



ACT Wildlife

Rescue • Rehabilitate • Release

2017 Annual Report

Message from the President

We have been in operation for four years and we are still progressing beyond expectations.

This year we have concentrated our efforts to improve our policies and procedures. The review has commenced and will continue into 2018 to provide efficiencies in the operation of ACT Wildlife. This will involve close liaison and support from our hard working volunteers.

We continue to face challenges with low resources and too few volunteers. Each year we conduct training sessions on the various species care and a general introduction (Orientation course) to ACT Wildlife and how we work in the community. Caring for wildlife is a 'different reality' where you are tied to the animals, some for 24 hours a day and for many months.

The committee has been working hard in the background canvassing politicians for a 'home base' for ACT Wildlife. We have successfully acquired a grant to fitout a building at the Jerrabomberra Wetlands rangers headquarters. This is welcome news after four years of working from our own homes.

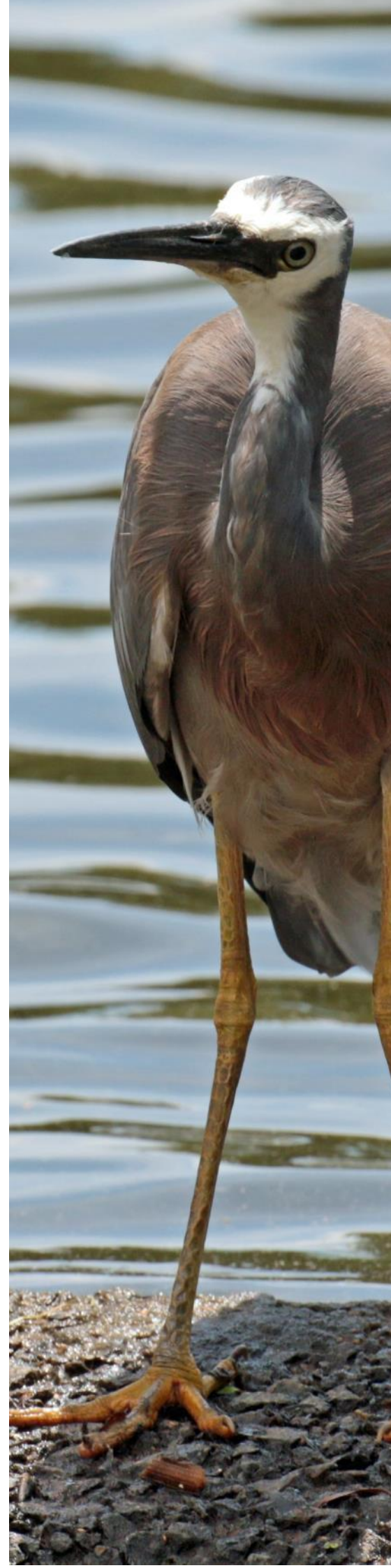
I would like to thank all our volunteers who commit their time and expertise that enable ACT Wildlife to succeed and grow as an organisation. Without phone operators, transporters, carers, coordinators, to those who attend events, sew pouches, and fundraise we would not be able to do the great job we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

Yours in caring,



Marg Peachey, President



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.

Eastern Bearded Dragon. Photo taken by Vic Hughs - vichughes165@gmail.com



Program Impacts

The Canberra community awareness has grown and ACT Wildlife receives larger volumes of calls and animals into care each year.

Unfortunately the community continues to perceive us as government employees and expect a service that we are not necessarily able to provide at all times, as our resources are limited and we cannot attend every situation. To counteract this we encourage the public to do as much as they possibly can to help the animal in need. Most are happy to help but just need a bit of guidance.

Program Opportunities

Wombat Mange Program

The wombat mange program, which started last year has concluded. This has been a great opportunity for ACT Wildlife volunteers to learn about wombats in their natural habitat, including their burrow habits.

The program concentrated on a small section along the Murrumbidgee River and after 16 weeks treatment at each burrow the program indicated less mange in the area. By creating mange free areas will allow us to release rehabilitated wombats back to these areas.

Mange is considered a treatable disease if caught early, however if not treated will continue to spread and infect other wombats in the area. The program was supported with expertise from the ACT Parks and Conservation Service, the Mange Management Inc. and University of Canberra, and funded by an ACT Environment grant.

By undertaking this program demonstrates our strategic commitment to reduce the number of animals that enter into care, as well as overall animal welfare within our local environment. Our volunteers will monitor this section of River over the next two years.

This program has also provided data to similar research occurring across Australia and the results has assisted the government to allow others to treat wombats under a special licence.



Wildlife Statistics

During 2017 we received 2,933 animals – a 2% increase since last year and a 158% increase since 2014. The increase this year isn't large, however this may be due to the increased number of animals taken to vets by the public and improved advice by our phone operators, which neither become a statistic in the ACT Wildlife database.

The phone calls received by our 24/7 phone helpline has continued to rise. In 2017 we saw an increase of 24% from 2016, which equates to 862 calls during business hours each month and 928 calls after-hours each month. A comparison between 2014 and 2017 is a 563% increase - from 1,408 calls to 9,337 calls. The ratio of phone calls answered between business hours and after-hours has also increased by 589% and 580% respectively since 2014.

The number of animals received didn't exceed more than 300 per month, unlike the previous year which saw a spike of 368 animals recorded in November. However, the longest period of time animals exceeded above 250 occurred for the first time since operation in 2014. These months were December, January and February, whilst these months including March increased by about 100 animals per month. This has increased pressure on our carers in what was considered 'quite times' for particular species.

June had the fewest number of animals in care whilst October, December and January had the most. Last year the minimum and maximum numbers of animals in care had increased by 950% (from 8 to 84 animals) and 85% (from 203 to 368 animals) respectively compared that with the first year. However, the minimum and maximum numbers this year were not as extreme.

During 2017 we received a similar ratio of the top two species: birds (77%) and possums (11%), whilst we saw a decrease in lizard and flying fox numbers (3% each).

Wildlife enter into care for many different reasons, which are highlighted in the animal report sections below. Figures 1 and 2 demonstrate the number of calls and animals received in the first year of operation (2014) and the most recent two years of operation (2016 & 2017).



