

WILDLIFE PRESERVATION SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA LIMITED

PO BOX 42 BRIGHTON LE SANDS NSW 2216

WPSA PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2012

A year in review

The major focus during the year was fund raising and the launch of the new **Wildlife Science Ecology Research Scholarship** to enable bright young student scientists to study and research wildlife conservation at the University of Technology Sydney to prevent any further wildlife extinctions. The NSW Governor, Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir AC CVO, officially launched the new scholarship at the Gala Dinner on 6th June 2011.



Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir AC CVO and Suzanne Medway launching the new UTS scholarship

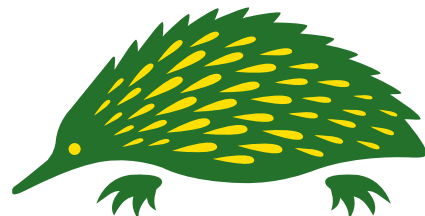
Early this year WPSA joined forces with the university students studying for a Bachelor of Arts degree in Communications at the University Technology Sydney to learn how to market a product to a new generation of young Australians. This project was undertaken by three of our directors – Suzanne Medway, Clive Williams and Patrick Medway – to gain valuable marketing advice and counsel on how to reach a new group of young people. Towards the end of this project we welcomed our newest board member, Chris Chan, to the project team.

Five groups of five students were each given a brief on how to connect the Society to young Australians in the 18 to 30 year age group who aren't currently involved in environmental and wildlife conservation issues. We wanted to inspire them to take action towards a greater public awareness of the importance of wildlife conservation in our natural world for future generations of young Australians. We were also hopefully looking for the next generation of leaders to help run the Society and ensure its long-term survival of its valuable wildlife conservation work across Australia.



Steven James, Tutor from the UTS School of Communications and Suzanne Medway

One consideration that we are excited about is the change of our brand name to **Australian Wildlife Society**. The students felt that the name Australian Wildlife Society is generic enough to encompass many wildlife issues, not just preservation! There are many instances where the general public confuses our name with other organisations and people often say Wildlife Protection Society rather than Wildlife Preservation Society. Research indicates that a maximum of three words in a title is better for memory retention.



Australian Wildlife Society

Conserving Australia's Wildlife
since 1909

The new logo for the Australian Wildlife Society

As with all charities, our Society has to be very aware and carefully husband our income stream and this is something that will be addressed in the rebranding of the Society. As we receive no government funding and rely entirely on our own membership fees and return on investments to carry out our wildlife conservation work, seeking more support through sponsorship or partnerships is a recommendation that the Board will consider following.

The students also recommended that we take more credit for the wildlife conservation work we do and incorporate more publicity on Facebook and Twitter to reach this younger audience of potential supporters.

The UTS project was an exciting and very worthwhile experience for our Directors on the Board. We learned at first hand some of the current thinking and attitudes of young university students and their energy level and capacity to come up with exciting ideas.

It is clear with the new ideas and suggestions being made that we will have to look at expanding our office facilities and even move more quickly to establish a new National Office for the work of the Society. The Directors were satisfied that the liaison with UTS provided a very valuable model to follow and it is our intention to repeat the exercise, focusing on a different topic, next year.

We identified that the future of the Society lies with a new generation of young Australians who have a passion for wildlife conservation. Our research indicated that young people who study wildlife conservation at university develop a keen and abiding interest in the subject which can last a lifetime. You too can make a donation to the Wildlife Science Ecology Research Scholarship at any time. Donations are fully tax deductible under our registration as a *DGR status Item 1 on the table in section 30-15 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997*.

In an innovative first for our Society we launched the UTS Scholarship Loan Scheme to raise minimum of \$100,000 to be invested for the Scholarship in a secure financial institution at the maximum interest rate to earn additional funds. This has proved to be a very successful method of raising additional funds for the scholarship.

To date we have raised \$24,246.61 in donations and hold \$22,625.95 in the UTS Scholarship Loan Scheme investment account.

Wildlife conservation projects

The Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia has developed a diverse range of conservation projects and responsibilities in our mission to preserve Australia's unique wildlife, and this is evident in the breadth of our achievements over the last year. We deal with and support a broad spectrum of environmental issues, supporting and/or delivering various wildlife conservation projects and operating in a number of different, and sometimes difficult

and isolated, locations across Australia. Some of our wildlife conservation projects focus on preserving a single species, while others deal with national problems on a continental or global scale – such as feral animals or climate change. Our volunteers work in locations all around Australia, from remote areas in the central desert to the capital cities – and all showing a tremendous dedication and commitment to preserving and protecting Australia's fauna and flora for the next generation of young Australians.

103rd Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting was well attended by members and a delicious morning tea was served at the conclusion of the proceedings. Our guest speaker for the event was Deborah Tabart, the CEO of the Australian Koala Foundation.



