

# WINTER 2010 NEWSLETTER

**DARLING RANGE WILDLIFE SHELTER INC.**  
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## Coordinator's Report

While not forgetting the wildlife and site restructuring happening at the shelter, this introduction is all about the humans. A big warm welcome to our new management team members!

Fran Bell has some big boots to fill as she steps into the role of Volunteer Coordinator. Funnily enough she then took off for a three month trip to South Africa – volunteering with lions, elephant and leopards. While she is away we are lucky to still have Racheal around for a while and Nicky Percival to take on much of the role.

Sharron Goldfinch has enthusiastically taken on the role of Fundraising Coordinator. She is doing an amazing job keeping track of merchandise and exploring various fundraising projects.

Maria Kisler has been working unacknowledged for some time now with the support of her husband Nick. Together they have ensured many site safety aspects are managed, including the removal of waste and the good working condition of our fire equipment. We are really

fortunate she has agreed to formally take on the role of Site Safety Officer.

We also have a new member of the shopping team – the 'DRWS Shopper'. For those of you who do not know who this person is - I am keeping mum. On one of my shifts we like to keep the mystery – very similar to how fans of the programme Top Gear view The Stig! So welcome to the new DRWS Shopper – may we discover bags of never ending antibacterial hand wash and Tim Tams.

With welcomes out of the way it is with much sadness that we farewell Racheal – our extremely organised and take-on-anything Volunteer Coordinator for nearly two years.

Racheal has shown outstanding generosity with her time - taking on this role and being involved with many other projects. We all know it is actually because she cannot bear to miss out on any action (but I can relate to that). Racheal has been involved in so much that it is difficult to pinpoint a highlight. I know we



will all have different memories but probably the memory burnt into my mind is one where I felt just as helpless as her. I responded to a call for my name from across the facility only to find Racheal standing in a weird way near the waterbird enclosure – a baby dugite had run up the leg of her trousers. I did not know what to do and she did not know what to do. It seemed like an eternity of nervous laughter. I am not sure I wanted her to drop her trousers. She was not confident of having put on some 'good' knickers that day. On that note....we will miss you Racheal, and I know we all wish you and your family the very, very best of luck as you embark on a new life journey in Laos.

Michelle H

## FAL Cash and Carry Charity Board

For anyone who is a FAL Cash and Carry member the shelter is currently listed on the Charity Board at the Canningvale warehouse. The FAL Cash and Carry member is offered back a percentage of their sales in the form of a coin. The member can then choose to donate their coin to one of the groups listed on the Charity Board. FAL Cash and Carry then

honours donations made by forwarding a cheque to each of the charities. We are excited to have been nominated to be listed on the Charity Board and have heard that the generosity of shoppers towards our wildlife is already quite apparent. For more information please contact Sharron G on the Monday am shift.



Best of luck, Racheal!

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### Membership Fees

**Please note that membership fees are due in July. Please forward forms and payment to Julie.**

## 'HAFTADU' - Applied to a Bandicoot suffering from Toxoplasmosis



Introduced at the recent development day was the concept of HAFTADU - slang for 'have to do' - an easy checklist to ensure you have completed all necessary aspects of wildlife admission and primary care. I am going to apply it to a recent bandicoot admission.

### History

The rescuer advised that the bandicoot was captured at 6pm the evening prior. It had poor balance and seemed disoriented with no obvious injuries. It was contained in a box. Oats and water had been provided, however, not consumed. This was the third bandicoot with the same behaviour found over recent weeks. The previous two died shortly after rescue. This history made me consider a toxic cause rather than traumatic event. I enquired about pets (the rescuer has a confined cat), proximity to roads and use of poisons (which were not used as the rescuer did not want to harm wildlife in the area). Dehydration was a given issue.

### Assessment

I could do a visual assessment, without introducing any further stress, as the bandicoot was in a cat carrier - it was standing, swaying and very unsteady. Weighing scales and a hot box were ready for use. While keeping handling to a minimum, a base weight is really important for calculation of medication dosage and to gauge future progress. The assessment guide on the back of the admission form is useful to ensure the whole animal is examined. If a



Bandicoot Joey

second person can record as you examine, the process can progress even more smoothly.

