

SPRING 2010 NEWSLETTER

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Coordinator's Report

Spring is the blanket term we use to refer to our 'busy time'. With myself not wanting to pre-empt a massive influx of admissions, it has not been so bad.

This could be due to the fact that the rainfall for winter 2010 was very much below average across much of the state. Maybe with less wind and wet weather the little guys are staying in their nests. The larger ones are able to make it across the road without being hit by a wet weather motorist. Or, maybe, without the rain, wildlife are not breeding as we have accepted as the norm.

Over the winter months minimum temperatures were also very much below the average for much of the state. So maybe it is too cold for humans to be out rescuing our wildlife?

The cold weather certainly has not stopped our members from helping wildlife in need. Maybe low admissions are a result of our members acting to ensure wild 'families' stay together. Alicia and Gemma have been out gathering ten newly hatched ducklings who had ended up down a very deep drain on private property. The men at the work-site sat nearby and ate their lunch. While eating they were kind enough to offer verbal support to our ladies

who put the ladder down the drain, climbed in and then bucketed the ducklings above ground to be reunited with their very anxious mother duck. Gemma and Alicia relocated the duck family to a nearby lake reserve.

The couple who rescued the nestling New Holland and brought it to DRWS were pleasantly surprised when Scott told them to take the bird home. He followed with the ladder and was able to replace the nestling in the nest. This was 24 hours after it had been 'rescued'. Within 15 minutes the parent birds were back feeding the chick.

So while we have missed the pleasure of hand rearing eleven gorgeous babies, the wild families are intact.

Winter was busy with the National Wildlife Rehabilitation Conference in Adelaide. As always the conference offered the opportunity for participants to be informed on various topics by some wonderful presenters. Papers can be downloaded from - <http://nwr.com.au/nwrdsa/index.html>.

Members have had the opportunity to join locally managed educational opportunities conducted by ourselves, DEC, Kanyana and WAWRC on a variety of topics,



including bird diseases, tube-feeding and bobtail flu. Various educational and skill development opportunities are ongoing throughout the year.

These next three months will be a fantastic opportunity for members to gain increasing hands-on experiences with wildlife admissions, so skills learnt can be put into practice.

There are shift time changes to be implemented. By the first week of October all same day morning and afternoon shifts will be functioning with a half hour handover period. Morning shifts will be available on-site until 1.30pm. Afternoon shifts will need to be available from 1pm. This will be of massive benefit to shifts in relation to handing over any issues and for wildlife who will be subject to ongoing monitoring and care for the full day. We are looking forward to the full cooperation of all members in ensuring the change proceeds as smoothly as possible.

Michelle H

DRWS Goes Solar Powered!

It has taken some time but we are about to go solar powered! During September roof panels are expected to be installed and the power generated should be sufficient to ensure the facility is run by the sun. It is expected the shelter will be putting power back into the grid which means we will be generating more power than what we would actually use. Obviously we won't be generating power at night but we hope the excess produced during daylight hours will be

enough to compensate for our nighttime usage.

The project is only possible due to the generosity of Lotterywest, who provided the funding.

This move certainly complements our philosophy of helping our environment. With the composting toilet, grey water system and soon to be installed rain water collection tanks the shelter is certainly doing its bit to reduce our impact upon the environment.



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Looking for Helpers!

Sharron, our new Fundraising Coordinator, is looking for people to help out with some of the upcoming activities. Please contact Sharron direct (via the Monday am shift) if you are able to assist with projects as outlined in the Diary. Don't forget to clean out your cupboards for the October garage sale. (Donations to left in the storage room attached to the joey house.)

Great Egret



All members are invited to our upcoming Annual General Meeting scheduled for Tuesday 28 September at 7pm. We are looking forward to hearing from Lesley Shaw, of the Native Species Breeding Programme, Perth Zoo, who will be our Guest Speaker .

During late June a Great Egret was sighted in the Burswood area, carrying a significant amount of fishing line, sinkers and hooks around both legs. He was capable of good flight, meaning he would not be easy to restrain and treat.

It was a pleasure to work in conjunction with Halina from WA Seabird Rescue and staff from the Burswood Function Centre (BFC). Everyone persevered with such commitment to capture this bird who was quite aware of what was going on. The Egret was spending time at the BFC and in wetlands close to Victoria Park. While Halina worked with BFC, DRWS worked at monitoring and attempting to secure the Egret from the Victoria Park area.

As the weeks dragged on it became apparent that he was becoming weaker. Whereas initially the Egret had the full use of both legs he came to favour one and rarely bore weight on it.

Halina had left equipment at the BFC to trap and contain the bird. Due to the commitment of the BFC kitchen staff the Egret was trapped by use of a 'D-Net' and contained during early July. It had taken about three weeks to capture the bird.

