

AUTUMN 2009 NEWSLETTER

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Coordinator's Report

Summer is 'technically' over but you wouldn't know it by the continuing warm weather we are experiencing. And to know that there are still baby birds being admitted!

It has been a busy few months - as the Christmas and New Year period always is for everyone - with a lot of things happening.

December is always full of fun and it was great to have such a large number of members and guests at the Christmas morning tea. This event was fully funded by a Woolworths WISH voucher won through a competition conducted by the Comment News. Once again our catering and organizational team did a terrific job.

No doubt everyone has heard some news about the cygnet relocation from the Forrestdale Lake Nature Reserve. Near on 20 individuals from DRWS braved the early morning to assist on the day. The project went extremely well with a posi-

tive outcome for a number of cygnets. The 13 birds relocated would not have survived in the Reserve for much longer. Six of the cygnets have been accommodated at DRWS and were recently released at Yanchep National Park. Read more about the project and release in this edition of the newsletter.

Hopefully everyone has met Andreas, or Andy, who arrived from Austria shortly before commencing a five month intercultural exchange placement at DRWS in February. We are really excited to have Andy on board and hope his time with us is as rewarding for him as it is for us. With an ever increasing number of requests for us to offer experiences to intercountry visitors, we have taken the plunge! Andy's DRWS support person is Racheal Kimber and she is pleased to be able to work with Andy and our DRWS members to make the experience a positive one all round. Find out more about Andy un-

Website Upgrade

We have been busy making arrangements for the DRWS web-site to be changed and updated. While this is still in process it is hoped to be finalised very soon. Do keep your eyes peeled for information relating to the site and the new forum. We are really lucky to have been advised that many of

the forum postings can be transferred into the new format so information will not be lost. A celebratory web-site launch is in the pipeline. In the meantime to get access to the forum and a heap of really great information please email Celeste on webmaster@darlingrangewildlife.com.au.

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der the Volunteer Profile section of this newsletter.

It is with our very best wishes that Dr Rachel Wicks leaves the Armadale-Byford Veterinary Hospital. We are extremely grateful for her support and commitment to our wildlife over the past few years. We hope to continue the relationship on some level and look forward to seeing her face around - just not at the vet clinic!

Anyway, the last few months have been extremely busy and we are anticipating another busy season. This newsletter should help with keeping everyone up to date. Don't forget to use the web forum if you are looking for information.

Michelle H



Galaha...and more Galaha



The summer months have seen a large number of Pink and Grey Galah admissions. On site DRWS members have been very busy collecting fresh native branches for our resident flock which was recently released.

These birds were admitted with a variety of issues – ‘orphaned’, vehicle and window trauma and disease. Whilst all of these issues require an immediate assessment and response to kindly assist the bird, galaha can suffer from viral enteritis which requires some additional consideration.

It is commonly young galaha which suffer a profuse diarrhoea and wasting syndrome which results in death. The weight of the bird is an extremely important assessment tool as it will help in determining the kindest and most appropriate treatment option. If the disease is well-established then irreversible damage to the intestine of the bird is

significant and euthanasia may be the kindest treatment option. A galaha averages between 300g and 380g in weight.

As the diarrhoea is viral it can easily be transferred to other cockatoos, therefore, isolation and excellent nursing hygiene is paramount. Regardless as to whether the galaha is demonstrating clear symptoms of viral enteritis, it should be quarantined. A period of 30 days is generally suggested; however, this can be considered and determined on a case to case basis.

Psittacine circovirus infection – Beak and Feather Disease – is known to run concurrently with the condition. It was evident within one of the ill birds admitted to DRWS. Given this finding, the importance of a period of isolation and good examination is high.

Sick birds have been found to suffer dehydration, emaciation and death over a reasonably

short period of three weeks. Remember if a galaha can be picked up in a park or other environment without the rescuer suffering too much, then the bird is sick and will require fluids (intensive fluid therapy) and assessment (even just its weight) urgently.