Suzanne Medway and Deborah Tabart

Serventy Conservation Medal for 2011

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 2011 was awarded to Jenny Maclean of Mareeba, North Queensland, for her long-standing contribution to saving the endangered spectacled flying fox. Jenny, a physiotherapist by profession, founded the Tolga Bat Hospital over 20 years ago to rescue spectacled flying foxes paralysed by tick bites. (Because of the loss of their natural food sources, the bats have been forced to seek food at lower levels where they come into contact with ticks causing their already depleted numbers to be threatened even further.) Since that time, she and a dedicated band of volunteers, from across Australia and also from overseas, have devoted endless hours to the task. However, Jenny has not confined herself to rescuing the native animals. She has developed an

education centre at the hospital and regularly devotes her time to educating the public about the contribution bats make to the ecology of the region. She also makes the hospital and her expertise available to university students and staff conducting research.

Jenny was also responsible for forming *Wildlife Friendly Fencing* which has alerted people across Australia to the damage barbed wire fences do, not only to bats, but to other wildlife which fall upon them. Jenny has shown how to minimise the damage that these fences can do to animals. Her dedication and her long-standing contribution to wildlife conservation make her a worthy winner of the Serventy Medal.



Jenny Maclean

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. We note with some concern that the Victorian government has been asked to remove the bare-faced or common wombat from the list of protected native species which will allow some local farmers to destroy wombats on their property. We are fortunate to have the support of the various national wildlife rescue services that do such valuable and selfless work to help rescue, save and rehabilitate our native wildlife. We are constantly reminded of the necessity of our organisation to stay vigilant and to continue to protect and preserve our native wildlife from attack and abuse.

University Student Grants

The Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia announced the winners of the ten annual grants of **\$1,000** each to honour and/or postgraduate students conducting research that will contribute to the conservation of Australian wildlife. The winners for 2012 were:

Diana Virkki, Griffith University. Project: Reptile responses to variable fire regimes in southeast Queensland.

Jerome Kalvas, Murdoch University. Project: A Survey of the presence of the amphibian chytrid fungus (*Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis* (Bd)) in frog populations of the Adelaide bioregion of South Australia.

Katrien Geurts, James Cook University. Project: Sourcing to the sink or sinking to the source: how do fragmentation barriers influence dispersal of rainforest mammals?

Rachel Blakey, University of NSW. Project: Bats, birds, insects and floods: understanding ecosystem processes to better conserve our river red gums.

Robert Mason, University of Queensland. Project: Improving the conservation of the Great Barrier Reef through better prediction of coral bleaching.

Chrystal Mantyka-Pringle, University of Queensland. Project: Decision making for conserving Australia's freshwater biodiversity under climate change and land-use change.

Amy Bond, Griffith University. Project: The interactions between roads and wallabies in the urban context of greater Brisbane.

Channing Hughes, University of Sydney. Project: Assessing the impact of poison baiting for red foxes (*Vulpes vulpes*) on the endangered Tasmanian devil (*Sarcophilus harrisii*).

Jenny Molyneux, Charles Darwin University. Project: Management and spatial ecology of the brush-tailed mulgara (*Dasyurus blythi*) in central Australia.

Teigan Cremona, University of Sydney. Project: Mortality and behaviour of juvenile northern quolls during dispersal.



A juvenile northern quoll

2012 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 wildlife conservation projects.

During the year major donations were made to:

- Cairns Turtle Rehab Centre
- Cedar Creek Wombat Rescue
- Wombat Awareness organisation

Australian Wildlife magazine

Our coloured magazine is the 'flagship' of the Society and has proved to be extremely popular amongst all of our members.



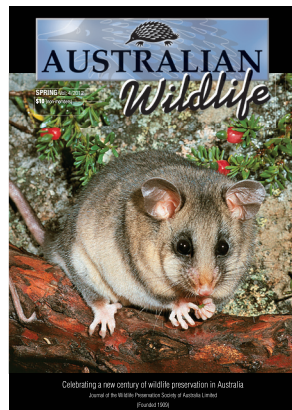
Summer Cover



Autumn Cover



Winter Cover



Spring Cover

Our fortnightly Email Wildlife Newsletter has proven to be very popular with our members and we encourage them to forward it on to their family, friends and associates to help spread the wildlife conservation word.

Conferences and wildlife research seminars

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

WPSA is an active member of the Nature Conservation Council of New South Wales. Our Society's CEO is a representative on the NSW State Pest Animal Control Council and an appointed member of the NSW Kangaroo Management Advisory Panel. He provides expert advice and assistance on wildlife conservation matters and keeps the Society abreast of environmental and conservation developments by government officials.

Members of the Society also participated in the annual Clean Up Australia Day in March.

Financial Report summary

The Society's Councillors and Finance Committee continues to exercise tight and effective control over our finances and reviewed and adjusted the investment portfolio during the year. The investment funds of the Society continue to be adversely affected by the global financial crisis with the return on our investments below average. The Finance Committee reviewed the situation and made a recommendation that the Society's investments be pooled to create a single investment portfolio to maximise the income for the future wildlife conservation work.

Donations, bequests and gifts

During the year we continued with our bequest program to encourage donors to support our work through the 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.

We are extremely grateful to the Estate of the Late Richard Edward Zeidat for their generous bequest to the Society's mission of conserving Australia's native wildlife.

A special thank you to all our members

May I wish every member of the Society a healthy and happy 2013 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.

Suzanne Medway JP
PRESIDENT
31 December 2012



Green catbird. Photo: Michael Ritchie