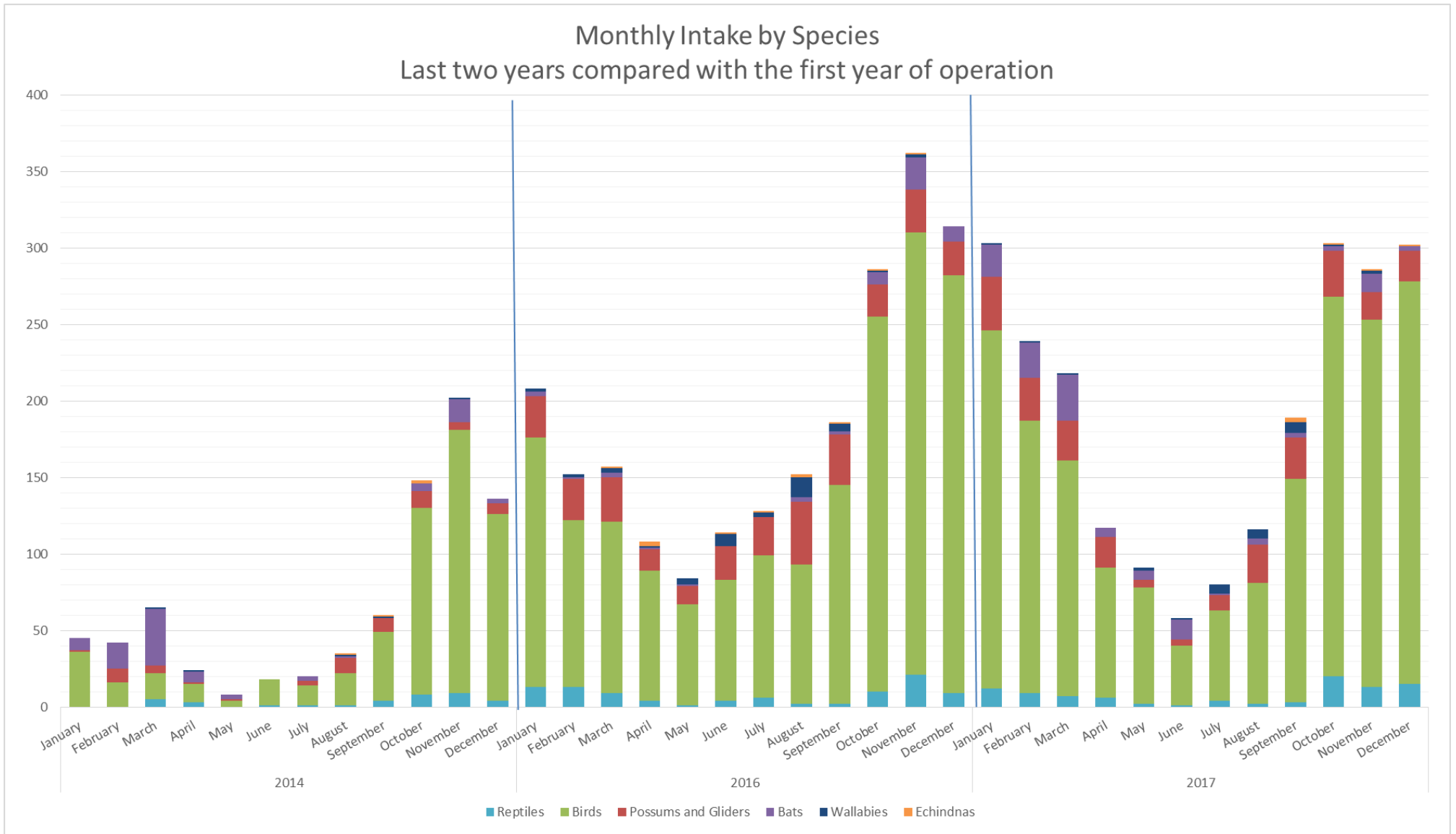


Figure 1: Monthly Comparison of Animal intake between the first year of operation (2014) and the most recent two years (2016 and 2017).

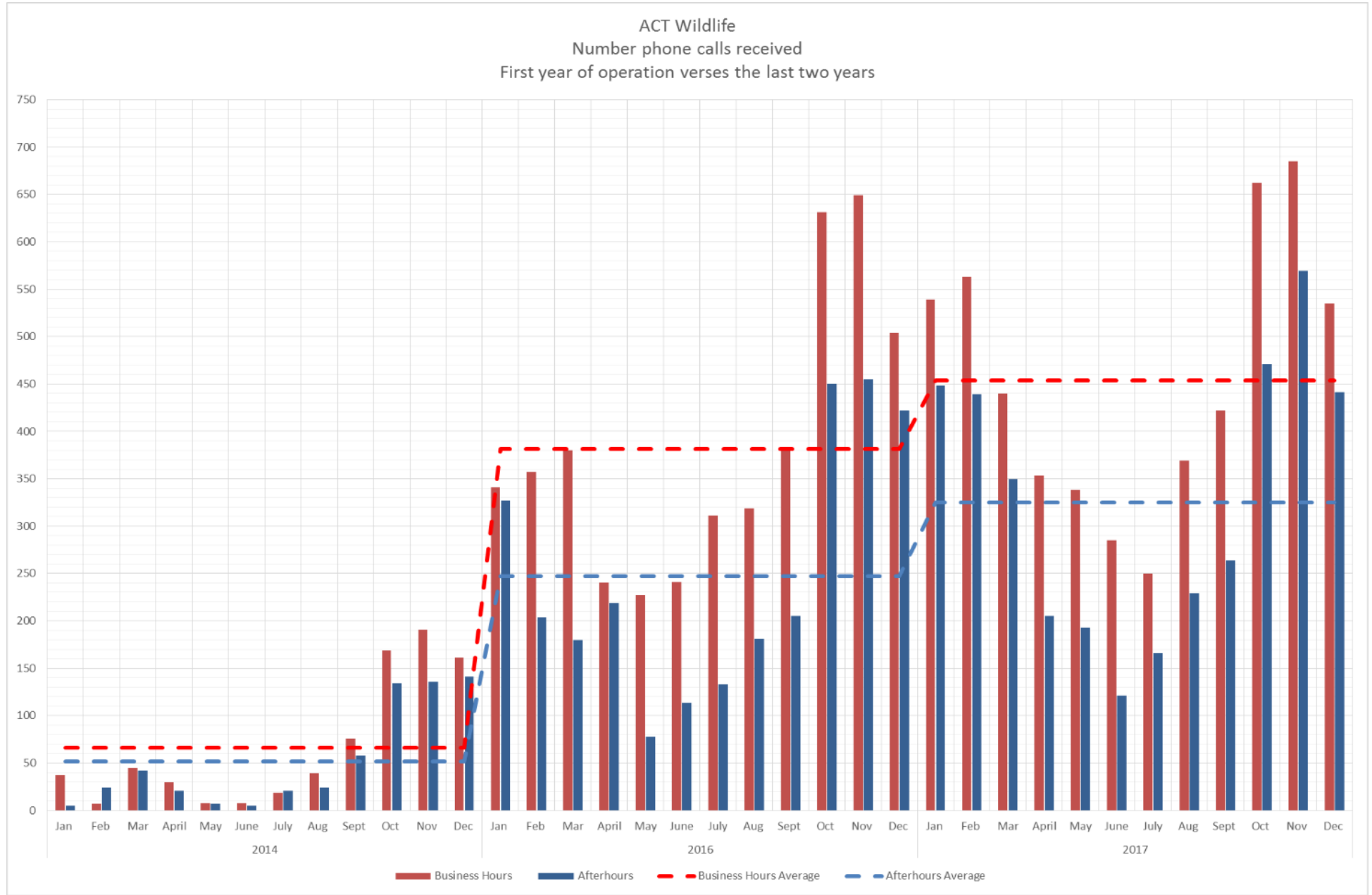


Figure 2: Monthly Comparison of phone calls between the first year of operation (2014) and the most recent two years (2016 and 2017).

Note: Business Hours is defined as 9am to 5pm.

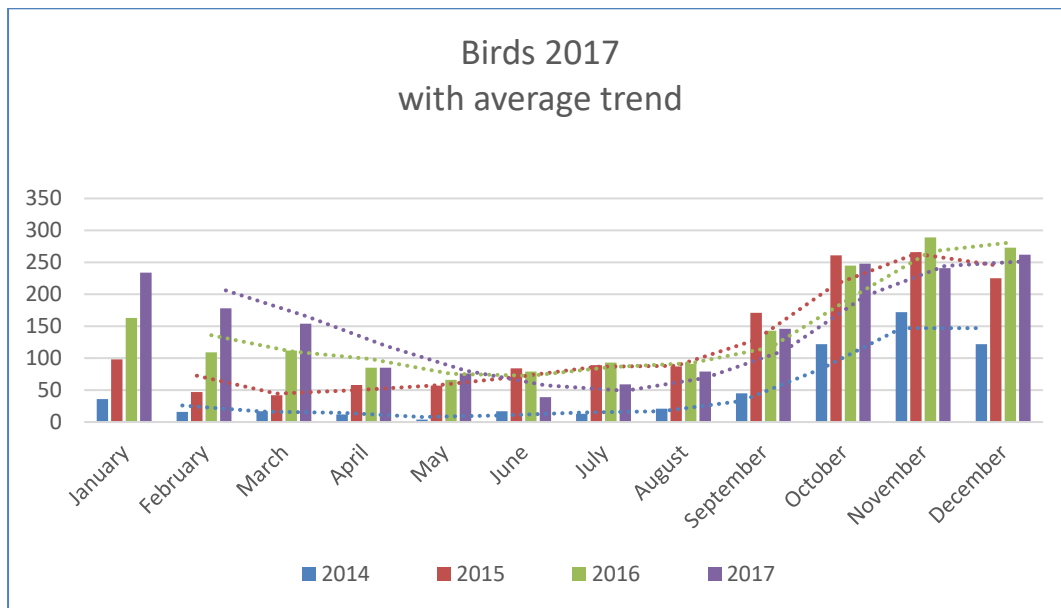
Our phone operators, rescuers, carers and transporters bring injured or orphaned native wildlife into the care system. Some of our members manage the palliative aspect of wildlife care, when they assist a member of the public to get a seriously injured animal to vet care, whilst others are called upon to help carers to receive animals from the vets or other carers, and those who rehabilitate to release the animal back to the wild.