Just as a bit of trivia, galaha are noisy members of the cockatoo family and are widespread across Australia – both as pets and in the wild. The northern and eastern subspecies are a reddish tinge to the wrinkled skin area around the eye while the Western subspecies has a pale-grey to white eye area. There are other physical differences between the subspecies which are more visually apparent. Galaha mate at around 2 to three years of age and a breeding pair will remain together for life. A female galaha develops reddish eyes while the male will have dark eyes. Galaha can be a long lived species, like most cockatoos.

A number of Volunteer Development Days have been scheduled for 2009—2nd May, 1st August and 7th November. Please mark one in your diary. A more ‘hands on’ session is scheduled for 29th August 2009.



Volunteer Development Day

Feedback from the near-on 30 participants at the Development Day held on 7th February has been most positive. Topics covered were – A Brief Background of DRWS; Admission of Wildlife; Care and Rehabilitation of Birds; Care of Mammals; and Care and Rehabilitation of Shinglebacks. Development Days will be conducted on a quarterly basis. It will be expected that all new members will attend one of the days during the first six months of

commencing at DRWS. Thank you to those who came along and provided the valuable feedback. Thanks also to the organisers who did a great job with the advertising, recruiting, catering and presenting topics. A more practical session has been scheduled for August just prior to the expected ‘busy’ period and it is hoped just as many people will come along and help to make these events worthwhile and a success in the future.

Forrestdale Lake Swan Rescue

I'm not normally a morning person and snakes ugh!!!! I'm petrified of them! But early on Tuesday morning 6th January 2009, along with 80 other intrepid volunteers, I dragged myself out of bed, braved the Tiger snakes and met with the DEC coordinators at Forrestdale Hall at the ungodly hour of 6.30am.

We had a slow start, filling out registration forms, briefing talk and organising ourselves into five groups. Four groups to surround the lake and one to help with processing and transportation. Finally we were bussed to our various locations more waiting until everyone was in place effectively surrounding the lake.

DEC had already made a temporary run, leading to a series of holding pens, using Hessian sacking. With the use of walkie talkies all four

groups spread out around the lake and gradually walked toward the swans/cygnets herding them toward the Hessian runway.

Once inside the pens the cygnets were processed by the zoo vet and transportation was arranged.

Thirteen cygnets were rescued, one was euthanased, one died later and six were residing at DRWS. The operation went smoothly, though for some of the cygnets the stress was obvious. Unfortunately many cygnets were lost before the rescue was arranged but with valuable lessons learned there should be a speedier, more effective rescue next year.

Much was made of the Tiger Snakes we didn't see any! Those wearing gumboots were glad they did so. The rest of us had wet, mud encrusted feet

It was heart warming to see so many people volunteer their time and energy and interesting to become acquainted with the other organizations represented. Native ARC, WA Seabird Rescue, Malubillai, Friends of Forrestdale Lake, DEC, Perth Zoo and of course DRWS should feel proud of their achievement.

Trudie McCain



Diary Autumn 2009

March

Monday 2nd

Sunday 8th

Monday 8th & Tuesday 9th

Wednesday 11th

Thursday 12th & Friday 13th

Saturday 14th

Monday 16th & Tuesday 17th

Tuesday 17th

Saturday 21st

Wednesday 25th

Starting Saturday 28th

Saturday 28th & Sunday 29th

Tuesday 31st

April

Thursday 2nd

Saturday 11th & Monday 13th

Tuesday 14th

Saturday 18th

Saturday 25th

Tuesday 28th

May

Saturday 2nd

Tuesday 11th

Tuesday 26th

Wednesday 27th

Labour Day Public Holiday

Forrestdale Lakes 'cygnets' relocation for release

DEC, Fire Awareness Course

Snake and Reptile Handling and Relocation Course

DEC, Senior First Aid Course

DRWS, Fire Awareness Course

Possible Red Kangaroo relocation to Kalgoorlie

DEC, Senior First Aid Course

Management Meeting

Roleystone School Fair

Conservation Council of WA Meeting

Conservation Week

See www.conservationwa.asn.au

Hills Heartbeat Festival, Armadale Christian College

Monthly Meeting

Wildcare Operators Visit to DRWS

Café on the Dam (Easter)