We learned the bandicoot was - female, weighed 888 grams, felt a little thin, pouch was empty and dry, had poor balance but movement in all limbs, there was less tone in the back legs than expected, no obvious injuries, there were no droppings in the box, eyes were sunken and glazed (possibly the result of dehydration or a feature of some vision loss), had a few fleas, nose was clear of discharge, became very 'floppy' after handling despite a rapid assessment - it was obvious she was very sick.

### Fluids/Feeding

At least 16 hours had passed without the bandicoot taking fluid or food - and there were no signs of any output. She was incapable of taking any fluids orally. Subcutaneous fluid administration was required.

Following a telephone veterinary consult it was decided fluids should be provided on site. There were serious concerns the bandicoot may not survive, therefore the provision of fluids and an assessment of her response to the treatment was considered the best plan of action.

With weight recorded earlier it was easy to calculate volume of fluid to be provided. I was to liaise with vet staff as to the bandicoot's condition and seek further treatment once she had stabilised.

Food was not a priority at this point - she needed hydration. After fluids were provided she became 'floppy' for a few minutes and then seemed brighter.

### Treatment

There were no obvious injuries to treat - she required minimal handling and a warm, dark and quiet environment.

The temptation is to frequently check on admissions in hot boxes. This must be weighed up against the stress caused each time covers are lifted.

A Treatment Sheet was started with information matching it to the correct Admission Form. Fluid orders were charted and comments recorded, outlining her condition and response to therapy.

### Accommodation

Regardless as to whether she was to be accommodated on-site, in home care or at a veterinary clinic, the most appropriate environment was - a warm hotbox, soft flooring and soft layers she could hide in, no furniture that could cause her injury and a dark cover over the front of the box.

### Documentation

There are several sections of an Admission Form - details of the rescue and rescuer are recorded on the front. The back records information relating to the important initial assessment, home care or onsite location, any initial

veterinary involvement, and assessments and outcome.

For wildlife in home care the Admission Form is placed in the home care file under the name of the carer. Some carers prefer to take the form home with wildlife which is appropriate if DRWS also has this record on-site. The Treatment Sheet remains with the admission. When appropriate the outcome section can be completed. The more detail recorded on Admission and Treatment forms the more useful the information will be for future reference

Unfortunately this bandicoot died a few hours after entering care - she responded well to the subcutaneous fluids but was just too sick.

### Utilising Resources

Many resources were used to assist with this admission:

Rescuer - provided information narrowing likely causes and the relationship continues with information relating to further deaths.

Shift members - assisted with documentation, treatment and theorising possible causes.

Vet - Advised on initial treatment choices and immediate health needs, when provided with clear and comprehensive initial admission assessment information.

Networking with other wildlife rehabilitators - to determine if similar admissions were presenting at other facilities and what outcomes were being found.

Animal Health Labs - Given three highly similar deaths on the rescuer's property an autopsy was considered relevant. A comprehensive report was provided. The bandicoot was suffering from Toxoplasmosis. It is important to keep the body cool but not frozen if a diagnostic autopsy is being done.

Toxoplasmosis (*Toxoplasma gondii*) is a protozoal disease. Bandicoots are particularly sensitive and there is no recommended or accepted successful treatment.

Cats become carriers after eating muscle meat from infected mammals and excrete oocysts in their droppings.

The oocyst spores develop and become infective less than a week later (if owners cleaned up after their cats there would not be a problem). Once developed the oocysts survive for up to 18 months.

Bandicoots are exposed when digging and eating food from soil that has been contaminated. Toxoplasmosis causes severe heart disease. It can attack most other organs, including the lungs, liver, digestive tract and brain. The bladder tends to lose tone and stops emptying properly.

Cathy S

## Introducing....Cathy's Quiz!



I have a reputation for being full of trivia, or as some might say, useless information, so I thought it was about time I started sharing some of it. Here is a new addition to the newsletter. Each quarter there will be a different style of quiz but always the theme will be Australiana. To get things started I've kept it easy and the answers can be found elsewhere in the newsletter. I hope you enjoy the challenge.



