

# WILDLIFE PRESERVATION SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA LIMITED

PO BOX 42 BRIGHTON LE SANDS NSW 2216

## PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2009

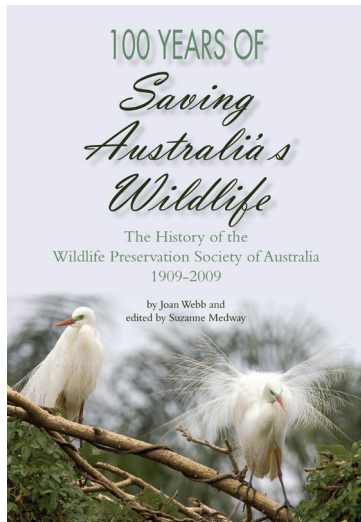
### A special Centenary year

The Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia celebrated a major milestone in 2009 – a Centenary of wildlife preservation in Australia. **It was a great thrill to be able to celebrate one hundred years of wildlife conservation throughout 2009** right across Australia. We were able to involve every member of the Society through our national *Australian Wildlife* magazine and regular email newsletters.

We trust that everyone was able to attend at least one of the official functions held in each capital city and to enjoy meeting fellow members of this great Society.

### One Hundred Years of Saving Australia's Wildlife

We have commissioned a Centenary edition of the history of the work of the Society from 1909 to 2009 with an emphasis on the special people who have worked so hard over the past one hundred years to save and protect our native wildlife. Order your copy through the National Office.



### 100<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting

The historic 100<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of the Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia Limited was held on Wednesday 25 February 2009. Our guest of honour was The Hon Carmel Tebbutt MP, Deputy Premier, NSW Minister for Climate Change and the Environment.

Suzanne Medway, Executive Director/Honorary Secretary/Editor was awarded Honorary Life Membership for her contribution to the Society over the last ten years.

After the formal proceedings the Directors of the Society for 2009 cut the Centenary cake and a delicious

morning tea was served, kindly sponsored by Carmel Tebbutt and the Department of Environment and Conservation.



Directors of the Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia in 2009. L to R: Back row: Richard Mason, Judith May, Suzanne Medway, Vanessa Wilson, Clive Williams. Front row: Tony Cornell, David Murray, Patrick Medway, Noel Cislowski, Peter Hardiman

### Centenary Luncheon

The Centenary Luncheon to celebrate one hundred years of conservation work by the Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia was held in Sydney on Friday 22 May 2009 in the presence of Her Excellency, Professor Marie Bashir AC CVO, Governor of New South Wales. Over one hundred members and friends joined our celebrations in the beautiful Cello's Restaurant. Master of Ceremonies, Noel Cislowski (Chairman of the Centenary Committee), opened the proceedings and invited the National President, Patrick W Medway AM, to officially welcome the Governor, life members, members and guests to the Centenary Luncheon.

In welcoming the Governor our National President said that Her Excellency did us a great honour with her presence at our Centenary Luncheon and thanked her for coming and supporting our important wildlife conservation work in this our Centenary Year.

### Serventy Conservation Medal for 2008

This special award was inaugurated in 1999 to commemorate the wonderful conservation work by the members of the Serventy family – Dr Vin Serventy, his brother Dr Dominic Serventy and his sister Lucy. Each member of the family has given a lifetime of commitment to the conservation and preservation

of Australian wildlife. The Serventy Conservation Medal for 2008 was awarded to Barry Scott, who has devoted 23 years of his life to the conservation of the koala and indirectly to the conservation of other Australian wildlife. Barry has been a director of AKF over that period and as evidence of his commitment it is sufficient to point out that he has missed only three meetings in all that time. The AKF is now a strong viable organisation which could survive without Barry, however, it would not have started without him. His contribution to the welfare of Australia's wildlife justifies the award of the Wildlife Preservation Society's Serventy Conservation Medal.



