AUSTRALIAN Wildlife

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Celebrating a new century of wildlife preservation in Australia

Journal of the Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia Limited
(Founded 1909)

2020 ANNUAL PRESIDENT'S LUNCHEON

Members, family and friends enjoying the President's Annual Luncheon.

L to R: Robin Crisman, Katerina Skarbek, Julie Old, Roz Holme and Kev Holme.

L to R: Suzanne Medway, Malinda Ly, Justine Pacampara, Hollie Deste, Mike Manahan and Patrick Medway.

Kim Gallagher and Caitlin Gallagher.

L to R: Caitlin Gallagher, Roz Holme, John Creighton, Alexandra Seddon.

Sue Emmett and Mark Bluett.

Katerina Skarbek and Robin Crisman.

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ON THE COVER:

Front Cover:
Pugsley, the mountain pygmy-possum. See page 17 for more information on how The Australian Wildlife Society is funding a new strategy to save the species from extinction.
Photo: Chris Humfrey (TV Zoologist and founder of Wild Action)
https://wildaction.com.au/chris-humfrey/

Back Cover:
Juvenile tawny frogmouth. The tawny frogmouth (*Podargus strigoides*) is a species of frogmouth native to and found throughout the Australian mainland and Tasmania. Photo: pen_ash

Suzanne Medway AM
Editor, Australian Wildlife

Australian Wildlife Society

Conserving Australia's Wildlife since 1909

Australian Wildlife

is the official journal of the Australian Wildlife Society
(Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia Limited).

Founded in 1909, the Society is dedicated to the conservation of our unique Australian wildlife in all its forms.

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Directors 2020

Notice to our members

The Australian Wildlife Society (Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia Limited) is managed and controlled by an elected board of ten volunteer directors. The Society is a registered company limited by guarantee with ASIC and is responsible for complying with all its regulations.

Any member who might like to consider serving as a director of the Society is invited to contact the national office for more details. The most important qualification to serving as a director is 'a commitment to and love of Australian wildlife'.

The Society holds regular monthly meetings on the first Wednesday of each month in Sydney.

The Editor would like to feature a member's profile in the fortnightly email newsletter and occasionally in our quarterly magazine. Members are invited to consider submitting a short article with a photograph for possible publication.

Our Mission

The Australian Wildlife Society (Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia Limited) is an independent, voluntary, non-profit conservation organisation, formed in 1909, and is committed to the preservation of Australia's precious flora and fauna. We act as a watchdog and provide advice to government agencies and institutions regarding environmental and conservation issues concerning all aspects of wildlife preservation. 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.

Our Society has always known that a conservation battle is never really won until the victory is enshrined in legislation. We have always tried to convince politicians of the necessity to include the preservation of Australia's precious wildlife and its vital conservation habitat in all their planning and environmental issues and discussions.

From the President's desk

Suzanne Medway AM - President

As individuals, we can contribute by moving towards a sustainable future by changing the way we live our lives and use resources.

What a traumatic first few months of 2020 it has been. The devastation to our native Australian wildlife from the bushfires has been devastating and confronting. But there have been some bright moments in all this tragedy with so many generous donations coming in to support the rescue and rehabilitation of injured wildlife. The donations have come from all around Australia and all around the world.

The resilience of our natural world is incredible following the recent rains, and already we are seeing green shoots springing up from the bushfire areas.

It is amazing how the community comes together to provide support when devastation arises. Many individuals have asked what they can do to help native wildlife impacted by the bushfires. Our 'wildlife affected by fires' initiative has now concluded. We thank everyone who so generously donated funds. Please access the link for more information on how the donated funds have been distributed https://www.aws.org.au/news/

From our end, it has been a formidable task distributing the funds as there are so many groups in need of help. Our Society's commitment with all donations is to distribute 100 percent of the money received, and we will continue to ensure that this happens with the balance of the funds donated for wildlife injured in fires.

It is now time to look forward. The discussion and lobbying for decisive action to offset climate change is growing daily. The development of renewable energy through solar energy and wind power needs to move forward at a rapid pace to help create a cleaner environment.

As individuals, we can contribute by moving towards a sustainable future by changing the way we live our lives and use resources.

It was my very great honour to chair the 111th Annual General Meeting of the Society on 4 March and to host the Annual President's Luncheon. These two events are always a highlight of the Society's calendar, and it is a good time to reflect on the past year and anticipate the coming year.

My personal goals for 2020 are to steer the Society forward to become even more relevant in such difficult times for our native Australian wildlife and to prepare a succession plan to encourage members to consider becoming a board member to form a strong and talented board to move forward into the Society's 112th year.

As a wildlife conservation Society, the board of directors will be holding extensive discussions on how we can move forward during 2020 to contribute to our mission of saving and protecting Australia's precious native wildlife.

Australia is in a perfect position to harness the sun's energy and every year, more people across the country are installing solar panels on their homes.

111th Annual General Meeting

The Society's board of directors with the 111th anniversary cake. L to R: Philip Sansom, Ken Mason, Suzanne Medway, Stephen Grabowski, Julie Old, Brian Scarsbrick, Alice Suwono, Trevor Evans and Patrick Medway.

The 111th Annual General Meeting of the Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia Limited, trading as the Australian Wildlife Society, was held on Wednesday 4 March in Sydney.

Suzanne Medway, President, tabled the Annual Report for 2019 and highlighted the Society's achievements in wildlife conservation over the past year. The full report is featured in this magazine.

The audited Treasurer's Report for 2019 showing a healthy financial balance was tabled and adopted by the meeting.

Peter J Varley, Chartered Accountant, CA Registered Company Auditor, was confirmed as the Society's auditor for 2020.

The election of the directors to sit on the board for the coming year took place, and Brian Scarsbrick AM was elected to join the other nine directors remaining on the board.

Annual President's Luncheon

The Annual President's Luncheon was held after the Annual General Meeting, in Cello's Restaurant at Castlereagh Boutique Hotel in Sydney, and attended by an enthusiastic group of supporters.

Megan Fabian, National Office Manager, welcomed the guests and introduced Suzanne Medway AM, President, who proposed a toast to 111 years of wildlife conservation by the Society. Suzanne and Patrick Medway cut the birthday cake and invited the directors to join them for a photo.

The Society was pleased to announce the winners of its prestigious awards for 2019 during the luncheon proceedings.

2019 Serventy Conservation Award

The Serventy Conservation Award was inaugurated in 1999 to commemorate the incredible conservation work by the members of the Serventy family - Vincent Serventy, his brother Dr Dominic Serventy and his sister Lucy Serventy. Each member of the Serventy family has given a lifetime of commitment to the conservation of Australia's wildlife. The award is intended to recognise and celebrate conservation work that has not been done as part of a professional career. It is awarded to those who labour in the conservation field for a love of nature and a determination that it should be conserved. Often, these have been non-scientists who have earned their conservation skills through sheer hard work.

The award for 2019 was presented to Alexandra Seddon of Merimbula, New South Wales. Alexandra has devoted her life to the protection of Australia's wildlife. Since she and her husband bought their first property, in Crowsnest in Candelo New South Wales in 1975, Alexandra has acquired three other properties, all devoted to wildlife conservation. After several years in Crowsnest, Alexandra partitioned off 57 acres of feral-proof land to

act as a sanctuary for animals before their release into the wild. Alexandra welcomed people from all over the world to stay on the property to learn about wildlife. In 1996, the land known as Pambula Wetlands came on the market and Alexandra purchased it, naming it Panboola and turning it into a thriving bird sanctuary.

In 2001, Alexandra purchased the Batty Towers Flying Fox Sanctuary to protect local flying foxes. Batty Towers Flying Fox Sanctuary became the main roosting site on the South Coast of New South Wales for the vulnerable grey-headed flying fox (*Pteropus poliocephalus*). In 2006, Alexandra used an inheritance to purchase Potoroo Palace at Yellow Pinch, New South Wales. Alexandra established Potoroo Palace as an environmental education centre, a charity, and handed the rights of the property to the local community so that it can never be sold. Today, Potoroo Palace is an active educational centre where people visit to learn about native wildlife.

In addition, Alexandra conducts regular talks and lectures, writes articles, produces documentaries and maintains an active relationship with the scientific community. She has also written several children's books about Australian wildlife, their habitats, and environmental surroundings and is a great advocate for the conservation of Australia's wildlife.

Acceptance speech from Alexandra Seddon

I feel truly grateful for this award. I hope that, because of it, more and more people will come to see the beauty and delicacy of Australian wildlife and how lucky we are to live amongst such magical creatures. There are many people that I know personally, who give their whole lives to caring for Australia's wildlife, scarcely allowing themselves enough sleep or even time for eating. I would like to inspire more people to follow them and learn from them. I would like to lead people to treasure and respect the land and the waters, that have been cared for with such wisdom by the traditional custodians for thousands and thousands of years.

I have been living and working in the Bega Valley since 1975. To begin with, I was caring for wildlife and protecting habitat on Crowsnest Community Farm, Candelo, while farming and teaching. Later, in 1996, I inherited, from my father, enough money to buy 15 acres of horse paddock/degraded wetland at Pambula, which we called The Waterbird Sanctuary. Then in 2001, I inherited from my mother enough money to add another 100 acres of farmland/wetland to the Sanctuary, to which other people have since added. The whole 200 acres is now called Panboola, Pambula Wetlands and Heritage Project. It has been restored beautifully by volunteers who continue to care for it. Also, in 2001, I was able to protect a flying fox camp which became Batty Towers Flying Fox Hospital and Conservation Area, where I now live. In 2006, we took over a run-down zoo which has since become Potoroo Palace, a native animal education sanctuary – a charity.

Brian Scarsbrick presented the Serventy Conservation Award for 2019 to Alexandra Seddon of Merimbula, New South Wales.

Ken Mason being presented with his Life Member's certificate by Patrick Medway.

Toby Salmon, Keira West and Jarrah Walker accepting the Community Conservation Award on behalf of Belgian Gardens State School.

2019 Community Wildlife Conservation Award

The Community Wildlife Conservation Award is awarded to a community group that is making a significant contribution to wildlife preservation in Australia.

The award for 2019 was presented to Belgian Gardens State School of Belgian Gardens, Townsville. This school, for a number of years, has been an active participant in the conservation of the black-throated finch (*Poephila cincta*). It has an active partnership with the Northern Queensland Dry Tropics and black-throated finch recovery program. The school has a specially designed enquiry unit for year four students. Under this program, the students learn about the life cycle of the finch, the threats it faces, and the actions taken by science to help it. Learning is not just theoretical but also practical. The school maintains its own aviary and students are involved in the care of the birds and make regular observations. Learning is not confined to the students, as the school informs the community through its school newsletter. Furthermore, an open day was held to educate the community about the program. The event attracted 400 people.

The program is designed to teach students basic science principles, while they have the opportunity to meet experts in the field. They are also encouraged to transfer their knowledge to other endangered species, some of which are bred at the school. These include the golden-shouldered parrot (*Psephotus chrysopterygius*), Gouldian finch (*Erythrura gouldiae*), and the clownfish (*Amphiprioninae*). The school is recognised as a significant breeder of the finch. It has bred over 150 finches since being involved in the program. This is an exciting program promising great future benefits, as young people become engaged in conservation activities and, in turn, assist in educating their local community.

Acceptance speech from Belgian Gardens State School

Belgian Gardens State School is honoured to be the recipient of the 2019 Community Wildlife Conservation Award. Our students and school community are proud of the work we undertake, to learn about threatened and endangered species of animals. We feel it is important to provide our students with real-life, hands-on learning opportunities. For example, having live breeding black-throated finches at our school is far more engaging than reading about them from a book or website.