Little Pied Cormorant. Photo taken by Vic Hughs - vichughes165@gmail.com



Birds

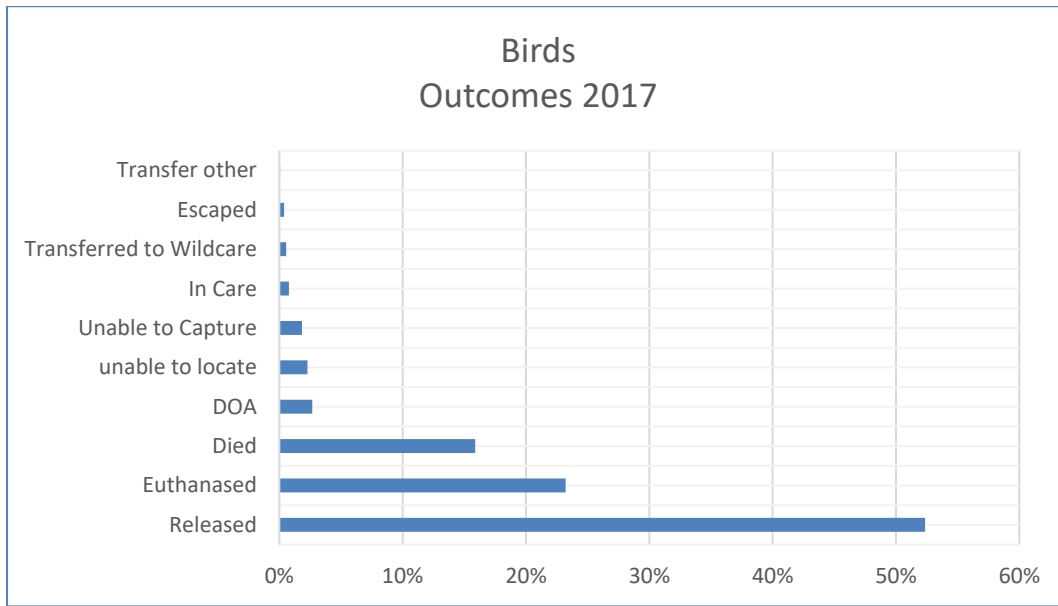
A total of 1,801 birds (73 species) came into care during 2017. This is a 3% increase from last year and an astounding 202% increase since 2014.



The top 80% of species in 2017 is similar to that from last year. They are; Australian Magpie (222), Galah (183), Sulphur-crested Cockatoo (147), Crimson Rosella (135), Australian Wood Duck (121), Magpie-Lark (94), Red Wattlebird (91), Pied Currawong (89), Crested Pigeon (81), Australian King-Parrot (71), Pacific Black Duck (54), Noisy Minor (45), Eastern Rosella (39), Australian Raven (37), and Black Swan (29).

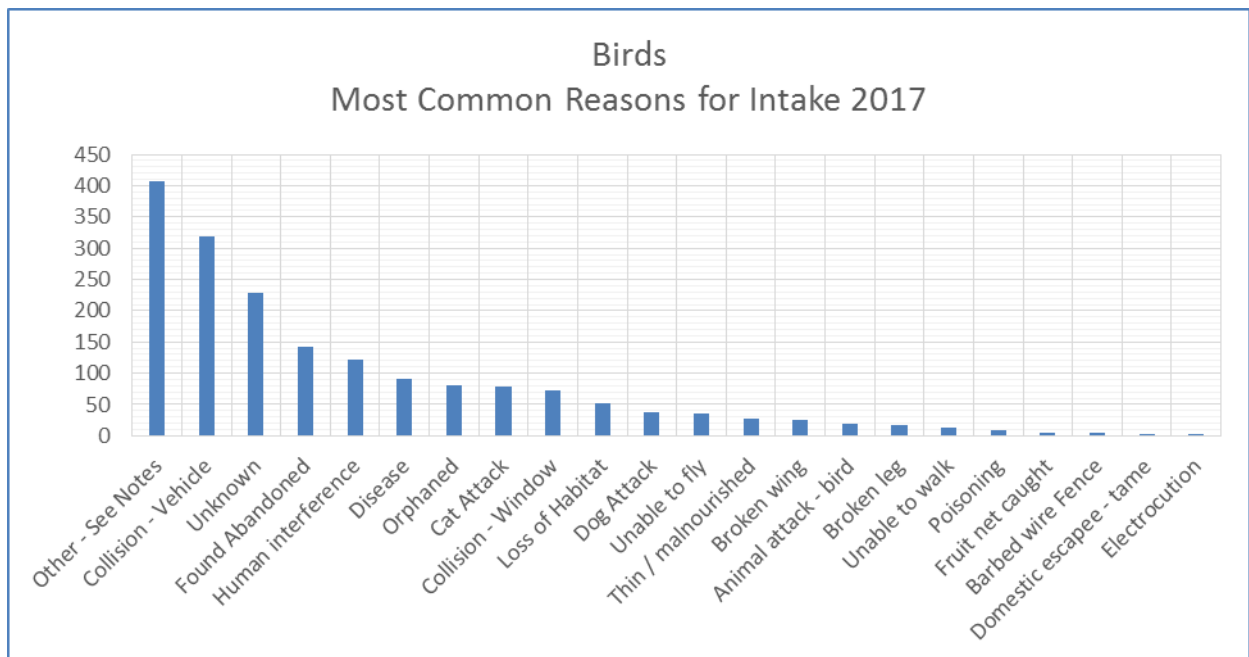
Birds make up 77% of the total animals received by ACT Wildlife. Of those that came into care we have been able to achieve a 52% release rate. This figure is extraordinarily high mainly due to the re-homing young birds with their families, thanks to our dedicated volunteers.





Birds came into care primarily due to; trauma (collisions with cars), attacked by cats or orphaned.

The graph below is not entirely accurate with 'causes'. Once the database has been tailored to suit ACT Wildlife's reporting needs these causes will be more precise. For example, a bird may be reported as coming into care because of a broken leg or wing, but may have also been hit by a car or caught by a dog.





Eastern Yellow Robin. Photo taken by Marg Peachey, ACT Wildlife President

Birds come into care for numerous reasons and our carers need to be able to assess, identify and provide appropriate care for each one.

Figure 3 provides a good indication on the various reasons, and the most likely reasons each species come into care. The sulphur crested cockatoo and galah are more likely to collide with vehicles, the Australian wood ducks are predominately ducklings, and magpies and currawongs tend to have multiple or unknown reasons*.

*The 'see other notes' in our records system means there was more than one reason the bird came into care.

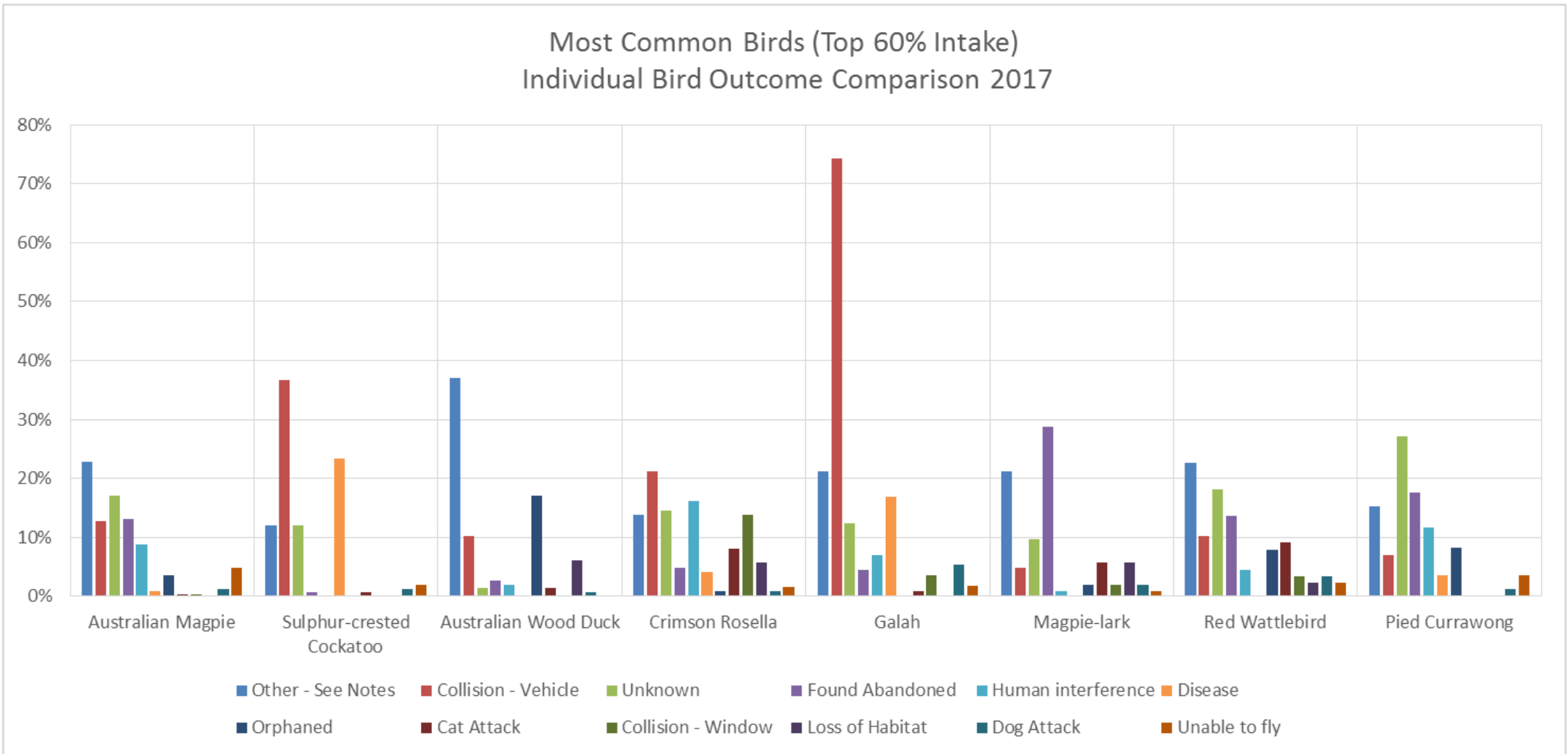
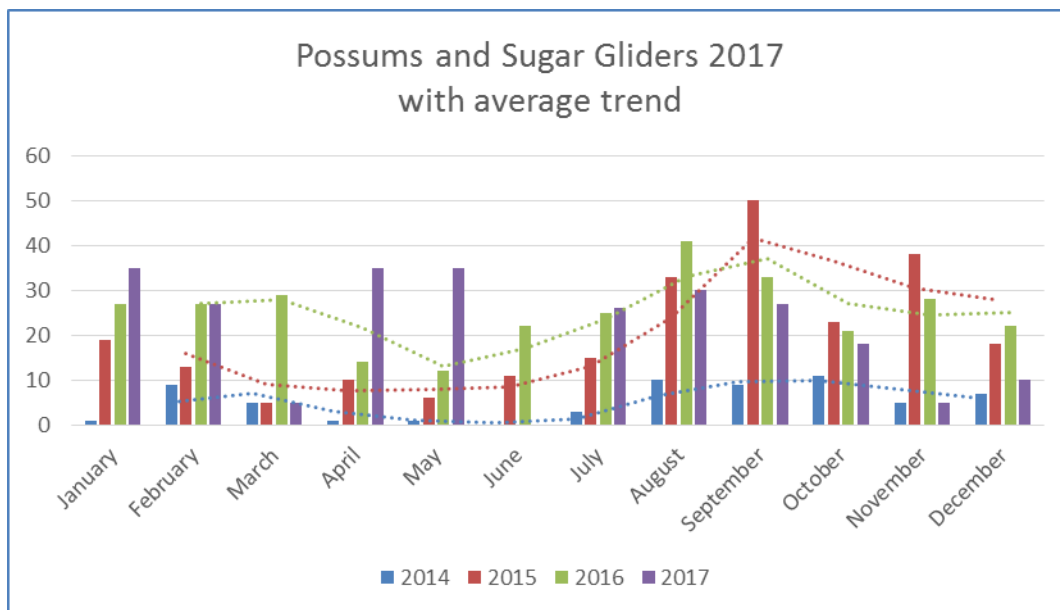


