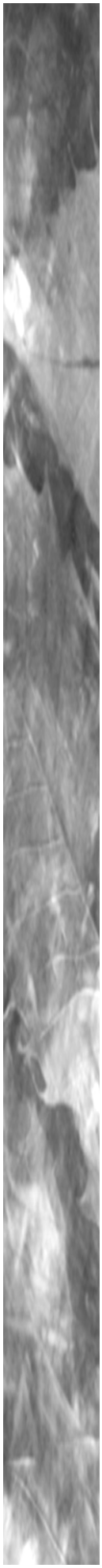
Contents



'Australian Wildlife'

is the official journal of the Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia Inc.

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

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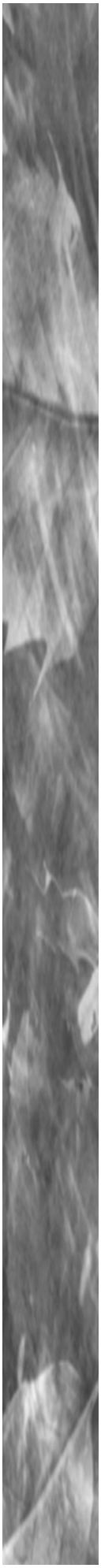
Councillors 2004

Regional Councillors

We would like to hear from our country members, anywhere in Australia, who would like to become regional councillors. The value to us is we would have a more intimate relationship with women and men who have a knowledge which could be valuable for conservation.

Such Regional Councillors would be sent the minutes of our Council meetings so they would know more about what we are doing. They could also submit motions for consideration and so play a part in Society decisions. By being listed in our newsletter State members could contact them in emergencies.

All articles are written by Vincent Serventy, Patrick Medway and Suzanne Medway unless stated otherwise.



From the President's Desk...

Whale sanctuary proposal

This edition of Australian Wildlife features a special article on the preservation of whales. Whale watching now provides sound economical advantages to countries around the world through eco-tourism. Australia is at the forefront of whale conservation and our Society is supporting the proposal for a South Pacific Whale Sanctuary.

Nature Conservation Council

Our Society is an active member of the NSW Nature Conservation Council and we will be represented at the Annual General Meeting of the Council in October. We have submitted three wildlife preservation motions seeking wider conservation support from the NCC Members for: an integrated system of marine sanctuaries around the whole coastline of Australia for the maintenance of marine biodiversity within marine environments; the establishment of the Hunter Wildlife Corridor Regional Park from the ocean to the mountains along the Hunter River system; and the establishment of a South Pacific Whale Sanctuary which would protect the breeding grounds of most of the species of migratory great whales that are found in the region.

Queensland visit

Suzanne and I recently had the pleasure of visiting South East Queensland and were amazed and disappointed at the amount of land clearing and development occurring in this area. Building developments, especially domestic housing projects, are everywhere, at the detriment of the natural habitat and its precious wildlife. While there are a number of wildlife sanctuaries along the coast such as Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary and Fleay's Fauna Park, and attractions such as Seaworld and Dreamworld which feature displays of Australian wildlife, it is not the same as protecting the natural habitat for our wildlife. On the other hand, there are some very active conservation associations and societies doing wonderful work to protect and preserve our environment. I met with officers of GECKO - Gold Coast & Hinterland Environment Council. This conservation group has developed a wide conservation brief, including tree planting and recycling programs which are proving to be very successful.

Meeting with the Mayor

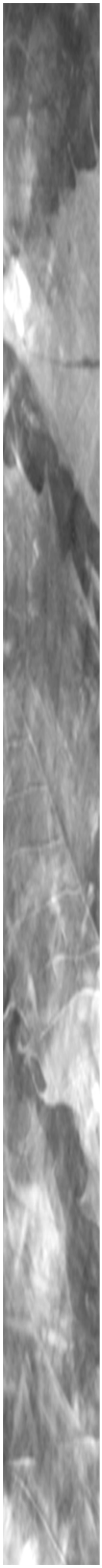
During my visit to Queensland I arranged to meet with the Mayor of the Gold Coast City Council, Councillor Ron Clark MBE. I received a very sympathetic hearing about our project to reduce the roadkill of native animals across Australia, discussed local environmental and conservation issues such as the preservation of native wildlife habitat and native vegetation, especially in the Currumbin Valley. We also discussed a proposal to establish a National Rainforest Bird Observatory in Queensland.

Work continues on saving Towra Lagoon

Work continues on the restoration of the Towra Beach area to protect the historic Towra Lagoon and the habitat for migratory wading birds which frequent Botany Bay. The contractor has been working 12 hours per day to complete a very demanding schedule to finish off the beach nourishment in time for the summer season.

I again congratulate all government agencies and local conservation groups for their support in finally bring this project to a logical conclusion and look forward to seeing completion of the work over the next few months.

Patrick W Medway AM
NATIONAL PRESIDENT



Whales

Whales are migratory animals and are the heritage of all nations. We have a national and an international responsibility to preserve them for future generations.

Japan and Iceland plan to increase the slaughter of whales under the guise of scientific research. Our Society calls on Japan and Iceland to abandon this cruel practice, which next year will result in the killing of about 850 whales of various species.

We have a responsibility to rebuild the health of the world's oceans. Saving whales is an iconic representation of that work. Killing whales in the name of science is an affront to science. It is not science - it is cruel commercial slaughter.

25 years ago, the Australian Government decided to bring whaling in our waters to an end, and to pursue an international ban on commercial whaling. Over the past 25 years, Australia has made a very successful transition away from hunting whales and towards protecting them.

Since Australia abandoned whaling, the population of humpbacks in our coastal waters has grown from an estimated 500 to at least 10,000. Our own history is proof that this is not only possible, but also beneficial. While some species, such as humpback whales, appear to be increasing well, other species such as blue whales are still estimated to be less than one per cent of their original numbers.

Japan each year takes approximately 700 whales of various species under the International Whaling Commission's (IWC) "scientific whaling" exemption and plans to increase this number to over 800 next year.

Norway also was likely to take 670 minke whales this year under its reservation to the moratorium on commercial whaling and has submitted a plan to more than double its hunt. Iceland plans to target 25 minke whales this year and has not ruled out expanding its program.

Commercial whaling continues to expand in the face of the moratorium, despite repeated requests from the IWC for the practice to end.

Whale sanctuaries

Australia's own Exclusive Economic Zone has been a whale sanctuary since 2000, and we welcome news that the Government of our neighbour New Caledonia took a similar decision, to declare sanctuary for whales in its waters. This takes the current national-level sanctuary coverage in the South Pacific to approximately 13.5 million square kilometres. This is an important step towards achieving the target of 20 million square kilometres in island-state national whale sanctuaries by 2007, outlined in the Action Plan for the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme.