As Halina was unavailable DRWS collected the bird and took him to Dr Ian,

Riseley Veterinary Centre, for attention. The bird underwent surgery for removal of the line. A fishing hook was deeply embedded into one foot. There was considerable swelling and heat in the region indicating infection. Several digits had already been amputated by the debris.

Following surgery the bird was subject to a course of pain relief and antibiotics. During this time the Egret was maintained in home care. A follow-up review by Dr Ian resulted in a positive assessment and the Egret was released with BFC staff a little over two weeks later. There was still some swelling, however, the infection was no longer present. Assessment was that it may take some time for the swelling to fully resolve and that this could occur with the bird in its natural environment. There were no open wounds for further infection to originate.

It is positive to note that the Egret is still doing well in his natural environment around the BFC. And how do we know it is the same bird, you may be asking?

Upon capture the Egret was found to be wearing a metal band with information relevant to the Australian Bird and Banding Scheme

(ABBBS). Details were sent through to ABBBS, who responded with some interesting data.

This bird had been banded on 26 February 2001 at the Perth Zoo. At the time of banding he was about one year old. This meant the Egret was coming up to ten years of age. He had travelled less than 5km to settle.

Great Egrets are found throughout the waters of Australia. They are territorial and hunt in water of up to 30cm deep. They employ a 'wait and watch' approach - freezing motionless for long periods and then walking slowly and deliberately through the water. They feed largely on fish, also taking insects, crustaceans and amphibians.

When courting the eye colour changes from yellow to red and the bill changes from yellow to black. They may nest in trees of up to 15m high or in a reed bed. Females lay between three and six eggs that are a pale green to blue colour. The eggs are incubated by both sexes until hatching in around 25 days. The nestlings fledge in about six weeks.

Great Egrets have a life span of about 15 years in the wild. They could live up to 22 years in captivity.

Cathy's Quiz - All About Money

Hope you enjoyed the quiz from last season. I have added a few trickier questions this time. (Answers can be found on the back page.)

1. Who created the wildlife designs on our original decimal currency coins? _____
2. In what year did the government phase out 1 and 2 cent pieces? _____
3. What wildlife images can be found on -
 - a. 1 cent piece _____
 - b. 2 cent piece _____
 - c. 5 cent piece _____
 - d. 10 cent piece _____
 - e. 20 cent piece _____
 - f. 2004 student design 50 cent piece _____
1. How many kangaroos are there on a \$1 coin? _____
2. Can you think of two ways the original \$5 note differed from our other decimal currency? _____
3. _____
4. What year did we change from the original notes to the polymer ones we have now? _____



Plucky Duck Back in the Wild



Quiz Answers

1. Stuart Devlin—selected over five other designers

2. 1990

3. A Feathertail Glider

B Frilled Lizard

C Echidna

D Lyrebird

E Platypus

F Wombat, Koala and Lorikeet

4. 5

5. It was introduced a year later than other coins and notes and was the first time a female, other than a monarch, had appeared on Australian currency

6. 1988

Spring Diary

September

Saturday 4

Tuesday 7

Thursday 9

Saturday 11 & Sunday 12

Tuesday 14

Saturday 18

Series

Sunday 19

Saturday 25 Sep - Sunday 2 Oct

Tuesday 28

Thursday 30

October

Saturday 2 & Sunday 3

Saturday 2

Saturday 9 & Sunday 10

Tuesday 12

Friday 15 - Sunday 17

Saturday 23 and Sunday 24

Tuesday 26

November

Tuesday 9

Tuesday 16

Wednesday 17

Saturday 27

DEC, Wildcare Helpline Review
National Threatened Species Day

DRWS goes solar powered!
DEC Basic Wildlife Rehabilitators' Course
Management Meeting
Byford Market Day**
DEC Wildlife Rehabilitators' Advanced Topic

Diseases of Reptiles, Dr Karen Payne, Perth Zoo
WAWRC, WA Seabird Rescue Workshop
Perth Royal Agricultural Show
AGM and Monthly Meeting
Guest Speaker - Lesley Shaw, Native Species Breeding Programme, Perth Zoo
Emergency Services Display, Thornlie

Bunnings Sausage Sizzle Fundraiser, Maddington**
Bunnings Sausage Sizzle Fundraiser, Cockburn Central**
Garage Sale Fundraiser – Bring in your pre-loved goods!**
Management Meeting
Shirley Fisher Art Exhibition – sales supporting DRWS
Cafe on the Dam Display**
Shift Communication Meeting

Management Meeting
Wildlife Rehabilitation Consultation Group Meeting
DRWS Cafe on the Dam presentation
Shift Communication Meeting

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

**Volunteer Support Needed

The Pacific Black Duck senselessly shot through the head with an arrow this month has returned to the wild and is thriving.

The duck, named Plucky, by WA Seabird Rescue volunteers for its ability to survive, was released near the Serpentine River in Coodanup about a week ago, the hole through its head still clearly visible.

Seabird Rescue president Linda Emery said that when they released the duck, they lost track of it because they were not able to tag it, but it has since been identified.