At Belgian Gardens State School, we have several breeding programs for threatened and endangered animals. We breed black-throated finches, Gouldian finches, golden-shouldered parrots, and clownfish. One of our science units, for year four, focuses on the black-throated finch. Students research their life cycle, habitats, threats they face, and what can be done to ensure their survival in the wild. Guest speakers from Northern Queensland Dry Tropics also share with students the work being done to preserve this unique finch. Students also are responsible for the day-to-day feeding and provide a varied, nutritious diet for all our breeding birds. We have had a very successful breeding program over the last eight years, breeding more than 150 black-throated and Gouldian finches and 23 golden-shouldered parrots.

Our school also has a special room called Reef BG, where we have 20 tanks displaying a variety of freshwater and saltwater fish species. Our primary focus, for year five and six students, is the breeding of clownfish. We have bred over 200 clownfish in the last eight years, selling our fish back to pet shops and fish wholesalers. Our motto is "every clownfish we sell is one less taken from the reef".

With the $2500 sponsorship, we intend to upgrade our breeding facilities for our clownfish. At Belgian Gardens State School, we feel it is important to educate our students and the wider community on issues faced by Australia's fauna. A special thank you to Associate Professor Julie Old for nominating us for this amazing award.

2019 Wildlife Rehabilitation Award

The Wildlife Rehabilitation Award is awarded to an individual or a conservation group that is contributing to the preservation of Australia's wildlife. The Society is aware that many organisations and thousands of volunteers are working tirelessly to save Australia's wildlife and the habitat in which they live. Many people find the experience of rehabilitating native wildlife rewarding; however, it is time-consuming and can be very expensive. The award is intended to acknowledge and commemorate, on behalf of the whole community, the individuals or conservation groups working tirelessly to support, rehabilitate and conserve Australia's native wildlife.

The award for 2019 was presented to John Creighton of Bundanoon, New South Wales. John cares for orphaned, injured and manged wombats and educates the community about the common wombat or bare-nosed wombat (*Vombatus ursinus*). In the field, John follows wombats and installs medicated burrow flaps. The wombats become treated for mange when they enter or leave their burrows. John is the founder of Wombat Care Bundanoon (WCB) and is dedicated to looking after wombat populations in the Southern Highlands of New South Wales.

John runs community workshops, attends conferences and manages volunteers. A group of 16 university

students, and their teacher, were inspired by John's work and flew over from California to volunteer their time at WCB. John has an in-depth understanding of the implications of mange for wombat populations on a broader ecological scale. John educates children about wombat care and biology at local schools. John also engages with and encourages the wider community to take action on all aspects of wombat conservation and hopes to preserve the Australian icon for future generations.

Acceptance speech from John Creighton

Thank you to the Australian Wildlife Society for presenting me with the Wildlife Rehabilitation Award for 2019. I am truly touched, humbled and honoured. To be the recipient of such an award is motivating, it is not an end-point, box-ticked, or goal-achieved. Receiving this award confirms that I am on the right path and encourages me to push forward. Personally, receiving this award marks a new chapter, in an ongoing journey, in wildlife care and community education.

Thank you to the Society for all you do to preserve Australia's wildlife and empower and educate so many individuals. The support, guidance, and knowledge the Society provides are vital for a successful outcome for Australia's wildlife. Simply, the Society empowers and inspires many individuals to achieve wildlife preservation, and for that, I am most grateful.

Each wildlife conservation organisation, in its unique way, is working together to achieve the same vision, intent, and action for Australia's wildlife. Personally, to be acknowledged for doing what I love, for those I love (the wombats), in their time of great need (mange, drought, and bushfires) is a powerful and affirming feeling. I am appreciative that my efforts have been recognised as valuable, vital and worthwhile. Thank you. Being the recipient of this prestigious award sends a message to other wildlife rehabilitators, that work in similar ways and achieving positive results for wildlife, that we are on the right path. Our work is noticed, and it matters!

When I think of the work wildlife rehabilitators do, I think of words such as sacrifice, dedication, commitment, challenge, struggle, and selflessness. Wildlife rehabilitation is hard work. It is physically and emotionally demanding, but it is also affirming, uniting and beautiful. As wildlife rehabilitators, we give so much of ourselves for the wildlife in our care, and as every good carer knows, wildlife rehabilitation demands nothing less than our very best.

President, Suzanne Medway AM, presenting the Wildlife Rehabilitation Award to John Creighton.

Caring for and being in such a position to make a positive change in the lives of Australia's wildlife is a privilege. The more you give, the more you get out of it. Their successes become our successes and together, we and the wildlife in our care and in the wild, all move forward. We are so fortunate to have so many hard-working wildlife rehabilitators across Australia. The goals and accomplishments being achieved, nationwide, is inspiring.

Attending a Wombat Protection Society of Australia conference on mange in 2015 was a key turning point for Wombat Care Bundanoon. It was one of those points where a specific need dictated our work. My focus went from rescuing and rehabilitating wombats to treating wombats for mange. Over the years, Wombat Care Bundanoon treating wombats for mange has saved hundreds of wombats from pain, misery, and death. However, this work is far from over, and we have so much still to do.

Receiving the 2019 Wildlife Rehabilitation Award is a real personal milestone, a great honour, and a motivator. I would like to thank my family, my extended family, and my friends. Without their love and support, I would simply not be here myself. To the Australian Wildlife Society, thank you for all you do. I will honour this award with great work in the future and do my best for Australia's wombats and wildlife. Thank you.

2019 Youth Conservation Award

The youth of Australia make significant contributions to the conservation movement through innovative projects and ideas. It is young people who can drive lasting and sustainable change and who will become the next ambassadors in environmental conservation and hopefully the successors to the current board of the Australian Wildlife Society. We aim to inspire young people to have a stake in environmental conservation by rewarding and recognising their efforts.

The award for 2019 was presented to Caitlin Gallagher of Bundanoon, New South Wales. Caitlin has been focusing on supporting efforts to reduce the incidence of sarcoptic mange in bare-nosed wombat populations. Furthermore, she has shown a commitment to wombat conservation in the field by setting-up and monitoring burrow flaps to treat wombats, as well as being heavily involved in fundraising and educating the public more broadly regarding wombat conservation and sarcoptic mange.

Caitlin volunteers her time every Saturday morning at WCB - Wombat Care Bundanoon, assisting John Creighton to treat wombats for mange.

Assoc Prof Julie Old presented the Youth Conservation Award for 2019 to Caitlin Gallagher.

Caitlin also regularly checks road-killed wombats for in-pouch joeys. Caitlin collects recyclable bottles and returns them for 10 cents each. Caitlin has now raised $1200 which purchases 15 litres of cydectin, a medication that is used to treat wombats for mange. Fifteen litres can treat up to 35 mange-affected wombats. Caitlin also presents at conferences and local schools to help raise awareness of the plight of the common wombat and encourage conservation action.

Acceptance speech from Caitlin Gallagher

Being presented with the Youth Conservation Award came as a pleasant surprise to me. Thank you for this amazing honour. When I first started working alongside John Creighton, I never thought that I would have both a national and international impact on a variety of individuals and their conservation efforts. I have collected thousands of bottles and recycled them, preventing them from ending up in landfill and to assist in the purchase of wombat medication. As a community, many people from Bundanoon have contributed to this recycling program, which I am eternally grateful.

Every day that I spend working alongside John is personally rewarding to me, whether it be: treating mange-affected wombats, driving around at night looking for injured wildlife, completing roadside rescues, providing supplementary food for wildlife affected by the recent bushfires, or assisting with the provision of education within our local community.

Receiving this award reflects the personal satisfaction that I feel in being part of the bigger picture. I know that my actions, however big or small, are having a positive impact on Australia's native wildlife and enhancing our communities' ability to show more respect for the delicate ecosystems in which we live.

When I first met John, I found him harvesting grass for drought-affected wombats and other wildlife in Taralga, New South Wales. I approached John and asked, "is there a way that I can be involved in the wombat conservation work you do?" John explained to me that he treats mange-affected wombats in the Southern Highlands region. I mentioned that I would be more than willing to contribute and assist him with his efforts if given the opportunity. I have been helping John for three years with the treatment of mange-affected wombats.

In 2018, I founded a fundraiser whereby I returned recyclable bottles for 10 cents each, to raise funds for mange medication known as cydectin. It was the expense of the treatment that initiated my action to fundraise. This fundraiser is ongoing, and so far we have raised over $1200, which means we have returned 12,000 individual bottles and cans.

In 2019, I was invited to attend a meeting held by the Rotary Club of Bowral-Mittagong to provide a speech about how I am involved with the treatment of mange-affected wombats and how I became involved with Wombat Care Bundanoon. As a result of my efforts, the Rotary Club presented me with a cheque to put towards purchasing medication for wombats affected by sarcoptic mange. Since 2018, my fundraiser has paid for 15 litres of cydectin, which has treated up to 35 mange-affected wombats.

Thank you again for presenting me with the Youth Conservation Award. I am so humbled to be the recipient of such a prestigious award.

In 2020, I pledge to continue my commitment to John Creighton in treating mange-affected wombats in the Southern Highlands and consider both myself and John as 'Bundanoon's wildlife warriors'!

Winners are grinners. John Creighton and Caitlin Gallagher.

AUSTRALIAN WILDLIFE SOCIETY

(ACN 134 808 790)

PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2019

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 – Associate Professor Julie Old, a very keen wildlife conservationist and author.

One of the highlights of the year was the presentation of our three awards – the **Serventy Conservation Award**, **Community Wildlife Conservation Award** and **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 conservation organisations and volunteers across the country. We are very proud to acknowledge and reward these individuals or conservation groups and encourage them to continue their good work on behalf of the whole community. We also introduced a new **Youth Conservation Award.** We aim to inspire young people to have a stake in environmental conservation by rewarding and recognising their efforts.

Another highlight is the awarding of our ten University Scholarships offered to honours or postgraduate students at Australian universities. Each year, ten $1,500 grants are awarded. Grants are available for research projects of direct relevance to the conservation of Australian wildlife – plant or animal. We also award three special scholarships at University of Technology Sydney, University of New South Wales and Western Sydney University.

E-newsletter

Our fortnightly email wildlife newsletters have also proven to be very popular with our members, and we encourage them to forward the newsletters on to their family, friends and associates to help spread the wildlife conservation word. We launched AusWildKidz, a youth section in the current newsletter. In the near future, we will be developing a youth newsletter of its own! A big thankyou to Linda Dennis, Editor of the E-news bulletin, for her valuable work in keeping us regularly informed on wildlife matters. If you have not registered your email address and would like to be put on the mailing list to receive the fortnightly newsletters, please contact info@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. We are in the process of constructing a 'Members Only' section. This year also saw the introduction of free membership to all students and educational institutions via our website.

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 thankyou to our Sub-editor, Sabine Borgis, for her valuable contribution to assisting with the editing of the magazine.

Summer Cover

Autumn Cover

Winter Cover

Spring Cover

Social Media

Social media is now a critical part of the way people in most walks of life communicate. We have become actively involved on four social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube). We aim to keep our followers up to date with important actions of the Society and the collective work being promoted nationally. Our followers continue to grow each month.

Membership

We introduced a new category of free membership classified as a Class B membership. Class B members do not have the right to vote at the Society's Annual General Meetings and receive an Emag subscription to the quarterly magazine *Australian Wildlife*. To be eligible a person must be a student at any school or registered educational institution and hold a current student ID card or be a registered school.

Members are encouraged to view the website and send any feedback via email to info@aws.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. Calls are received at all hours of the day and night and often the best we can do is to advise the caller to keep the animal or bird warm until a local wildlife rescue service can assist further. For more information on wildlife rescue organisations across Australia please access the link https://www.aws.org.au/links/

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 fulfil this goal we introduced the University Student Grants Scheme in 2005 and since its inception we have awarded over 150 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 **University Technology Sydney Wildlife Ecology Research Scholarship** was awarded to UTS School of Life Sciences PhD student Laura Michie for her research on mitigation of cold water pollution using a novel thermal curtain.

The **University of New South Wales Wildlife Ecology Research Scholarship** was awarded to UNSW School of Biological, Earth and Environmental Sciences PhD student Tahneal Hawke for her research on platypus (*Ornithorhynchus anatinus*), assessing long-term changes in platypus populations and the current impacts of river regulation on platypus population dynamics.