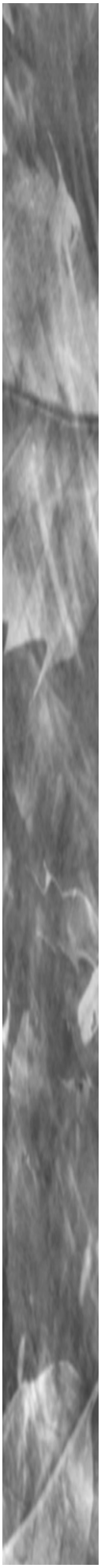
Our Society is convinced of the scientific justification of protecting all whales in their breeding grounds.

A South Pacific Whale Sanctuary would effectively conserve whales, as well as provide increased opportunities and economic benefits through eco-tourism whale watching, foster research, and increase knowledge and public awareness about all whales in the region. We also support the establishment of a South Atlantic Whale Sanctuary, to protect whales in another part of their Southern Hemisphere range.

Sydney's top whale watching spot at Kurnell Headland has been named one of Australia's best whale watching locations, with up to 1,000 people gathered each weekend this past winter to catch a glimpse of as many 70 passing whales

Whaling

There is no merit to the argument that culling whales is a way to improve commercial fish stocks, nor to the proposition that the only way to gather information on the diet and ecology of whales is by killing them and cutting open their stomachs.



While our Society opposes commercial whaling of any description, we do not oppose the ongoing limited access by some indigenous communities to some whaling for traditional subsistence purposes. In our view, this exception needs to be based on strict criteria, which limits access to communities whose traditional, cultural and dietary needs have been recognised by the Commission.

Another Minke whale is electrocuted

Eco-Tourism Whale watching

Whale watching is the ideal way to achieve the optimum and sustainable utilisation of whales. Over the past 25 years, eco-tourism whale watching has come to take whaling's place. Many of the favoured locations for watching whales are the sites of former whaling stations, and some of the guides and volunteers are the sons and daughters of the old whalers.

It is estimated that whale watching in Australia attracted 1.6 million tourists last year. Direct revenue in that period grew from $16m to $29m. Indirect revenue was estimated to have increased from $77m to $276m, driven mainly by land based whale watching, primarily at Cape Byron on the New South Wales coast.

The success of the whale watching industry puts beyond a shadow of doubt that whales in Australia are now considered more valuable alive than dead. Our economy gains hundreds of millions of dollars per year, while the exercise also helps raise awareness of whales and their important oceanic habitat.

The status of Antarctic whale stocks

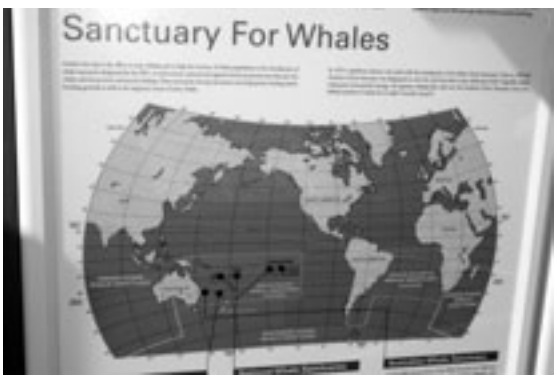
Over one million whales have been slaughtered in the Antarctic last century, seriously depleting seven of the eight species of great whales found there. In 1989, the results of an IWC whale population survey in Antarctica revealed that blue and fin whale numbers had been depleted between 95-99% by whaling. The blue whale population reduced to fewer than 1,000 animals from an estimated quarter-million. Blue whales were once the mainstay of the Antarctic whaling industry; over 30,000 were killed in a single season in 1931. The species has never recovered.

Along with the blue and fin whales, humpbacks, sei and sperm whales were similarly targeted, decimated and finally abandoned. Only the minke whale at 10 metres long and around 6-8 tons, the smallest and least profitable species to hunt, is now left in any numbers to be of economic interest to the whalers. The Antarctic minkes represent the last near-pristine whale populations left on Earth. For this reason alone there seems a good case to protect them from further exploitation. However, growing evidence of potentially catastrophic ozone depletion and climate change in this region fully justified the IWC's decision to declare Antarctic waters an international whale sanctuary in 1994.

The NPWS Cape Solander Whale Watch Project in Botany Bay National Park became a surprise Sydney attraction for families looking for something different. The sheer cliffs and clear horizon at the end of the Kurnell Peninsular make it an ideal vantage point and seems to be a milestone for the migrating whales, which can come within metres of the shore at this point. The convoy of passing whales that moves past Sydney is part of the annual humpback migration, with animals the size of a suburban bus travelling from their winter feeding grounds in Antarctica to their summer birthing grounds in the Great Barrier Reef. Many of these passing animals, which weigh up to 30 tonnes, are pregnant.

Indian Ocean Whale Sanctuary

The Indian Ocean Whale Sanctuary was established in 1987, and covers the entire Indian Ocean, to 40 degrees South. There was little opposition to its establishment, because the area has not supported large catches of whales for many decades. The sanctuary is to be reviewed in 2004.



Whale Sanctuary information sign at Kurnell Peninsula

Southern Ocean Whale Sanctuary

The Southern Ocean Whale Sanctuary (SOWS) was established by the IWC in December 1994. It covers most of the Southern Ocean south of 40 degrees south, to the ice-edge, and includes all the major feeding areas for whales. Japan has objected to the inclusion of minke whales within the list of species protected from whaling within the sanctuary, and is therefore not bound by the Commission's decision to establish the sanctuary. Japan kills some 400 minke whales within the sanctuary each year, through the provisions of Article 8 of the Convention, which allows any member to issue to itself a Special Permit to kill whales for the purposes of scientific research.

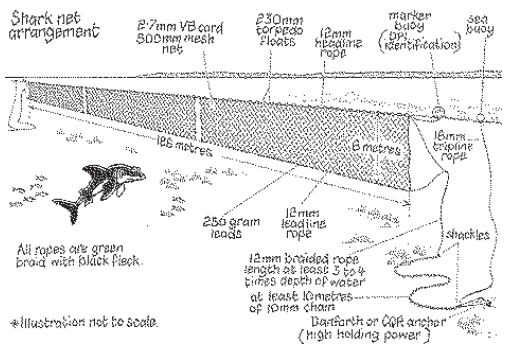
South Pacific Whale Sanctuary

Australia and New Zealand are currently proposing the establishment of a South Pacific Whale Sanctuary, which would protect the breeding grounds of most of the species of migratory great whales that are found in the region. The proposed sanctuary would stretch from Papua New Guinea in the west to Pitcairn Island and French Polynesia in the east, and from Fiji and Tonga in the south to the Equator.

