

# ACT Wildlife

Autumn 2023

NEWSLETTER

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## Message from the President

This year is already starting to take great shape with some good outcomes coming from our collaboration with the ACT Government.

Our Waterbird Entanglement Project has seen several signs going up around Lake Tuggeranong and Lake Ginninderra with strong support from Minister Vassarotti (MLA). The trial of tackle disposal bins for discarded fishing equipment (hooks, lines, etc.) has commenced and we look forward to learning how much the public will conform. For more information contact Kate Morioka.



**Yana del Valle**

The Tree Netting Swap Program is being sponsored by Environment, Planning & Sustainable Development and will commence within the next week or two after some great work over the past few months by the Flying-Fox carers with great collaboration from our Bird and Possum carers too. The aim of the program is to replace non-compliant tree nets with white netting with a mesh size of less than 5mmx5mm when stretched. This allows animals to better see the netting at night in the hope they will avoid landing on the tree and becoming entangled. Our main contact will be Clare Wynter, so watch this space.

The Inquiry into Environmental Volunteerism Report 2022 has been "Agreed in Principle" which includes, amongst other matters, providing a full-time Wildlife Veterinarian. This will result in direct relief for our transporters, rescuers, staff and of course our wildlife. Details on how the recommendation will be implemented will be developed in consultation with ACT Wildlife and I am so excited about what will happen. This work is credited to all those involved in individual submissions and Lindy Butcher for representing ACT Wildlife – well done!

The ACT Government's response into the Standing Committee's Inquiry into Environmental Volunteerism 2022 report was Tabled in the Assembly on 21 March, and is available at this [webpage](#).

The AGM will be held at 2pm on Sunday 2 April and will potentially see many new faces join the Committee as many long-standing committee members will not be nominating. I hope to meet and see many of you at the meeting and wish the new Committee the very best in making this organisation the best it can be with so many fantastic opportunities ahead.

*[continued on page 5](#)*



## Acknowledgement of Country

*ACT Wildlife acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the ACT, the Ngunnawal people. We acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and the contribution they and their Elders, past, present and emerging, make to the life of this city and this region.*

## Fishing and Bird Entanglements

The ACT Government has initiated a pilot program to reduce the number of birds becoming entangled with fishing lines or being caught by fishing hooks.

The program is being trialled around Lake Tuggeranong with signage and disposal bins.

Each year many birds come into care with fishing line wrapped around their feet or wings and hooks caught on their bodies. This reduces their ability to look for food and fly and potentially can cause a slow death.

Keep our wildlife safe by ensuring discarded lines and hooks are placed in the bins provided.

*One of the signs with the purpose built disposal bin.*



## Senator Pocock Visits ACT Wildlife Carers

ACT Wildlife is always looking for volunteers, and Senator David Pocock is up to the task. David recently visited carers Sara and Corin, where he gave them both a helping hand.

Turns out David was quite handy at feeding time. He and Sarah fed young wombats Macy and Jarrah their bottles as they swapped feeding tips. Macy and Jarrah are fed every 6 hours, so Sarah certainly appreciated the help.

Then as Senator Pocock looked after Vipul the wallaby, Pugsley the Krefft's glider explored his shoulders.

'The carers are doing such an amazing job for our wildlife and community,' David said. 'It's a great reminder for all of us to think about ways we can live alongside native wildlife.'



*Above: Sara and David feeding Macy and Jarrah.*

*Left: Vipul the wallaby, with Pugsley, the Kreffts Glider exploring David's shoulder.*

## Events

During February two events were held where ACT Wildlife held booths.

### World Wetlands Day

The first was World Wetlands Day held at Jerrabomberra Wetlands. This is also where our office is so a local event! The main attraction were cupcakes generously donated by Stephanie Copus-Campbell and were a great drawcard to speak to visitors about our work.

### Canberra Show

The second was the Canberra Show was held at EPIC. ACT Wildlife were generously given a booth area along Showtime Parade which is very close to the entrance of the show. This meant the visitors passed our booth with many stopping and asking questions. We had flyers and brochures to hand out. Lindy Butcher and Sara Lo generously donated hand made items to sell and we made over \$500 in sales and donations.

The booth was looked after by our volunteers and we extend a huge thank you to them for giving up their time over the three days. There were some interesting 'neighbours' such as the cattle exhibits and the racing piglets. Neither of which we had any choice as to whether they would be our neighbours.

During the second last shift on Sunday, a gust of wind whipped up and nearly took our marquis off to another location. Thanks to those on duty, it was rescued as were the flyers, brochures and display boards that relocated themselves.

Overall it was a successful event for us and we hope we are able to participate again next year (with a little more planning for windy gusts!).



*Yana, Stephanie and Don at World Wetlands Day.*



*Canberra Show booth before the wind gust.*

## New Legislation

Two new codes of practice are now available that set out responsibilities of wildlife carers and reptile keepers.

### Code of practice for wildlife rescue, rehabilitation and release

**The Animal Welfare (Welfare of Native Wildlife – Rescue, Rehabilitation and Release) Mandatory Code of Practice 2023** sets out standards we need to meet when rescuing, rehabilitating and releasing native wildlife. It also outlines our responsibilities as a licensed organisation.