The **Western Sydney University Wildlife Ecology Research Scholarship** was awarded to WSU School of Science and Health PhD student Kristen Petrov for her research on the ecology of a wildlife disease and recovery of the imperilled Bellinger River snapping turtle (*Mychelys georgesi*).

Wildlife Conservation Awards

The winner of the **Serventy Conservation Award** was Lorraine Vass of Lismore, New South Wales. For 19 years, Lorraine has been the driving force behind Friends of the Koala, a Lismore-based group. Her efforts have made the whole Lismore region more koala-conscious and helped stabilise, and possibly increase, its koala population. Lorraine has overseen a strong education program and has forged a close association with local schools. She also has established a close relationship with universities, particularly the University of Queensland, Queensland University of Technology and Southern Cross University.

Lorraine Vass and her husband Rick.

The winner of the **Community Wildlife Conservation Award** was Kanyana Wildlife Refuge, near Perth, Western Australia. This organisation has operated for over 40 years with the aid of a strong band of volunteers. The refuge rehabilitates many animals each year. It now has added a captive breeding program to its services. Kanyana has a strong school holiday program and works in collaboration with local universities to conduct research into factors affecting local wildlife. In recent years it has focused on research into parasites affecting wildlife and has been responsible for discovering previously unidentified parasites.

The winner of the **Wildlife Rehabilitation Award** was Tehree Gordon OAM of Barwon Heads, Victoria. Tehree has been involved in animal rescue since the age of 15; however, she has been registered as a wildlife rescuer and rehabilitator for over 40 years. Tehree and her husband opened Jirrahlinga Koala and Wildlife Sanctuary over 40 years ago to rescue and rehabilitate injured, distressed and orphaned wildlife while at the same time providing a haven for disadvantaged people of all ages. Tehree also established a special animal welfare program for the elderly, people with special needs and school children.

Kanyana Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre staff.

Suzanne Medway and Tehree Gordon.

Wildlife Photographic Competition

The annual judge's prize of $1,000 was won by Robert McLean for his photo of numbats (*Myrmecobius fasciatus*). The annual people's choice prize of $500 was won by Claudia Santori for her photo of a short-necked turtle (*Emydura macquarii*).

Annual Gala Ball

The 110th Birthday Gala Ball was held in the Grand Ballroom of the Western Leagues Club, Campelltown on Saturday 27 July. It was another outstandingly successful evening, with some 180 guests enjoying the festivities of music and dancing. A special thankyou to all our sponsors who contributed to the fundraising for the evening and especially to our special-guest sponsor WALKDEN and the Mayor of Camden, Theresa Fedeli, for attending the event. We thank director Trevor Evans for arranging the special visit of a dingo, koala and snake. This helped highlight the plight of the many species of Australia's precious wildlife that are facing the threat of extinction.

L to R: Julie Old, Arthur Pugsley, Megan Fabian, Suzanne Medway, Kevin Fabian and Philip Sansom.

The extended Medway family. L to R: Behzad Chauhdary, Aislinn Murphy, Colleen Murphy, Suzanne Medway, Kate Cameron, Harriet Richardson, Van Cameron, Blaze Cameron and Oliver Richardson.

University Students 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 2019 were:

Amy Rowles - Hawkesbury Institute of the Environment, Western Sydney University
Project Title: Seasonal importance of high elevation habitat for Australian bats

Bryony Palmer - School of Biological Sciences, University of Western Australia
Project Title: Assessing the impact of reintroducing Australian digging mammals

James Peyla - Future Industries Institute, University of South Australia
Project Title: Investigating the long-term effects of ocean acidification on the giant Australian cuttlefish

Jingyi Ding - School of Biological, Earth and Environmental Sciences, University of New South Wales
Project Title: How does the structure of Eucalyptus and Acacia forests vary along a rainfall gradient?: implications of changes in climate

Kate Cornelsen - Centre for Ecosystem Science, University of New South Wales
Project Title: Conserving the greater bilby (*Macrotis lagotis*): breeding bilbies fit-for-release to safeguard their future

Kiarrah Smith - Fenner School of Environment and Society, Australian National University
Project Title: "Reintroduction of the vulnerable New Holland mouse (*Pseudomys novaehollandiae*) to its historic habitat".

Lachlan Pettit - School of Life and Environmental Sciences, University of Sydney
Project Title: How have Australia's large reptile predators adjusted to a toxic invader through time?

Rosalie Harris - Research School of Biology, Australian National University
Project Title: Does sediment shape biodiversity in tropical macroalgal forests?

Sean Krisanski - School of Technology, Environments and Design, University of Tasmania
Project Title: Understanding spotted tail quoll behaviour in relation to habitat structure using UAV remote-sensing techniques

Vanessa Brown - School of Biological Sciences, University of Western Australia
Project Title: Novel seed enhancement technologies to improve restoration success.

2019 - Conservation Group Grants

The Council of the Society carefully considers all requests for grants from conservation groups and places special emphasis on wildlife and the preservation of wildlife habitat.

- **Port Stephens Koala Hospital.** Funds provided went to the purchase of two rescue/triage enclosures designed to carry and transport sick and injured koalas.
- **Hunter Wetland Centre.** Funds were allocated to the Green and Golden Bell Frog Project, in association with the University of Newcastle.

Key Projects

Kinder Partnership

As part of the new Natoons Kinder Surprise animal toy range launch, Ferrero Australia has partnered with the Australian Wildlife Society, which saw the charity secure a sponsorship. The sponsorship helped to fund a number of wildlife conservation programs across Australia and New Zealand, to protect endangered native animals. At the same time, the Kinder Surprise Natoons range helped to educate the next generation on the importance of native wildlife through fun and educative online resources.

Design Centre Enmore – TAFE NSW

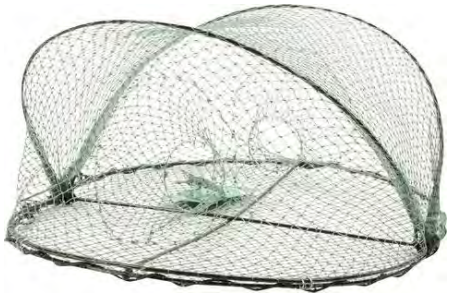
This year we collaborated with a group of TAFE students at Design Centre Enmore who developed a 110th birthday video for the Society that was launched at our Annual Gala Ball.

Queensland Alliance for Platypus

We became members of the Queensland Alliance for Platypus, which consists of key stakeholders and experts in the field of wildlife conservation, and donated the seeding funds to establish to project. The Queensland

Alliance for Platypus has been formed off the back of the success of the Victorian Alliance for Platypus-Safe Yabby Traps. The Victorian success in banning enclosed yabby traps across the state has been a push for other states to step up and do the same. These traps are an animal welfare issue for air-breathing animals, as well as a significant conservation issue for platypuses. Regulations in Queensland are confusing, and we still see horrible deaths of platypuses and rakali in these nets even after the change of regulations in 2015. A complete ban on the sale, use and possession of these nets will take out the confusion, and alternative wildlife-friendly nets can be used.

NSW Platypus and Turtle Alliance
We formed the NSW Platypus and Turtle Alliance, which consists of key stakeholders and experts in the field of wildlife conservation. We met with the NSW Minister for Energy and Environment, Matt Kean MP, who offered us his full support as we work with government agencies to save our native wildlife in all its forms for the next generation of young Australians. The Minister expressed his strong support for our new alliance and promised to give us a 'timeline' for the implementation of a ban on the use of these opera house traps and a net exchange program to help save the platypus and other air-breathing aquatic wildlife from drowning in NSW rivers.



An enclosed yabby trap (opera house net) that we would like to see banned from use and possession.

An open-top yabby net, which air-breathing aquatic wildlife can escape from.

Conferences and Wildlife Research Seminars

The Society's directors attended and contributed to a number of important wildlife conservation conferences, seminars, events and meetings throughout the year.

We attended the Nature Conservation Council Conference in November to engage, network and discuss important issues with key stakeholders in the field of wildlife preservation.

We attended Schools Environment Day at Mittagong NSW in October. It was fantastic to communicate with children from different schools in the southern highlands and teach them about wildlife and the environment.

The National Office Manager attended a seminar titled 'Improve your business through social media and branding' run by the Western Sydney Business Centre. Australian Wildlife Society strives for continuous improvement of professional development.

We attended the National Parks Association dinner in November at Mortdale RSL Club. The Minister for Energy and Environment, Matt Kean, provided an interesting speech pledging the addition of substantial lands to our national parks, amongst other relevant matters.

We also attended the Australian Wildlife Management Society's 32nd annual conference in Darwin. Some 200 delegates from across Australian and New Zealand gathered to share knowledge and exchange ideas with a focus on wildlife management in remote landscapes, with a wide range of papers being presented.

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. The board will conduct a review of our investments in line with ethical issues.

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 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 Taxation Office gift deductible status for any donations over $2. We also engaged with other organisations such as Zero Co to encourage donors to support our wildlife conservation work across Australia.

Appointment of National Office Manager

Ms Megan Fabian was appointed National Office Manager in May 2019. She is passionate about safeguarding wildlife and natural ecosystems for future generations. Megan completed a Bachelor of Natural Science (Animal Science), majoring in Zoology and sub-majoring in Conservation Biology, and a Master of Research Degree in Wildlife Conservation/Citizen Science at Western Sydney University. Megan has been an active member of the Society since 2015 and her future goals for the Society are: (1) to become more well-known in the wider community and established as a prime wildlife conservation organisation, (2) to continue to support wildlife conservationists to protect Australia's flora and fauna, and (3) to educate and encourage the wider community to take action in conserving the natural world for future generations.

A special thankyou to all our members

May I wish every member of the Society a happy, healthy and prosperous 2020. This will mark our 111th anniversary. We 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.

Suzanne Medway AM | PRESIDENT | 31 December 2019

CUMBERLAND PLAIN
CONSERVATION PLAN

The Department of Planning Industry and Environment is developing the Cumberland Plain Conservation Plan to protect threatened ecological communities and species and support the needs of the growing population of Western Sydney.

The Plan will balance future development in Western Sydney through the conservation of critical habitat for threatened species on the Cumberland Plain. Land suitable for future development will be identified, along with other lands that must be avoided for its biodiversity values. In doing so, the Plan will avoid and minimise impacts on threatened ecological communities and species early in the planning process. The conservation program will include new reserves such as national parks, biodiversity stewardship sites and ecological restoration projects that will help to secure long term protection for biodiversity in Western Sydney.

The Department has been actively engaging with stakeholders and the community to help shape the draft Plan.

Directors of the Australian Wildlife Society met the team developing the Plan at one of their community drop-in sessions in September 2019, and we have since met to discuss how organisations such as AWS can support the implementation of the Plan.

Over 170 people attended community drop-in sessions and stakeholder workshops to learn about the Plan and its objectives during this period of early engagement. The team has also been engaging with local Aboriginal communities and Aboriginal Land Councils in Western Sydney through workshops and additional community sessions.

The team developed a survey and an interactive map to allow community and stakeholders to tell them about areas with important biodiversity values in Western Sydney they would like to see protected into the future. The survey and map have now closed, and feedback is being considered to help develop the draft Plan, which will be placed on public exhibition in 2020.

Above: Cumberland Plain Woodland near Appin with lots of woody debris for habitat. Photo: Dayle Green, DPIE

AUSTRALIAN WILDLIFE SOCIETY

Funds a new strategy to save the mountain pygmy-possum from extinction

The mountain pygmy-possum (*Burramys parvus*) is a small nocturnal marsupial, endemic to the alpine regions of Australia, and has been selected as the Society's 2020 wildlife of the year.

Through sponsorship from Kinder (Ferrero Australia), the Society is playing a key role in the preservation of the mountain pygmy-possum by funding a program to help save this species from a changing climate and possible extinction.