Whales and shark nets

Whales migrate north during the Southern Hemisphere winter and the number of humpbacks making the journey north from Antarctica to calf is increasing. It is estimated that more than 4,000 humpback whales migrate annually along the Queensland coast. Eleven shark nets are currently in place in front of the Gold Coast's most popular swimming beaches.

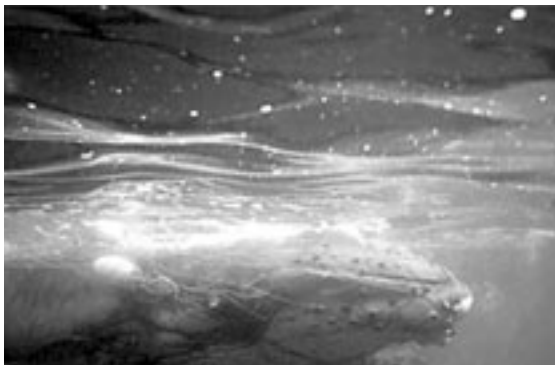
According to the Queensland State Government, the shark net system is designed to catch sharks of more than two metres and cause the least possible bycatch with their 500 millimetre mesh stretched about 186 metres. The program has been in operation for more than 41 years.



Shark net

As recently as last month a juvenile humpback whale drowned after being caught in a shark net off the Gold Coast, prompting calls for the removal of part of the controversial bather protection system during the peak whale migration season. The whale was trapped in the net off Mermaid Beach and the alarm was raised by residents of a high-rise who saw two adult humpbacks circling the net. The adults appeared to be grieving for the calf. Samples from the body of the dead whale were collected to determine its gender, then the carcass was towed out to sea. It is the second whale to be trapped in shark nets on the Gold Coast this year. Another whale was freed from a net in May.

Our Society believes that nets should be removed during the busy southern migration period and replaced with baited hooks. The deaths of whales caught in shark nets are going to increase every year because the whale numbers increase every year.

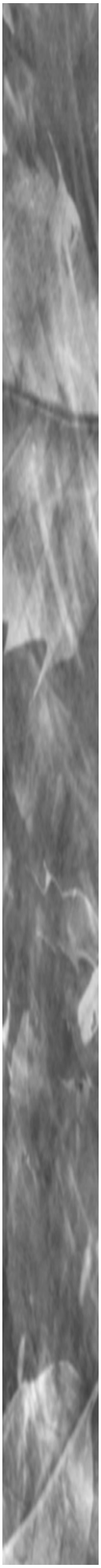


This humpback whale calf, caught in a shark net on the Gold Coast, did not survive the ordeal, although its mother was freed

The lie of shark nets

Shark 'safety' nets and drumlines with baited hooks line the beaches on the eastern seaboard of Australia's coastline in order to catch sharks, reduce their numbers and therefore reduce the likelihood of shark attack. However, most people would probably be surprised to hear that shark nets and drumlines are not in fact designed to exclude sharks from the beach. Indeed, a third of sharks killed in them are caught in the process of leaving the beach - that is, they are caught on the beach side of the net.

The expert committee set up to advise the Federal Environment Minister on threatened species issues - the Threatened Species Scientific Committee - considers shark meshing to have a significant impact on a range of marine mammals including humpback whales. The New South Wales Fisheries Scientific Committee has



reported that the nets off NSW have caught at least 8,000 harmless sharks in the last 52 years. Over 14,000 marine animals other than sharks were caught in the Queensland nets in the first 15 years of operation, including dolphins.

It is vital that the State and Federal Governments take action to phase out shark nets and drumlines - and therefore end the senseless carnage of thousands of threatened animals in these nets which are questionable in their effectiveness.

It's worth noting that sharks inhabit all of Australia's coastline, but that only Queensland and New South Wales use shark nets (with Australia and South Africa being the only two countries in the world that operate shark nets for swimmer safety) and that shark attacks are a very rare event in Australian waters.

Further, there are reports that it is suspected that the baited hooks on the drumlines and the nets (both of which have entangled marine life) may in fact attract sharks closer to areas where people swim.

Whale Sharks

Western Australia is privileged to be one of the few places in the world known to be visited by the mysterious whale shark (Rhincodon typus) on a regular basis.

Each year, just days after the mass spawning of corals on the Ningaloo Reef (near Exmouth) in March and April, whale sharks appear in the waters along the front of the reef, remaining for up to a month. It is thought that they come to feed on an explosion of marine life that feeds on the coral spawn. Most of these visiting whale sharks are immature males. It remains an intriguing puzzle why this particular section of the population visits our coast.

Whale sharks will grow to over 12 metres in length, which is about the size of a large bus. These gentle ocean giants are often confused with whales because of their large size and feeding habits. They are, however, sharks, albeit the least fearsome of this group, and their closest relatives are the nurse and wobbegong sharks. Whale sharks are not aggressive, they cruise the oceans feeding on concentrations of zooplankton, small fish and squid. The whale shark's mouth contains 300 rows of tiny teeth, but ironically, they neither chew nor bite their food. Instead, the sharks use a fine mesh of rakers attached to their gills to strain food from the water. These rakers are functionally similar to the baleen plates possessed by many whales.

Biologists have speculated that whale sharks feed by literally vacuuming food from the water. However, researchers at Ningaloo have observed that the sharks usually feed by actively swimming through a mass of zooplankton or small fish with their mouths wide open. Whale sharks have also been observed to hang vertically in the water and feed by sucking water into their mouths.

Very little is known about the reproduction of whale sharks, most information coming from a single egg found in the Gulf of Mexico. It is thought that the young develop in egg cases that are retained in the mother's body until hatching. Despite their large adult size, whale sharks are very small at birth, probably 40 to 50 centimetres.

Tourism based on whale shark watching has increased dramatically in the last few years and Government agencies have taken steps to protect these magnificent animals. The Department of Fisheries and CALM have combined to declare an indefinite closed season for this species under the Fish Resources Management Act and the Wildlife Conservation Act.