Figure 3: Most Common Birds in 2017 and the most common reasons why they came into care

Possums

A total number of 253 possums entered into care during 2017. Of these, 90% were Brushtail possums, 7% sugar gliders and 3% ringtail possums. The total is a 16% decrease from last year but an astounding 308% increase since 2014.

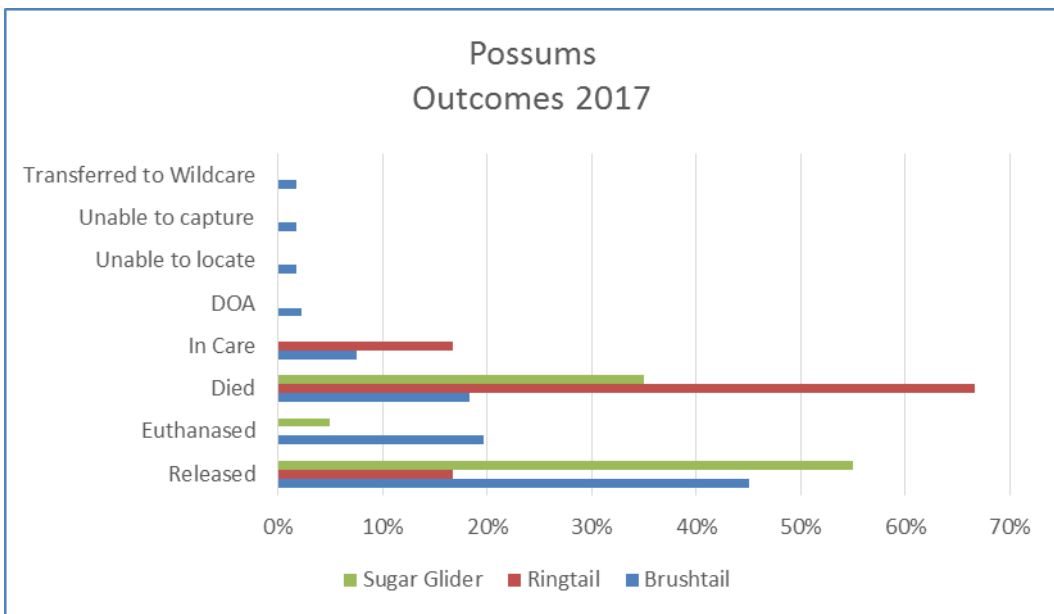
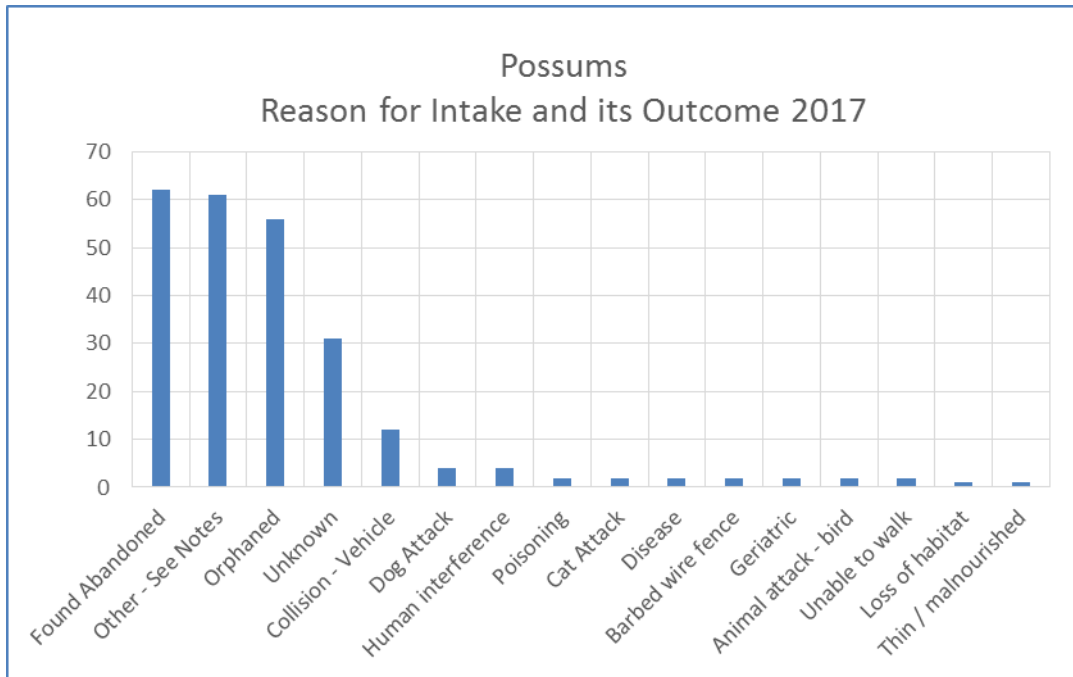


The distinct seasons experienced in the first few years was not evident in 2017. About a quarter of the total number received had injuries or illnesses arising directly from living in close proximity to humans, particularly in an urban environment. The types of injuries include; collisions with vehicles, cat or dog attacks, poisoning and electrocution.

The hard work and dedication of our volunteer carers was reflected in the subsequent release about half of possums coming into care. In the 17-24% euthanasia cases and 18-33% cases that died, the injuries were unavoidable due to excessive poisoning or injury in adults and juveniles.

Possums remained in care for varying lengths of time. About 25% of possums were in care for less than one month, and a third were in care for over 3 months.





