opportunities means that birds have to spend less hazardous time flying from tree to tree. Moreover, other local species (especially Golden Whistlers, Grey Shrike-thrushes, Buff-rumped Thornbills and Dusky Woodswallows) regularly nest behind loose protruding bark. The two local *Nyctophilus bat species often roost in such situations too (as well as in tree hollows). Many more species harvest lichen and spider webs from such tree trunks as essential nest-building materials.*



It is reasonable to apply the same multiplication factor to foliage and flowers of large trees compared with smaller ones, and both resources are used by many more animal species than the bark is. In fact it could easily be more than the 10:1 ratio cited above, as once a tree is mature it can devote more of its energy to producing leaves and flowers, instead of growing and expanding its trunk and major branches.

Big trees produce far more ground litter than small ones, and this is crucial habitat in itself, especially for small animals which are a key food resource for larger ones. Only old trees tend to have healthy mistletoes, which are a key habitat resource (both for shelter and food) for many animals – and that's a whole story in itself.

The draft Action Plan I mentioned at the start is a pretty solid document, as we'd expect from the expertise available to government within its ecological arm. However, I also detect the grubby fingerprints of political interference in some changes that have been made between the first and second iterations of the draft. One of these is critical. In the first draft the obvious comment was made that *'protection of existing mature native trees is far more cost and time effective than removal and subsequent regeneration'*; *this essential point has disappeared from the latest version. The relevance here is to new suburban developments. Large numbers of critically important mature eucalypts have been removed in recent times for housing projects in Molonglo and West Belconnen in particular. For the reasons we've already discussed it is not enough to just promise to plant new saplings somewhere else – animals need breeding and feeding sites now, not just in a century or so! If you were tempted to write a brief response to the draft plan, I'd ask you to seriously consider including this point.*

Environmental offsets (whereby a developer has to pay to protect equivalent habitat elsewhere which would otherwise be lost) were introduced here a decade or so back. The idea was that they were a very last resort if habitat loss was really inevitable, not just convenient – as such the process was rarely to be used. Already it is the first response in many situations: 'we'll knock over a hundred 300 year old woodland eucalypts, and plant a thousand seedlings somewhere else'. As I write I've just read about a situation in Sydney which illustrates the problem perfectly. As part of an offset for losing important habitat to a new runway, Critically Endangered Cumberland Plain Woodland on a Defence Department site was to be protected. First point – why was Critically Endangered habitat not already regarded as inviolate? Secondly, the message didn't get through – part of the offset was later cleared anyway! I've gone on about this, but the issue is critical to our topic; the emphasis needs to be on finding ways to protect the existing trees, not finding a way to 'make it better' later, which are demonstrably flawed.

OK enough from me. If you're interested in the draft Action Plan you can see it here: <https://yoursayconversations.act.gov.au/action-plan-prevent-loss-mature-native-trees>.

Either way, never forget to treat these ancient keys to the health of our landscape and wildlife with the respect they so richly deserve but are often denied. Canberra has just been named on a list of Tree Cities of the World; as the implications of this unfold, let us make sure our precious mature native trees are front and centre, now and for the future.

Eldon and Emma Foote trust – \$71,000 which allowed us to buy our electric rescue and transport vehicle and maintenance for a few years. It is a Hyundai Kona. ACT Wildlife supporting initiatives to avert climate change consequences.

This grant has allowed the staff at Jerrabomberra to do more rescues during business hours.



Thank you to Emma Foote for the funds which are administered through the Lord Mayors Charitable Foundation. This has helped us enormously in our capacity to rescue wildlife.

WIRES grant for Rescue Equipment Consolidation.

WIRES has given us \$5000 for rescue kits to be lent to new and existing transporters and rescuers. If you could use some equipment that would enable you to do more extensive rescues please call Adam Coppard, Transport Coordinator.



Thank you WIRES. We really value your continuing support.

Cold Snaps Threaten Flying Fox Colonies

Native animal carers are aware of the idea that spring is known as the beginning of “maternity season” for many species.

The arrival of the Grey-Headed Flying-Fox, recently re-classified as a Threatened Species, at the end of September heralds the maternity season for our team.

Since their arrival, the Australasian Bat Society has been monitoring their numbers.