Barry Scott was presented with the Serventy Conservation Medal by Her Excellency, Professor Marie Bashir AC CVO, Governor of New South Wales and Clive Williams, Vice President

### Community Wildlife Conservation Award for 2008

The Community Wildlife Service Award is made each year to recognise organisations which make a significant contribution to the preservation of Australian wildlife. The Community Wildlife Conservation Award for 2008 was awarded to Australian Ecosystems Foundation Inc. of Lithgow, New South Wales. AEFI is a great example of a



L to R: Clive Williams, Patrick Medway, Her Excellency, Professor Marie Bashir AC CVO, Governor of New South Wales, Trevor Evans of AEFI with the Community Wildlife Conservation Award

community organisation in action, providing scientific and educational input into the management of our precious wildlife. They are worthy recipients of the Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia's Community Wildlife Conservation Award.

### Centenary Celebrations

A Centenary Committee, chaired by Noel Cislowski, was formed to plan the celebrations in 2009. During the planning process it was decided that the Executive of the Society would try and meet as many of the members around Australia as possible. The Lord Mayors of each capital city were approached and asked to host a reception and we were very privileged to be hosted in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Darwin by their Lord Mayors and in South Australia the Minister for the Environment and Conservation agreed to act as host.

The Centenary year began with a morning tea in February hosted by The Lord Mayor of Sydney, Clover Moore MP, at Town Hall House in Sydney. The full Board of Directors was able to attend and meet many of our New South Wales members.



L to R: Suzanne Medway, Dorothy Lawson, Margaret Deas, Deidre Bowes, Joan Keri

For our Victorian members, a Civic Reception hosted by the Lord Mayor of Melbourne, Robert Doyle, was held in May. Patrick and Suzanne Medway represented the Society.



L to R: Lew Smedley, Peter Vaughan, Penny White, Barry Barker



In June a Lord Mayor's Reception was held in Brisbane, hosted by Councillor Matic. The Society's Vice-President, Dr Clive Williams and the Chairman of the Centenary Committee, Noel Cislowski, represented the Society.

In July a Civic Reception hosted by the Lord Mayor of Darwin was held. Noel Cislowski, Chairman of the Centenary Committee and Ken Metcalfe, Regional Advisor for the Northern Territory, represented the Society.

For our South Australian members, a Ministerial Reception was held in Old Parliament House, Adelaide. The Minister for the Environment and Conservation, The Hon Jay Weatherill MP, hosted the reception. Patrick and Suzanne Medway represented the Society.

Airfares to the various capital cities were kindly donated by Qantas.

### University Student Centenary Grants

To celebrate the Centenary of the Society two special grants of \$5,000 each were awarded to honours or postgraduate students conducting research that contributed to the conservation of Australian wildlife. The two Centenary Grants were awarded based on each applicant's progress in the project for which the Initial Grant was awarded. The winners for 2009 were:

**Arian Wallach** – School of Earth and Environmental Sciences, University of Adelaide. Project – “Persistence of endangered mammals: Is the dingo the key?”



Dingo and pups

**Andrew Cole** – ARC Centre of Excellence for Coral Reef Studies, James Cook University, Townsville. Project – “The control of coral disease by coral-feeding fishes.”

### University Student Grants

The Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia announced the winners of the ten annual grants of \$1,000 each to honours or postgraduate students conducting research that will contribute to the conservation of Australian wildlife.

**Alice Blackwood** - School of Biological, Earth and Environmental Science, University of New South Wales. Project – “The effect of river red gum decline in the Macquarie Marshes on woodland birds”.

**Lisa Cawthen** - University of Tasmania. Project – “Beyond the remnant: The influence of local and landscape level factors on forest dwelling bats”.

**Jennyffer Cruz** - Department of Environment and Conservation and Invasive Animals Cooperative Research Centre, University of Queensland. Project – “Exploring the declines of native species in Australia's biodiversity hotspot using the koomal (*Trichosurus vulpecula hypoleucus*) as a model species”.

**Kerinne Harvey** – Department of Biological Sciences, Macquarie University. Project – “Why do plants become invasive? The role of phylogeny, herbivores and time”.

**Crystal Kelehear** - School of Biological Sciences, Tropical Ecology Research Facility, University of Sydney. Project – “Nematodes *versus* toads: investigating the potential for parasites to lessen the impact of the cane toad invasion”.



Amplexing toads

**Nadav Pezaro** - School of Biological Sciences, University of Sydney. Project – “Nest site selection in the Eastern water dragon (*Physignathus lesueurii*): A case study in response to climate change”.