The mountain pygmy-possum has adapted to live exclusively in alpine habitat. It is found in highly elevated boulder fields and dense alpine rock crevices of southern Victoria and Kosciuszko National Park in New South Wales. It survives winter by hibernating for up to seven months and is dependent on the insulation provided by snow, and its primary food source, for its survival. Therefore, changes in climate pose a considerable risk to this species.

Hibernation is a seasonal response to changes in climate and food availability. Hibernating mammals endure prolonged intervals of torpor, during which the body temperature, metabolism, and other metabolic functions are significantly reduced.

Hibernating mountain pygmy-possums reduce their body temperatures from the normal active temperature of 36°C to approximately 2°C during torpor bouts. To hibernate successfully, mountain pygmy-possums require temperatures between 1.5°C and 2.5°C. Hibernation can last between five to seven months. The mountain pygmy-

Above: The mountain pygmy-possum is a small, mouse-sized nocturnal marsupial of Australia found in dense alpine rock screes and boulder fields, mainly southern Victoria and around Mount Kosciuszko in Kosciuszko National Park in New South Wales at elevations from 1,300 to 2,230 metres.

The mountain pygmy-possum is mainly grey-brown with paler grey/brown to cream underneath. Its fur is fine but very dense keeping the animal warm in sometimes freezing temperatures. It has a darker ring of fur around its eyes, rounded ears and a long tail.

possum prepares for hibernation by doubling its bodyweight before winter begins. The mountain pygmy-possum will eat as much as it can to store enough energy to last through the duration of its dormant period.

The survival of the mountain pygmy-possum depends not only on its immediate environment but also on the regional migratory patterns of its major food source, the bogong moth (*Agrotis infusa*). Each spring, the bogong moth leaves the heat of their breeding grounds in southern Queensland and north-western New South Wales to fly more than 1000 kilometres until they reach the Australian Alps in south Victoria and Kosciuszko National Park, in summer, where they congregate in huge numbers. Once there, they switch their bodies into a dormant state, not unlike hibernation (in summer this dormancy is called aestivation). The peaks of the boulder fields and rock crevices are used as their aestivation sites. A few months later, the moths migrate back north to breed as their larvae cannot tolerate cold conditions.

The mountain pygmy-possum is the largest of Australia's five species of pygmy-possum, yet it only weighs 45 grams and could easily fit in the palm of your hand.

Hibernation, the insulation provided by snow and the migratory patterns of the bogong moth, play a key role in the mountain pygmy-possum's survival. Dr Hayley Bates, from the University of New South Wales, stresses that if there isn't enough snowfall or snow melts early due to a warming event, as climate modelling predicts, the cold air will penetrate the alpine rock crevices and adversely affect the survival of the mountain pygmy-possum. Temperatures below 0.6°C will wake a mountain pygmy-possum from its hibernation and put it at risk of shivering to death. Furthermore, due to the migratory patterns of its food source, if woken early its food source will not be present, and therefore the mountain pygmy-possum is also at risk of starving to death. If the mountain pygmy-possum experiences two consecutive winters of decreased snowfall, warming climate and non-present key food source, then the species could collapse and go extinct. As a result, in New South Wales, the mountain pygmy-possum is listed as an Endangered Species on Schedule 1 of the *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995* and is classified as critically endangered on the International Union for Conservation of Nature's Red List of Threatened Species. Its threatened status is one of the reasons why the Australian Wildlife Society selected the mountain pygmy-possum as its 2020 wildlife of the year.

To combat the effects of climate change, scientists from the University of New South Wales have established a breeding program at Secret Creek Sanctuary, based on evidence provided by the fossil record of its ancestors.

The Australian Wildlife Society is helping to fund this program to help save the mountain pygmy-possum from extinction. The fossil records show that the prime habitat of the mountain pygmy-possum's ancestors was rainforest environments.

As Australia dried out, some animals adapted, however some, including the ancestors of the pygmy-possum, were so connected to the rainforest environment that they followed the environmental shift eastward. The program aims to breed the critically endangered mountain pygmy-possums at warmer, lowland rainforest conditions and lower altitude of 1000 metres. This strategy has been implemented to assist the mountain pygmy-possum to adapt, shift and acclimatise to a more temperate climate, like its ancestral habitat. This strategy will provide the mountain pygmy-possums with the opportunity to adapt to a warmer temperature, providing it with the chance for survival and preventing it from becoming a potential victim of climate change.

While there are many unanswered questions and there is still so much more to learn about this species, the breeding program at Secret Creek Sanctuary provides the opportunity to study the animal and its breeding behaviours at a warmer temperature. If the program is a success and it can be demonstrated that the mountain pygmy-possum can establish a foothold in a more temperate environment, UNSW Professor Mike Archer predicts that other threatened animals could be preserved using the same strategy.

The mountain pygmy-possum is the only marsupial in the world known to store food and hibernate for extended periods.

Australian Wildlife Society

Threatened Wildlife Photographic Competition

This is a national competition that awards and promotes the conservation of threatened or endangered Australian wildlife through the medium of photography.

The Australian Wildlife Society invites photographers to raise the plight of threatened or endangered wildlife across Australia. Our Society aims to encourage the production of photographs taken in Australia, by Australians, which reflects the diversity and uniqueness of threatened or endangered Australian wildlife.

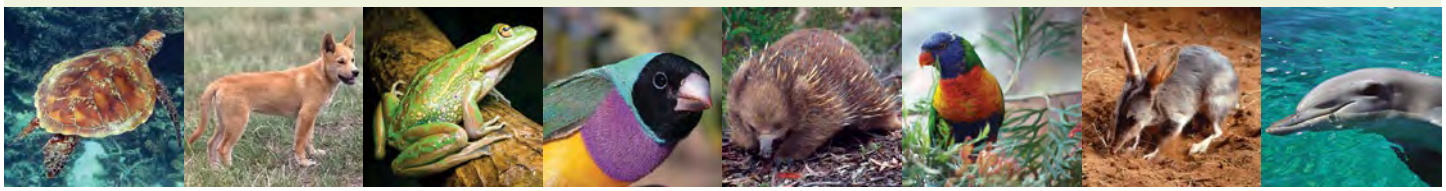
An annual judge's prize of $1,000 will be awarded
An annual people's choice prize of $500 will be awarded

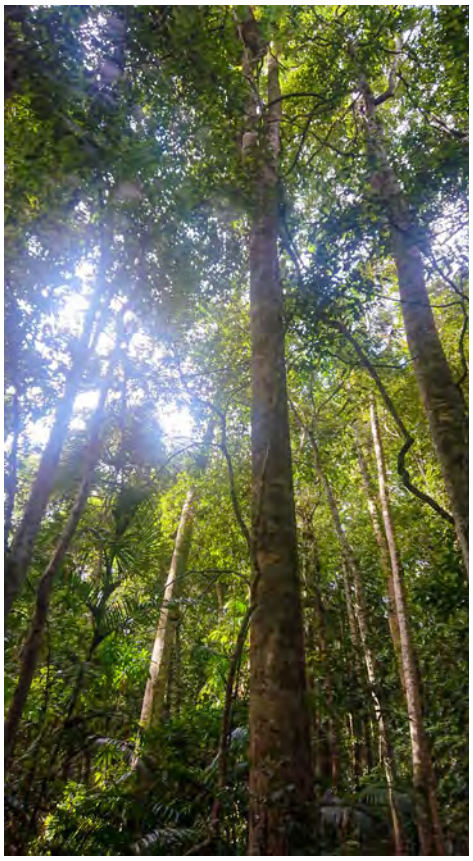
Rules of entry:

1. The subject of each entry must be a threatened or endangered Australian species of wildlife – fauna or flora
2. The entry must be the work of the entrant
3. The photograph must have been taken within the twelve months prior to the date of entry
4. The name of the threatened or endangered species, photographer and date taken must be in the 'file name' of each photograph submitted
5. Entrants retain the copyright to their entries but accord the Australian Wildlife Society (AWS) the right to use them in any of its publications or any reprint arising therefrom
6. Entries to be submitted by electronic means to – **photo@aws.org.au**
7. All entries must be accompanied by a short paragraph (maximum 150 words) describing the status of the endangered species, the location of the photograph and the reasons and circumstances for choosing to photograph it
8. Directors of AWS or their families are ineligible to submit entries
9. There shall be no charge for entry and entrants may submit more than one entry
10. The final result is at the discretion of the Directors and will be announced in August each year.

CLOSING DATE FOR ENTRIES: 30 JUNE

ONLINE VOTING FOR THE PEOPLE'S CHOICE WILL BE OPEN FROM 1 JULY TO 30 JULY





A Day in the Atherton Tableland

Gregory Byrnes

In December 2019, I joined a small group led by an internationally experienced biologist who drove us from Cairns up through the dry woodland to the rainforest.

Our first stop was the gigantic cathedral fig tree (*Ficus virens*) with its impressive network of aerial roots reminiscent of gothic cathedral flying buttresses and slender columns. One keen-eyed member of our party noticed, among the long black vines and sticks on the forest floor, something slightly different: a snake! Our guide identified it as a slaty-grey snake (*Stegonotus cucullatus*), a harmless species which seems to benefit from its resemblance to the red-bellied black snake (*Pseudechis porphyriacus*) and yet, if handled, it will strike repeatedly.

In a drizzle, we continued to Lake Barrine, an extinct volcano full of rainwater, and enjoyed a walk among tall bull kauri pines (*Agathis microstachya*). Unlike pines in cold climates with their needle-like leaves, these pines have broad leaves. Two well-known ones at Lake Barrine are about 50 metres tall and estimated to be a thousand years old. On various trunks we observed some reptiles: a Boyd's forest dragon (*Lophosaurus boydii,* formerly *Hypsilurus boydii*), an unusual species that does not seek warmth from the sun and uses a low energy waiting style of predation; and a fat-tailed gecko (probably the Eastern, *Diplodactylus platyurus*) whose tail stores fat and also acts as a plug when it hides in a hole, blocking predators out and keeping moisture in.

The sun came out, and shafts of light brightened patches of the canopy and leaf-littered ground. A curious yellow lifeform was pointed out on a rotting log: slime mould. Once thought to be fungi they are now classed in the *Protista*, singles cells that sometimes gather together as if one organism. When studied overtime or on an accelerated video the whole 'colony' moves and changes shape.

Around dusk, we explored the banks of a river in hopes of sighting platypus. Ripples at the water's edge and rapid movement along the overhanging bank were promising, however a white-tipped tail confirmed that this was the water rat or rakali (*Hydromys chrysogaster*). Unlike most other native species, the rakali can kill the introduced cane toad (*Rhinella marina*) and eat its heart and liver without being harmed. We continued our search, aware of the microbats skimming over the water, and at a different bend in the river, our patience was rewarded with a clearly identified pair of these elegant muscly monotremes (*Ornithorhynchus anatinus*), diving and resurfacing repeatedly.

Above left: The Curtain Fig Tree is of the strangler fig species. Normally these figs germinate on top of another tree and try to grow roots into the ground. Once this important step is accomplished, the fig will grow vigorously, finally kill the hosting tree and then grow on independently. In this case, the hosting tree tilted towards a neighbouring tree, and the fig also grew around that one. Its curtain of aerial roots drops 15 metres to the ground.

Above middle: Boyd's forest dragon is a living dinosaur, with a large wedge-shaped head, plates on its cheeks and spines on its head, back and on its chin.

Above right: A beam of sunlight shining through the canopy.

Slime mould on a rotting log.

