



Achieving optimal outcomes for Australian wildlife

The Quarterly Newsletter of the New South Wales Wildlife Council Inc.
Volume One. Number One. July 2006.

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From the Chair

A warm welcome to the very first Newsletter of the NSW Wildlife Council. The council that is the voice for the wildlife community and more importantly for our NSW native fauna. We hope to speak up on your behalf and seek assistance to help the hard working network of carers. Prevention of loss of wildlife habitat is high on the agenda of the council also. I have been there from day one, and I am very proud to serve alongside members from the other groups and individuals with a general licence in NSW. As always, there have been 'teething' problems but with laughs along the way as the council representatives get to know each other.

We all have the same goal and we have already achieved a great deal since Oct 2005. Having been around for many years I am aware that there is still a lot of trust to be gained amongst us but the dream is now coming together. I do hope that you enjoy our first newsletter. My special thanks to Sandra and Steve who have spent many hours putting it together.

Through our newsletter and our website, we will be able to communicate with you all. Thanks to all of my fellow rescuers and carers for your great work - I hope we can all work alongside each other. Please feel free to contact me at anytime if you wish to discuss any issues regarding the council. Keep on Caring!

Audrey Koosmen, NWC Chair

Welcome

Welcome to the first newsletter of the New South Wales Wildlife Council Inc. Only a few copies of this newsletter will be printed, as we are publishing online to save trees and preserve habitat, as well as saving costs. The newsletter will be published regularly and will be available to download from our website at www.nwc.org.au.

We would love to have contributions from NWC members. The NWC is not just the representatives sitting at council meetings. The NWC is all members of wildlife groups that belong to the NWC.

Starting in this issue is a chance to get to know member groups and their representatives on the council, with a different representative being highlighted in each issue.

Steve Amesbury and Sandra Stewart (Editors)

History of the New South Wales Wildlife Council Inc.

- July 2003** National Wildlife Rehabilitators Conference Werribee Vic.
- May 2004** State Body proposed at regional workshops held by the Department of Environment & Conservation (DEC).
- July 2004** Second National Wildlife Rehabilitators Conference, Penrith New South Wales. The NSW Wildlife Rehabilitation Council Working Party was formed.
- Late 2004** Invitations sent to groups and individuals with a wildlife rehabilitation licence to form a steering committee.
- March 2005** Steering committee formed. 23 people (15 groups and independents. Monthly meetings and online discussion. Developed Operational Framework for Council.
- Oct 2005** Inaugural Meeting New South Wales Wildlife Council.
- June 2006** NWC is incorporated and comprises representatives from 19 groups and one representative for individual licence holders (over 80% of NSW licenced rehabilitators).

The invitation to participate in, and be part of the NWC remains open to all licenced rehabilitation groups in NSW.



Chair: Audrey Koosmen
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 Secretary: Lorraine Vass
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*Closing Date for submissions
 for the next newsletter:*

September 17th 2006.

Submissions may include articles, photographs on wildlife rehabilitation and habitat issues, training notices, buy, swap, sell or find ads, or other items likely to be of interest to our members, partners and supporters.

Email: editor@nwc.org.au
 or mail:

The Editor
 NWC Newsletter
 NSW Wildlife Council
 PO Box 324
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Minister Welcomes Council's Progress

Members of the council's Executive; Audrey Koosmen, Stan Wood, Lorraine Vass and Sonja Elwood met with the Minister for the Environment, Hon Bob Debus, MP on 21 June.

The meeting was cordial and encouraging. The Minister congratulated the wildlife rehabilitation community on taking the initiative and forming the council. He was complimentary on the progress made thus far. He assured the Executive that he has agreed to the review of the 7- day holding period. He would be looking for input from the council as well as assistance from its members in the public education programme that needs to accompany any change to policy of long standing.

The Minister undertook to pursue a coordinated approach to state government funding directed to wildlife rehabilitation issues. His office will assist in investigating state-wide insurance and other support already in place for some voluntary organisations. Further down the track he is willing to address matters which need the involvement of his Federal counterpart such as a state-wide, centralized rescue and information telephone service.

The meeting provided an opportunity for Executive members to meet Scott Cardamatis, the Minister's Policy Advisor on the environment aspect of his portfolio and Mick O'Flynn, Manager, Conservation Operations Section, DEC. Contacts which have since proven to be helpful.

The Minister invited the council to seek further meetings when there are issues that require his attention.