Under the code, we're responsible for the health and wellbeing of wildlife in our care. This includes providing:

- access to suitable food and clean water
- an appropriate environment
- freedom to express natural behaviour
- appropriate handling
- alleviation of sickness or suffering.

For more detailed guidance, check the code of practice.



### Code of practice for keeping reptiles

If you keep native reptiles in captivity, check the **Animal Welfare (Private Keeping of Native Reptiles) Mandatory Code of Practice 2023**.

This sets out standards for keeping Australian reptiles privately in the ACT. It complements measures to protect reptiles from illegal harvesting and introduction of diseases and genetic contamination.

You need to meet these standards when keeping reptiles such as turtles, lizards and non-venomous snakes privately in the ACT. It doesn't apply to exotic reptiles, or to those kept in zoos and reptile parks under special licences.



## Dangers of Old Netting

Some older styles of garden netting are highly dangerous for wildlife, trapping animals like flying foxes, birds, lizards and snakes in wide mesh holes. They suffer terrible injuries and often die.

The ACT Government is providing ACT Wildlife with a grant of \$25,000 for us to swap households' unsuitable netting with wildlife safe netting. Swaps will take place when ACT residents bring their larger mesh netting to ACTW. The grant is being finalised at the moment and the swap program will commence this winter and will continue until we have spent the funds. The swap will only apply to residential garden netting, not orchards or other commercial businesses.

A small ACTW netting subgroup has been set up to manage this project and we will be calling for volunteers to help staff some information & netting swap stalls over the second half of this year.

Several factors make netting unsafe – not only the size of the mesh but also its colour (black or dark green is much harder for animals to spot in time to avoid) and how the netting is placed over the trees and garden beds. As part of the project we plan to organise public demonstrations on how to use nets safely.



The project will help save birds, bats and reptiles and we welcome any volunteer help to work on stalls, help distribute information leaflets, publicise the program, keep records of swaps and other project tasks. If you are interested in helping please email the subgroup at: [flyingfoxes@actwildlife.net](mailto:flyingfoxes@actwildlife.net)

## Message from the President *cont'd*

[continued from page 1](#)

On a final and more administrative note, I'd really like to encourage everyone, carers, transporter, volunteers alike, to continue your effort in record keeping. We need to ensure all mandatory data is entered into Wildman, including treatment summaries, treating/assessing vet's details, and animal outcomes. It's so critical to have as much detail as possible so we can identify strategic initiatives and set priorities.

Thank you everyone for your efforts and continued support.

**Yana del Valle**

*President*

## Social Media

ACT Wildlife's social media department is going well, but creating a story a day needs more volunteers! Are you a writer, interviewer, photographer, videographer, graphic designer? Or maybe you have skills in managing Facebook and Instagram pages? Let's tell the fabulous stories of our carers and their birds and animals, and go behind the scenes with our volunteers who transport the injured, answer the phones and more. Get in touch with social media coordinator Evan Croker today – [evan@croker.com.au](mailto:evan@croker.com.au)

Follow us:

[www.facebook.com/ACT.Wildlife](https://www.facebook.com/ACT.Wildlife)

[www.instagram.com/act\\_wildlife/](https://www.instagram.com/act_wildlife/)



## Australian Wildlife Rehabilitation Conference

# PERTH 2023



## Australian Wildlife Rehabilitation CONFERENCE INC

**Friday 11 - Sunday 13 August 2023.**

The theme for the 2023 conference is '**Building Communities**'. Presentations will deal with challenges faced and/or overcome during COVID-19 and other emergencies (bushfires, floods etc.) and innovation in wildlife medicine and/or rehabilitation that has advanced the industry.

Day 1 & 2 presentations will take place at the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre (PCEC) and will be available via zoom for those unable to travel to Perth, Western Australia. Morning presentations on day 3 will also be at the PCEC.

Attendees will have the opportunity to visit 2 x Perth-based wildlife rehabilitation facilities as part of day 3 excursion packages.

Register through [Eventbrite](https://www.eventbrite.com).

For more information: [www.awrc.org.au/perth-2023.html](https://www.awrc.org.au/perth-2023.html)

## Calling all Carers!!

For the last four years we have produced and sold a stunning fundraising calendar featuring animals that you've cared for. This calendar is sold all over the world and raises awareness of the work we all do and about our unique wildlife. Last year we sold 900 copies.

This year we are asking you to submit your photos for the 2024 calendar.

### Calendar photos

#### Guidelines

- The animal needs to have been in care during the year January 2022 to May 2023
- Your photo may be taken on a recent model phone camera or a traditional camera
- It needs to be landscape orientation
- The animal must be photographed in a way that reflects our best practice methods of rehabilitating wildlife.
- The owner of the photograph must be a financial member of ACT Wildlife.
- The photo needs to be accompanied by the submission form which includes the dates the animal was in care and includes its Wildman number – This submission form is on the member tab on our website .
- If your photograph is selected for the calendar your name will be included as photographer (optional)
- If you prefer to have someone else take a photo of your wildlife for the calendar we have a team of photographers who will be very happy to meet you and take photos for you. Contact [evan@croker.com.au](mailto:evan@croker.com.au) to arrange this.
- Photos that aren't included in the calendar will be uploaded to our website for the rest of the year so that visitors to our website can enjoy them throughout the year.