The month of November has been complex for the bat team due to the unpredictable weather conditions. The recent cold snap has resulted in unexpected overnight temperatures for this time of year. Young, non-

thermoregulating pups have been particularly vulnerable to the conditions.

Daily morning sweeps of the camp became required as unseasonable overnight temperatures were experienced up the entire east coast. Reports of nightly losses of >100 pups in Cowra due to a combination of tree collapse and weather conditions had our team on alert.

Normal mortality rates expected during the maternity period here in Commonwealth Park for the current population of <1000 is approx. 1-6pups a week. These numbers take into consideration predation by local birdlife before sweeps.

Across this month, on

nights of extreme cold temperatures we have had nights with fatalities of up to 11 in a night.

Unfortunately we have not had any surviving pups in the ACT from these events – but have been able to take in pups from other camps that experienced this on a greater scale.

If you are interested in becoming a bat carer, please ask our bat coordinator about upcoming training and the required vaccinations.

-Author wishes to remain anonymous



Phalaris aquatica
wikipedia

Phalaris Grass Proving Problematic

Phalaris grass has been added in the past to many pastures on farms in the ACT. It is native to southern Europe, drought tolerant, and is now widespread in sheep and cattle areas of Australia. Unfortunately young growth can produce toxins which cause neurological damage seen in sheep, horses,

cattle, macropods; the young being the most susceptible. The animals can look to be drunk to not being able to stand, to dying. It is known as Staggers. The damage is usually irreparable and the animals soon become easy targets for predators. Cobalt salt licks are used as a pre-

ventative. Rarely, but sometimes, we have received reports of macropods looking drunk.

Joan
Macropod Coordinator
ACT Wildlife

The Welfare of Orphaned Joeys



Pippa the Wallaby
Wildman

We are fortunate in the ACT that orphaned wallaby and Eastern wallaroo joeys can be raised by licensed carers (ACT Wildlife) and released back into the ACT to help maintain numbers of their species. We are also fortunate that under the ACT Government policy we are able to transfer up to 35 Eastern Grey orphaned joeys to Wildcare (NSW) annually. This transfer has to have happened within 48 hours. (See: Nature Conservation (Eastern Grey Kangaroo) Controlled Native Species Management Plan 2017, pp 31-33). There is a misconception by a few members of public that these orphaned joeys will be euthanised. They may be unaware of the ACT Government laws for the welfare of EGK joeys.

Wildcare notified us recently of a 4 1/2kg EGK they received which had been raised by a MOP in Canberra. The joey was in very poor condition and has now improved

greatly. The Wildcare member was only too grateful to receive the joey and give her a chance, no questions asked.

The welfare of the animals is our number 1 importance. The EGKs are known to be very stress-prone animals and need to be started with experienced carers who can access them for injuries and other health problems, get their gut systems settled with the correct care as well as providing the right environment.

If you know of any macropods in our community which are being cared for by MOPs, please let Lindy or I know and we will do our best to kindly help the MOP be aware of the needs of the joey and transfer it to a suitable location.

Joan
Macropod Coordinator
ACT Wildlife

Endangered, Threatened or Vulnerable Bird Species

If these birds come into care they need to be reported to the ACT Government. Coordinators are responsible for reporting to EPSDD.

Please let a bird coordinator if you have one of these animals, even if it dies or needs to be euthanised.

Critically Endangered:

Regent Honeyeater, Swift Parrot

Endangered:

Australian Painted Snipe, Australian Bittern, Gang Gang Cockatoo

Vulnerable:

Brown Treecreeper, Glossy Black Cockatoo, Hooded Robin, Little Eagle, Painted Honeyeater, Scarlet Robin, Superb Parrot, Varied Sittella, White-winged Triller, White Throated Needle-tail

Interesting Articles



'Ribberting' Recovery for Critically Endangered Frog

OurCBR

<https://www.act.gov.au/our-canberra/latest-news/2022/june/ribberting-recovery-for-critically-endangered-frog>



ACT Cat Containment Policy Information

ACT City Services

<https://www.cityservices.act.gov.au/pets-and-wildlife/domestic-animals/cats/cat-containment>