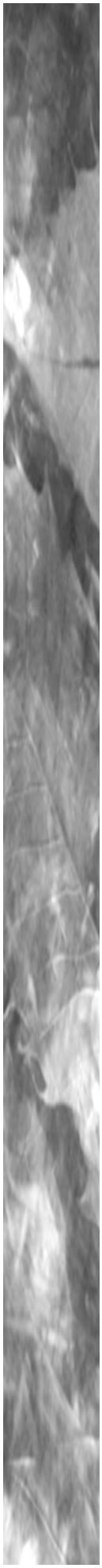
Marine Plan leads world in sustainable oceans management

A global benchmark in sustainable oceans management has been created with the launch of Australia's first regional marine plan. The South-east Regional Marine Plan, the first of several to be developed under Australia's Oceans Policy, was publicly launched in May by the Minister for the Environment and Heritage, Dr David Kemp, in Melbourne.

Taking in more than two million square kilometres of ocean territory around Victoria, Tasmania, eastern South Australia and southern New South Wales, as well as the sub-Antarctic Macquarie Island, the Plan is the culmination of more than three years of research and consultation with oceans interest groups.

'The South-east Regional Marine Plan will be regarded as an historic milestone in Australian natural resource management,' Dr Kemp said. 'Not only is this the first such plan to be developed in Australia's ocean waters, it is the first to be developed on this scale anywhere in the world. With the world's largest area of ocean territory, some 14 million square kilometres, I am proud that Australia is taking the international lead in this new frontier of ecologically sustainable development.'

This is an important measure to manage an ocean territory that contributes $19 billion a year to the economy, employs more than 275,000 people



either directly or indirectly, and contains unique and abundant ecosystems.

Marine industries and coastal communities depend upon healthy and sustainable ecosystems and regional marine plans will equip us to avoid the resource management mistakes that have occurred in marine environments in other parts of the world. We cannot afford to be complacent in light of environmental disasters such as the collapse of the Grand Banks ecosystem in the North Atlantic, where ecosystems, industries and communities have been devastated.

The South-east Regional Marine Plan contains more than 90 actions designed to prevent future problems, as well as stimulate sustainable development. One of the most important actions is the development of a system of representative marine protected areas (MPAs) in the South-east. Options for two areas, known as the Murray and Zeehan areas, covering more than 40,000 square kilometres (roughly two-thirds the size of Tasmania or twice the size of Kakadu National Park), have already been identified and are included in the Plan.

The aim is to protect representative and important marine habitats for future generations in order to support biodiversity and minimise the threats to these ecosystems.

Other key actions of the South-east Regional Marine Plan include:

• Development of a Performance Assessment System to provide a consistent and accountable way of determining the success of the Plan;

• Ensuring long-term industry security of access and certainty of process through a review of marine-related laws and regulations that apply in the Region and integrating planning and management of spatial measures such as fisheries closures;

• Enhancing community stewardship of the Marine Region through facilitating networking of Marine Discovery Centres; and

• Supporting Indigenous stewardship of the Marine Region through development of Indigenous Sea Country Plans.

The Government has a unique approach to oceans planning and management that recognises all ocean users. These interests are represented by the National Oceans Ministerial Board, comprising Ministers for the portfolios of industry, tourism, fisheries, science, transport, and environment. Dr Kemp chairs the Board.

Dr Kemp emphasised that there would be ongoing work and, as such, a Supplement to the Plan would be produced in 2005. It will contain the complete system of MPAs within the Region as well as a more detailed performance management system.

The South-east Regional Marine Plan is available from the National Oceans Office, freecall 1800 732 364. It can also be downloaded in full or in part from www.oceans.gov.au

A series of companion fact sheets can also be downloaded from the National Oceans Office website, covering information on Australia's Oceans Policy, the National Oceans Office, regional marine planning and the South-east Regional Marine Plan.

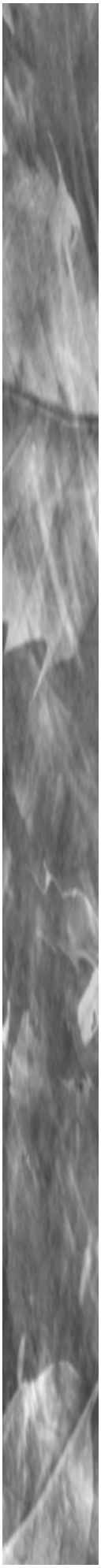
Suzanne Medway in the "hide" at the Royal Albatross Colony at Taiaroa Head

Albatrosses

To sight a soaring Albatross is unforgettable - a spectacle touched with a dignity and majesty no other bird can excel. Held aloft on slim wings up to 3 metres (9'6") across, the great Albatross is capable of swooping speeds of at least 115kph+. It's pure ecstacy in the air, yet distinctly clumsy on the ground. The social and family life of a breeding colony fascinating. Chicks are fussed over by devoted parents, adolescent's party, just like adolescents everywhere, courtships proceed with lots of kissing and cuddling, and "marriage" is usually for life despite long separations at sea. And the life of an Albatross is indeed long.

Patrick and Suzanne Medway recently visited the Royal Albatross Colony at Taiaroa Head, on the tip of Dunedin Peninsula in the South Island of New Zealand. This colony is the only mainland breeding colony of albatross in the world.

The breeding birds arrive at Taiaroa Head in September. The nest, built during early November, is formed by a bird sitting down and pulling vegetation and earth around itself with its bill. The white egg, weighing up to 500 grams, is



laid during the first three weeks of November. The parents share incubation duty in spells of two to eight days over a period of 11 weeks - one of the longest incubation periods of any bird. The incubating bird sleeps much of the time its mate is away. When the chick has hatched, the parents take turns at guarding it for the first 30 to 40 days, and the feeding of the chick is also shared by both parents.

Nearly 12 months after their arrival at Taiaroa Head, having cared for egg and chick over a period of some 300 days, the parents will leave the colony to spend a year at sea before returning to breed again. The chicks hatch during late January and early February; it takes about three to six days to finally emerge from the egg after making a hole in the shell. For the first 20 days the chick is fed on demand, and then meals decrease to three or four times a week. At 100 days the chick's down reaches a maximum length of 12 centimetres. At this age the chick is fed larger meals, up to two kilograms at a time, of more solid substance.

From early August the chick is fed lighter meals and in September, when fully fledged, it wanders from the nest testing its outstretched wings and eventually takes off with the aid of a strong wind. The young albatross will spend the next three to six years at sea; many then return to this unique headland to start another generation of Royals of Taiaroa.

View through the window of the "hide" at the Royal Albatross Colony at Taiaroa Head, on the tip of Dunedin Peninsula in the South Island of New Zealand. Can you see the albatross on the nest?

