

**NSW Wildlife Council Inc.**  
**Thirteenth ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
**Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> August 2018**  
**The Centre 14 Frances Street Randwick**



I wish to thank the representatives and alternate members of each group who have served another year on the NSW Wildlife Council (NWC) and for the time and support you all have given over the past twelve months.

It has been a very busy year and the success of the NWC has been due to our members' dedication and willingness to add to a robust and meaningful debate within our council and also ensuring the NWC is an important voice as National Parks and Wildlife progresses the licensing reforms as part of the new Biodiversity Conservation Act.

Each of the NWC meetings this year have had updates from the OEH Biodiversity Conservation Team and I would like to thank them for keeping the NWC up to date with the progress of both the licensing and accreditation discussion papers and the progress of stakeholder meetings. In particular I would like to note my appreciation for the honest and forthright summations by Peter Stathis, Ron Haering, Robert Oliver and their team members at each of these updates.

With the continuation of stakeholder consultation meetings as OEH considers a review of the different licences under the new Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016, the NWC has attended several meetings this year regarding the management of unwanted, escaped, seized and non-releasable native animals. Audrey Koosmen and Cheyne Flanagan attended a meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> November and Audrey Koosmen, Cheyne Flanagan and Kate Randolph attended the second meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> February. The representatives spoke at length, alongside Wires, about the costs associated with wildlife groups' holding of these animals for

prolonged periods, the tying up of facilities and the stress and added workload caused to volunteer groups. They also highlighted the issues with the current ballot system for rehoming these animals and weaknesses in the system for placing approved un-releasable animals in Zoos and display parks. After these meetings Meredith Ryan produced a submission on behalf NWC (June 4<sup>th</sup>) to OEH after the Summary of Stakeholder Outcomes was released.

A discussion paper was released for by OEH for submissions due on 24<sup>th</sup> July which summarises the findings of the stakeholder meetings over several years. These meetings first attended by Audrey Koosmen, Meredith Ryan and Shona Lorigan then this year by Cheyne and Audrey show that the NWC has continued their active participation in the process and that they will continue to work with OEH to ensure the best outcomes. A final submission on the discussion paper was prepared by Meredith Ryan on behalf of the NWC and submitted in early August, It should be noted that as part of the submission the NWC highlighted its concern that the pet industry is pushing for mammal species to be added to the list of animals to be sold. Audrey Koosmen and Shona Lorigan will attend the follow up meeting for stakeholders on August 29<sup>th</sup> to further support the wishes of the NWC.

Meredith Ryan and Kerryn Parry-Jones represented the NWC at the Flying Fox Consultative Committee (FFCC) stakeholder meeting on December 6. After the meeting, the NWC received a formal request for a permanent representative from the council on this committee and my thanks to Jacquie Maisey for representing the NWC in this role.

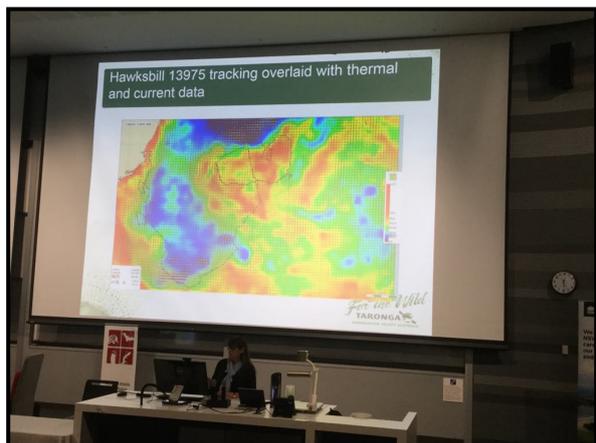
Peter Stathis and Ron Haering have also updated the NWC on the release of the Koala Strategy and subsequent project funding. Representatives from our member groups as well as WIRES joined OEH in Port Macquarie in June to commence work on standardised training for Koala care.

A vote by the NWC in 2017 to increase our grants to \$10,000, enabled the 7 successful 2017- 2018 Grant recipients to fund a range of projects from extending a macropod enclosure, a bird of prey enclosure, flying fox creches, materials for multiple possum dreys and whale/dolphin slings to be used in rescue along the entire NSW coast. The grants totalled \$10507 and I am pleased to report that interest in the grant programme is increasing every year and we have received a record number of applications for the 2018-2019 year.

The NWC's work on producing new codes of practice as well as reviewing and updating older codes has continued this year. The macropod code of practice has now been completed and released and the 2010 koala code of practice has been thoroughly reviewed and extensively rewritten. Initial copies of both were printed and released at the Australian Wildlife Rehabilitation Conference in the first week of July and they were warmly received by all of the attendees. The OEH team were delighted to confirm that every single printed copy was taken, despite a second batch despatched to the conference to keep up with the demand. I would like to thank Shona Lorigan, who has worked with the member groups of the NWC and WIRES to achieve such a wonderful result. I would also like to thank Ron Haering and Alison Forster (Koala Code) from OEH, as they guided the documents through the review process from the OEH perspective.

The Australian Wildlife Rehabilitation Conference was held in the first week of July, where many of our members were able to join our colleagues from all around Australia. The NWC's work as the state body for wildlife rehabilitation in NSW received much praise from those who attended, with special mentions for our Grant Programme, and Codes of Practice. We showcased a poster project on the Grants Programme and were delighted to share a table with WIRES, with both groups seen to be working together and closely with NPWS for a better outcome for wildlife.

Two of our member groups representatives presented at the conference, Shona Lorigan on behalf of ORRCA on “The Unique Features of Marine Mammal Rescue & Rehabilitation” and Libby Hall on a “Marine Turtle Rehabilitation and Satellite Tracking”. Both of these presentations were a huge success and thoroughly enjoyed by all the attendees. I was also delighted to be able to present on behalf of the NWC on the first day and many attendees have commented on the council’s professional and successful role within NSW, compared to peak bodies in other states.



In May, the NWC advised that an attendee from each group would have their \$250 registration sponsored by the NWC. I am pleased to report that this was well received by the member groups with 9 groups taking up the offer. With the NWC also providing accommodation for the NWC secretary the total cost for the NWC was \$2700. I could not finish without mentioning my thanks to IFAW who sponsored my attendance at the conference as Chair of the NWC.

In closing I wish to say how proud I am of all the work done this year by the NWC and it has been my pleasure to represent our member groups throughout NSW as Chair. In particular, I would like to thank the out-going committee members who have worked tirelessly to support me and the NWC in its work. We certainly have worked very hard year and the year ahead for 2018-2019 year will be another full year.

Audrey Koosmen

*Photographs: Credit Sonja Elwood*