**Catherine Price** - School of Biological, Earth and Environmental Sciences, University of New South Wales. Project – “Novel approaches to improving the success of reintroductions – protecting prey with chemical camouflage”.

**Robert Reed** - Department of Zoology, University of Melbourne. Project – “The effects of rotational prescribed burning on the long-nosed potoroo (*Potorous tridactylus*)”.

**Karen Stagoll** - The Fenner School of Environment and Society, Australian National University. Project – “Conservation in urban and peri-urban landscapes: planning and management of habitat for threatened woodland birds”.

**Jessica Walsh** – Spatial Ecology Lab, University of Queensland. Project – “Resource allocation prioritisation at a fine resolution: how to achieve the best conservation outcome for the malleefowl”.

### 2009 Conservation Group Grants

The Council of the Wildlife Preservation Society 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. The Society makes regular contact with wildlife caring groups across Australia to find out how they are faring, what their main projects are and how we can be of assistance

to them in preserving native wildlife. We lobby organisations and government bodies on their behalf and make donations to assist them in their special conservation projects.

During the year major donations were made to "Help for Wildlife" for the rescue and rehabilitation of native Australian wildlife affected by Victorian bushfires and to the Nature Foundation of South Australia for important sea-lion research on Kangaroo Island.



Sea-lions on Kangaroo Island

### **Australian Wildlife magazine**

Our coloured magazine is the 'flagship' of the Society and has proved to be extremely popular amongst our members. We are indebted to the Editor, Suzanne Medway, for her continued dedication and commitment to the high standard of production of this magazine. Suzanne is continually challenged to find an outstanding wildlife photograph for the front cover and members are reminded that they can always provide an input with photographs and articles to assist in making the magazine very readable for our national membership.

Beginning in January 2009 to mark our Centenary, a fortnightly email Wildlife Newsletter was launched to all members that have supplied email addresses. This has enabled the Society to keep members updated more regularly on what is happening in the world of wildlife conservation. Our Regional Advisors were also able to contribute and keep the members up to date on what is happening in their region.

### **Conferences and wildlife research seminars**

Directors attended and contributed to a number of important wildlife conferences and meetings throughout the year. We actively initiated and sponsored some of these conferences and participated in others:

- 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Sea Turtle Symposium in Brisbane
- 2009 ARAZPA Conference at SeaWorld on the Gold Coast
- Indian Myna Conference in Nowra
- 2009 Clean up Australia Day in Bicentennial Park in Sydney
- Launch of a special Democracy Display featuring the Society in Canberra
- National Tree Day planting in Bicentennial Park in Sydney
- Visit to the Wirrimbirra Wildlife Sanctuary at Bargo
- Kangaroo Management Committee meeting at Dubbo NSW
- NSW Pest Animal Control Council meetings in Sydney
- Zoology Conference at Taronga in Sydney
- 2009 Nature Conservation Council Annual General Meeting and Conference in Sydney

### **Donations, bequests and gifts**

During the year we continued with our bequest program to encourage donors to support our work through advertising in the Solicitors' Pro-Bono publication and website, and 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. Contact the National Office for more details.

### **Celebrating a new century of wildlife preservation**

Our Society now has a new and modern constitution to cope with the administrative and structural changes necessary for the Society to receive Tax Exemption and Deductible Gift Recipient status. We are registered as an approved environmental organisation with the Federal Government. Members and friends can make a tax deductible donation to the wildlife conservation work of the Society, which is helping to establish our long term viable future. All donated funds are allocated directly to a wildlife conservation project.

### **Ecoworld Gardens project**

One of the great disappointments in 2009 was the refusal by the Rockdale City Council to approve our lease of the Brighton Lagoon area of the Rockdale Wetland Corridor to establish our Ecoworld Gardens project. The short-sightedness of this Council and the constant requests for more technical information were very frustrating after some ten years of responding to their original Expressions of Interest to establish such a centre.

We have now invested the funds in our major projects account for future consideration.

### **A special thank you to all our members**

May I wish every member of the Society well for 2010 and thank them most sincerely for their tremendous support and continued dedication and commitment in helping the Society to preserve and protect our native wildlife for future generations of young Australians as we now begin to celebrate the next one hundred years of wildlife preservation as a national wildlife conservation body.

Patrick W Medway AM  
NATIONAL PRESIDENT  
31 December 2009