“When you look at what was through its head, it’s a pretty amazing recovery”, she said. “When we did release it, it went back to the area where it was found.”

Plucky has formed a relationship with another injured duck locals have nicknamed ‘Elvis’,

because its injury on the side of the head gives it a king of rock ‘n’ roll look.

Ms Emery said she suspected the second duck might have also been injured by a bow and arrow.

“We can’t prove what caused the injury to this one but it is interesting that once released, our duck came straight back to the area where it was found with the arrow and has been seen daily with the other injured duck,” she said.

No one has been charged with injuring the duck, an offence that carries a \$4000 fine under the Wildlife Conservation Act.

Department of Environment and Conservation officers are still investigating the incident and are seeking information from the public.

Article taken from *The West Australian*, Friday 20 August 2010, page 19.

‘Puggles’ from Narrogin sedated following physical examination.



Volunteer Profile - Sharron Goldfinch



I injured my back many years ago while working in a nursing home, which limited my working career. I lived on a beautiful 50 acre farm for six years in Manilla, NSW. I ran a successful registered kennel, breeding and showing Bull Mastiff and Staffy dogs. I was also editor for the Northern NSW Bull Mastiff Club.

I have always had a love for animals, no matter what they were. On the farm there were many different species of wildlife, but my eyes were always in the sky and that is when I started my love affair with birds. I found fledgling birds now and then that

the middle of the paddock with a net trying to catch bugs and grasshoppers - must have looked really silly, looking back. I would be in the garden turning over soil, trying to teach young birds to find worms and bugs so they could fend for themselves.

At the back door lingered 'Bruiser' - as I called him - sitting there, mouth open squawking. How that bird survived not being trodden on or being eaten, with our two cats lurking around, is beyond me! Bruiser was fearless. He would fly to you anywhere on the farm. Eventually he got the idea and moved on.

Those adventures truly enlightened me, but it took many years before I found my niche. I searched the internet about a year ago after leaving my job. I wanted to volunteer and care for wildlife as I was not able to do paid work. That is when I came across DRWS. Since then I have come ahead in leaps and bounds. I have learnt so much in my first year. My passion has grown tremendously thanks to the patience and encouragement I have received from all at Darling Range. I have attended many courses to build up my knowledge. Darling Range also has many presentations and Development Days for volunteers, which I have found extremely interesting and helpful. I am very proud that I recently took on the challenge of Fundraising Coordinator.

My most memorable moment would be the first time I had to tube feed a Shelduck. I was so nervous and shaky. This big fella really needed my help - he was so calm and patient. Thanks to the recent course I had completed I felt confident I could do it. I also had a lot of encouragement from my peers. I was so happy to find out later that day the duck had started to feed on his own. I felt very proud of myself and no-one could remove that smile from my face for days, but I can tell you that my heart was pounding more than the poor duck's. I am pleased to announce he has been released happy and healthy....and that is what it is all about at Darling Range - a great place to be.

Bits and Pieces

DRWS is having a Garage Sale on the weekend of 9 and 10 October. This is only possible because Regina and Trevor have kindly offered their home and garage sale experience to run the project. All members are asked to bring down any pre-loved goods, plants, books or other saleable items and leave them in the storage room side of the marsupial house. The goods will be transported to Regina's home closer to the date.

DEC Wildlife Rehabilitators, Advanced Topic Series - Diseases of Reptiles - is being conducted on Saturday 18 September 2010. The presentation will be run by Dr Karen Payne, Perth Zoo. Pre-bookings are essential through DEC's Community Involvement Unit on 9334 0279 or email

community.involvement@dec.wa.gov.au. The cost of the

presentation is \$25 and includes morning tea.

WA Seabird Rescue is conducting a workshop on Sunday 29 September from 10.30am until 4.30pm. It will be conducted at Native ARC, Bibra Lake. Pre-bookings are essential and the cost of the course is \$25. Morning and afternoon tea will be provided along with a Certificate of Attendance.

A comprehensive manual can be ordered at an additional price of \$20. Please email WAWRC for bookings and payment on secretary@wawrc.org.au.

Many thanks to Stefan Goldfinch, Absolute Office Interiors, who kindly donated a new display board system for the Shelter's Café on the Dam picture display. The new boards look fantastic with our recently

updated photographs.

Thank you.

Has everyone noticed our new wildlife food fridge? It is a tremendous improvement on the previous one. The recent purchase was made possible due to the success of our DEC, Environmental Community Grant, Fauna Rescue and Rehabilitation.

Thanks to Shelter volunteers who recently supported students from Emmanuel Catholic College, who came on-site to help with some general maintenance and tidying jobs. Megan Mentz, Christian Service Coordinator, arranged a hardworking group of young people who oiled, swept, planted, watered and weeded each morning for a week. We certainly appreciated the efforts of the volunteers, who supported the students, and the students themselves.