### Question One

Can you match the fauna and flora emblems to each state or territory?

- |                         |          |                        |
|-------------------------|----------|------------------------|
| a. Sturt's desert peai. | Platypus | j. Leadbeater's possum |
| b. Kangaroo paw         |          | k. Wombat              |
| c. Huon pine            |          | l. Numbat              |
| d. Sturt's desert rose  |          | m. Tasmanian devil     |
| e. Pink heath           |          | n. Koala               |
| f. Waratah              |          | o. Gang gang cockatoo  |
| g. Cooktown orchid      |          | p. Red kangaroo        |
| h. Royal bluebell       |          |                        |

WA	___ and ___	SA	___ and ___
NT	___ and ___	QLD	___ and ___
NSW	___ and ___	ACT	___ and ___
VIC	___ and ___	TAS	___ and ___

### Question Two

The Australian magpie is a secondary emblem for which state?



### Question Three

Why were the kangaroo and emu chosen for the Australian Coat of Arms?



## Winter Diary 2010

### June

Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup>

Saturday 12<sup>th</sup>

Monday 21<sup>st</sup> thru Friday 25<sup>th</sup>

Saturday 26<sup>th</sup>

Sunday 27<sup>th</sup>

Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup>

### July

Thursday 1<sup>st</sup>

Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> & Sunday 4<sup>th</sup>

Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup>

Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup>

Saturday 17<sup>th</sup>

Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> & Sunday 25<sup>th</sup>

Saturday 31<sup>st</sup>

### August

Sunday 1<sup>st</sup>

Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup>

Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup>

Saturday 21<sup>st</sup>

Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup>

Management Meeting  
 Kanyana Tube Feeding Workshop  
 DRWS Marsupial Home Care Meeting  
 7<sup>th</sup> National Wildlife Rehabilitation Conference, Adelaide  
 DEC Advanced Topic Bird Diseases  
 Racheal's Farewell Dinner  
 Shift Communication Meeting  
 Geocatch Busselton; Western Ringtail Possum Symposium

Kanyana, Bobtail URTI Workshop  
 WAWRC Education and Training for experienced rehabilitators in Kirup  
 Presentation to Roleystone Organic Growers' Group  
 Management Meeting  
 DEC Basic Course in Wildlife Rehabilitation  
 DEC Basic Course in Wildlife Rehabilitation  
 Shift Communication Meeting

WAWRC AGM (Feeding Techniques and Subcutaneous Rehydration Workshop @ Kanyana)  
 Wildlife Rehabilitation Consultation Group Meeting  
 Management Meeting  
 DRWS Development Day  
 Shift Communication Meeting

**Racheal's  
 farewell dinner  
 to be held on  
 Sunday 27th  
 June at the  
 Ambassador  
 Chinese  
 Restaurant in  
 Cannington.  
 Please RSVP.**

## Volunteer Profile— Yvonne Giblett



### Quiz Answers

Q1  
WA b & l; SA a & k; NT d & p;  
QLD g & n; NSW f & i; ACT h &  
o; VIC e & j; TAS c & m

Q2

South Australia

Q3

Both are known to be capable  
of moving only forward and  
therefore considered positive  
symbols for Australia.

I consider my introduction to the world of wildlife care traumatic.

I lived in Bedforddale where it was common to have kangaroos, including females with pouch young, wandering about my paddock. Unfortunately, one day my German Shepherd decided it would be great fun to chase one. My friend Margaret and I were screeching like banshees to stop Jemma (the dog). The obedient Jemma took not the slightest bit of notice and continued the chase. The poor roo - in her plight to escape - threw her joey, jumped the fence, crossed the other paddock, jumped that fence and disappeared into the distance. The joey was fully furred and very unsteady on its feet - as you would be after being thrown out at full speed. We caught and wrapped the joey in a blanket - then got on the phone.