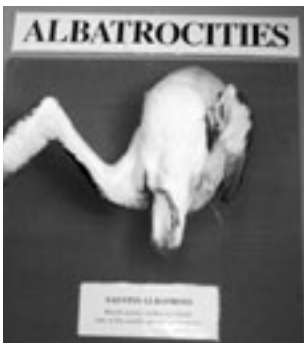
Albatrosses- long-lived or longlined?

For millions of years albatrosses have dined on squid in the southern oceans. But today, many of the squid have hooks in them - attached to the longlines at the back of fishing boats.

Albatrosses are natural scavenges and are attracted to the dead squid or fish used as bait. As the bait hits the water during the setting of the longline, albatross attempt to seize and swallow them.

Longline fishing for tuna, patagonian toothfish, snapper, ling and other species kill at least 300,000 seabirds every year. One of the major contributors to seabird deaths is fishing for the threatened southern bluefin tuna, a valuable and much-prized fish in Japanese restaurants.

Longline fishing is a huge industry. More than 500 boats ply the oceans each year. In the Southern Hemisphere as many as 500 million hooks are set annually.



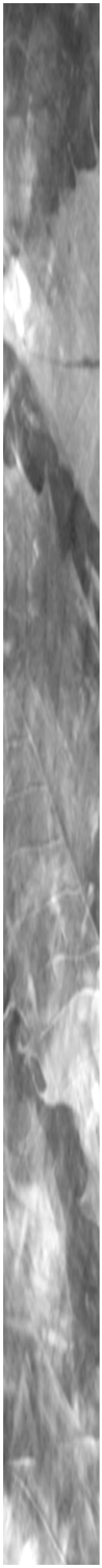
A display showing "Albatrocities", an albatross hooked from longline fishing

The problem in New Zealand

New Zealand is the albatross capital of the world. New Zealand's sub-Antarctic islands are home to more species of breeding albatrosses than any other country. But, in the last 20 years over 65,000 albatrosses and petrels have been drowned on tuna longline hooks within our 200-nautical-mile Exclusive Economic Zone. New Zealand species that are killed in large numbers include the Campbell albatross, Antipodes and Auckland Islands wandering albatrosses, Southern Buller's albatross and the grey petrel.

This is a global problem

Albatrosses spend little time on land. They cover thousands of kilometres in feeding flights alone. As long-lived infrequent breeders, birds such as albatross are particularly vulnerable. Six of the world's 20 albatross species are in decline and longline fishing is implicated in each case. Some of these species are on the path to extinction. The slow-breeding wandering albatross needs a very high survival rate to maintain a stable population. Yet, tragically, over the last 20 years their numbers have declined significantly with a drop of 45% in the major breeding colony in the Auckland Islands. The only "sustainable" longline mortality for wandering albatross is zero. Australia has developed a plan to reduce albatross and petrel deaths in their fishing zone. Other countries are developing similar plans. New Zealand has yet to finish one.



Just outside the Harbour at Taiaroa Head a royal albatross in flight

Mitigation alone has failed

Over the past ten years there has been research into measures to reduce the level of seabird deaths. Sadly this work has not achieved the desired result. The principal mitigation measure used so far has been streamers (known as tori lines) which run from the stern of the boat.

Although intended to discourage birds from taking baits, these lines do not prevent albatrosses being hooked, or petrels, which are able to dive deeper.

Setting the lines only at night has been tried, but albatross deaths can be high on clear nights with a full or near-full moon. The New Zealand Government has so far refused calls to restrict fishing during the five days either side of the full moon, when the greatest number of birds are caught. Petrel deaths can also be higher during night sets. Despite requirements to use standard tori lines for tuna boats, the rate of seabird deaths in tuna fisheries has not declined significantly. There are no requirements on non-tuna vessels that catch seabirds, for example, ling, bluenose and snapper.

All longlining nations have a responsibility to prevent the needless slaughter and death of seabirds.

Many of the world's albatross and petrel species are threatened with extinction, mainly because of the impacts of longline fishing. Pollution and other fishing methods, like trawling, are also having a negative impact on albatross and petrel populations.

Throughout the Southern Ocean seabirds face the danger of death by drowning on longline hooks.

What is longlining?

In the 1980s, longlining became an increasingly popular method of fishing, partly in response to the increasing demand for high-quality, high-value fish destined for the clientele of upmarket restaurants. Many nations have fishing vessels engaged in longlining, but the fisheries of particular concern are those targeting Southern bluefin tuna and Patagonian toothfish. During line setting, longliners set a single line up to 130 km long behind the boat. Attached to it are literally thousands of baited hooks. An estimated one billion hooks are set annually by the world's longline fleets. Some of the baited hooks are eaten not by their intended targets, but by albatrosses and other seabirds. The hooked birds are dragged under water and drown.

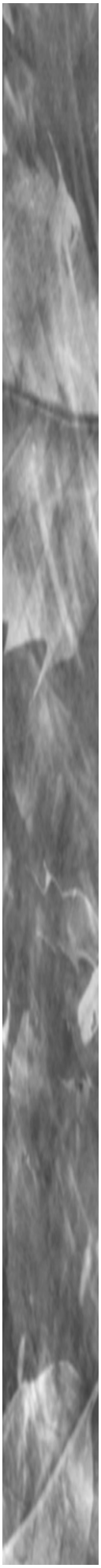
What is the problem?

Albatrosses and other seabirds often feed by scavenging for food behind fishing vessels and other boats, waiting for prey to be disturbed or scraps thrown overboard. When longlining, fishing boats set thousands of baited hooks on a fishing line to catch fish. Seabirds scavenging behind these boats try to eat the bait from the hooks as they are set behind the boat. Some birds swallow the hooks and are dragged underwater and drown.

More than 300,000 seabirds are killed in this way each year. 26 species of seabird, including 17 species of albatrosses, are in danger of extinction because of the deaths caused by longlining. Once set, the hooks are too deep for the birds to reach. To stop birds being needlessly killed, it is essential to stop them having the opportunity to swallow the baited hooks before they have sunk. Many cheap and readily implemented solutions have been, and are being, developed. Employing these will be of benefit to the fishermen themselves because the more bait eaten by birds, the smaller the catch of fish.

What are the solutions?

To prevent birds swallowing the baited hooks before they have sunk below their reach, many simple measures have been devised some of which are cheap and easy to implement. Examples include: towing bird-scaring (or tori) lines behind the vessel. These have plastic streamers tied to them that flap in the wind and scare birds away from the baited fishing line; using an underwater setting tube. These set the fishing line underwater out of reach of the birds; tying enough weights to the fishing line so that it sinks more quickly out of reach of the birds; using thawed not frozen bait as it sinks more quickly; dying the bait blue. This puts birds off eating it; setting lines at night. Most albatrosses feed mainly by day.