Management Meeting

DEC Advanced Topic in Wildlife Rehabilitation

"Bats – With Wings on their Fingers"

ANZAC Day

Monthly Meeting

DRWS Development Day & Shift Skipper Meeting

Management Meeting

Monthly Meeting

Conservation Council of WA Meeting

We have a large number of community activities scheduled for Autumn. Please mark your name down on the rosters at DRWS if you are able to assist for any period of time. It is much appreciated.

Volunteer Profile—Andy (Andreas) Lener



Andy holding his first snake EVER during his first week at DRWS—
Courtesy of Racheal K

I arrived in Australia just a few weeks before coming to DRWS in February. My home is Telfs in the western region of Austria. At the moment the weather back home is ranging from around -5 through to a warm 50C! So Australia is a bit different to home in a few ways.

I spent the last few months of 2008 in France. I can speak fairly fluent French. In travelling to France I wanted to improve on my language fluency and I hope to improve on my English while in Australia. At home we speak German.

My family enjoy travel and we also share our home with international visitors. Experiencing different cultures has been a part of my family and it is something I really enjoy.

I am really hoping to experience Australian culture and people during my stay in Perth. I will be involved with DRWS for about five months. During this time and after I will be heading off to experience more of Australia. Then back home to study. My time in Australia is actually my 'gap' year.

I am staying with my host family in Leederville and my trip has been organised by AFS. AFS is an international, voluntary, non-governmental, not for profit organisation that provides intercultural learning opportunities for people with an interest in a more peaceful world.

I have a folio of projects and tasks for me to become involved in while at DRWS! Experience in working with people while developing some useful skills is what I am looking forward to.

No doubt everyone will have noticed that I cycle to and from DRWS. You might think it insane but I am actually a keen cyclist. Back home I train six days each week and participate in competitions – I love keeping fit and being outside. The weather here is a little warmer than back home but I still need to do some cycling regardless! My other passion is music and I have been learning the drums for nearly 10 years.

Anyway, I look forward to meeting everyone during my time at DRWS.

Bits and Pieces

A number of skill and knowledge development opportunities for DRWS members are scheduled for autumn. Please register your participation via the forms left in the Volunteer Cabin.

A Marsupial Home Care Meeting was conducted on 22nd February at DRWS. Thank you to all who participated in the most productive meeting. Minutes from the meeting are available. Please contact Julie S, Iris S or Yvonne G if you wish to secure a copy of the minutes.

Carolyn L is unfortunately unable to deal with the massive number of maintenance issues which have been arising. For any non-urgent matters please record information in the 'Maintenance Book' for follow-

up. The book is located in the pigeon hole filing system in the administration Building.

For those who have been most attached to our swans - one suffering from photosensitisation and one having suffered an over-extended wing – both birds have been taken for pre-release in Chittering. They are doing extremely well and are currently residing on a lovely deep dam until ready to move on to a new home of their choice.

The Wildlife Rehabilitation Consultation Group met during February. Michelle Rouffignac has resigned as Chair to rest up prior to her new arrival which is very exciting. A new Chair is yet to be confirmed, however, the group is pushing ahead with many wildlife related issues

including the exploration of the process of Accreditation for Wildlife Rehabilitators in the State.

The Victorian Bushfires have taken a massive toll on the areas affected. DRWS has played a role in ensuring goods have been provided to wildlife rehabilitators caring for wildlife in the region. Many DRWS members have played a role in personally donating and ensuring goods would reach those affected. Thank you to all who have played a role in supporting this cause.

Many thanks to Scott (Sat pm) who took many of the photographs in this edition of the newsletter and allowed us to use them.