**ACT Wildlife**  
ESTABLISHED 1982

2023 Calendar

## Annual General Meeting

ACT Wildlife will hold it's Annual General Meeting (AGM) on Sunday 2 April at 2pm, 701 Cotter Road, Duffy.

At the AGM a new committee will be elected, nomination forms can be obtained here. Each member has the right to vote and there is one vote per household.

Our Patron, Ian Fraser has been invited to speak about his latest adventures. Join us for this important meeting. The agenda can be found [here](#).

## Goodwill Wines

When you order wine from Goodwill Wines, 50% of the profits from your order will go to your selected charity. You can select ACT Wildlife as your selected charity.

Goodwill Wines have raised \$504,822 for Australian charities so far.

Orders can be placed here [goodwillwine.com.au/](http://goodwillwine.com.au/)



## ACTW Container Deposit Scheme

ACT Wildlife is now set up with the ACT Container Deposit Scheme which donates to charities. 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: [actcds.org.au/](http://actcds.org.au/)

You can return eligible drink containers to three different types of return points: Drop & Go Point, Drop & Go Pod and Cash-back Depot.

There are a number of return points located across the ACT- there is one near you! This return point (photo below) is located near the Burns Club in Kambah.





## Evie and Digger

Evie and Digger came into care in 2021.

Evie was rescued from her mum's pouch, weighing a tiny 145 grams. She came in with a blood nose and struggling to feed. Digger lost his mum a few months later.

Volunteer carers Jeff and Cheryle took them on. They reared them together from young joeys to chunky 20 kg adults. At nearly 2 years of age, Evie and Digger were ready to go back to the bush.

Evie and Digger were recently taken to their new digs – thanks to transporter Dale and property owner Steve.

Initially, they weren't too sure about their new burrow, but before long were right at home.

Property owner Steve is providing Evie and Digger with meadow hay, sweet potato and water until they get their bearings.

We're also keeping an eye on the pair via a Wi-Fi camera and things are going well. When we last checked, Digger was happily living up to his name, putting in some extensions to the burrow. View the full video of their release [here](#) (filmed and edited by Evan Croker).



*Evie and Digger check out their new digs.*



If you have a story about wildlife in your care that you would like to share in the next newsletter, forward it with photos, to [newsletters@actwildlife.net](mailto:newsletters@actwildlife.net)

# WILDLIFE CARE

## ITS ALL ABOUT TEAMWORK

Wildlife carers are amazing! They have extensive knowledge of the animals they care for; they spend extraordinary amounts of time, money and resources on their animals and often neglect their own interests; they are patient and committed; but.....they are only one part of the 'wildlife care team' and could not operate on their own. As Helen Keller said, "Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much".

The first group of people involved in the wildlife care team are members of the public. They are a crucial part of the team because they notice animals in trouble and are kind enough to report them. If we take the opportunity to educate them, they will become wildlife aware and continue spotting and reporting animals who need help. They may even become carers.



The second group of people in the wildlife care team are the wildlife phone people. They provide initial advice to the members of the public and/or make the best arrangement to ensure that the animals end up in the capable hands as soon as possible. Their role is all about problem solving.

The next group is the rescuers who have their own problems to solve as they need to identify the best way of catching animals, sometimes in tricky situations, without causing additional stress or injury. Whether they rescue regularly or just occasionally, their role is essential to get the animals out of trouble. In addition, they never miss an opportunity to educate the public when they collect the animals.

The coordinators are the next group. Their challenge is to oversee the care of animals, keep the carers informed and engaged and train new carers. Their role is as much about managing animals as it is about managing people.

Training new carers is also done by mentors, those wonderfully experienced carers who probably don't get enough credit for providing good advice and reassurance to many new carers.

The vets are also part of the team. They perform surgery, diagnose difficult cases and dispense drugs. ACT Wildlife appreciates all the vets we deal with.

And last but not least, our carers could not operate effectively without the support that is provided by all the generous committee and non-committee members of the group who perform a large range of



thankless tasks essential to keep the group going (fundraising, keeping the books balanced, running training courses, sewing, maintaining membership lists, taking minutes, to name a few).

The challenge faced by a large team like this is that it is composed of so many people, with different personalities, backgrounds, skills, abilities, perspectives, sensitivities, communication styles, way to deal with stress and a sense of humour.

But if we make sure we are prepared to hear each other's opinions, communicate respectfully, and view our differences as richness, our team will get stronger. So let's support each other so that we can achieve our best, individually and collectively and let's stay focused on our goal which is to save animals.

'You need to be aware of what others are doing, applaud their efforts, acknowledge their successes and encourage them in their pursuits. When we all help one another everybody wins.'

Jim Stovall