After nightfall, we walked along a quiet road to study nocturnal wildlife at the forest edge. The first, surprisingly, was a musky rat-kangaroo (*Hypsiprymnodon moschatus*), because this smallest of macropods is usually only active by day; he may have been delayed while going home to his nest. Then the sightings came quickly one after another: a red-legged pademelon (*Thylogale stigmaticus*) in its typical habitat; a plump coppery brushtail possum (*Trichosurus johnstoni*) with its distinctive orange-gold fur; and several green ringtail possums (*Pseudochirops archeri*), one with a baby on her back. The green appearance of their fur is due to a blend of black, yellow and white in the fine hairs. Not to be forgotten, of course, are the spectacled flying foxes (*Pteropus conspicillatus*) that were flapping slowly over the canopy or hanging in the foliage. In recent years they have suffered from heatwaves which wipe them out in their thousands. These fruit bats play a vital role in dispersing rainforest seeds over a large area and pollinating flowering plants. Without these fruit bats, the gene pool and health of Australia's native forests would not exist.

It is remarkable, once your ears have adjusted to the generally silent background, how much noise the rainforest creatures make, as they pull at and nibble twigs, leaves and fruit, and as half-eaten pieces fall to the ground. With practice, it must become easy to locate them in the dark. Yet, it was not completely dark, because clusters of fireflies (family *Lampyridae*) among the leaves were twinkling like birthday candles.

It was a delightful excursion with a knowledgeable guide and charming companions.

(Thanks to Wait A While Tours, Cairns.)

Gregory Byrnes

Kauri pine at Lake Barrine, Atherton Tableland, Queensland.

The Curtain Fig Tree is a heritage-listed tree at Curtain Fig Tree Road, Yungaburra, Tablelands Region, Queensland. It is one of the largest trees in Tropical North Queensland, Australia, and one of the best known attractions on the Atherton Tableland.

2019 Australian Wildlife Society

University of NSW Wildlife Ecology Research Scholarship

The 2019 Australian Wildlife Society (AWS) Wildlife Ecology Research Scholarship was awarded to UNSW School of Biological, Earth and Environmental Sciences PhD student Tahneal Hawke for her research on platypus (*Ornithorhynchus anatinus*), assessing long-term changes in platypus populations and the current impacts of river regulation on platypus population dynamics.

Another dam diet: the impact of river regulation on platypus macroinvertebrate food sources

Tahneal Hawke

Introduction

The platypus is a unique semi-aquatic monotreme endemic to rivers and creeks of eastern Australia. There has been emerging evidence of declining platypus numbers, particularly in the Murray-Darling Basin, which has resulted in the recent IUCN Red Listing of 'Near Threatened'.

I have been studying platypus populations in rivers across the east coast of New South Wales and Victoria for the last three years. Given that the distribution of the platypus overlaps significantly with Australia's most regulated rivers, I have been attempting to assess the impacts of dams and river regulation on platypus populations, using a novel method of DNA metabarcoding of cheek pouch samples, to assess the impacts of river regulation on platypus diet across their range.

The platypus feeds exclusively on macroinvertebrates, which have been shown to be heavily impacted by altered flows and temperatures on regulated rivers. Dietary studies of platypuses are limited, given the difficulty of underwater observational studies on a primarily nocturnal species. Additionally, food items in the gut contents and faeces of the platypus are mostly unidentifiable. Platypuses store partially masticated food in their cheek pouches inside their mouth; consequently, most dietary studies have been primarily reliant on manual cheek pouch investigations. My research, thus far, has discovered significant detrimental impacts of heavily altered flow regimes downstream of large dams to platypus populations. However, we are waiting for the results of the DNA sample sequencing to determine the impact of river regulation on platypus diets.

Photo of Tahneal setting nets to capture platypuses.

Methods

We captured platypuses using either mesh or fyke nets, for collection and examination of cheek pouch material. Check pouch samples were collected from 130 platypuses in New South Wales and Victoria.

In New SouthWales, samples were collected from upstream of the

A platypus captured during studies on the impacts of river regulation.

Jindabyne Dam on the Thredbo River, and downstream of the dam on the Snowy River.

In Victoria, samples were collected from upstream and downstream of Dartmouth Dam on the Mitta Mitta River, and the free-flowing Ovens River.

Cheek pouch samples will be assessed using DNA metabarcoding, a method shown to be highly effective for species identification. Genetic material is extracted, amplified, and sequenced for taxonomic identification, obtained by matching sequences to reference DNA barcodes in the Barcode of Life Database (BOLD). We are currently waiting for the results of the sample sequencing.

Next steps

Once sample sequencing is complete, the dietary composition will be compared between free-flowing and regulated rivers, upstream and downstream of dams. The dietary composition will also be compared to estimates of population sizes and metrics of individual condition, to evaluate if there is a relationship between river regulation, diet, and health. The outcomes of this research will have important implications for the management of regulated rivers. If the composition of the platypus diet differs upstream and downstream of dams, it may indicate that the impacts of river regulation on macroinvertebrates are a causal factor in their decline downstream of dams. Identifying factors that contribute to these declines is critical for the future of the species and will allow environmental managers to reassess the timing and volume of flows to benefit macroinvertebrate populations and platypuses.

Local platypus knowledge from members of the community is also highly beneficial for providing information about the presence and absence of platypuses across these waterways. Uploading sightings to the Atlas of Living Australia or the platypusSPOT app can assist in ongoing platypus research by contributing to our understanding of their distribution, habitat requirements, and threats.

Collecting the cheek pouch sample from a captured platypus.

Tahneal Hawke processing a captured platypus.

2019 Australian Wildlife Society

UTS Wildlife Ecology Research Scholarship

The 2019 Australian Wildlife Society (AWS) Wildlife Ecology Research Scholarship has been awarded to UTS School of Life Sciences PhD student Laura Michie for her research on mitigation of cold water pollution using novel thermal curtain.

Thermal pollution in Australian freshwater ecosystems; effects on native fish populations

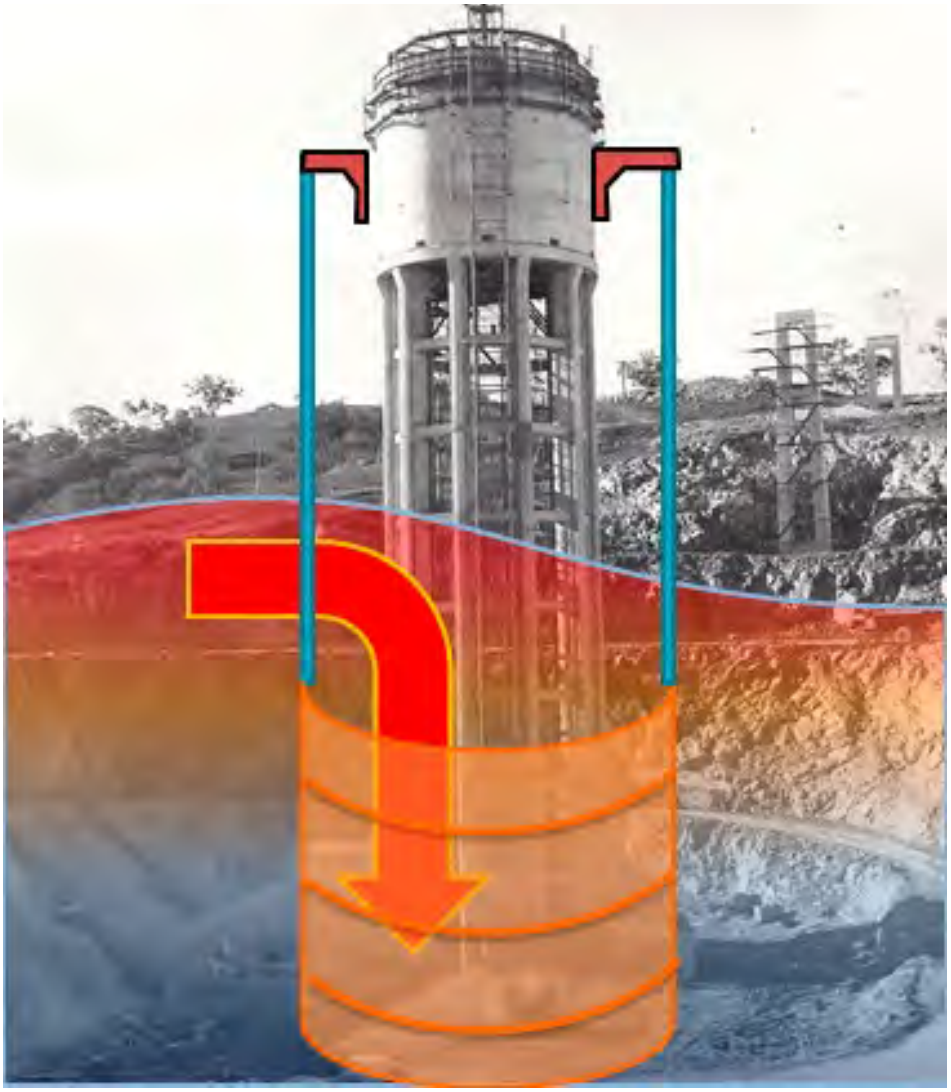
Laura Michie

Freshwater ecosystems compose such a tiny part of the earth's surface but are crucial in supporting the global economy, the environment and human survival. Wildlife decline in freshwater ecosystems has occurred at much faster rates than in oceans or on land, with Australia being no exception. When we think about issues that may be causing these declines in fish populations, cold water pollution probably isn't the first thing that comes to mind. In Australia, this largely understudied phenomena affects large stretches of river, particularly in the Murray–Darling Basin.

Cold water pollution occurs downstream of large dams when water is released from the bottom of the water column. Due to the depth of water within dams, this water can be much cooler than what is naturally found in the rivers. Water released from these large dams can be as much as 12-16 °C cooler than natural river temperatures.

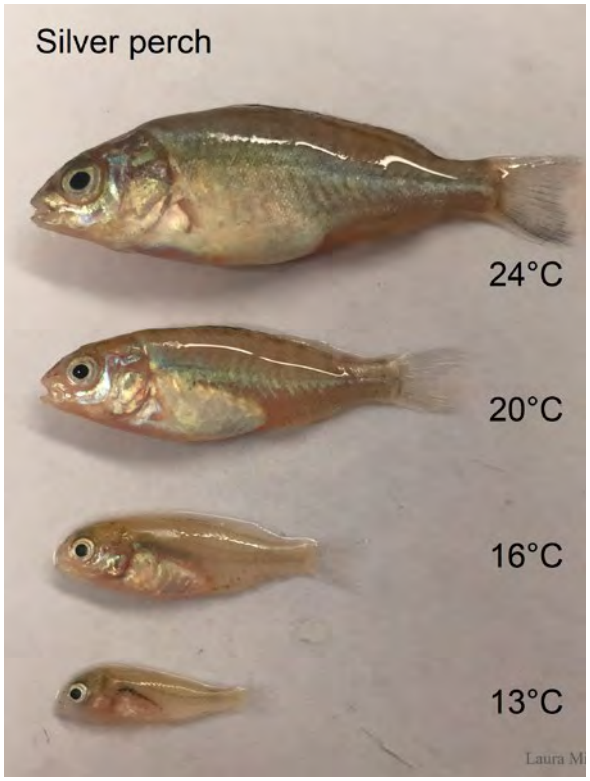
This is a particularly large problem in Australia where native fish populations are adapted to a typically warm climate. In Australia, population declines of endangered species of fish such as Murray cod, silver perch, freshwater catfish and trout cod have been partially attributed to cold water pollution. Reduced water temperatures can affect fish populations in a number of ways, causing mortality, reduced reproductive success, altered metabolic function, reduced potential for growth and reduced swimming ability.

For my research, I was interested in understanding how to mitigate the issue of cold water pollution in Australian freshwater ecosystems for the benefit of our native fish populations. To do this, I studied the Macquarie River in central-western New South Wales downstream of Burrendong Dam. This river system was of particular interest as a novel, cost-effective 'thermal curtain' has been retro-fitted at Burrendong Dam to reduce the cold water pollution that has historically occurred downstream. This curtain works by releasing warm water from the surface of the dam into the river downstream.



Simple schematic of the thermal curtain in place at Burrendong Dam.