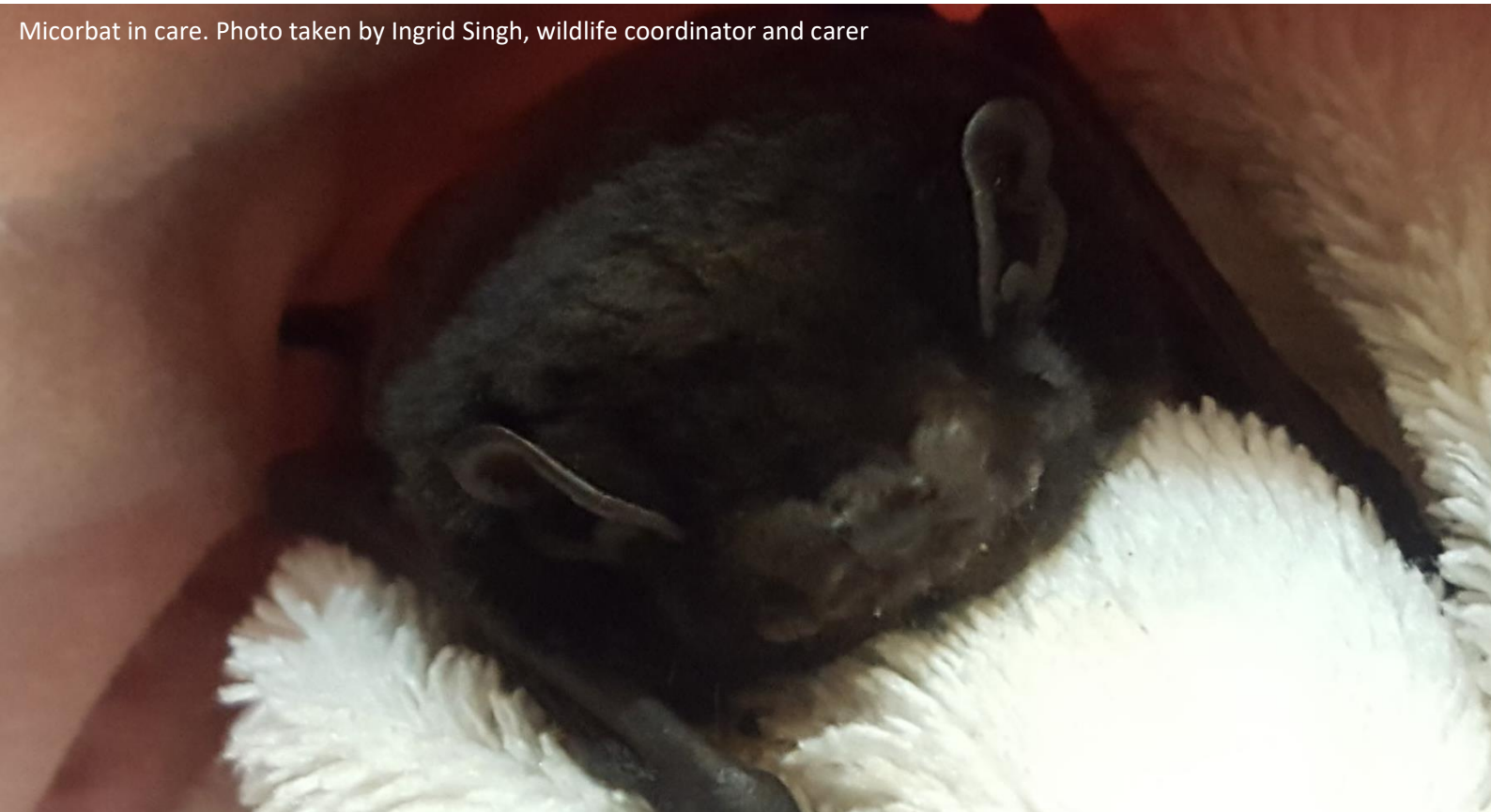
Bats

A total number of 125 bats (80 Flying Foxes and 45 Microbats) entered into care during 2017. Number of bats that visit Canberra fluctuates each year, however for comparison this is a 136% increase from last year and a 15% increase since 2014.

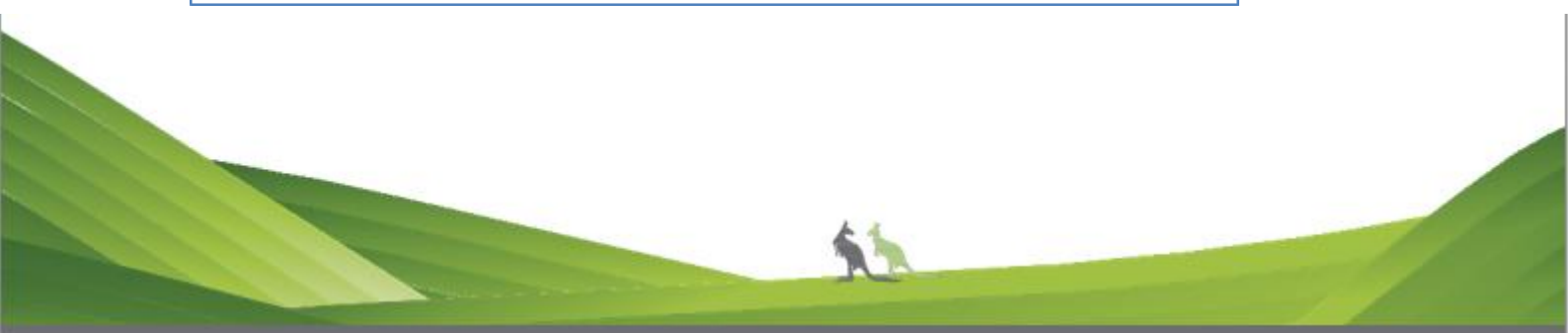
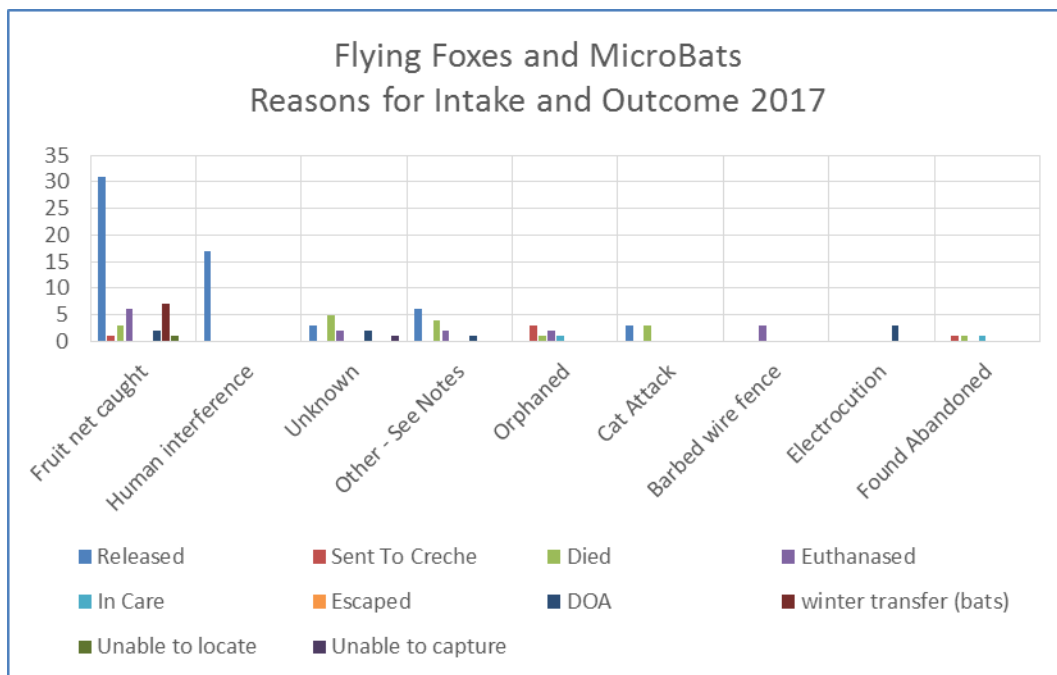
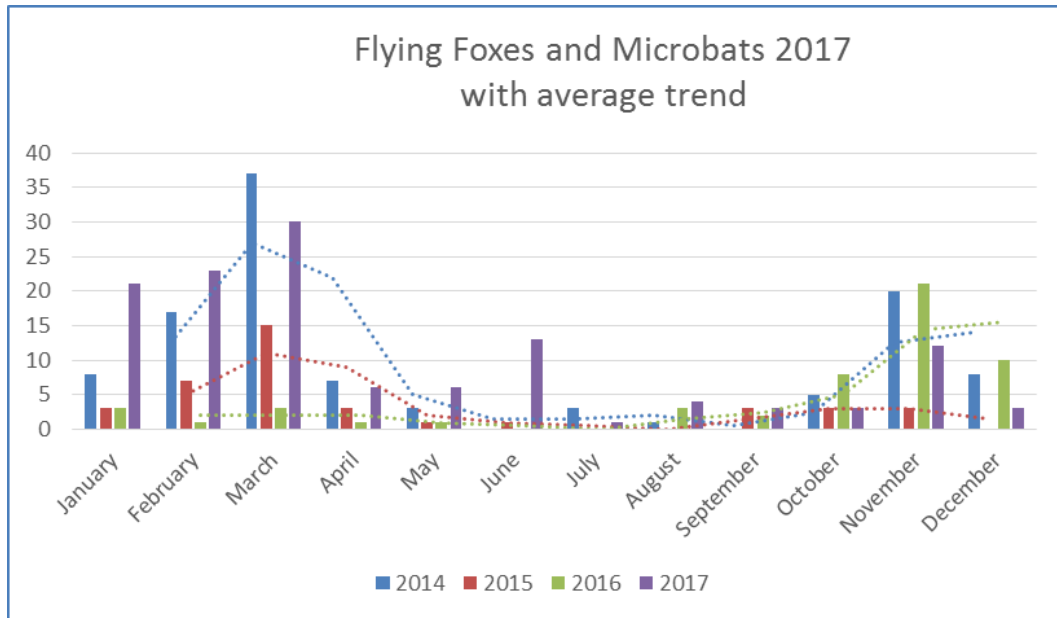
Flying Foxes are temporary residents, who migrate all over Eastern Australia, and settle where there is sufficient food and roosting sites. This leads to difficult prediction from year to year, but generally you expect to see an increase between September and March when the weather is warm and fruit is abundant.