Lorraine Vass

NWC Values Statement

In encouraging our members to achieve the stated objectives of the association, the NSW Wildlife Council values the following:

1. Humane and ethical treatment of all animals.
2. Sharing and co-operation between all individuals and groups in the wildlife rehabilitation community.
3. Continuous learning and improvement in relation to all aspects of wildlife rehabilitation.
4. The principles of conservation, particularly as they pertain to Australian native animals and their habitat.



Buy, Swap, Sell, Find

We invite you to use our newsletter as a place to buy, swap, or sell wildlife related items.

Maybe you are finally 'retiring' from wildlife care and have a collection of cages, pouches, aviaries, or other wildlife rehabilitation equipment that you have accumulated over the years. Advertise here to help make the task easier for both yourself and those looking for goods.

To advertise what you wish to buy, swap, sell or find contact the editor with the details.

NWC takes no responsibility for the advertisements placed here and all arrangements are to be made between the advertiser and the individual responding.

Land Sale !

Upper Hunter Valley, 40 acres Freehold on river frontage surrounded by 70,000 hectares of National Park. 4 bedroom house. Solar powered.

Back up generator. Combustion cook-stove, heats hot water. Bore with solar powered submersible pump. Petrol pump on the river. Abundant wildlife.

Presently release Site for local wildlife carers group. On site is a large 2 1/2m x 9m x 2m flight aviary, macropod nursery and rehab. yards, and a solid wombat enclosure.

It's hard to find a property as ideal as this for releasing wildlife.

Only 30k south from Merriwa, 2hrs from Newcastle. Priced to sell at \$155,000 negotiable. phone enquires - 0265482837 or see photos and more info at www.noagentproperty.com.au and type in ID 2709.

Meet NWC Chair Audrey Koosmen

Group: Native Animal Trust Fund

Family: Hubby and 2 grown children

Occupation: Retired nurse

Time in wildlife care: Started when I was about 17yrs old - 41yrs my goodness!

Role in your Group: President of NATF, Species coordinator.

What do you hope the NWC will achieve?: To promote the plight of Aussie native wildlife and help to— conserve and protect its wild habitat. To achieve better standards in management and care practices for wildlife also providing better assistance to the wildlife rehabilitators.

Outside Interests: Bush walking, beach combing, reading, working with homeless and abused kids and adults.

Most unusual animal cared for? Water rats they are most wonderful creatures, sadly there are not many left.

Amusing Wildlife Experience: Called out to get a baby wedge tail eagle, I was armed with the biggest box (TV) to find a baby turtle dove awaiting me!!

What animal what would you choose to be and why? I would not want to be as they are given no chance in this human life of ours.

Favourite:

Place: The Barrington rainforest, beach at Catherine Hill Bay, Tomago, land of the best free range koala habitat.

Drink: Nice cold beer or cuppa.

Food: Any if cooked for me!

Quotes: We should engage in the same high standards of integrity and sacrifice that we ask of others.

To know an animals feelings you must enter its heart and soul.

If you could swap places with someone famous who would it be? David Attenborough, he has been everywhere and seen everything I want to see and has a wonderful passion for all creatures great and small.

If you weren't involved in wildlife rehabilitation what would you do with your time? I cannot say animals have been my life since a was born, maybe travel the world.

If you were given \$2 million, how would you spend it?

Build a wildlife hospital with full time trained wildlife vets & nurses, buy habitat, help support wonderful NATF members!



Audrey and Cleo



Promoting NATF & the koalas

Who's Who

The current membership list of the NSW Wildlife Council is an impressive one—representing over four thousand rehabilitators across the state. Current members as at July 2006 are:

FAWNA (*For Australian Wildlife Needing Aid*)

Friends of the Koala

General Licence Holders

Hunter Koala Preservation Society

Koalas In Care

Koala Preservation Society of NSW

LAOKO (*Looking After Our Kosciusko Orphans*)

NANA (*Native Animal Network Association*)

NATF (*Native Animal Trust Fund*)

Northern Rivers Wildlife Carers

Northern Tablelands Wildlife Carers

ORRCA (*Organisation for the Rescue and Research of Cetaceans*)

RRANA (*Rescue & Rehabilitation of Australian Native Animals*)

Sydney Wildlife

Tweed Valley Wildlife Carers

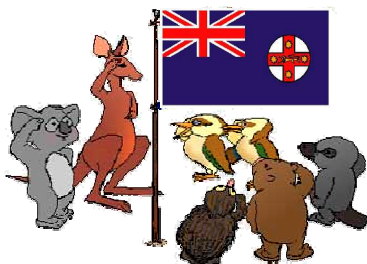
Wildcare

Wildlife Aid

Wildlife ARC

Wildlife Carers Network

WIRES (*Wildlife Information Rescue and Education Service*)



NSW Wildlife Council

Who We Are, What We Do

The NWC was formed as the peak body to represent wildlife groups, and therefore the individual members of these groups in New South Wales.

All the groups who have chosen to be members of the council have one representative chosen by their group, and an alternative representative. Both the primary and the alternative representative may attend meetings but only the primary representative may vote.

Each group is entitled to one vote on the council, for voting purposes, individuals with a general licence vote as one. The council meets four times a year at the DEC offices in Hurstville. Between meetings much work and discussion goes on behind the scenes in an online forum. Issues that arise between meetings can be posted online and the representatives from each group are then responsible for conveying the message to the group that they represent.

DEC will also provide information to the NWC for representatives to pass onto their groups. Guest speakers are invited to the quarterly meetings to discuss relevant issues.

The NWC is forging a closer working relationship with DEC by expressing our needs and concerns and becoming a contact point for groups to DEC and vice-versa.

The council needs and wants to be relevant to rehabilitators and those who support their groups in many other ways. All group representatives on the council are involved in wildlife care on a day-to-day basis whether as carers, rescuers or behind the scenes workers.

For the council to act on behalf of the wildlife community we need to know your concerns and needs. The best way to communicate with the council is to speak to your group representative who will then raise your issues with the council. If you are unsure who your group representative is please ask your group's executive committee.

The other way is to contact your representative is through the NWC email: secretary@nwc.org.au or editor@nwc.org.au or by mail as follows:

New South Wales Wildlife Council Inc
PO Box 324
Lismore NSW 2480.

The NWC is here to represent rehabilitation groups and individuals in NSW, and can do that best with your input and feedback. So if you are pleased with something that we have accomplished please let us know!

2005 inaugural NWC Meeting

Front Row from left *Sonja Elwood, Lorraine Vass, Audrey Koosmen, Stan Wood, Kay Brady (who has since resigned)*

Back row from left *Jill Taylor, Barbara Witham, Sandra Stewart, Gwen Perry-Jones, Helen Kennedy, Joan Hills, Ian Johnson, Iona Roberts Coralie Tarlinton.*



Responses from NWC Meeting with Minister

Received by NWC 20 July 2007

7 Day Holding Period

When parliamentary opportunity arises Minister Bob Debus will seek an amendment to Section 58 of the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974* to reduce the period that unlicensed people can hold wildlife from 7 days to 72 hours.

Letter to Ministers for Roads and Primary Industries

Minister Debus will outline the potential benefits from the formation of the NWC as the peak statewide body. He will seek their support for the council and suggest a coordinated approach between their respective departments to provide funding assistance to the Council so that it can resolve state-wide issues in wildlife rehabilitation.

Success of Grant Application

\$5 000 in funding assistance to undertake preparation of a plan to develop a wildlife rehabilitation database for the state's wildlife rehabilitation groups.

Council Guests —Paul Canfield and Kelly Waples

Holding council meetings in Sydney has the advantage of allowing us to invite speakers to address representatives on issues of interest. The University of Sydney's faculty of Veterinary Science was quick to acknowledge the Council's formation and appointed Professor of Veterinary and Clinical Pathology, **Paul Canfield** as Faculty Liaison. Paul attended the Council's February meeting to discuss ways in which the faculty might support the Council. Paul attended our meeting the day after returning from six months in the United Kingdom.

Paul is particularly well known to Koala groups as he has been dealing with Koala diseases for some 30 years. He is well published, has supervised numerous PhD. Students, and is patron of the Port Macquarie Koala Hospital. Cheyne Flanagan, Supervisor of the Hospital says Paul is a "**veritable encyclopaedia of information on wildlife pathology and disease.**"

Paul outlined the Faculty's commitment to wildlife studies, teaching programs, research programs and the role of the Wildlife Health and Conservation Centre under construction at Camden as well as the Australian Marine Mammal Research Centre which has its HQ at Taronga Zoo. He encouraged groups needing assistance in pursuing their research interests to contact him.

Kelly Waples, Manager, Wildlife Licensing & Management Unit in the Conservation Operations Section of DEC addressed our May meeting.

Kelly discussed the Department's internal review of its wildlife management operations. The review will include overhauling the *Rehabilitation of Protected Fauna Policy* which will have implications for wildlife rehabilitators. Other topics raised were the need to develop species guidelines and to update those that are in place, the Department's reporting requirements from groups and the apparent lack of interest in statistical data collected as well as the difficulties for groups created by the 7-day holding period.