Popular Birding Spots

COG

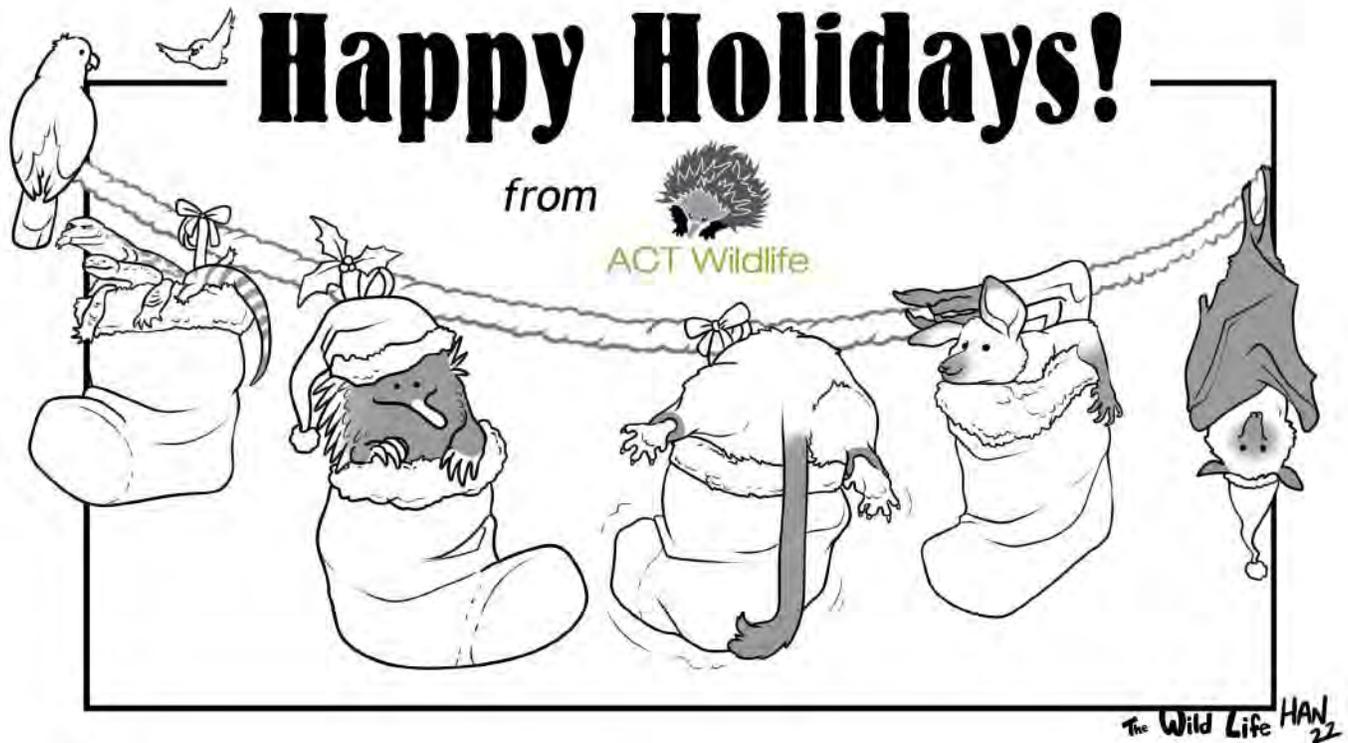
<https://canberrabirds.org.au/observing-birds/popular-birding-spots/>



Flawed Laws for Nature

The Canberra Times

<https://www.canberratimes.com.au/story/8010216/australias-flawed-laws-for-nature/>



ACT Wildlife

Rescue • Rehabilitate • Release



ACT Wildlife
Dairy Road
Fyshwick
ACT 2609

Phone: 0432 300 033
Inured Kangaroos: 13 22 81
For general information:
info@actwildlife.net
For training enquiries:
training@actwildlife.net

Our Mission

- ◇ 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 ensure a high standard of welfare for animals in care

Visit our Website at actwildlife.net

About the Newsletter Editor

I've been very fortunate to be editor for the ACTW Newsletter for over a year now, but its time to move on- to different roles within the organisation. Heather Sommariva has kindly volunteered to be our new Newsletter Editor!

Thank you to everyone who has enjoyed my editions, and I look forward to seeing what Heather has to bring next.

Wishing you all a safe and enjoyable holiday season.

Hange Sloan
*Former Newsletter Editor
Committee Member
Reptile Coordinator*



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Heather Sommariva', written in a cursive style.