At 0730 and with joey on board, Margaret and I headed for Roleystone. Syl C took the joey from us and then I proceeded to haunt her for updates on this little joey's progress.

Following several phone conversations I became aware of Darling Range Wildlife Shelter. The Shelter was then situated at the old Cohunu site. I commenced Thursday afternoon shifts in February 2004 (I think :)).

I just loved it. There were so many kangaroos, a darling little possum that threatened to rip your finger off and magpies by the truckload. After a couple of months Jan Watson and I were doing Thursday afternoons on our own. I do not know if we had BO but nobody stayed on our shift. We did work well together for almost three years. After the move to Martin, Jan and I did Monday mornings and Thursday arvos (we did get other vollies to work with us :)). Sadly and due to serious health issues Jan was no longer able to volunteer. She is still missed.

But I am getting ahead of myself. After being at the Shelter for approximately eight months I was offered a joey for home care. After much thought, I decided to give it a go.

I was besotted. Poor 'Clancy' was my guinea pig. After a few feeding issues - during which time I harassed other carers for help and advice - Clancy started to thrive. It was decided that Clancy should not be alone and four weeks later Bindi arrived. Like Clancy, she was just beautiful.

Who needs TV when you have joeys? They were such a delight and I was hooked. Clancy and Bindi grew up without a hitch and settled into the shelter well - I cried for days. They grew into beautiful big roos and were released at Bindoon. Good for them and sad for me.

After caring for these two, the smooth sailing stopped. Clancy and Bindi gave me the false sense that rearing joeys was a piece of cake. Boy, did I find out how wrong I was. If I had first experienced the problems I have had with several joeys after Bindi and Clancy, I might not have continued being a marsupial carer.

I have continued to take care of joeys (kangaroo and possum) and have reared several bandicoots. I have had my fair share of heartache and tears. I have even reached the stage where I said I would never do this again - it is just too hard. But then I look into the eyes (open or closed) of a little orphan and the heart melts.

My commitment to the shelter is bigger than Ben Hur (well, I think). I am a Marsupial Coordinator. When I joined the management committee my eyes were really opened as to how much work goes on behind the scenes. There are so many hard workers that give so many hours of their time which usually involves a monetary cost as well. Often their spouses help out. Most of the time this is without even a thank you. Without the generous hard working people at the shelter, including all of our shift volunteers, the place would not function. Everyone does such a great job.

### Bits and Pieces

*Thank you to everyone who helped at the working bee. All jobs on the list were either completed or a good start was made. The biggest job - being the relocation of the smaller aviaries - is still in progress. It is hoped that this site re-structure will be completed by the end of July.*

If you have not yet completed the DEC Basic Wildlife Rehabilitation Course now is the time to do so. Consider registering through the notice posted in the Admin Building for a discounted fee.

*All shift members are encouraged to consider registering with the DRWS Web Forum. The forum contains much information including - minutes from all monthly communication meetings; policies,*

*procedures and official DRWS documents; and various communications from other agencies in relation to upcoming educational and skill development opportunities. Contact [webmaster@darlingrangewildlife.com.au](mailto:webmaster@darlingrangewildlife.com.au) for a login.*

There is expected to be a good number of Western Australian rehabilitators at the upcoming National Wildlife Rehabilitation Conference in Adelaide. If interested in the conference, even just to have a look at the various papers being presented, do get on to the conference website - <http://nwrc.com.au/nwrcsa/index.html>

*The number of hours volunteered by all shift members is currently being collated to be forwarded to the Department of Environment and Conservation. Please make sure*

*time sheets are up to date. There is a reward system for all volunteers. For example, should you volunteer 50 hours of your time you will (eventually) be forwarded a 12 month entry pass to the various National Parks within Western Australia.*

There have been many wildlife releases over autumn, however, the longest distance travelled with the most wildlife in one trip 'award' goes to those who drove our gorgeous reds to Kalgoorlie. All of our gentle reds have settled into their new environment. Thank you to those who were available to assist and make the long trip.

*Wildcare is in need of committed phone operators. Please contact Sonia Chalmers at DEC if available to assist.*