

Meeting Notice; Annual General Meeting.
Time; 12 noon
Date. Sunday 28th February 2010
Venue; Armidale Tree Group Woodland centre , East Mann St. Armidale.
Fund Raising meeting 11am
Followed by; General Meeting , Time 1.30pm
Come along and support your organisation.



Telstra country Wide and New England Mutual are proud to be sponsors of NT Wildlife Carers...Local people working together.

Return address
Northern Tablelands Wildlife Carers
PO Box 550 Armidale 2350



Training : It will be Basic Wildlife

Awareness and Care' for new members and carers, tutor Linda Dennis. Date 7th March
 email
 linda@fourcrossingwildlife.com



Rescue Rehabilitate Release

Newsletter of The Northern Tablelands Wildlife Carers Issue No 84 February 2010
Phone - 1800-008290 www.ntwc.org.au



NTWC assisting Wombat researcher.

by Julia Rose

This is a dream come true! At last in 2010 there will be a study of wombat movements in the Hot Spot area on Thunderbolts way near Nowendoc, east of Walcha. NTWC has been recording road kills for many years and this is definitely an area where the sealing of the road surface has resulted in an increase of wombat mortalities. The old unsealed road helped by reducing the traffic speed and had the added benefit of noise from tyres on the gravel as cars approached. Wombat tracks have been found both sides of the road in several sites and it seems they prefer to ignore nearby culverts as a safe underpass. Question is what can be constructed with spots which will alert or divert wombats? We know wombats have great hearing but poor eyesight and tend to 'stop and think' if confused by something which causes many deaths.

We hope we can achieve results which can save this population.

NTWC wish to thank Natasha Crook (also a snake handling member) for choosing this topic to work on for her honours project at UNE and Linda and I are looking forward to being her assistants.



A very happy Wombat

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Northern Tableland Wildlife Carers is a network of trained volunteers licensed by NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service. We rescue, rehabilitate and release injured, sick, orphaned & unwanted native fauna. Any assistance please call the above numbers in your area.

Membership \$15 single and \$20 family year for authorised and support members. All donations over \$2 are tax deductible.

This Newsletter is designed by Colin Wood and printed by New England Mutual.

Telstra Country Wide are also proud to be a sponsor of NTWC



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United Nations Climate Change Conference December Copenhagen December 7th ~ 18th 2009

by *Dr Douglas Kerlin*

In 1788 when Australia was first settled by Europeans over 65% of the Koala forests have been cleared.

~ That's over 75 million hectares. The remaining 35% ~ around 41 million



Hectares ~ remains under threat from land clearing for agriculture, urban development and unsustainable forestry.

In December, the Australian Koala Foundation is

“We need a new paradigm, where natural forests have the right economic. Mapping is the view to this vision; mapping underpins everything the AKF has done, and will do. Mapping every treemeans accuracy and integrity”
Deborah Tabart CEO Australian Koala Foundation

taking a delegation to COP15, the next United Nations Conference of Parties on Climate Change in Copenhagen. We will argue that the world needs to recognise the significance of our forests in the climate debate, and that the simple solution lies in rewarding the landholder who protects these trees. Once this logic has been adopted, we believe that voluntary markets will move into place to ensure the carbon savings are safe in the bank of existing forests.

When we save the trees, we guard ourselves against the impacts of climate change. What's more, the koala's Eucalypt forests have been found to be some of the most valuable carbon sinks in the world.

The AKF believes Australia could lead the

world in protecting existing forests for their huge carbon value. Currently, the Australian Government is misleading the world. This Government is talking about protecting forests in develop-

ing nations, but is ignoring the destruction of the forests of Australia, and the associated production of carbon.

The AKF will be a unique delegate at

COP15 because we bring world-famous mapping expertise to show both developed and developing countries simple solutions to global problems. AKF boasts one of the richest databases of trees in the world from mapping more than 40 000 square kilometres over 1800 field sites. We believe that mapping will bring integrity to the carbon economy system, and we have the trailblazing maps and the figures to prove it!

CEO Deborah Tabart OAM, Girl Guides Australia representative Abbylene McGuire, and myself make up the delegation.