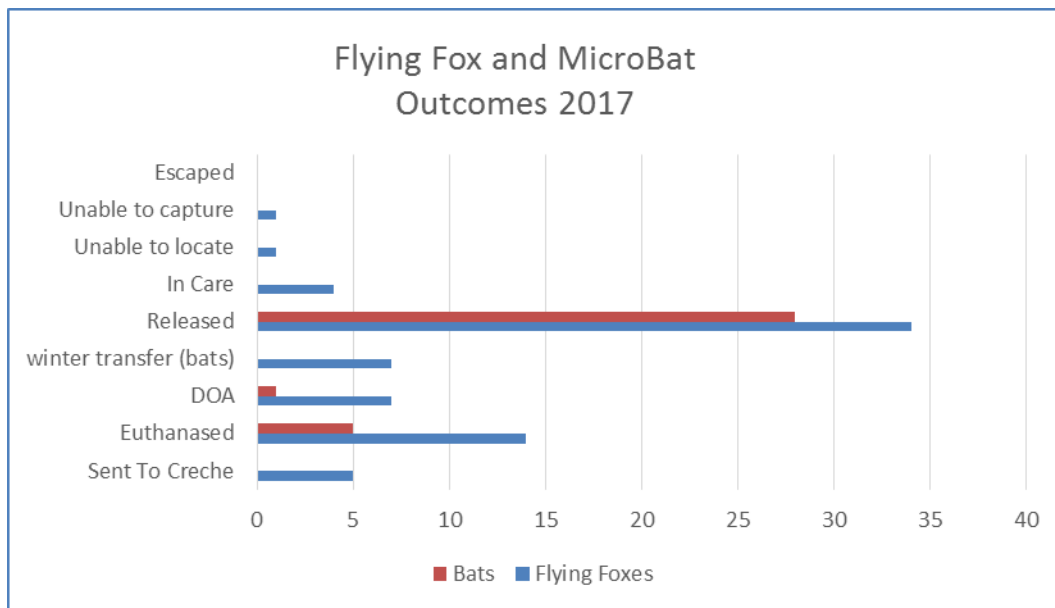
Microbats, however are local residents and are mainly located in areas surrounding suburbia with little interaction with humans. Due to this we receive similar numbers into care each year.

Micorbat in care. Photo taken by Ingrid Singh, wildlife coordinator and carer



Whilst in care both Flying Foxes and Microbats had a high percentage release rate (84% Microbats and 59%* Flying Foxes), which is typical for these species.





* Flying Foxes release statistics combines the categories; released, sent to crèche and in-care.

Flying Foxes

The Grey-headed Flying Fox was the only species that came into care during 2017, with the exception of one Black Flying Fox. Of these 52% were caught in fruit nets, which is an increase from 16% the previous year.

For more information on good fruit nets and how to erect them, visit

<http://www.actwildlife.net/resources.html>

Microbats

Nine species of Microbats came into care in 2017, which is an increase by four species from 2016. These were; Lesser Long-eared Bat (17%), Little Forest Bat (14%), Goulds Wattled Bat (7%), Unidentified Bats (2%), Large Forest Bat (1%), Goulds Long-Eared Bat (1%), Chocolate Wattled Bat (1%), Inland Forest Bat (91%), and Eastern Forest Bat (1%).

Drawing on expertise from across Australia (national online Microbat rehabilitation forum and local training through WIRES Goulburn), identifying the local Microbats has improved.

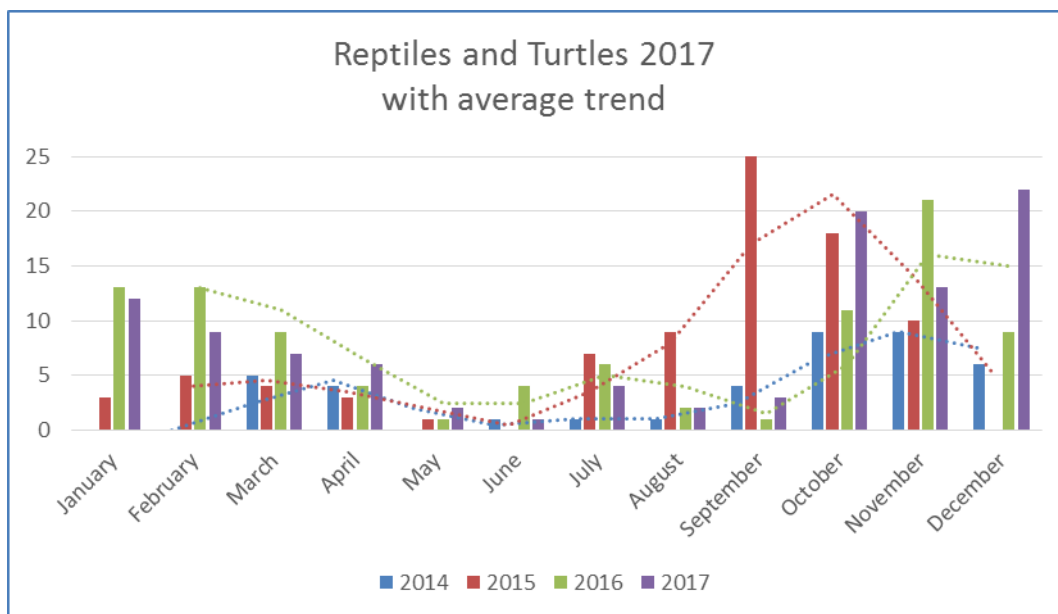


Reptiles

A total number of 101 reptiles entered into care during 2017. This is a 7% increase from last year and a 153% increase since 2014.

A total of eleven species came into care during 2017. This was made of the Eastern Blue-tongue Lizard (47%), the Eastern Long-necked Turtle (32%), the Shingle Backed Lizard (6%), the Bearded Dragon (4%), the Macquarie River Turtle (2%) and the Gippsland Water Dragon (1%).

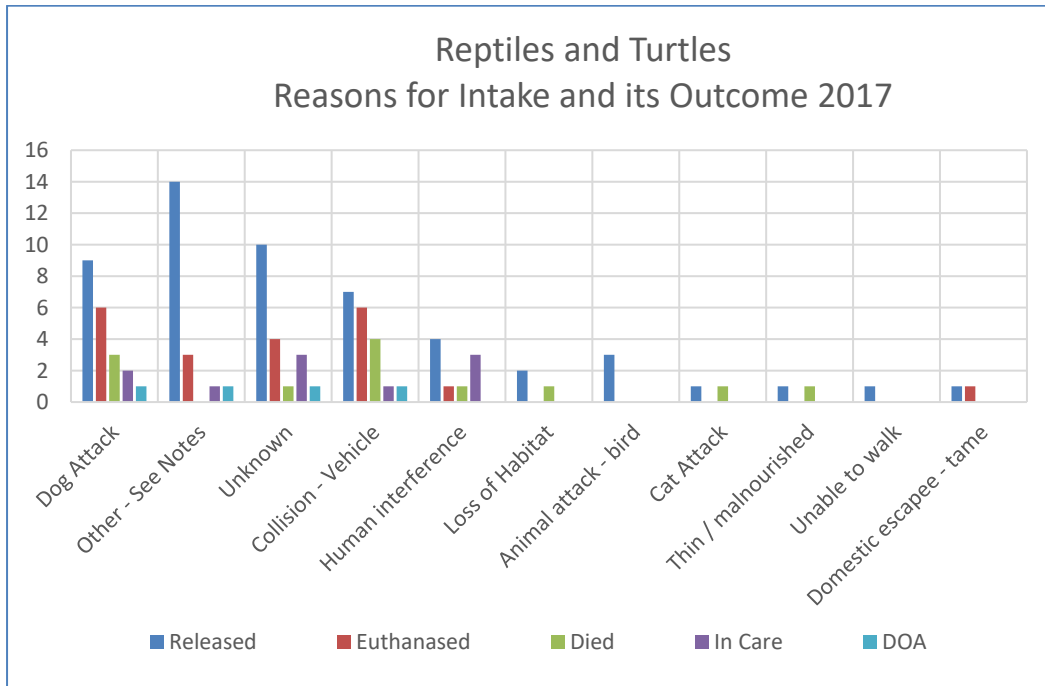
Reptiles are cold blooded and rely on the sun and local rainfall to survive. The air temperature and rainfall patterns usually dictate when we receive reptiles for care, which is evident from the graph below.