Pirate fishing

Current loopholes in international law allow a fleet of more than 1,000 large-scale fishing vessels to register under flags of convenience (FOC). The boats are owned in one country but registered in another, thus avoiding fisheries regulations. These "Pirate" fishing vessels are not only stealing fisheries resources, but also operate with total disregard for the number of seabirds they kill. FOC states include Panama, Belize, Cambodia and Honduras. The majority of FOC vessels are owned by companies based in the following ten states: Taiwan, Spain, Belize, Panama, Honduras, Singapore, South Korea, Japan, China, and Equatorial Guinea.

It is estimated that over 100,000 birds - including tens of thousands of albatrosses - are being killed each year by pirate fishing vessels in the Southern Ocean. Many of these boats are targeting Patagonian toothfish, a species often sold and labelled as Chilean sea bass, Antarctic black hake or mero.

The illegal fishing industry is large and difficult to police. Fish are sometimes transferred at sea to vessels to be landed in coastal states, for example Mauritius, that are not contracting parties to controls. Many developing nations lack the resources to police their waters effectively and prevent illegal vessels from operating. The United Nations is well aware of the problem of pirate fishing boats, and a Plan of Action to tackle the problem has been drawn up, although its final wording was significantly weakened because of objections from some member states, in particular Mexico.

Bringing the illegal fishing industry under regulation is essential to prevent albatrosses from becoming extinct.

Longline fishing has been identified as the single greatest threat to seabirds globally. Seabirds scavenge behind fishing vessels - they get caught as they try to eat bait from the hooks, and are dragged underwater to drown. A longline may be up 130 kilometres long. Every year, ocean fishing catches about 10,000 albatrosses and petrels

World-wide effort to save the albatross

Ballina's Australian Seabird Rescue (ASR) volunteers have been called upon to lecture at conferences in Coffs Harbour and Forster. The invitation came from the SeaNet organisation, which researches and promotes more sustainable commercial fishing methods. SeaNet's primary objective is to work with the fishing industry to minimise the catch of non-target species. SeaNet NSW is hosted by Ocean Watch, the National Heritage Trust, the Clarence River Fishermen's Co-op and NSW Fisheries. NSW Fisheries are at the coalface in the preservation of many species of wildlife, especially with their donation of a sea-boat for Ballina's ASR. The SeaNet project has received the welcome support of many commercial operators who have become aware of the need to preserve the many species affected. Commercial fishing at sea, especially longline fishing, often creates havoc with many marine creatures.

Albatrosses are one of several endangered species who fall prey to the longlines, with an estimated 300,000 killed each year. That's one every two minutes!

ASR will be demonstrating methods of handling seabirds, which inadvertently become hooked or tangled in the fishing gear.

Tasmanian albatross line up

Punters are gearing up for one of the longest races in history, to pick the fastest albatross in a field of 18 migrating from Australia to South Africa. 18 shy albatrosses have been fitted with electronic jockeys, miniature satellite transmitters that will enable scientists and gamblers to plot their progress. This is a race for survival where the wildlife of the world benefits no matter what the outcome, said a spokesman for the British bookmakers. The Big Bird race was the brainchild of conservationist Tim Nevard, who is based in Queensland. According to the ABC, funds raised form the race will be aimed at further research on eliminating the hazards.

Scientists help out

$200,000 from Miami's Marine Conservation Institute has been allocated to assist Dr Graham Robertson to save countless seabirds from the effects of longline fishing. Over several years of research, Dr Robertson has developed a method of placing tiny lead weights on the longlines, causing the lines to sink quickly, drastically cutting the opportunity of birds such as albatross and petrels to dive for baited hooks. In experiments

in New Zealand, a 94% reduction in mortality of some species was achieved. The three-year sponsorship will enable Dr Robertson to work with fishers, scientists, and authorities in Chile and Argentina.

The brink of extinction. The mortality rate of albatrosses, due to longline fishing, has now reached epidemic proportions

Marine entanglement

Thousands of marine animals die each year entangled in active or abandoned fishing gear, nets, and lines. Several species of dolphins, porpoises and whales are particularly vulnerable to entanglement.

Often, these species feed on the same fish that nearby humans are fishing. Other times, they swim with, feed near, or inhabit the same area as those fish. The Marine Mammal Protection Act provides the only defence for these species. It requires that teams of specialists develop mechanisms to reduce entanglements and to ensure the continued growth of marine mammal populations. Thousands of marine animals die each year entangled in active or abandoned fishing gear, nets, and lines. Several species of dolphins and whales are particularly vulnerable to entanglement.

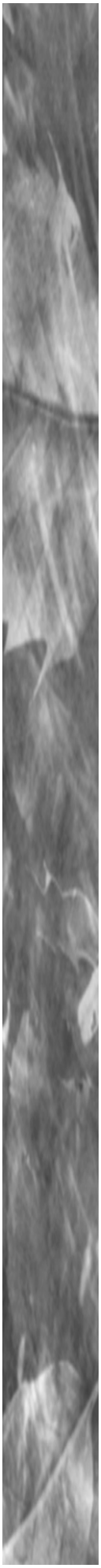
The entanglement of Australian fur seals in human debris in Australian waters is a tragedy. Trawl nets continue to be the major source of entanglement materials for seals. This form of entanglement is probably the most lethal as the typically large pieces of entangled netting is both resilient to wear and buoyant. The majority of entangled seals are juvenile and sub-adult animals. This probably reflects the tendency for smaller animals to become entangled and the consequent mortality of these animals due to physical injury imposed by the increased restriction of neck collars as the animals grow. Some seals however do survive entanglement and have circular scars around their necks.

Something is being done

Federal Minister for the Environment and Heritage, Dr David Kemp, boosted protection for Australia's marine wildlife by invoking the powers of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act 1999 to combat the effects of harmful marine debris.

Harmful marine debris that injures or kills threatened marine vertebrates through entanglement or ingestion is now recognised as a Key Threatening Process based on the recommendation of the Commonwealth's Threatened Species Scientific Committee. The Minister has also commissioned a national Threat Abatement Plan.

