

SPRING 2009 NEWSLETTER

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Coordinator's Report

Yes we have ducklings....spring is here! We all love the cute little guys even if they produce heaps of cleaning and washing. There is definitely nothing like the smell of at least half a dozen ducklings in a warm vivarium first thing in the morning.

Spring is going to be busy. Not only in relation to wildlife admissions but the many projects which will be continuing on-site. It is with much excitement that we announce the recent application to Lotterywest was approved. We have also received a generous donation from the Boddington Gold Mine. This funding will result in upgrades and new facilities for the benefit of our wildlife and members. No doubt there will be plenty of discussion about these projects at our meetings.

Following the release of the Minimum Standards for Wildlife Rehabilitation publication the Wildlife Rehabilitators' Consultation Group has been focused on the development of an updated accreditation process for rehabilitators. Some electronic and paper correspondence has been received outlining the new process and inviting feedback from the wildlife rehabilitation community. Over the past months any applications for registration have been sidelined in readiness for the new structure. All DEC accredited (previously known as registered) rehabilitators will be required to work through the process. Future changes to the Wildlife Conservation Act will be in support of the new structure. Changes to the Act will see only accredited rehabilitators able to care for wildlife for a period of



time. It is anticipated this change will result in fewer situations of wildlife being maintained in unacceptable conditions by non-accredited rehabilitators.

Finally, and with much sadness for purely selfish reasons, we wish Marg Buckland a wonderful retirement from DEC as the Coordinator of Volunteer Services. Marg has been a tremendous support and great friend to us over the years and we wish her the very, very best on her newfound freedom away from the office (we do hope, however, that she pops in for a wine every now and then).

Michelle H

2009 Lotterywest Grant

DRWS has been successful with a Lotterywest Grant of over \$115 000. The funding will go towards a number of projects including new possum and bandicoot enclosures, improved facilities for volunteers and the installation of a significant solar power generation system. The solar system will mean that

DRWS will be generating its own power and will have limited, if any, need for mains power. The Honorable John Day attended to officially present DRWS with a cheque. Julie Sheridan, our Treasurer, accepted the funding on behalf of the management team and members of the Shelter.



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Please do not forget to return all sold and unsold tickets for the DRWS 2009 Raffle to Pam Key by 21st September.

Soft-plumaged Petrel

No doubt we can recall the wild and windy weather which happened during late June. It was at this time a pretty little seabird with unusual feet colouring was collected from a car yard in Maddington.

Whilst we knew it was a seabird of some kind there was limited confidence in ascertaining which one it could be exactly. It was great to be able to contact Marg Lerner from WA Seabird Rescue for advice – with the possibility of transferring this little guy into her care. Marg was extremely busy with the large number of seabirds brought to shore and so it happened that this little guy remained in DRWS home care.

Given some fairly prolific emailing, Marg helped establish he was a Soft-plumaged Petrel. There is some information available about this bird, but it is still very unclear as to what subspecies might occur around Australia.

Soft plumaged Petrels are nocturnal and come to land to breed. They breed in colonies and the

only breeding colony confirmed to exist in Australia is just off Tasmania. This colony was not confirmed until the 1990s and during 2001-2002 was found to only consist of about six pairs. It is thought another colony might exist in Australian waters, but this unconfirmed breeding colony is on Macquarie Island, which is obviously more Antarctic than close to home!

The birds breed in a chamber at the end of a burrow which can be over 1.5 metres in length. They lay one egg which is incubated by both parents. The chick is tended by both parents, too. Fledging doesn't occur until around three months after hatching. Soft-plumaged Petrels are at high risk of predation by cats and foxes. Apart from breeding in colonies, they are generally described as solitary and shy.

These birds feed on the wing, picking food from the ocean's surface such as squid and crustaceans. There is no confirmed information as to where they



typically forage.

The admission weight of this bird was 185g and given the average weight for the species is between 280g and 370g he was definitely in poor condition. So commenced the tubing of fluids, the attempts to entice him to eat ANYTHING (whilst looking like he enjoyed it) and concern for his lack of improvement in condition.

His condition and general presentation improved over the first few days, however, towards the end of the week he deteriorated. He started regurgitating food and any weight gained was quickly lost. Unfortunately he did not make it.



DRWS Annual General Meeting is to be held on Tuesday 29th September at 7pm at the Old School House, Hillside Farm. The Raffle Draw will follow. We look forward to seeing members on the evening.

Diary Spring 2009

September

Saturday 5th, 12th & Sunday 13th

Tuesday 8th

Saturday 12th

Tuesday 15th

Sunday 20th

Tuesday 29th

October

Saturday 10th & Sunday 11th

Tuesday 13th

Saturday 31st

November

Saturday 7th

Tuesday 10th

Tuesday 24th

DEC Basic Wildlife Rehabilitation Course

Management Meeting

DRWS Common Conditions in Wildlife Presentation

DRWS Common Conditions in Wildlife Presentation

WAWRC General Meeting

Annual General Meeting & Raffle Draw

Bunnings Sausage Sizzle Fundraiser

Management Meeting

Shift Communication Meeting

Development Morning

Management Meeting

Monthly Meeting

*Bird Care Coordination Meetings every Thursday 1pm on-site.