The thermal curtain was improving river temperatures downstream;



Average size of silver perch after thirty days of exposure to a range of water temperatures.

however, we had no idea if these improvements were significant enough to benefit fish populations. Further, we recorded dramatic reductions in water temperature (as much as 10°C) downstream of the dam when surface and bottom water releases were used interchangeably. These rapid changes in water temperature are termed thermal shock; although we know thermal shock can be detrimental to fish, very little is understood about the ability of Australian species of fish to cope with the stress associated with thermal shock.

Thanks to the generosity of the Australian Wildlife Society, I was able to conduct some experiments on Australian native fish larvae to better understand how they respond to thermal pollution in their natural habitats. The experiments focused on the two aspects of thermal pollution that were observed in the Macquarie River; chronic exposure to reduced water temperatures and the rapid reductions in water temperature, or thermal shock.

In the first round of experiments, growth and development of three species of Australian freshwater fish including trout cod and silver perch, both listed as Endangered, was severely stunted by cold water pollution. The fish were exposed for thirty days to water temperatures ranging from 13°C to 24°C, representing severe cold water pollution to natural river temperatures. Fish exposed to the cold water were more than half the size of fish exposed to natural river temperatures. The results reiterated that water temperatures need to be as close to natural river temperatures as possible to benefit fish populations fully.

To follow on from this growth analysis of fish affected by cold water pollution, I have been able to conduct an analysis of how this growth has been reflected in fish otoliths. Otoliths are a bone within the ear of fish; microstructure analysis of this bone is a technique frequently used by fish biologists to attain valuable ecological information of fish life-history events and measuring growth history during early life stages of fish.

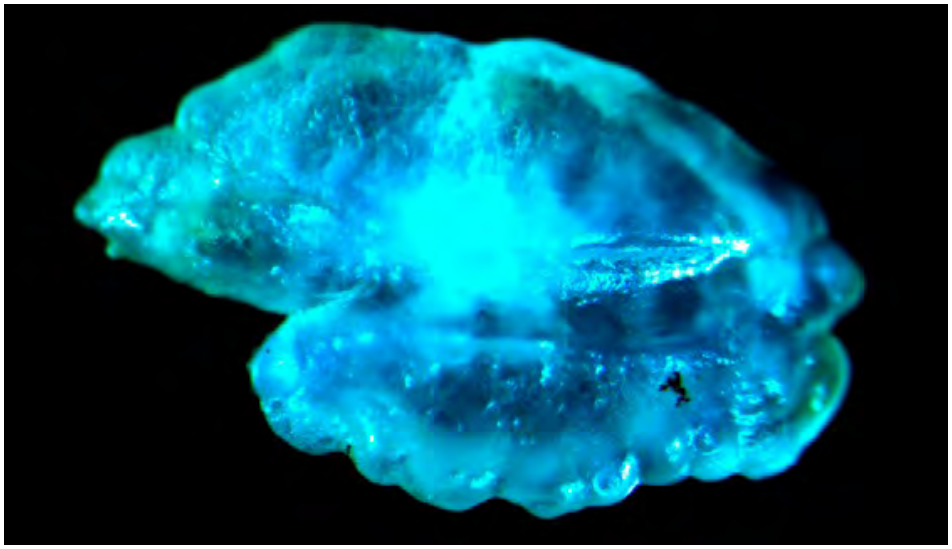
My results showed that the growth and development of otoliths were affected in cold water pollution conditions. This information is useful for researchers studying fish to determine whether they have been affected by cold water pollution at some point within their lifetime and determine if this affected their growth and development

In the thermal shock experiments Murray cod, silver perch and golden perch experienced high rates of mortality and significantly impaired swimming ability. I assessed a range of magnitude cold shocks (-10, -8, -6 and -4°C), and found that more severe reductions in temperature caused higher rates of mortality and resulted in greater impairment to swimming ability. Despite this, even small reductions in temperature still affected fish negatively, particularly younger fish.

Results from this research emphasise the need for management of this ecological problem. Infrastructure such as the thermal curtain at Burrendong Dam is a potential option, but their potential to cause thermal shock needs to be managed. Even when thermal pollution is of a magnitude that is not lethal to native fish, it still affects their swimming ability and growth in a manner that may cause indirect mortalities as fish may be more susceptible to stressors such as predation.

My project has provided essential information about the thermal tolerances of these valuable freshwater species. It has great potential to guide management plans to assist in the direct conservation of these species.

I would like to sincerely thank the Australian Wildlife Society for the contribution of funding which has made this research possible.


Example of golden perch otolith used for analysis.


Laura Michie

2019 Australian Wildlife Society

University of Western Sydney Wildlife Ecology Research Scholarship

The 2019 Australian Wildlife Society (AWS) Wildlife Ecology Research Scholarship has been awarded to Western Sydney University, School of Science, PhD student Kristen Petrov for her research on the ecology of the imperilled Bellinger River snapping turtle (*Myuchelys georgesi*).

Turtles in Trouble: the decline of the Bellinger River snapping turtle (*Myuchelys georgesi*)

Kristen Petrov

In freshwater ecosystems, turtles fill multiple ecological roles as herbivores, omnivores, top predators and scavengers, and historically occurred at high population densities. Their ability to consume large quantities of carrion (dead animal matter) makes them excellent decomposers, and facilitates nutrient cycling within an ecosystem, helping to maintain water quality.

The persistence of turtles over the past 200 million years has been attributed to their long lifespans (i.e. 20-100 years), high reproductive output, and morphological defence against predation (i.e. protective shell). Despite these adaptations, turtles are among the most threatened vertebrate groups, with 61 percent of the world's 356 turtle species threatened or extinct. The slow maturation time of turtles means that threats to each of the life-stages of turtles (i.e. adult mortality or nest mortality) can be detrimental to species survival. Human mediated environmental change, including habitat destruction and modification, invasive species, overharvesting, climate change, pollution and disease, have all contributed to the plight of turtle populations globally.

Australian freshwater turtles are not immune to the global decline, with almost half of the 25 extant species of freshwater turtles in Australia listed as Vulnerable, Endangered, or Critically Endangered.

Juvenile Bellinger River snapping turtle. Photo: Kristen Petrov

The Bellinger River snapping turtle is one Australian freshwater species threatened with extinction. The Bellinger River snapping turtle is a species of short-necked turtle, endemic only to the Bellinger River, in northern New South Wales, Australia. The population was once estimated to be ~ 4500 individuals and was considered stable with no apparent risk of extinction. However, in 2015, the population experienced a mass mortality event likely caused by a novel nidovirus, termed the Bellinger River virus. The Bellinger River virus affected only adult turtles and killed the majority of the breeding population. No other co-occurring turtle species was affected by the disease, including

the Murray River turtle (*Emydura macquarii*) or common long-necked turtle (*Chelodina longicollis*). Current population estimates suggest ~ 150 Bellinger River snapping turtles remain in the Bellinger River, most of which are juveniles. The rapid decline of more than 90 percent of the historical population places the species at imminent threat of extinction. With a wild population comprised predominately of juveniles, the road to recovery will be long, as juveniles of the species must survive to adulthood to reproduce.

Conservation efforts, including a captive breeding program, are underway for the species, and understanding the threats to the remaining Bellinger River snapping turtles is crucial to the species' survival.

One of the ongoing threats is the presence of the non-native Murray River turtle (*Emydura macquarii*), which was first detected in the Bellinger River in the 1990s. Since the decline of the Bellinger River snapping turtle, the Murray River turtle has become the dominate turtle species in the river (~ 500 individuals inhabiting the river) and is a primary competitor to the native Bellinger River snapping turtle. Both species have similar diets and overlap in habitat in the Bellinger River, and this risk of competition may threaten the Bellinger River snapping turtle.

The Murray River turtle also hybridises with the native Bellinger River snapping turtle in the Bellinger River. The low number of Bellinger River snapping turtles and the high abundance of non-native Murray River turtles may mean that the incidence of hybridisation, and the number of hybrid individuals, will increase. As the current Bellinger River snapping turtle juveniles reach maturity; they will be less likely to encounter an opposite-sex turtle of their kind.

The recovery of the Bellinger River snapping turtle in the wild will take years, but maintaining the current population and evaluating remaining threats is ongoing through collaborative efforts of the recovery team, including the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, and Western Sydney University.

By understanding the threats to the long-term survival of the Bellinger River snapping turtle, this project can guide conservation and management strategies and help prevent the extinction of this iconic Australian turtle species.

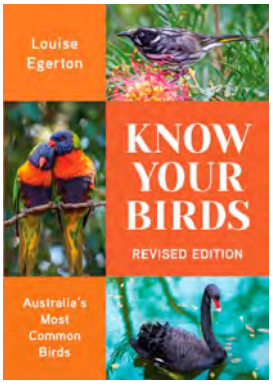
Western Sydney University PhD student Kristen Petrov, with Co-Founder and Director of OzGreen, Sue Lennox.

Book Reviews

The Magical Blue Forest by Georgina Kenyon, Design by David Walker

The Magical Blue Forest is about a secret forest in the Blue Mountains that comes alive at night. The book takes you and owl on a magical journey through the forest where you will meet many friends along the way, from feathered and frilled to furry and fluttery. A heart-warming story about living in harmony with the forest and the importance of friendship. The book concludes with an informative sentence on each friend that was meet along the way.

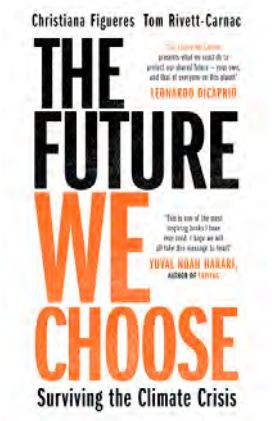
Publisher: Spotted Quoll Books | RRP: $17.00



Know Your Birds by Louise Egerton

Know Your Birds is a compilation of Australia's best-known Aves, those you are most likely to see around cities and towns. There are 80 entries, each of which features a portrait of a well-known Australian bird. The accompanying text is all about how these birds live: their traits, habits, social lives and domestic arrangements. You will be amazed at just how different from one another their lifestyles are. The author, Louise Egerton, completed her BSc in Botany and Zoology at the University of New England. Louise's first edition of *Know Your Birds*, won a Whitley's Award for the best beginner's guide. Today she lives in the Southern Highlands, New South Wales where she is involved in a number of local environmental activities.

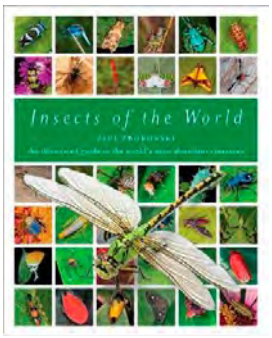
Publisher: New Holland Publishers | RRP: $26.99



The Future We Choose: Surviving the Climate Crisis by Christiana Figures and Tom Rivett-Carnac

The Future We Choose is an empowering, passionate and practical call to action for a sustainable future. The authors, Christiana Figures and Tom Rivett-Carnac, outline two crucial scenarios for our future. The first scenario being, how life on Earth will be by 2050 if we fail to meet the Paris Agreement climate targets. The second scenario details how each of us must confront the climate crisis head-on, with determination and optimism. With a focus on creating environmental and social change, *The Future We Choose* ought to be a key reference and centrepiece on everyone's coffee table. We can solve our climate emergency, but we must act now!

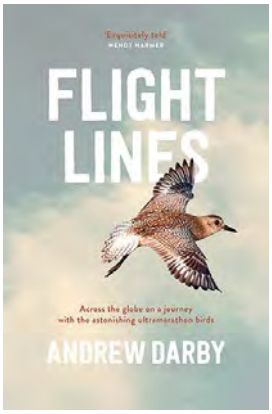
Publisher: Allen & Unwin | RRP: $27.99



Insects of the World by Paul Zborowski

This wonderfully illustrated book is essentially a photographic guide to the fascinating, diverse insect groups of the world. It encompasses all insect orders, including butterflies, dragonflies, beetles, ants, and bees. Each image was taken in the wild, in the insects' natural surroundings. Each image is presented with a caption that starts the process of discovery. *Insects of the World* is an essential reference for bug enthusiasts everywhere, from children fascinated with creepy crawlies right through to academics.