Plastic bags, abandoned fishing gear and solid waste illegally dumped by ships at sea can end up causing painful injuries and death to dozens of marine species including several endangered species. The listing of marine debris as a Key Threatening Process will mean a national Threat Abatement Plan will be developed in consultation with stakeholders, such as local councils, State Governments and industry and environment groups. To facilitate this process a Threat Abatement Team will be formed. The plan will build on existing laws and mitigation activities such as improving stormwater management and installing pollutant traps in waterways. It will provide a coherent and strategic plan for filling any gaps across programs from reducing plastic bags in our community to managing waste disposal on the high seas.



The plan will also examine the effectiveness of joint agreements with other nations to reduce and manage the six million tonnes of debris that enters the world's oceans each year and investigate the need for new agreements. This is particularly important for addressing the impact of marine debris on our northern shores.

Whilst marine debris is a hazard for many sea creatures, it is a particular danger in Australian waters for at least 20 species already listed as threatened or endangered. They include green turtles, loggerhead turtles, blue whales, humpback whales, albatrosses and petrels. For example, turtles, whales and sea birds may be severely injured and even die after entanglement with marine debris such as fishing lines, fragments of trawl netting or plastic packing straps. Seabirds confuse polystyrene balls and plastic buoys with sea eggs or crustaceans and eat them. Turtles confuse plastic bags with jellyfish, their common prey.

This listing underscores the importance of reducing the environmental impact of the six billion or so plastic shopping bags Australians dispose of each year. Governments and retailers have agreed to work towards halving plastic bag use by the end of 2005, and cutting plastic bag litter by 75%. Environment Ministers have called for a complete phase out of light weight, single use plastic bags within five years.

Feral pests

Our Society's National President, Patrick Medway, is a member of the Pest Control board and was delighted to be advised that $500,000 from the Natural Heritage Trust funding has been allocated for projects to control feral animals.

The Australian Government is providing $500,000 for 23 projects to help reduce the serious damage feral animals cause to Australian agriculture and the environment. The projects are part of the National Feral Animal Control Program, which is administered by the Bureau of Rural Sciences. The program identifies better ways to manage nationally significant pest animals. It also provides funding for control projects in key areas - 16 of which involve feral pigs. Feral pigs cause at least $100 million in lost agricultural production every year and are also responsible for considerable environmental damage. The 16 projects receiving funding involve shooting, baiting and trapping programs in areas where feral pigs are causing significant damage. The Australian Government is contributing $200,000 to this work in addition to contributions by State and local government, and individual landholders.

On top of the $200,000 for the feral pig projects, $298,942 is also being provided to seven on-going projects looking at ways to better manage pests such as birds, foxes, rabbits and wild dogs. Nationally significant pests, such as rabbits, feral pigs and wild dogs cost us over $500 million a year in lost agricultural production and also cause significant environmental damage. This damage would be much greater without the concerted cooperative efforts of researchers, government agencies and individual landholders.

As in many other regions of north Australia, the feral pig has significant impacts in Cape York

Bitou is only for baboons!

by Carol Nolder

The results of 25 years of 'bitou bashing' were celebrated in June 2004 when National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS) hosted a party for nearly 90 people at Diamond Head, Crowdy Bay National Park. Members of the Mid-North Coast Branch of the National Parks Association of NSW have carried on a lengthy battle with the invasive weed Chrysanthemoides monilifera which covered large areas of the coastline after being introduced to our shores in 1908 by ships dumping ballast from Africa, where the bitou is food for baboons and elephants! The Soil Conservation Commission considered that the

bitou could act as a sand-dune stabiliser and made payments not only for collecting buckets of the seed, but also for distributing them in the sand, causing the rapid spread of the bitou along the coast, which smothered the native Acacia sophorae on the dunes.

Twenty five years ago, the 'Bitou Bashers', a group of enthusiasts who treasured their local headland in Crowdy Bay National Park, commenced an attack on the bitou using the Bradley method of bush regeneration and counting the plants removed as they did so! The bitou is now declared to be a noxious weed. The group has now grown to nearly 150 members who, with dedicated commitment, enthusiasm and tenacity, developed a great team spirit. Further contributions by the Department of Agriculture, NPWS staff and NPA members outlined the biological controls that had been introduced, the bitou bush tip moth, the seed-fly and the leaf-rolling moth, which have all put pressure on the bitou, but it was realised five years ago that with the inaccessibility of large areas of cliffsides, it was necessary to obtain funding for a paid co-ordinator to facilitate aerial spraying.

Bitou bush was introduced into NSW during the 1950s and 60s to stabilise sands after mineral sand mining. Bitou bush has become a weed and is displacing much of the native vegetation in dunes along the NSW coast. Due to the potential of erosion problems it is difficult to remove bitou bush because until the native vegetation is re-established there is no vegetation to stabilise the sand

Wildside

by Lance Ferris, Australian Seabird Rescue

National award for Seabird Rescue

Words could not describe our euphoria at Parliament House, Canberra. Amidst a throng of 500 National Landcare Award finalists, guests and dignitaries, Australian Seabird Rescue was chosen as the winner of the Natural Heritage Trust Coastcare Community Award. Earlier in the day, I had witnessed presentations to other finalists and was awestruck by the amazing determination and dedication of so many environmental groups from around Australia. Farmers, revegetation groups, catchment organisations, dunecare teams, were among the winners in several other sections. The presentations highlighted the incredible advances made by Landcare over the years, and the ability of individuals and small teams of volunteers to make a real difference to our environment. The award was presented to us by The Hon Warren Truss MP, Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.

In the Great Hall: The Hon Warren Truss MP, presents the Coastcare Award to ASR,s Marny Bonner (right), at Parliament House, Canberra

A place to call home

Twelve years on, and Australian Seabird Rescue volunteers finally have a place to call home. Thanks to the outstanding generosity of The Tony and Lisette Lewis Foundation, the property formerly known as the Tropical Gardens Function Centre in North Creek Road, Ballina is now Seabird Rescue's headquarters. The centre is on five acres of waterfront land, with a lecture hall, a residence, a saltwater lake and a freshwater lake. The location puts us within minutes of most rescue sites, and a short boat-trip to the mouth of the Richmond River. We will be able to pump good saltwater into the sea turtle and seabird rehab ponds and will stand a far greater chance of saving many more animals. The hall will eventually accommodate school-group sessions, rescue workshops and conferences, and will host displays by organisations such as NSW Fisheries, National Parks and Wildlife Service, Wetland Care, and Landcare, to name a few. The centre is ideally positioned for major incidents such as oil-spills or marine wildlife emergencies.

First patient

The new ASR centre was christened by the arrival of a Southern giant petrel. The bird was rescued off Evans Head by the crew of a fishing boat. These huge, pelagic birds are amazingly gentle, and

take to care extremely well. The species was recently included on the endangered list, following concerns of diminishing populations. One kilogram of fish per day is proving to be a healthy appetite and hopes for early release is promising.