Bird Care Coordination Team

A Bird Care Coordination Team has been formed. Cathy, Michelle H, Monica and Racheal K will be making every effort to ensure they are available to confirm care plans, follow-up on releases, coordinate home-care placements and offer educational 'moments' to volunteer members. We will be discussing all bird

admissions at 1 pm on a Thursday on-site. We invite any other member with an interest in a particular admission to come along to the discussion. Alternatively, all of the group members can be contacted via email. Members are encouraged to contact one of us if there are any issues that need support or input.



Tawny Frogmouth Care and Rehabilitation Guidelines

With the increased number of Tawny Frogmouth admissions over winter a DRWS document on their care and rehabilitation for all DRWS volunteer members has been developed. Everyone is encouraged to become familiar with the document, especially while we have some of these gorgeous birds on site. The document was

officially launched at the recent Practical Skills Development Day. For those members who did not attend, the document has been left in the pigeon hole of each shift and downloaded onto the web-forum. Enjoy the reading! The Bird Admission Coordination Team is confident this document will be of interest to everyone.



Bits and Pieces

On the last Saturday of every second month a shift communication meeting will be conducted at 12.30pm at DRWS. Any changes to the start time will be advertised. These meetings will take the place of the Tuesday evening meeting (of that month) and Shift Skipper Meeting and each shift is expected to be represented. **The first of the Shift Communication Meetings will be Saturday 31st October. Please ensure your shift has a representative.** (Remember there will not be a Tuesday evening General Meeting in October.)

The Development Days

and Practical Skills Development Day have been really well received by members. This is fantastic for the presenters. For those who attended the Practical Skills Day it would be useful for management if feedback forms could be completed. The forms can be found in the Thurs am pigeon hole and can be left in the plastic communication folio of a member of the management team. The next Development Day is scheduled for Saturday 7th November and we look forward to seeing people then.

Please do not forget that there is a need for new

faces to help with the thrice yearly weekend sausage sizzle fundraisers at Bunnings. Please contact Pam Key direct to offer your assistance as the next sizzle is October 10th and 11th. An hour or two from your weekend makes the load a lot less for others so please assist if you can.

Many thanks to Carolyn Lewis and Pam Key who supported the involvement of a small group of professionals from the CPA. The Corporate Group were interested in volunteering for a day at DRWS after finding out about us through Volunteering WA. They did an

amazing job in working to establish and protect a number of trees that had been recently planted in the kangaroo enclosures.

The next National Wildlife Rehabilitation Conference is scheduled from the 22nd through 24th June 2010 in Adelaide. A field trip is also planned for the 25th June. For more information refer to <http://nwrc.com.au/index.html>.

Many thanks to Sam Irving, Katch Photography, and Scott Jones, who provided most of the photos in this season's edition of the Newsletter.

Volunteer Profile—Cathy Stuart



I have always had a love of the Australian outback, flora and fauna. My husband Bob and I have done a lot of travels through the outback and have had many memorable encounters with wildlife and have spent hours studying natural behaviour.

When I saw an advert for a basic wildlife carers' course it seemed a natural progression of knowledge (I love gathering knowledge – useless info some might call it but you never know when you just might need it). So I did the course and then started working at Native ARC. My understanding of what is normal was a great footing to recognising when something wasn't right.

My connection with Darling Range came in the form of Mia, a Native ARC euro that DRWS agreed to relocate. My first meeting was with Yvonne and she must have made a good impression because I felt

the shelter could offer me an opportunity to further my knowledge and wildlife involvement so I made the move.

I know I made a good impression because on my second week I was the only one to turn up! Luckily they all came back the following week.

I have done some home care joeys, Riley the bandicoot, as well as some birds - I think it is the most rewarding experience even if the outcome isn't always happy. I have lots of memories and keep detailed notes on all my long term charges as I think this is a good reference in the future. I have also been involved in wildlife releases and it is great to see them disappear into the bush. Unfortunately I still have to work for a living and my job as a night duty nurse makes it very difficult for me to give the birds and animals the attention I would be happy with so I am currently unable to home care.

I attend any education sessions I can. I have developed a network of carers in other organisations that I can call on for advice and have become heavily involved in education at DRWS. Even if talking in front of a group of people isn't my favourite pastime, I want to help others, either on site or in home care, do the best they can and hope some of my enthusiasm rubs off and encourages others to increase their knowledge and ability to care for wildlife.

On a personal note I enjoy reading (of course), listening to cricket, doing crosswords (I represented WA once in a comp) and cross-stitch. I breed finches and I am a past winner of the West Australian Ladies' Boat Fishing championship. Thought I might as well brag while I got the chance and now you are full of useless info too!

Recent Release of Grey Kangaroos

On Sunday 30th of August a group of DRWS members attended to farewell and relocate our juvenile greys from D Pen. Releases are always a time of great stress and mixed emotion—sadness to see them leave after being in care for usually at least 12 months, but happiness that they have made the grade and are now able to move on to where they should be.

The recently installed 'race' system had been prepared to assist with their containment within such a large area. Steadily Steve and Scott were able to restrain and bag each of the juveniles. Other members



then stepped in to assist with sedation and carefully securing the kangaroos in vehicles.

All of the kangaroos travelled well. Unfortunately, the rather large water body at the relocation site was too large to be avoided by one of the newly relocated. A very committed Julie S made her way into the

water to help him onto dry land (wetsuits might become standard attire for those who are involved with this process during wintry weather).

All reports indicate our guys are doing well and are finding their way in a larger and more natural environment.