



## AUSTRALIAN WILDLIFE SOCIETY

PO BOX 42 BRIGHTON LE SANDS NSW 2216 1 (ACN 134 808 790)

### PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2017

#### A year in review

The past year for the Society has been one of consolidation and growth. I was honoured to be elected as President following the Annual General Meeting. We were delighted to welcome a new member to the Board – Christine Banks, a very keen wildlife conservationist and author.

A highlight of the year was the introduction of a new award – the **Wildlife Rehabilitation Award**. Our Society knows that many organisations and thousands of volunteers are already working tirelessly to save our threatened species as well as the humble and more common Australian species and the precious wildlife habitat in which they live. We are all aware of the wonderful work being carried out by volunteers across the country in saving our sick and injured wildlife. We wanted to recognise and help these individuals or conservation groups continue with their good work on behalf of the whole community. Our Society introduced this new award with a trophy and a cash award of \$1,000.

We also introduced the **Australian Wildlife Society Threatened Wildlife Photographic Competition** – an annual national competition that awards and promotes endangered Australian wildlife through the medium of photography. We invited photographers to raise the plight of endangered wildlife in Australia. Our Society aims to encourage the production of photographs taken in Australia, by Australians, which reflects the diversity and uniqueness of endangered Australian wildlife. An annual judge's prize of \$1,000 and an annual people's choice prize of \$500 will be awarded.

#### Australian Wildlife magazine

Our coloured *Australian Wildlife* magazine is the flagship of the Society and has proved to be extremely popular amongst all of our members. We invite members to distribute copies to family and friends and to invite them to become members. A special thank you to our Subeditor, Sabine Borgis, for her valuable contribution to assisting with the editing of the magazine.

Our fortnightly email wildlife newsletter has also proven to be very popular with our members and we encourage them to forward the newsletter on to their family, friends and associates to help spread the wildlife conservation word. A big thank you to Linda Dennis, Editor of the newsletter, for her valuable work in keeping us regularly informed on wildlife matters. If



Summer Cover



Autumn Cover



Winter Cover



Spring Cover

you have not registered your email address and would like to be put on the email list to receive the fortnightly newsletter, please contact [accounts@aws.org.au](mailto:accounts@aws.org.au) with your details.

#### Website

We continue to update our website to make it more user friendly. Changes to the structure and layout will be an ongoing process. It is also planned to design and implement a 'Members Only' section. We also hope to make the application process for new members simpler. Members are encouraged to view the website and send any feedback via email to: [info@wpsa.org.au](mailto:info@wpsa.org.au)

#### Wildlife rescue calls

We continue to receive numerous and wide-ranging distress calls for help from members of the public about sick, injured and stranded wildlife across Australia.

## Our Mission

Part of our Mission Statement reads: “Our mission is to conserve Australia’s fauna and flora through education and involvement of the community. We are dedicated to the conservation of our unique Australian wildlife in all its forms through national environmental education programs, political lobbying, advocacy and hands on conservation work.” To fulfill this goal we introduced the University Student Grants Scheme in 2005 and since its inception have awarded over 130 grants to very worthy recipients. In 2016 we increased the grant to \$1,500 and plan in the future to steadily increase the dollar amount of the grants subject to further donations, which are always welcome.

## Wildlife Science Ecology Research Scholarships

The 2017 Australian Wildlife Society Wildlife Ecology Research Scholarship was awarded to UTS School of the Environment PhD student Reannan Honey for her project titled ‘Habitat restoration of hollow bearing trees for hollow-dependent fauna’.

In 2017 we introduced a new scholarship, the Australian Wildlife Society Wildlife Ecology Research Scholarship. It is open to University of New South Wales postgraduate research students who are undertaking a research project that is of direct relevance to the conservation of Australian native wildlife (flora or fauna). The scholarship totals \$5,000. The inaugural winner was Corey T. Callaghan for his project titled ‘Bird Conservation in the Blue Mountains World Heritage Area – response to urbanization?’

## Wildlife Conservation Awards

The winners of the **Serventy Conservation Award** for 2017 were Rupert Russell of Mt Molloy, North Queensland and Graeme Sawyer of Darwin, Northern Territory.

**Rupert Russell** has made a remarkable contribution to wildlife conservation in North Queensland for over 40 years, ranging from the protests over the destructive road-building in the Daintree Rainforest to his present involvement in the yellow-bellied glider project.



Rupert Russell

Graeme Sawyer was actively involved in the establishment of the Australian Association for Environment Education (Northern Territory) in 1987 and has maintained an active involvement in it ever since.



Graeme Sawyer

The winner of the **Community Wildlife Conservation Award** was made to Frog Safe Inc. of Edmonton, North Queensland. This organisation has operated a frog hospital for 18 years, treating over 3,000 frogs in that time, and has developed a deep understanding of frog health through untold hours of research.

The winner of the inaugural **Wildlife Rehabilitation Award** was Roz Holme of Cedar Creek Wombat Rescue and Wildlife Refuge. Over 30 years ago, Roz and her husband Kev recognised the plight of the bare nosed wombat. Animals that until recently would have died if left untreated are given a chance to recover and continue to help maintain the healthy population.



Suzanne Medway and Roz Holme



## Wildlife Photographic Competition

The annual judge's prize of \$1,000 was won by Native Animal Rescue of Western Australia (Mike Jones, Black Cockatoo Coordinator). The winning entry was a photo of a forest red-tailed black cockatoo named Makuru.



The annual people's choice prize of \$500 was won by Matt White. Matt's entry was a photo of a greater glider.



## Gala Dinner

In June we held the Society's inaugural Wildlife Gala Dinner to raise funds for Australian wildlife conservation. It was an outstandingly successful social evening, with some 250 guests enjoying the festivities. A special thank you to all our sponsors who contributed to the fundraising for the evening, and especially to

Tim Faulkner of Devil Ark for being our eminent guest speaker. Before telling an enthusiastic audience about Devil Ark, Tim spoke about the threat of extinction to many species of Australia's precious wildlife.



L to R: Patrick Medway, Ken Mason, Noel Cislowski, Clive Williams, Suzanne Medway, Robyn Weigel, John Weigel, Trevor Evans and Wayne Greenwood.



Suzanne Medway and Tim Faulkner

## 2017 – University Student Grants Scheme

The Australian Wildlife Society's University Research Grants are scholarships offered to honours or postgraduate students at Australian universities. Each year, ten grants of \$1,500 are awarded. Grants are available for research projects of direct relevance to the conservation of Australian wildlife – plant or animal. The winners for 2017 were:



**Glen Bain** - School of Biological Sciences, University of Tasmania  
Project title: Restoring Resilience in woodland bird populations of the Tasmanian Midlands



**Siera Claytor** - James Cook University, Cairns  
Project title: The role of serotonin in frog host response to chytridiomycosis



**Christopher Gatto** - Monash University, Melbourne  
Project title: The role of nest moisture in sea turtle primary and operational sex ratios Introduction



**Ana Gracanin** - University of Wollongong  
Project title: Does deforestation promote developmental stress in spotted-tailed quolls?



**Md Anwar Hossain** - School of BioSciences, University of Melbourne  
Project title: Assessment of the vulnerability of freshwater crayfish to climate change



**Le Ma** - School of Veterinary and Life Science, Murdoch University, Perth  
Project title: Protecting our unique key stone species, *Westralunio carteri*, the only species of freshwater mussel in South-western Australia



**Diana Prada** - School of Veterinary and Life Sciences, Murdoch University, Perth  
Project title: Conservation of insectivorous microbats; connecting genetics and infectious disease threats in Australia's global biodiversity hotspot



**Kit Prendergast** - Curtin University, WA  
Project title: Determinants of native bee assemblages in urban habitat fragments in the southwest Australian biodiversity hotspot and interactions between honeybees (*Apis mellifera*) and native plant-pollinator communities



**Peter Puskic** - School of Biological Sciences, University of Tasmania  
Project title: Novel assessment of the relationship between plastic ingestion and fatty acid profiles in three species of Australian shearwaters



**Emily Quinn Smyth** - University of Technology Sydney  
Project title: Impacts of lantana invasion in remnant forest on habitat use by native fauna: a multi-taxon approach for conservation

### 2017 Conservation Group Grants

The Board of Directors carefully considers all requests for grants from other wildlife conservation groups and places a special emphasis on native wildlife research, conservation and the preservation of wildlife habitat. We lobby organisations and government bodies on their behalf and make donations to assist them in their special wildlife conservation projects. Conservation grants were made to the following projects:

- Devil Ark – a major contribution was made to build an adolescent devil enclosure at Devil Ark, Barrington Tops
- Fourth Crossing Wildlife – funds were supplied for attending wildlife conferences, making presentations on behalf of the Society
- Adelaide Koala Hospital – to buy new equipment for the rehabilitation of injured koalas
- Illawarra–Shoalhaven Great Eastern Ranges Regional Partnership – to deliver two pest control workshops and purchase 10 feral fox and cat cage traps designed to reduce predation on native fauna in the local national parks.

### Conferences and wildlife research seminars

The Society's directors attended and contributed to a number of important wildlife conservation conferences, seminars and meetings throughout the year. We actively initiated and sponsored many of these conferences and participated in others. AWS is an active member of the Nature Conservation Council of New South Wales. Our Society's CEO is a representative on a number of pest animal control committees and attends both city and country meetings. We attended the Australasian Wildlife Management Society 30th Anniversary Annual Conference in Katoomba in December 2017.

### Radio and Cruise talks

The Society's CEO and honorary secretary, Patrick Medway, continued to promote the Society by giving lectures to various groups and schools. He was again a guest on ABC Radio's *Nightlife with Tony Delroy* to answer questions on wildlife conservation issues from across Australia and launched a major lecture series for Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines on native Australian fauna and flora.

### Donations, bequests and gifts

During the year we continued with our bequest program to encourage donors to support our wildlife conservation work across Australia through the website and through general publicity. We are very grateful to all our members for considering using the bequest program to help the Society with its long-term planning. Please contact the National Office for more details on the Bequest Program and on how to join the Friends of the Society and make a regular monthly donation to support our national wildlife conservation programs. We hold Australian Tax Office gift deductible status for any donations over \$2.

### Financial Report summary

The Society's directors and the Finance and Investment Committee continue to exercise tight and effective control over our finances, reviewing and adjusting the investment portfolio as required during the year. The investment funds of the Society have continued to grow. During the year we instigated a major review of the financial records of the Society that are maintained in a Reckon system. The directors are now fully satisfied that the financial records are accurate and correctly reported as we plan for the future.

### Moving Forward

The process of gradually moving the national office to Narellan was commenced with the transferring of the membership functions to what we hope will be the permanent national office of the Society.

### A special thankyou to all our members

May I wish every member of the Society a happy, healthy and prosperous 2018 and thank you all most sincerely for your tremendous support and continued dedication and commitment in helping the Society to preserve and protect our native wildlife for future generations of young Australians.

Suzanne Medway AM | PRESIDENT | 31 December 2017