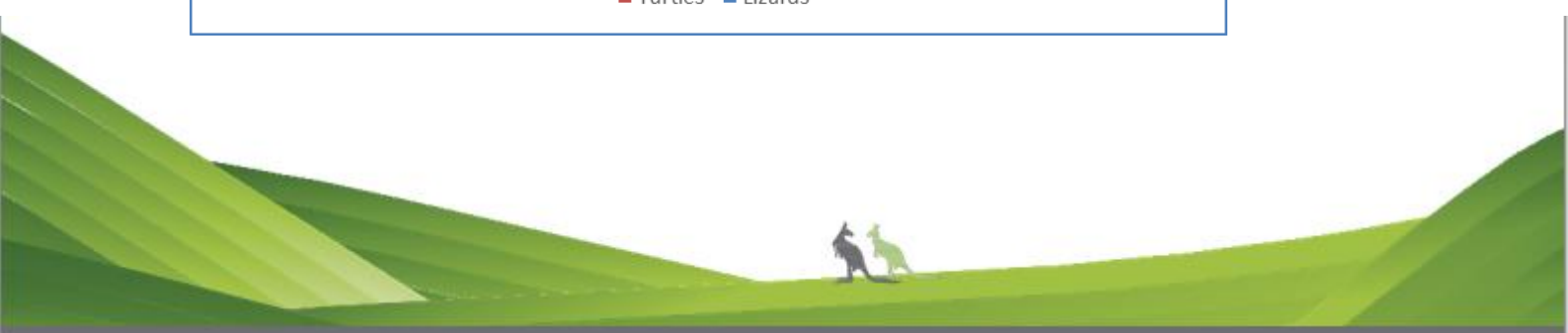
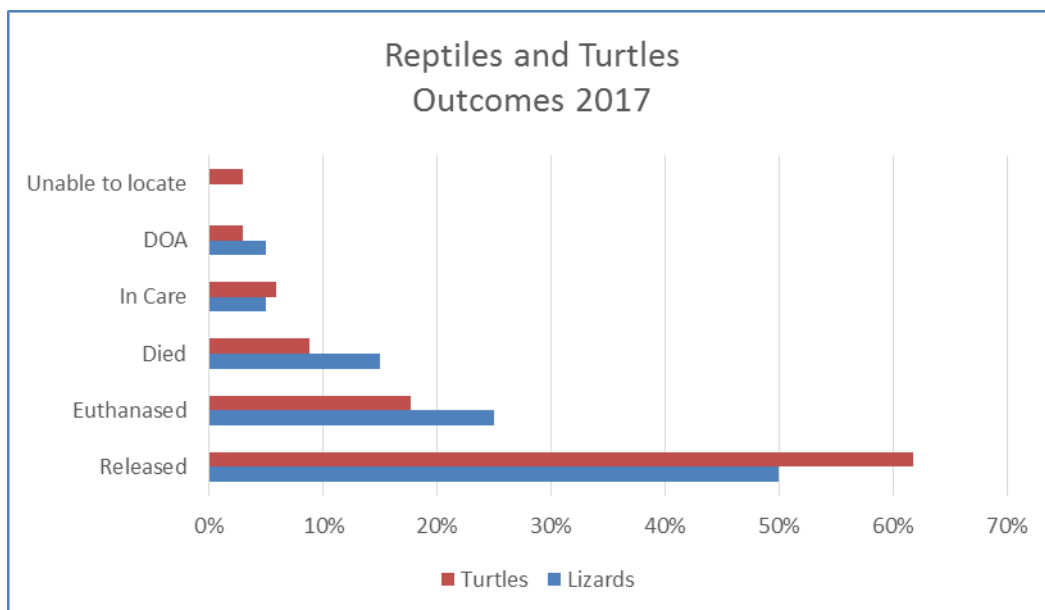
Reptiles are territorial and have most likely lived in the same area since they were born. Reptiles are hardy and can recover from significant injuries if treated early but may take a long time to recover. This means carers may be required to house reptiles for up to 6 months, if they enter into care leading into Canberra's cold winter. Most reptiles require minimal care once their initial injury is treated.



The main reasons for reptiles and turtles to be euthanased were mainly due of dog attacks and vehicle strikes. These injuries caused were assessed by vets as unlikely to heal, or unlikely to heal sufficiently, to allow the reptile or turtle a good quality of life in the wild.



However, a large percentage of reptiles and turtles were released back to the wild.





Injured Blue Tongue Lizard: Photo taken by Ingrid Singh, wildlife coordinator and Carer

Memberships

In our third financial year, ACT Wildlife has 125 members, similar to that of 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 \$20 to \$25 during the year. The low membership fee is in recognition of the time volunteers provides to ACT Wildlife.



Training

Training provides the opportunity for our volunteers to learn new skills and assist in the rehabilitation of wildlife. This year training consisted of 15 courses with over 141 people attending. It has been a great investment in time and we now have 45 households that are qualified to care for our wildlife.

	Orientation & First Aid	Adv Birds	Basic Birds	Basic Possums	Reptiles	Phone, Rescue & Transport	Flying Foxes	Total
Run	5	1	2	2	1	3	1	15
Attendees	63	6	26	21	8	20	5	141

We work well with Wildcare Queanbeyan with members from both organisations taking advantage of training sessions in the ACT and across the border.

The training offered is a combination of formal and informal training to support the various activities across our organisation.

Our formal course outline includes:

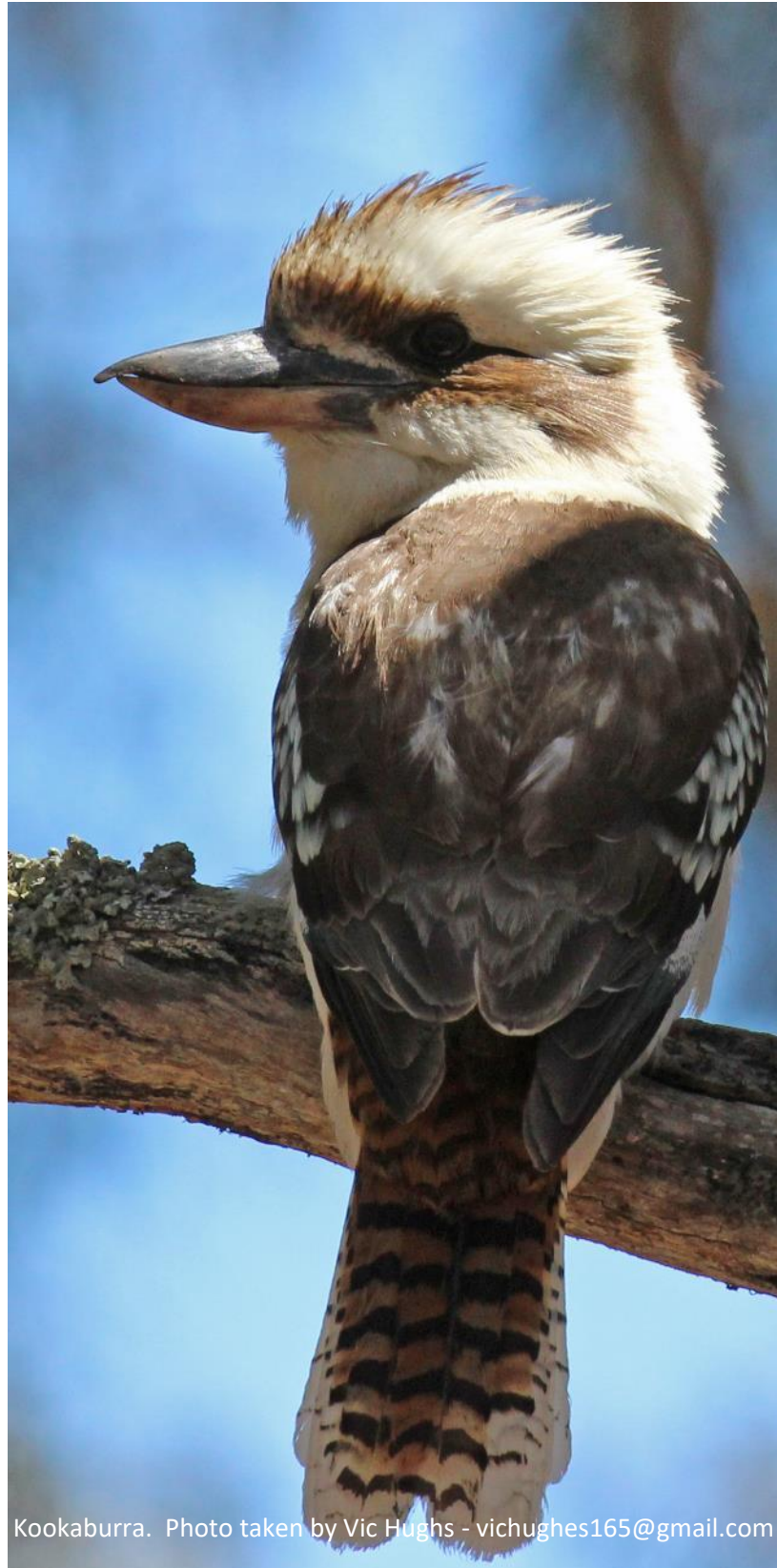
- Orientation Session - to provide new members with information on our organisation, our main role and an outline of the various activities volunteers can assist us with, and
- Species specific courses – practical demonstrations provide up close examination of our wildlife to determine why they may have come into care and what treatment and rearing information that may apply. The course also covers identification, diet, husbandry and basic first aid.