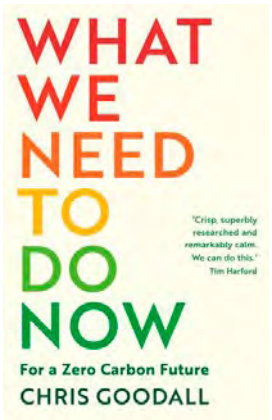
Publisher: New Holland Publishers | RRP: $49.99



Flight Lines by Andrew Darby

Flight Lines is an extraordinary non-fiction narrative about one of Australia's migratory shorebirds, combining personal narrative, vivid imagery, and fascinating new science. The author, Andrew Darby, follows the journey of two grey plovers who take previously uncharted, ultramarathon flights from the southern coast of Australia to Arctic breeding grounds, clocking thousands of non-stop kilometres. These tiny birds accomplish astonishing feats of endurance despite predators, typhoons and exhaustion. However, the positive power of citizen science radiates throughout *Flight Lines*, as the hard work of the people Andrew meets, and satellite tracking technologies, help make real headway in preserving the habitats of shorebirds for years to come.

Publisher: Allen & Unwin | RRP: $32.99

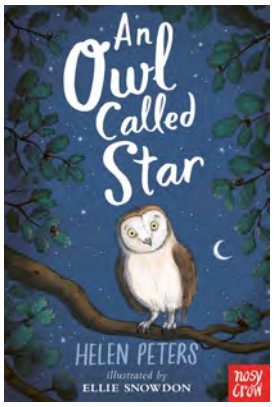


What We Need to Do Now for a Zero Carbon Future by Chris Goodall

What We Need To Do Now is an urgent, practical and inspiring book that signals a green new deal for Britain. The UK has declared a 'climate emergency' and pledged to become carbon neutral by 2050. So how to get there? Drawing on actions, policies, and technologies already emerging around the world, Chris Goodall sets out the ways to achieve this and proposes ideas such as farming and eating differently, encouraging plant-based alternatives to meat. Is this a book that Australian's can draw inspiration from? A commendable read if you are preparing to implement action for a sustainable future.

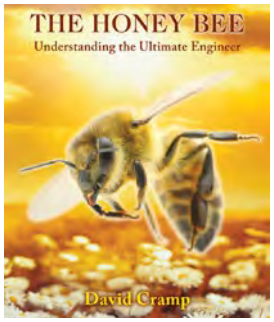
Publisher: Allen & Unwin | RRP: $24.99

Book Reviews



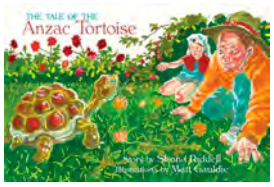
An Owl Called Star by Helen Peters, Illustrated by Ellie Snowdon

Jasmine and Tom are excited to find a little barn owl, called Star, in the woods near Jasmine's farm. But the owl is injured and starving and therefore Jasmine and Tom race to save his life. As Star recovers, Jasmine realises that this beautiful bird is also a deadly hunter. Has Jasmine taken on more than she can handle?
Publisher: Allen & Unwin | RRP: $12.99



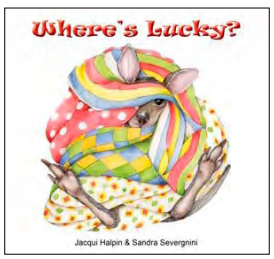
The Honey Bee: Understanding the Ultimate Engineer by David Cramp

Author and beekeeper, David Cramp, explores the origin and evolution of the honey bee. He explains the complexity of the hive, the honey-making process, and the role of the queen, workers, and drones. The honey bee, an often underestimated insect, possesses sophisticated language and navigation systems and can memorise landmarks on an internal brain map. *The Honey Bee* also explains the amazing way in which flowers attract bees, the importance of pollination and the vital role the honey bee plays in the overall well-being of the planet.
Publisher: Buzzgroup | RRP: $29.99



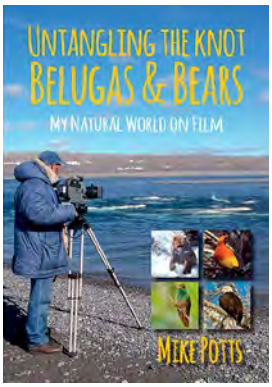
The Tale of the Anzac Tortoise by Shona Riddell, Illustrations by Matt Gauldie

Based on the true story of one of the longest-living and quietest World War I survivors, this is an epic tale of soldiers, nurses, sacrifice and kindness, when siblings Matthew and Marama find themselves transported back in time to the shores of Gallipoli through an encounter with a tortoise. The original tortoise who inspired the story was plucked by a wounded soldier from the battlefield and then gifted to a nurse, who brought him home.
Publisher: Harper Entertainment | RRP: $19.99



Where's Lucky? by Jacqui Halpin and Sandra Severgnini

What a delightful book – it is an amusing tale about the delights and difficulties of caring for orphaned joeys. Lucky the orphaned swamp wallaby has a knack for getting into mischief. While Theresa and Tony care for him and their mob of other joeys, Lucky gets into lots of places he should not be. Where will they find Lucky next? A percentage of the income from this book will be donated to Our Haven Wildlife Shelter in Golden Beach, Victoria, which was the inspiration for this story.
Publisher: Exisle Publishing | RRP: $24.95



Untangling the Knot: Belugas and Bears by Mike Potts

Untangling the Knot provides an in-depth look into what is involved in capturing the sequences needed for a natural history film, using comprehensive diaries and over 200 photographs. The author, Mike Potts, describes the hardships of living and working for weeks in remote regions, avoiding tropical diseases, the onslaught of forest insects, long hours of waiting from dawn to dusk, and of frustration and disappointment when the elements or circumstances conspired against him. In a career spanning 35 years, several of the programs in which Mike was involved have won major awards. Mike has also worked with Sir David Attenborough while filming *Attenborough in Paradise* and describes this experience as a career highlight.
Publisher: Whittlespublishing | RRP: $39.99

A Tribute to the Reptiles and Amphibian of Australia and New Zealand Edited by Chris Williams and Chelsea Maier

A Tribute to the Reptiles and Amphibians of Australia and New Zealand showcases 125 of the best photographs of the countries' most spectacular reptiles and frogs, from the desert spadefoot to the golden-tailed gecko, and from the collard whipsnake to the Clarence River turtle. Twenty-five of the best photographers specialising in herpetology each submitted five of their most inspiring images, resulting in a unique and captivating publication. Reading like a field guide, this beautiful book includes details of each species' natural history and distribution. Come along and enjoy the adventure.
Publisher: New Holland Publishers | RRP: $49.99

Into the Forest by Christiane Dorion, Illustrated by Jane McGuinness

The earth is rich with magnificent forests and spectacular communities of plants and animals that occupy them. Each habitat has something unique to offer and is invaluable. Find out the important role that forests play for both wildlife and people. Readers of *Into the Forest* will find out how trees change colour through seasons, how to plant their trees and the importance of protecting habitats through sustainability. Step into the forest and discover the wildlife that you might not have known was there. From carnivorous plants and hibernating mammals to birdlife that soars throughout the forests, this book will provide you with a truly amazing experience.
Publisher: Bloomsbury | RRP: $24.99

Australian Wildlife Society
University Research Grants

INSTRUCTIONS FOR APPLICANTS

The Australian Wildlife Society University Research Grants are scholarships offered to honours or postgraduate students at Australian universities. Each year, ten $1,500 grants are awarded. **Applicants must be a member of the Society,** student membership is free and you can join through our website www.aws.org.au. Please send a copy of your student ID to info@aws.org.au

Grants are available for research projects of direct relevance to the conservation of Australian wildlife - plant or animal. Grants may be used for the purchase of equipment and consumables, travel expenses related to field research, or attendance at conferences at which you are presenting your work. The grant is paid directly to the student.

PREPARING YOUR APPLICATION FOR A GRANT

Applications should be a maximum of 3-4 pages (12 point font), including a brief CV and should be set out under the headings below (a reference list is not required).

APPLICATIONS EXCEEDING FOUR PAGES WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED.

Introduction: Briefly introduce the background to your research topic, specify the project's aims, and outline its importance to the conservation of wildlife.

Methods: Briefly outline your proposed methodology. We require only sufficient detail to demonstrate that your aims are achievable. Remember that the assessors may not be familiar with your field of research. You must also indicate that you have obtained (or at least applied for) any relevant research licences, permits or approvals (including animal ethics).

Schedule: Outline a proposed timeframe for the completion of your project, listing major milestones, including the submission of a final report to the AWS.

Budget: Itemise the expenses involved in conducting your research. Any funds already secured from other sources must also be declared. (This will not reduce your chances of success, provided there are necessary items in your budget that are not yet funded).

Brief CV: The final page of your application should consist of a short CV, which should demonstrate your ability to produce results of a high standard within a limited timeframe. Also include the details of two referees who can comment on the proposed project, one of whom should be your academic supervisor. A current postal address is to be provided.

Please prepare your application as a single 'Word' document, and submit it as an email attachment to info@aws.org.au. For convenience, it would be helpful to name your file according to the format: 'Your Name AWS Grant Year', e.g. 'Joe Bloggs AWS Grant 2020'.

CLOSING DATE: APPLICATIONS ARE DUE BY 31ST MAY EACH YEAR.
APPLICANTS WILL BE NOTIFIED BY MAIL IN JULY.

CONDITIONS OF SPONSORSHIP

Recipients of Australian Wildlife Society grants will be requested to acknowledge the Society's contribution in all publications and presentations arising from their project. In addition, recipients will be required to submit a brief report on their project to the Society for use in the Society's magazine, *Australian Wildlife.*

WILDLIFE PRESERVATION SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA LIMITED
TRADING AS AUSTRALIAN WILDLIFE SOCIETY

YOUR LEGACY FOR AUSTRALIA'S WILDLIFE

The Wild Life Preservation Society of Australia was founded in 1909 by a group of enthusiastic bushwalkers. Our founders suggested the need for such a group in a talk with the Naturalists' Society of NSW. The Swedish Consul-General for Australia, Count Birger Mörner, organised the first preliminary discussion in the Consulate on 11 May 1909. As an outcome of this discussion, it was decided to call a public meeting for the formation of the Society. Fifty people attended and were enrolled as the first members of the Society. Within one week, the newly formed Wild Life Preservation Society of Australia had grown to more than one hundred members.

The Provisional Committee worked hard and in the same year, the inaugural meeting adopted a constitution and elected the first chairman, the Hon. F E Winchcombe MLC, head of a large firm of woolbrokers, skin and hide merchants. There were six women on the first council of 25 people, and some who were later to become famous as naturalists.

Our Society pioneered the recognition of the need for legal protection for our animals and plants.

Today we are known as the Australian Wildlife Society (AWS). We are a national not-for-profit conservation organisation. Our mission is to conserve Australia's wildlife (flora and fauna) through education and involvement of the community. We are dedicated to the conservation of Australian wildlife in all its forms through environmental education, political lobbying, advocacy, and hands-on conservation work. AWS is a registered company limited by guarantee with ASIC and is responsible for complying with all its regulations. AWS is funded through membership fees, sponsorships, partnerships, donations, and bequests. The Society is managed and controlled by an elected board of ten volunteer directors. We hold regular monthly meetings, on the first Wednesday of each month in Sydney, to discuss important wildlife conservation matters and make a number of significant decisions.

Furthermore, we act as a watchdog and provide advice to government agencies and institutions regarding environmental and conservation issues concerning all aspects of wildlife preservation. Our Society has always known that a battle is never really won until the victory is enshrined in legislation. We have always tried to convince politicians of the necessity to include the preservation of Australia's wildlife and the conservation of its vital habitat in all their planning, policies and discussions.