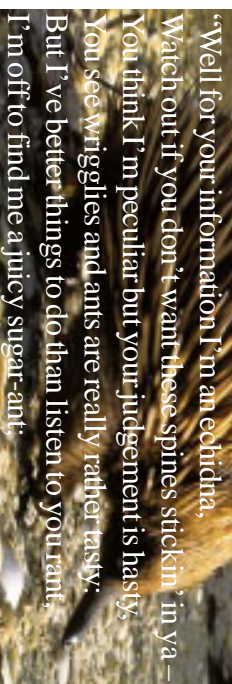
Echidna

by Colin Gibson

Look at that animal, you've got to be joking,
With all those needles in its back out poking;
Never before have I seen such features
On any one of a thousand creatures:

Her sharp little toes, her squat little stance

And long, sticky tongue full of insects and ants
Flicking in front of her pencil-thin muzzle—
Have you ever seen a more peculiar living puzzle?



“Well for your information I'm an echidna.
Watch out if you don't want these spines stickin' in ya—
You think I'm peculiar but your judgement is hasty,
You see wrigglies and ants are really rather tasty.
But I've better things to do than listen to you rant,
I'm off to find me a juicy sugar-ant!”

I can be reasonable but I'm not kiddin' ya
You'd better not hassle me, 'cause I'm an echidna!”
Urr, ants and wriggly creatures, yuk!
However can you bring yourself to swallow that muck?
You dig so much one day you'll get bogged,
With your beak in the dirt I'm surprised its not clogged!
With those spines on your back you're a curious case
But those legs would never-ever win you a chase;
Fiction can never be stranger than fact,
No animal alive could follow your act.

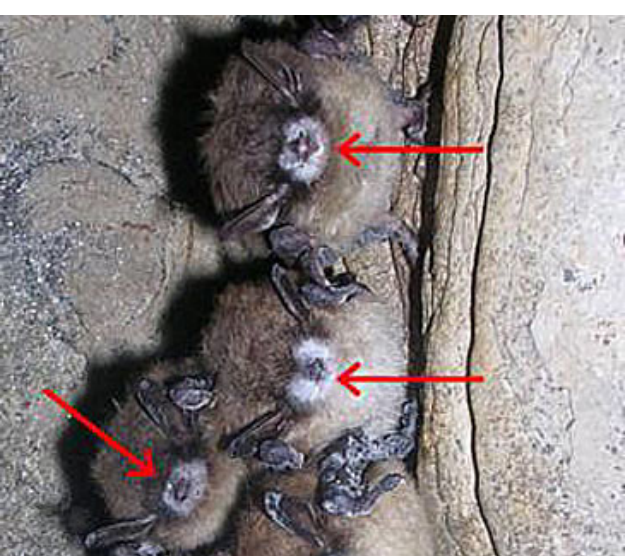
“To repeat myself, I'm an echidna,
I hope you got my warning, well then, didn't ya?
You're opinion of my diet is somewhat injudicious
Because not only are they tasty ants are wonderfully nutritious;
But from a twit like you it's not all that surprisin'
Try one and maybe you'd broaden your horizon:
But I waste my time, it's goodbye I'm biddin' ya,
Don't answer me back, because I'm an echidna!”

Something is Killing Bats!

The White Nose Syndrome Tragedy

Something is killing whole populations of bats in the eastern U.S. as they hibernate in caves and mines. Bats are losing their fat reserves (which are needed to survive hibernation) long before the winter is over and dying of starvation.

The cause is unknown, but the affliction has been given the name “White Nose Syndrome” (WNS)



because of the telltale white fungus growing on the noses of infected bats. This previously undescribed fungus, *Geomyces destructans*, may also appear on a bat's wings, ears, and tail.

However, bats affected with WNS do not always have the fungus growing on their bodies, and may instead display abnormal behavior.

Scientists do not know if the fungus is the sole cause of the bat deaths, or if it is merely an opportunistic pathogen, taking advantage of immune systems weakened by another biological

or chemical agent.

The earliest evidence of WNS is in a 2006 photograph taken in Howe Caverns, New York, but the condition was not recognized until a year later. Since then, hundreds of thousands of bats have died.

There is some concern that if the syndrome is a pathogen, it could be accidentally spread to Australia (and other places).

Bats Are Dying

Mortality rates of 70-100% have been documented in the first year in many hibernacula found to have WNS. In caves where fewer than 100% of the bats died the first year, populations continued to decline in successive years.