ASR volunteer Kristen Archibald attends the giant petrel, the first patient at the new centre

Leatherback turtles in serious decline

Of all endangered species of sea turtles, the leatherback is the most at risk. The decline of this species is creating serious concerns for conservationists the world over. So-named because of its leathery shell, it is the largest of all the marine turtle species, barely fitting on the back of a table-top truck when fully grown. Even though it is a reptile, it's the only marine turtle that has the ability to regulate its body temperature. When foraging, it can dive deeper than the largest whale. Plagued by nets, longlines, pollution, exploitation of eggs, and the destruction of nesting habitat, the species is virtually on the brink of extinction. Numbers have plummeted from 91,000 in 1980 to fewer than 5,000 in 2002. They have swum the oceans for 100 million years, but unless things change for the better, their remaining time on earth is seriously limited.

This huge leatherback turtle was recently found dead on a Queensland beach. (Photo courtesy of EPA Queensland)

No danger too small for sea turtles

Tonnes of marine debris enter the oceans every day – an estimated 800,000 kilograms in fact. The pollutants range from tiny pieces of plastic packaging to abandoned motorcars. In most cases, we can only guess how many creatures die as a result of this onslaught. In the past, when collecting tangled fishing line and plastic from around the shores, we often bypassed the very tiny pieces, not considering these to be a threat. An ailing sea turtle which was rescued at sea, two weeks ago, has been monitored for any signs of foreign bodies in the gut. Within five days in care, the regular examination of its droppings found a ten-centimetre length of tangled fishing line. Since then, the turtle is eating well, and making a speedy recovery. Some months ago, a similar event occurred with one of our turtles suffering from gut impaction caused by a tiny, cellophane lolly-wrapper. It seems that the miniscule, often obscure items are a far greater threat than a dumped vehicle.

This seaturtle from Angourie was on the critical list, until it passed a tangled piece of fishing line

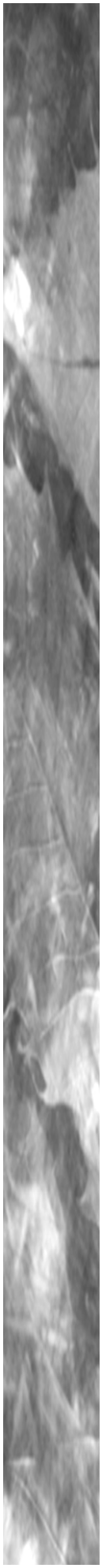
Conservation Walkabout

by Dr Vincent Serventy AM
President of Honour

Our Society has won at last

Our Society over more than thirty years has attempted to ban the clearfelling of native forests. This dangerous technology, economically sound, ecologically disastrous, turns unique and diverse native forests into plantations usually of one dominant tree species.

We finally convinced NSW, now it seems all political parties went to the federal election



agreeing to ban clearfelling. As a result, these will become national parks with selective logging; Australia's method for nearly two hundred years that will allow the logging of selected trees by expert foresters. Congratulations Australia and our members who have fought for so long. Don't rest on your laurels. There are many battles still to win!

International

Our Society has always been involved with international as well as national conservation. In the twenties two of our members played an important part in creating what later became the World Conservation Union, the most significant group in the world today.

At an international conference in Perth some years ago they adopted as their conservation motto, the one our Society had developed some years before: 'Humans must live in harmony within nature.' We also ran the world's first Nature Conservation Day which some years later grew under the new name of Earth Day to a worldwide movement. We were also the first to develop the concept of wildlife corridors.

That is why we were pleased to see some State governments take a lead on banning GM foods. Our scientific panel has two world authorities on the topic. Dr David Murray has written an important book 'Seeds of Concern' published by the University of New South Wales. Professor Margot Somerville is a South Australian, now Professor of Law and Medicine in Montreal Canada. She has just won a UNESCO prize of ten thousand pounds for her work on ethics. Her book 'The Ethical Canary' has become a best seller.

From broad environmental principles we know the earth can support the present population in terms of food. However, David Attenborough, among others, has warned that we face grave environmental dangers from over population.

Australia is the lucky country in not having too many people; only suffering from having too many in too few places. Decentralisation can solve that. However our ecological knowledge teaches us no species can use too much of the earth's resources without disaster.

Noah's Ark

A modern ark in the Natural History Museum of London. They are storing hair, skin, even eggs of endangered species which in a sad future may be used to bring the species back to life. The full story is told in New Scientist of 31 July 2004.

Forecast

New Scientist reports on 14 August 2004 warns surface tropical waters will emerge in the Pacific over the next three months bringing droughts to Australia and heavy rain to the United States.

Global warming

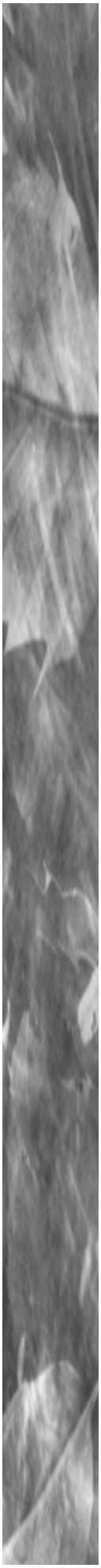
One of the results of this is a rise in sea levels, mainly due to melting glaciers and continental ice sheets adding more water to the oceans as well as the effect of warming the whole sea, causing expansion.

Now the University of Reading in England, as well as the Australian university in Canberra, has made a study of Roman fish pens of two thousand years ago. The whole fascinating story is told in New Scientist of 14 August 2004. Sea levels have changed for a variety of reasons. However the rise in the last hundred years has come as a result of human activity in the industrial age. Rising temperatures from greenhouse emissions has melted ice once safe on dry land.

New Guinea

Our heaviest bird, the cassowary, found in Australia and New Guinea. A study in the University of Melbourne has found the bird is useful in allowing the seeds of the fruit they eat to germinate well. Normally only four percent of untreated seeds germinate but after passing through the cassowary gut ninety percent germinate.

This picture by the late Eric Worrell, valued member, shows a male which bred in his park at Gosford NSW. The male incubates and cares for the young



WWF director retires

Dr David Butcher, after ten successful years in the job, has retired. He worked with us on the NSW Nature Conservation Council so his appointment was greeted with pleasure by all state conservationists. As expected, he worked long and hard raising WWF to its present powerful position. We wish him well in whatever new work he does. