

## **2010 WPSA Community Wildlife Conservation Award**

Dr Clive Williams, Vice President, announced the winner of the Community Wildlife Conservation Award for 2010 as Wombat Awareness Organisation of South Australia.

The southern hairy nose wombat is the emblem of South Australia, yet landholders easily obtain permits to cull them. Often this is done in inhumane ways, while the species is in decline. The Wombat Awareness Organisation (WAO), led by Brigitte Stevens, has for many years been fighting to educate the community of South Australia that current practices risk the eventual extinction of the species.

WAO has spent many hours of its members' time and considerable money on rescuing injured animals as well as negotiating with pastoralists over ways to live harmoniously with wombats. WAO has also conducted considerable research into sarcoptic mange, a deadly disease which threatens to ravage populations of the animal. WAO also has been raising money to purchase Portee Station in South Australia as a refuge for wombats as well as a place for scientific study into mange and other threats to wombat existence. Moreover, Portee Station will also be a refuge for other wildlife species, including 133 species of birds.

WAO is a completely volunteer organisation. Its achievements and aspirations make it a worthy winner of WPSA's Community Wildlife Conservation Award.

### **Response by Brigitte Stevens**

The Wombat Awareness Organisation is humbled to receive this incredible recognition from the Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia. Like all of our unique wildlife species, the southern hairy nosed wombat deserves protection and the right to live without continual suffering and cruelty at the hands of people. Simple and effective solutions of protection and co-existence can be achieved to ease the pressure of the species' survival; winning the Community Wildlife Conservation Award promotes that we can make a difference through determination, dedication and love of our wildlife.



*Brigitte Stevens*