Damage to wings and bodies persists in bats that survive a winter in WNS-affected populations.

Additional Signs of WNS

- Bats flying outside during the day in near freezing weather.
- Bats clustered in the winter in sections of caves or mines not normally used for winter roosts, especially near the entrance.
- Dead or dying bats on the ground or on buildings, trees or other structures during the winter.

• Bats not arousing at all after being disturbed.

How WNS Is Spread

- Bat to Bat - Bat to bat transmission of *G. destructans* has been proven in the laboratory. The pattern in which WNS has spread between caves appears to support this.
- Cave to Humans to Bats? - The spread pattern also suggests that humans may transport WNS from infected sites to clean sites, probably on

Do you utilise Our Website as much as you could? www.ntwc.org.au

Main advantages of using the website

- You can print out your Membership form
 - Foster Care report
 - Milk request form
 - Animal transfer form
 - Animal report form
 - You can have access to most carer organisation throughout Australia
 - Have access to lots of useful links for education and help for native animals
 - Read the latest and older issues of you newsletter
 - See lots of photos of animals in care and those that have been released
 - Lots of stuff to help you care for our native animals
 - Check out the snakes in our area and see which are non; partly or very venomous
 - Leave a message for our committee
- In future, to save on postage and paper we will be sending out emails with the website address of the latest newsletter to all who have internet access.
- Please register you email address with Colin at turton37@bigpond.com

clothes and equipment that aren't cleaned and decontaminated between visits to caves.

Bats Matter!

Bats are an essential, beneficial part of the ecosystem.

Bats play critical roles in insect control, plant pollination, seed dissemination and cave ecosystems, and provide food for other animals

Consuming over half their body weight in insects each night, bats reduce the need for insecticides and are the major predator of night-flying insects. Bats eat thousands of tons of insects nightly.

Bats play a significant role in science and medicine. Bat research has enabled advancements in sonar, vaccine development, blood coagulation, and artificial insemination, to name just a few.

Decimation of bat populations will cause a substantial ecological ripple effect, with far-reaching consequences.

WNS doesn't only affect bats - it impacts our whole ecosystem.

Taking Action

Scientists, wildlife officials, private and university laboratories, and non-profit organizations, including the National Speleological Society, have partnered to develop research strategies. Numerous field and laboratory projects are underway to discover the cause or causes of WNS, and determine how to fight it.

Caving organizations are helping these groups implement plans to help slow the spread of WNS until science can find a solution.

You are asked to honor all cave closures and advisories for private and government land, and follow strict cleaning and decontamination procedures for caving clothing and equipment. Please check with your state agencies or local NSS grotto for the status of caves and caving in your area.

Have you seen a greater bilby?

This shy little marsupial has a grey and white silky coat, long sensitive ears and pink pointed nose. With huge rabbit ears and soft grey fur it's easy to see the resemblance to rabbits, but that's where it ends. The bilby is also known as the rabbit-eared bandicoot. In earlier times, the guardians of the land knew that the bilby could be found all over Australia, but nowadays they can only be seen in certain remote places.

How is the Wildlife Preservation Society helping, and how can you help?



Over the past 200 years, Australia has experienced a higher rate of mammal extinctions than any other continent.

Members of the Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia have been working since the Society's foundation in May 1909 to preserve and protect Australia's wildlife in all its forms.

The Wildlife Preservation Society is supporting "Operation Rangelands" in the Pilbara region of Western Australia.

Arid regions, including much of the Western Australian rangelands, have been most affected. Of the 85 species of native mammals (excluding bats) known to have once occupied the arid zone, 11 are now extinct, six are extinct on the mainland and are found only on off-shore islands and 16 are now severely restricted in their range. Preventing further extinctions and reversing the rate of decline of biodiversity and ecosystem health in the rangelands will require proactive and determined intervention and the support of organisations such as the Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia.

The goal of this unique, ecologically integrated project is to restore natural ecosystem function and

biodiversity, including the reintroduction of 11 arid zone mammal species, to almost 600,000 hectares of rangelands in the north-eastern Goldfields of Western Australia by 2020. As well as tangible conservation outcomes, the knowledge and management experience gained from this project will have application across the semi arid and arid rangelands of Australia.

This will be achieved by:

1. Controlling introduced herbivores including feral camels and feral goats.
2. Controlling introduced predators – feral cats and foxes.
3. Implementing ecologically appropriate fire regimes to maintain functioning habitats and to reduce the risk of large, damaging wildfires.
4. Reintroducing native mammals, such as the bilby, that have become extinct or have severely declined due to introduced predators and herbivores and altered fire regimes. These reintroductions will improve the conservation status of arid zone mammals and, in doing so, return many important ecological functions such as soil cultivation through digging and burrowing, nutrient recycling, seed dispersal and grazing and browsing.
5. Monitoring reintroduced fauna, introduced predators and herbivores and biodiversity and ecosystem health.

Do you love bilbies?

Help save Australia's native bilby by donating to the Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia's special bilby project.

With your support we can save Australia's precious bilby.

Join the Wildlife Preservation Society at http://www.wpsa.org.au/pro_bilby.html and for as little as \$10 or more each month and together we can make Australia a safe place where native wildlife conservation matters.

A Chilli Wombat Update

By Linda Dennis

In the last newsletter I told you about the new species of wombat – the Short-Eared Wombat. There is only one individual in this very special sub-species, and her name is Chilli.

Chilli was rescued when she was around the 1kg mark. She had been exposed to the very chilly elements and as a result had frost bite to much of her body, the worst effected areas being her ears, which subsequently fell off (hence, the Short-Eared Wombat!).

Chilli is now a happy, healthy 6kg and has been moved to her new outside enclosure – which she LOVES!! She's been doing all the normal wombatly things, like eating lots of grass, exploring the great outdoors and digging (well, renovating!) her very



Introducing Chilli to her new outside enclosure.

own burrow.

We started the burrow off for her so that she would have an escape from the harsh elements (the extreme hot and cold), providing her with an entry tunnel and a small sleeping chamber. Apparently we humans don't know how to make a proper wombat burrow, however, and she has been busy at work, doing it the right way!

Every day there has been a mound of dirt outside the tunnel and we're wondering if she'll dig herself to China before too long!



Chilli checking out her new home.

Some carers wonder why we offer a burrow at all, thinking that the wombat should do the work itself. In the wild, though, a baby wombat would never dig its own burrow – it would live with its mum! Sure, it would have a practice dig – and we should allow this opportunity while in care – but we should never expect it to create a complete burrow for itself. That's just not nice.

As carers we must provide shelter from the harsh elements. The extreme cold can be very unpleasant, but remember that a wombat cannot tolerate high heat. Anything above 25 degrees Celsius can be extremely distressful to a wombat (it can even kill them) and so, we must ensure that our wombats have a burrow to retreat to.

As explained above, a wombat joey will then start their own renovations and make our silly human-wombat burrow into a proper home.

Chilli has a long way to go before release. She's 6kg now but she has to be a whopping 18 to 20kg before release. In the mean time, she'll enjoy her half human – half wombat life. Down the track she'll be "de-humanised" but for now she likes her quality time with her human mum and dad!!



Chilli enjoying a tickle from dad.

Bats Need Your help!

Report unusual bat behavior or bats that appear diseased to your state wildlife agency. Unusual behaviors may include daytime flight, especially during very cold weather. Report dead or dying bats you find on the ground, trees, or buildings.

If anyone comes across what they suspect may be White Nose Syndrome, they should immediately contact the Commonwealth Department of Fisheries Forestry and Agriculture National Pest and Disease Outbreak Hotline on 131 450.

Marsupial soaks up sun like a lizard

by Fiona MacDonald



and most widespread marsupials, basks in the sun to reduce its need for food and water in the desert - a strategy traditionally associated with 'cold-blooded' animals.

Dr Lisa Warnecke of the University of New England found that dunnarts bask to warm their body while arousing from torpor - a short hibernation that some mammals can go into for a few hours each day.

Basking in combination with torpor has so far only been identified in two other mammals, both small Australian marsupials.

Adapting to change

Warnecke believes basking may be used by many more mammals that go into torpor and could help species cope with climate change.

"It appears this is a really good strategy to increase an animal's chance of survival in harsh conditions, which is going to become more important as climate change begins to negatively impact on habitats."

"If we find out that more species can do this, it will give us hope that small native mammals have a better chance of surviving," says Warnecke.

The research, which Warnecke undertook as part of her PhD, reveals that combining basking with torpor can allow dunnarts to survive on a quarter of the food and water they would normally require.

Survival strategy

Torpor on its own has already been proved a valuable survival strategy.

Earlier this year Warnecke's supervisor at the

Basking after a midday torpor allows dunnarts to survive on a quarter of the food and water they would normally require (Source: Lisa Warnecke)

A small Australian marsupial is taking a lesson from the reptile world and basking in the sun to conserve energy and improve its chances of survival, a researcher has found.

The fat-tailed dunnart, one of Australia's smallest

Newletter of The Northern Tablelands Wildlife Carers University of New England, Professor Fritz Geiser, found that more than 90% of mammals that have become extinct in the past 500 years didn't use torpor.

During torpor, an animal's body temperature drops - a dunnart will go down to around 15°C - meaning a lot less food and water is required to keep it functioning.

But rewarming from low body temperatures requires a lot of energy and is often thought of as the downside to the process, adds Geiser.

"Using the sun to passively warm the body saves up to two-thirds of the arousal energy costs," he says.

Warneke observed the basking in the deserts of Kirichega National Park in New South Wales and in the laboratory, where she could more closely monitor the dunnarts' metabolic rates during torpor and arousal.

Geiser believes the reason this basking behaviour has only been identified in Australia is due to our abundance of harsh environments with a lot of sun.

"Although many animals use torpor, they are usually hard to locate and observe. If more people start looking I'm convinced we will find basking happening more often and in many different countries."

Other mammals that go into torpor include bats, hopping mice, pygmy possums and echidnas

Subject: 'critical care' - wombats, joeys, possums, koalas - Dr Anne Fowler [OZARK]

'Critical care is produced by oxbow and imported into this country by Specialised Animal Nutrition. It is usually available from vets and not directly from ebay (which is where timothy hay and rabbit/gp pellets can be purchased).

The reason that I have thought that critical care would assist possums in particular is that possums have the same type of gut as our rabbits/guinea



smoothed-nosed Wombat (Vombatus ursinus)

ment of normal caecal flora. There are other ingredients - vitamins, peclins, etc.

We also need to remember that for the brushtail possum, up to 30% of the natural diet may include grasses and weeds (dandelion, dock, milk thistle), so this is approaching the 'normal' diet for this species. When it is fed, it is about the consistency of pap.

It is fantastic that Sydney Wildlife have taken up the challenge to try something to bring wildlife rehabilitation forward, rather than have us repeating the same old, same old for another 20 years! Even better is the success that they appear to have had.

Would critical care be good for macropods? That

Our recent raffle results & announcing our next (and best) raffle.

Brett Maunder of The New England Mutual very kindly drew the winning tickets in our "Pamper Yourself" raffle. The results were.



Julia Jill & Brett Maunder

1st N Clare ~ 2nd L Willis ~ 3rd d Commins ~ 4th R Scheinder ~ 5th A Megham ~ 6th L Morgan ~ 7th D hansford

We want to congratulate all the winners and announce our next raffle. It is probably the best we have ever offered. We are raffling IBM computers kindly donated by John Donnelly. There will be **3 x first prizes** in this raffle with 3 draw dates during 2010.

Tickets are \$1 and each prize is estimated to be worth \$700.

Draw dates: First week in April, August and December 2010.

Selling Venues and Dates; see newsletters, web site or ring 1800 008 290. We encourage all



members to get behind our Wildlife Group and really promote and sell as many tickets as we can. *** Ticket books are available from Julia and Jill The cost of looking after our native friends are getting more expensive with over 6000 spent just on 'Wombaroo' powder for joeys. **** Huge thanks to John Donnelly for donating such great prizes.

We also are trying to get the money for a 'rescue trailer' for more disastrous events in our region. The New England Mutual has already given us \$1000 towards this ambitious project, but we need more, up to \$1500 to buy equipment and to cover running costs.



The type of 'Rescue Trailer' we would like to buy

Prolapses in Marspials

by *Linda Dennis*

What is it?

A prolapse is when part of the bowel lining (the mucosal lining) protrudes from the cloaca (as pictured). The cloaca will be very sore and swollen and will be quite painful for the animal.



How is it caused?

There are a few reasons for a prolapse.

1. the animal is constipated and continually pushing, trying to pass poo;
2. ongoing diarrhoea;
3. over stimulation when toileting.

How to avoid it?

1. It is vitally important to ensure that the animal is kept adequately hydrated while in care. For adults, ensure that there is fresh water available daily. For joeys, this may mean giving water bottles in between milk feed bottles – remember that the milk substitute we offer them is food and not water! This is particularly so with Wombaroo fed joeys. Wombaroo is a very thick milk formula and it is imperative that water bottles are also offered. When using Biolac or Di-Velact extra water may not be required, but constant checking is needed at all times, which ever formula is used. Obviously, more water is required on hotter days.

2. Diarrhoea should never be ignored! If the diarrhoea can't be stopped within 3 days then it's time to get your animal off to the vets ASAP. Of course, use your own judgement, if the diarrhoea is severe then get to the vets sooner rather than later.

3. When toileting a marsupial joey you only need soft, gentle rubbing to stimulate the joey into passing wee and poo. If the joey has not begun to toilet in 30 seconds – or is not showing signs that is about too (cloaca opening and closing) - cease toileting.

How to treat it.

It is important to ensure that the entire cloaca area is kept well lubricated during a prolapse.

The animal will need to be transferred to a clean environment so that dirt, etc, does not get onto the bowel lining.

For less severe cases sugar (fine) can be mixed with an oily solution (Vaseline, Paw Paw Ointment, Baby Oil Gel, etc) and applied to the cloaca. The sugar makes the bowel lining contract back in and the oily solution keeps the area lubricated.

Haemorrhoid cream can be applied to the area. This also shrinks the bowel lining back into the cloaca.

For severe prolapses, and when the above treatments don't work, a vet will need to anaesthetise the animal, manually push the lining back into place and then insert a stitch to keep it in place.

A prolapse should never be left for long as the bowel lining becomes dry it will become quite difficult to treat. If an improvement hasn't been seen in around 2 hours from the time of prolapse then veterinary help is required ASAP. A vet will also give an anti-inflammatory, antibiotics and probably pain medications for the animal once the stitch is in place.

After the stitch is place, the sugar and oily solution can be applied to help keep the bowel lining in place.

has been the experience in the US. In my personal observation, sick joeys prefer critical care to a bottle of milk. So, yes, it would be appropriate for macropods and certainly for wombats as well. I have used it with sick koalas and have seen some incredible weight gains when fed with supplementary milk, again, it makes more sense than feeding them mashed up pumpkin! Leaves and grass are reasonably similar in nutrient profiles.

Potential uses include:

1. given around caecal colonisation times in healthy orphan possums, and when mac/wombat joeys are starting to mouth and chew solid foods
2. given to sick orphans to assist with 'normalising gut flora' and providing a source of easily digestible energy - makes more sense to their gut than nutrigel, for example!
3. given to sick/injured adults to either supplement their energy intake or wean them back onto solid food.

Anne Fowler

BVSc, MACVSc (Avian Health, Wildlife Health)

Wildlife Trapping & The prevention of cruelty to animals Regulations 2008

The use of animals for research and teaching in Victoria is governed by the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986 (the POC TAA Act) and associated Regulations. Accordingly, a scientific procedures license must be held and AEC (Animal Ethics Committee) approval sought for all research activities using animals.

The use of free-ranging wildlife in research is regulated by both the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986 and the Wildlife Act 1975.

How do the two pieces of legislation relate to each other and what does that mean for AECs?

There is an exemption in the POC TAA Act for the

taking, collecting, banding and marking of wildlife. The exemption means that those specific activities does not require licensing under the POC TAA Act. These activities require a Wildlife Research (Scientific) Permit, issued by the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE).

Anything outside these activities (eg, taking samples, performing minor procedures, etc) is not exempt from the POC TAA Act and must be carried out under scientific procedures license and with AEC approval. A Wildlife Research Permit is still required.

Where does the AEC fit into this system? Who looks after the welfare of wildlife?

Despite these two different systems for the



regulation of research on wildlife, both scientific procedures licenses (BAW) and Wildlife Research Permits (DSE) require AEC approval of the projects. An AEC's priority in these considerations must be the welfare of the animals involved.

In December 2008, new rules were introduced under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Regulations 2008 governing the use of traps in Victoria.

The new trapping Regulations prohibit the use of any trap not listed in the Regulations and prescribe the conditions of use of those that are listed.

Because of the exemption mentioned above, trapping of wildlife under a Wildlife Research Permit

is exempt from the requirements of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Regulations 2008. AECs do not have to comply with these Regulations when considering applications to simply trap and mark wildlife (consistent with the wording of the exemption above).

However, AEC approval and wildlife research permits must still be consistent with prevention of cruelty and good animal welfare. The Bureau considers the POCTA trap Regulations to represent a contemporary, evidence-based understanding of the welfare impacts of using traps and they were formulated with extensive consultation.

The Bureau would advise AECs to consider the provisions of the Regulations when assessing trapping protocols involving wildlife.

When do the trapping Regulations apply?

Where trapping is not authorised by a Wildlife Research Permit (eg. for vertebrate pest species), the new trapping Regulations apply. The AEC is bound by all relevant legislation when making its decision on the research proposal—that is, they can't approve something that is otherwise illegal (under the POCTA Act or any other legislation).

When wildlife is not the target of the trapping, AECs that approve trapping practices prohibited by the Regulations will be in breach of the Australian Code.

A Fact Sheet on the new trapping rules is available on request from the Bureau of Animal Welfare.

The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986, the Wildlife Act 1975, and their associated Regulations can be found on the Victorian Legislation and Parliamentary Documents website <http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au>

Rehydration and Pain Relief by Dr. Ann Fowler on OZARK

Every animal should be rehydrated before pain relief (whatever name it has) is given.

It was good to see the reminder that panadol is toxic to livers - and thus should also not be given to dehydrated animals. The liver is also a major filter



organ of the body. There was a paper where panadol was used to try to kill possums (must have been NZ!).

It is still not known where panadol acts in the anti-inflammatory cascade - it is not described as providing pain relief in MIMS - but is indicated to reduce fever. This means that we do not know if it harms the good/healing parts of the anti-inflammatory parts of the cascade as well as the bad/painful parts. If you look at the advertisements on TV, panadol is advertised as being the treatment of headaches (aka mild meningitis). Look harder and you will see neurofen/voltaren/etc are used for musculo-skeletal pain (ie the true nsaids). If you can diagnose an animal with meningitis, you are a better carer than I am currently, and I have something to learn from you. But I do see wildlife with musculo-skeletal pain (broken bones, bruised muscles), and thus I am happy to use meloxicam/ carprofen/lofeidine - all drugs that we know where they work - EXACTLY in the anti-inflammatory cascade.



A Koel chick in care, a first for NTWC and Armidale.

by Julia Rose

At first we thought it might have been a white throated nightjar as feather markings were similar. Not so said Steve Debus, it is a juvenile Koel and the first recorded juvenile in Armidale. OK, so feed the same sort of diet but add a bit more fruit especially figs. A week after I started caring for this one an adult was rescued out of bird netting in town, so koels were definitely around.

Being a 'cuckoo' all the way from New Guinea they use other nesting birds to raise their young and to be quite honest I can see why. This one was very noisy and demanding and quite aggressive with it's hooked beak. As soon as its feathers were ready I put it into the flight aviary with



the adult koel doing a feather replacement thing. Although they tolerated each other the adult was not helping so it was released.

Codeine has the side-effect of constipation and sedation. The sedation makes you think that the animal is feeling better because it is quiet. Well, an animal is better when it becomes 'wild'. When we consider species, the herbivores are predisposed to this effect of the opiates. Constipation can occur after simply one dose.

The trouble is that vets and medics are considering our grass/leaf-eating wildlife to be simple-stomached carnivores when they are in fact herbivorous. In other words, we should treat them as short-eared rabbits of the trees, or giant guinea pigs that burrow, or wannabe cattle trying to evolve a rumen, not as small cats.

And yes, I do think that wildlife should see a vet if it is in pain. Would you like a neighbour to treat you with a gall-stone/broken leg, or a trained professional?

Once the young Koel could feed itself from fruit on skewers and fly it was ok to go, so we returned to the rescue site hoping magpies wouldn't attack it again. Would you believe it, after flying onto a branch I could hear an adult Koel close by calling, a sort of searching call as if looking for a 'ready raised chick'. I didn't wait to see what happened next..... I had done my bit. Next year the chicks will be returned to adoptive parents area asap!