The Council has been invited to make a submission on the Department's relationship with the rehabilitation sector and its attitude to native wildlife welfare issues. The Executive met with the Department's officer to expand on aspects of the submission, in particular, what we believe the Department's role should be in managing wildlife welfare and why we believe conflict of interest arises with other agencies dealing with wildlife welfare.

Lorraine Vass

A few weeks after these meetings, we were advised that Kelly was leaving DEC to move to Perth. The Council wishes Kelly all the best for her new life in W.A.

There is nothing in which the birds differ more from man than the way in which they can build and yet leave a landscape as it was before.

Robert Lynd 1879-1949 The Blue Lion and Other Essays

Photos by Jeremy Nunn & Sandra Stewart. Rocky Creek Wildlife Refuge 2006



NSW Wildlife Survey



Dallis Park Flying Fox Colony Under Threat

In mid-April the Minister for the Environment announced a state-wide survey to locate koalas. The data collected is to feed into the Recovery Plan for the Koala, which is expected to be published later this year.

During June 200,000 survey forms and regional maps were distributed to households across the state to facilitate community participation. By this time the survey had expanded to include a number of wildlife and feral species. The NSW Wildlife Survey sought sighting details of Brushtail possum, Echidna, Platypus, Spotted-tailed Quoll, Wombat, wild dog/Dingo, Fox, Deer and Cane Toad, as well as Koalas. Current locations (past 2 years) and earlier locations of any of the above species were requested.

"Well over 13000 responses have been received and are now undergoing analysis"

DEC's Senior Research Scientist and Vertebrate Ecology Team Leader admitted that in part including the additional species was opportunistic. It is 20 years (1986-7) since the last survey of the koala was undertaken in New South Wales.

Although the Council was not contacted directly about the Survey an offer to participate by contributing records of member groups was made and subsequently accepted by the team.

Several groups, in particular those which are licenced for koalas, contributed both current and earlier records. A few groups offered records for other species. A modest fee was negotiated for the use of electronically held koala records.

Dr Lunney will be the guest speaker at the Council's August meeting. We expect to learn more about the survey process and publication outputs.

Lorraine Vass

An urgent situation arose for the flying fox colony at Dallis Park, Murwillumbah in the Tweed Shire of Northern NSW. A small group of residents are seeking legal permission to destroy the colony site whilst the flying foxes are away feeding on the coast. This follows a previous illegal action that saw the old colony site destroyed. The colony then moved to another roosting site which was even closer to the residents.



13,000 Flying Foxes, 35% *pteroptus alecto* (black) and 65% *pteroptus poliocephalus* (Grey Headed) lost their roost site. If this new action is successful a further 15,000 flying foxes will lose their homes.

Dallis Park is the most significant maternity colony in the Tweed Shire. These animals are absolutely vital to the pollination, general diversity and the very survival of our five world heritage listed National Parks in this area.

Action Taken by NWC:

A letter was sent to Senator the Hon. Ian Campbell, Commonwealth Minister of the Environment; The Hon. Robert John Debus MP, NSW Minister for the Environment; Tweed Council and Tweed's Local newspaper 'The Daily News'. The issue was also raised when the NWC Executive met with Minister Debus and his advisers. It was stated that *this issue "is being addressed so that wholesale destruction is avoided."*

The Good News (as reported on the FFICN site):

Whilst the fight is far from won proceedings have been held up after a petition by some 1200 people, letters to Ministers and the NWC submission representing some 4000 wildlife rehabilitators (19 groups) across the state. The decision has been made to look at this matter further.

DEC have said that they are now aware of the situation and have effectively said that no rubber stamping will take place and are now 'seriously investigating' the issue.

The original plan was to slow down proceedings so that in a proper and sensible review could be made by the relevant authorities. So far this strategy has worked. The media attention has created a surprising number of bat friendly people who have raised their voices and their pens in support. There is now greater positive support for the bats than negative feedback.

The local DEC Ranger is putting forward a long-term plan for management of the site including: replanting the area previously cleared in a corridor to connect old and new sites, create a buffer zone, possible planting behind the colony away from the residents and perhaps even signage and a viewing platform. It sounds great. We will keep pushing!

Alan Rose

Convener NWC GHFF Working Party
rose@northnet.com.au



Photographs (top) Black Flying Fox,

(Above right) Grey Headed Flying Fox in care - Alan Rose NTWC

Alan Rose would like to thank Tweed Valley Wildlife Carers for providing additional information. You can visit their website at www.tvwc.org.au