YOUR BEQUEST WILL HELP US TO CONTINUE TO PRESERVE AUSTRALIA'S WILDLIFE FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

HOW YOUR BEQUEST WILL BE USED

By remembering AWS with a bequest in your will, you are making a unique commitment. Your bequest to AWS will help us continue to preserve Australia's wildlife for future generations.

We rely on our supporters' generosity to enable us to continue working towards the conservation of Australian wildlife (flora and fauna) in all its forms through national environmental education and advocacy. Without you, our work would simply not be possible. Whatever the amount you bequeath to AWS, your contribution is invaluable.

A bequest is one of the most effective and long-lasting ways you can help AWS. Your promise of future support is deeply appreciated. If you have included a bequest to AWS in your will, please let us know. We thank you personally for this bequest of support. At all times your privacy will be fully respected and the information you provide will remain strictly confidential.

Your bequest will go directly to wildlife and/or wildlife conservation projects across Australia. Some examples of our projects are listed below:

- Supporting wildlife rescue groups that are rehabilitating injured wildlife
- Active involvement in national environmental education
- Lobbying and advocating for the protection of Australia's wildlife and its habitats
- Offering university grants and scholarships to honours or postgraduate students at Australian universities
- Offering conservation group grants
- Offering free membership to all students in Australia
- Founding Australian Wildlife Week
- Presentation of our four annual prestigious awards
- Founding the NSW Platypus and Turtle Alliance
- Kinder Program – the Society has selected a number of wildlife conservation programs in each state of Australia and one in New Zealand to receiving conservation funding under this new program
- Holding an annual threatened wildlife photographic competition that rewards and promotes the conservation of threatened or endangered Australian wildlife through the medium of photography

HOW TO MAKE A BEQUEST

If you already have a will but would like to leave a bequest to AWS, you can do so by making a simple addition to your existing will. This is called a codicil. If you do not have a will at the moment, you can simply include a bequest when you write a new will. Whatever your circumstances, we would advise you to see a solicitor to ensure that your wishes will be followed. When catastrophic events occur and our immediate action is required, it is essential that all our programs continue without interruption. Financial flexibility is crucial to our ability to respond to priority needs, so we ask that you do not designate your gift to a particular project or region.

Types of bequests:

1. A **residuary bequest** is the most effective way to leave a bequest to AWS. It is a gift of what remains after you have made provisions for your loved ones. A residuary gift will keep up with inflation. It will mean your bequest will achieve as much in our projects in the future as you would like it to now.
2. Leaving a **percentage of your estate** allows you to decide what proportion of your total estate you would like to give to AWS. A percentage gift will also keep up with inflation.
3. A **pecuniary bequest** is a fixed sum of money to be left to AWS. This type of gift will not keep up with inflation.

Recommended bequest wording

Please take this information with you when you visit your solicitor to draft or update your will. We suggest the following wording:

"I give and bequeath

- the residue, or
- [.....] percentage of my whole estate, or
- [.....] percentage of the residue, or
- the specific sum of $[.....]

the the Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia Limited, for its general purposes, and declare that the receipt of the Treasurer for the time being of the Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia Limited shall be a complete discharge to my Executors in respect of any sum paid to the Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia Limited."

Your solicitor may also require the following detail:

ABN: 13 817 470 816

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is a bequest?

A bequest is a gift left in your will. It's also known as a legacy. You can leave a bequest by writing a new will, or by adding a codicil (an addition) to your existing will. We recommend you consult a solicitor who can help you write your will.

What is the best way to leave a bequest in my will to AWS?

The best way to leave a bequest to AWS is to leave a monetary bequest (i.e. not property, shares, etc.) and a residuary bequest. This is a gift of what remains after all your other provisions have been made, enabling you to put your loved ones first. A residuary bequest also keeps up with inflation, they are the most effective way to provide a gift to AWS. You can also leave a percentage of your estate or pecuniary bequest, which is a fixed sum of money to be left to AWS.

I want to leave a bequest to a specific project. Can I do this?

Having flexible funds is essential to our ability to respond rapidly and where the need is greatest. Leaving a bequest for the Society's general use is the most effective as it means that your gift will definitely be used where it is needed most. Leaving a bequest to a specific type of work or location might mean that it cannot be used. This can occur if we are no longer working there or doing the kind of work specified in the future. As such, we ask that you do not designate your gift to a particular project or region.

Can AWS help me write my will?

No, we don't have that kind of legal expertise. We recommend you consult a solicitor who can help you write your will. There is also a public trustee in every state of Australia that offers will-writing services.

Can I make AWS the Executor of my will?

No, we appreciate your trust in the Society but we do not have the necessary resources. We try to keep administration costs low so that the maximum amount can go towards our projects in the field. As such, we choose not to take the role of Executor of a will as this can often be a lengthy and involved legal process.

Can I leave you my house, other property or shares?

Yes, but monetary gifts are preferred as AWS would need to convert any property or shares into cash to be able to use them. This means additional time and resources spent trying to get the best price and sell these items before we can put your bequest to use.

PTO>

L to R: Wayne Greenwood, Brian Scarsbrick, Alice Suwono, Suzanne Medway, Patrick Medway, Trevor Evans, Philip Sansom, Megan Fabian and Ken Mason.

My relative has passed away and left a bequest in their will for AWS. What do I need to do?

We very much appreciate bequests left to us from generous supporters. Please ask the Executor to notify us in writing of the bequest by sending a letter to the National Office Manager, PO Box 7336, Mt Annan NSW 2567 or via email manager@aws.org.au and we can start the process of transferring the bequest to AWS.

Why is having a will so important?

If you do not have a will when you die, state laws will determine how your assets will be distributed. Leaving clear instructions and sharing your decisions with your family and friends can give you the peace of mind that your final wishes will be understood and respected after you are gone. We recognise that writing a will is one of the most significant decisions you'll ever make. That's why we know it's important to take your time and have all of the information you need to help you make up your mind.

Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia Limited
Trading as Australian Wildlife Society

Address: PO Box 7336, Mt Annan NSW 2567, Australia
Tel: (61) (4) 24 287 297
Email: manager@aws.org.au
ABN: 13 817 470 816
Web: aws.org.au/bequest

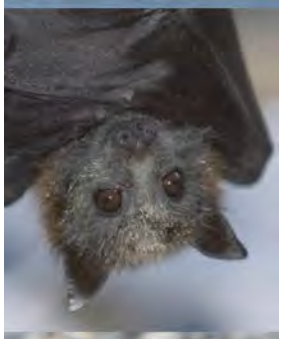
Australian Wildlife Society
Conserving Australia's Wildlife since 1909

REGISTERED CHARITY
acnc.gov.au/charityregister

Visit the Australian Wildlife Society website at www.aws.org.au to find out the latest on what is happening in our fight to preserve Australia's unique wildlife

Be a part of the Australian Wildlife Society's conservation future






To commit to being a part of our future, please complete this form. You may cancel your donation subscription at any time by notifying the national office.

Australian Wildlife Society
PO Box 7336
MT ANNAN NSW 2567

Email: accounts@aws.org.au
Telephone enquiries to: (02) 9556 1537

You may also commit by visiting www.aws.org.au and registering online

All donations of $2 or more are tax deductible.

Australian Wildlife Society
Conserving Australia's Wildlife since 1909

Your Details

Name: Dr / Mr / Ms / Mrs / Miss

Address:

State: Postcode:

Phone: Home Work

Email:

☐ I want to join the Friends of WPSA and give by automatic deduction each month to help protect our unique native wildlife and its important habitat

I will give via: Credit Card (please complete authority form below)

Credit Card Payments

I am paying by: ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard Card Security Code (CSC) __ __ __ __

Card No. __/__/__/__/ __/__/__/__/ __/__/__/__/ __/__/__/__/ Expiry date ___ /___

Name on card Signature

Regular Payment can be made by EFT

BSB: 062 235
Account No: 1069 6157
Account Name:
Australian Wildlife Society

I will give:

☐ $10 per month ☐ $15 per month ☐ $25 per month ☐ $50 per month

☐ My choice of $ per month _____

Signature Date

This authorisation is to remain in force until cancelled by the donor and in accordance with the terms described in the Agreement below.

Deduction will be made on 15th of each month.

CREDIT CARD AUTHORITY

1. The Donor will be advised 14 days in advance of any changes to the Credit Card Authority arrangements. 2. For all arrangements relating to the Credit Card Authority arrangements, the Donor will need to write to PO Box 7336, Mt Annan NSW 2567 or email info@wpsa.org.au. 3. Account details should be checked against a recent statement from your Financial Institution. 4. It is the donor's responsibility to ensure sufficient funds are available when the payments are due to be drawn. 5. If the due date for payment falls on a non-working day or public holiday, the payment will be processed on the next working day. 6. For returned unpaid transactions, the following procedure will apply: AWS will advise the Donor of the unpaid transaction and request alternative arrangements to be made for payment if possible. 7. All Donor records and account details will be kept private and confidential to be disclosed only at the request of the donor or Financial Institution in connection with a claim made to an alleged incorrect or wrongful debit. 8. This authorisation is to remain in force until cancelled by the Donor.

Membership Form

Membership

Become a member of the Australian Wildlife Society
Simply fill out this form.

Australian Wildlife Society
Conserving Australia's Wildlife since 1909

Name: .....

Address: .....

City/Suburb: ..... Postcode: .....

Telephone: ..... Fax: .....

Email: .....

Membership category (please tick)

- ☐ Student: $0 (Conditions apply)
- ☐ Individual: $55
- ☐ Family: $70
- ☐ Concession (pensioner/student/child): $50
- ☐ E-mag (emailed as PDF, no hardcopy will be sent): $30
- ☐ Associate (library, school, conservation groups): $85
- ☐ Corporate: $125
- ☐ Life: $2,000

(Includes postage within Australia. Add $40 for overseas postage)

Three year membership (please tick)

- ☐ Individual: $150
- ☐ Family: $190
- ☐ Concession (pensioner/student/child): $135
- ☐ E-mag (emailed as PDF, no hardcopy will be sent): $81
- ☐ Associate (library, school, conservation groups): $230
- ☐ Corporate: $340

(Includes postage within Australia. Add $60 for overseas postage)

Payment details (please tick)

☐ Direct Debit ☐ Cheque ☐ Money Order ☐ Mastercard ☐ Visa

Card Security Code (CSC) __ __ __ __

Card Number:

Name on Card: ..... Expiry: .....

Signature: .....

Amount $ .....

Donation $ .....

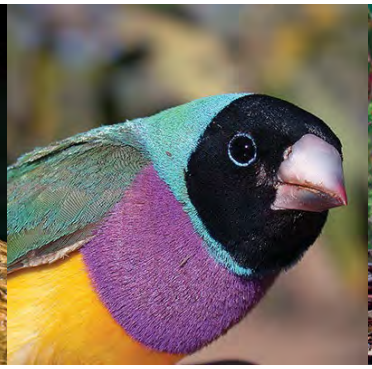
Total $ .....

Mail to the: **Australian Wildlife Society**
PO Box 7336, MT ANNAN NSW 2567.
Email: accounts@aws.org.au
Website: www.aws.org.au

Direct debit: **BSB:** 062 235
Account No: 1069 6157
Account Name: Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia trading as the Australian Wildlife Society

Membership Hotline: Mob: 0424 287 297

Note: All cheques to be made out to the Australian Wildlife Society

2020 ANNUAL PRESIDENT'S LUNCHEON

L to R: Caitlin Gallagher, Roz Holme, John Creighton, Alexandra Seddon and Robin Crisman.

Patrick Medway and Trevor Evans.

Roma Dixon, Adrienne Bradney-Smith and Tanya Clancy.

Sisilia (the Society's data entry officer) and Alice Suwono, Treasurer.

Sakkara Creighton and Tess McCord.

Alexandra Seddon, Alice Chance, and Christopher Chance.

Patrick Medway and Morgan Houston, Development Manager, Science Division of Philanthropy, UNSW Sydney.

Margaret McGurgan and Deidre Greenhill.