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



Volunteer carers are provided with up-to-date information to support their ongoing learning as a qualified carer. They are required to refresh their training to update their practices with the latest research knowledge. All carers must have undertaken the orientation and species specific formal training courses before caring under ACT Wildlife.

New carers will be allocated a 'mentor', a more experienced carer, who guides and advises them as they start caring. Once experienced themselves they may become a 'mentor' to others or help in other areas within the organisation.



Kookaburra. Photo taken by Vic Hughs - vichughes165@gmail.com

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, as they 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), and
- Belconnen Bunnings Spring Launch (September)

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

Fundraising

Fundraising is a great opportunity to promote ACT Wildlife with the general ACT community whilst raising funds.

This has consisted of;

- Fundraiser chocolates
- Bunnings BBQ Belconnen (September).
- Goodwill Wines <http://www.goodwillwine.com.au/>
- Youtube https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCY80YUm8xzoPLRu_Q1WCJ9Q



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/>
- Continuation our twitter account – thanks to an ANU student https://twitter.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
- Radio interviews with 2XXFM ACT community radio and ABC 666.

Crested Pidgeon. Photo taken by Vic Hughs - vichughes165@gmail.com



Financial Report

This has been our fourth year in operation and we have steadily built on our finances over that time. This year our income exceeded our expenses by \$20,212.

This year we successfully won a government grant or received a grant from the ACT government for \$36,142. This will assist ACT Wildlife to move into Jerrabomberra Wetlands.

The table below indicates income and expenses over the year.

Income	
Membership subscriptions	3,664
Donations	18,186
Training	2,096
Fundraising	2,403
Chocolate sales	2,009
Interest	273
Clothing	690
Annual Funding TCCS (QTR1, QTR2)	6,000
Miscellaneous	552
Sales	83
Total Income	35,956
Expenses	
Advertising	100
Consulting and Accounting	381
Freight	77
Printing and Stationary	1,372
Fundraising Expenses	1,427
Mobile Phone	1,074
Food/consumables	5,644
Flying Fox Food / Expenses	1,500
Miscellaneous	758
Insurance	355
Depreciation	2,692
T-Shirts	364
Total Expenses	15,744
Total Income minus Expenses	20,212



General Business

Our main income consisted of donations at \$18,186, memberships \$3,664, fundraising \$4,412, TCCS funding \$6,000, and Training \$2,096. The standout here is the donations increasing from \$5,404 in 2016 to \$18,186 this year. Donations included three large sums; \$5,000 from the National Zoo and Aquarium, \$1,000 from the Belconnen Rotary and \$1,000 from Diane Johnstone to help replace stolen night cameras. A more comprehensive list is in the notes to the financial statements.

Our main expenses were; food and consumables at \$5,644, fundraising \$1,427, printing and stationery \$1,372, and mobile phone costs at \$1,074.

Grants

This year saw us successfully acquit the ACT Environment Grant of \$19,830 for the study and treatment of mange in wombats along the Murrumbidgee corridor.

We were successful to receive an environmental grant of \$36,142 from the ACT government. These funds will go towards the 'yet to be acquired' wildlife centre at the Jerrabomberra Wetlands. These will include items such as; industrial washing machine and dryer, fridge, freezer, overnight cages etc. which will go a long way towards making this a functioning centre.

Much was achieved this year through enthusiasm and hard work, our challenge this year is to consolidate our gains and maintain our momentum.



Looking Forward

We are excited about the prospect of moving to the Jerrabomberra Wetlands building. In the coming year we will equip the building sufficiently to be an administrative hub and an area to receive animals from the public. The hub will also provide a space for our volunteers to socialise, share their experiences and network.

Ringtail Possum: Photo taken by Mandy Conway, wildlife coordinator and carer



The Committee Members

Thank you to the Committee Members who have taken Committee roles to help ACT Wildlife move forward into 2018.

Marg Peachey	- President
Martin Lind	- Vice President
Dorothy Brown	- Secretary
Jim Peachey	- Treasurer / Public Officer
Paul Perusic / Marg Peachey	- Training Officer
Jen Finlayson / Marg Peachey	- Phone Coordinator
Agnes Mesple	- Member
Kristy Price	- Member
Mandy Conway	- Member
Denise Kay	- Membe
Heather Peachey	- Member
Kumiko Callaway	- Member
Felicity Eylward	- Member

Black Pacific ducklings. Photo taken by Kumiko Callaway, wildlife coordinator and carer



Species Coordinators

Thank you to the Species Coordinators who have taken the roles to endeavour to organise and coordinate our carers in 2017.

Kumiko Callaway	- Birds
Ingrid Singh	- Microbats and Reptiles
Marg Peachey	- Flying Foxes
Lindy Butcher	- Wombats and Macropods
Cheryle Le Fevre	- Possums (North)
Michelle Johnson	- Possums (South)
Dorothy Brown	- Amphibians

Activity Coordinators

Thank you to the Activity Coordinators who have taken the roles to endeavour to organise and coordinate our members to help other parts of our business in 2017.

Phil Thurbon	- Events
Lindy Butcher / Emily Birks	- Media and Social Media
Heather Peachey	- Fundraising
Dee Harmer / Lindy Butcher	- Wombat Mange Project Manager
Paula Edmondson	- Sewing Coordinator
Dorothy Brown	- Food Coordinator



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.

Ian 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, 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 2017.



We Need Your Help in 2018

We welcome your support in any capacity to help ACT Wildlife grow as a not-for-profit organisation. This is great opportunity to gain a better understanding on our local wildlife and how a not-for-profit organisation works. 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.

Fairy Wrens: Photo taken by Vic Hughs - vichughes165@gmail.com



Wish Lists

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

The main items are;

- Old towels – these are used for capturing animals, wrapping up animals for transport, holding animals for assessments, and protecting you from their poo!
- 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.

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, and
- Monetary and equipment donations
- Adequate annual funding – to pay for the above items

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

- Answer the phone during the day
- Follow up with new members to ascertain their role as a volunteer
- Develop and maintain a communication/media plan
- Enhance the organisation's profile,
- Seek sponsorship, and
- Maintain records (assets, grants etc) as required.



Thank you to....

- The Southern ACT Catchment Group for helping ACT Wildlife with photocopying and laminating facilities and the use of a data projector for all of our training sessions. For providing a meeting space every month, and the use of the Landcare tent for the Canberra Show stall;
- Mitchell Depot for providing training course venues free of charge;
- TCCS for support with phone calls over the Christmas and New Year holidays and the challenging animal rescues;
- 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;
- Steve Kraus for providing all ACT Wildlife members free IT support;
- Bunnings for opportunities to raise funds;
- IGA Drakeford 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.

And thank you to all who have helped with the Mange Project. The volunteers who have tirelessly moved cameras and repaired flaps for the year. And especially to Dee Harmer, Lindy Butcher and Corin Pennock for managing the project and collating photos and videos.

And of course, to all the ACT Wildlife volunteers, coordinators and committee members who have contributed to making 2017 a success. We look forward to your involvement in 2018.

Front Photo: White faced Heron. Photo taken by Vic Hughes (vichughes165@gmail.com)





RESCUE



REHABILITATION



RELEASE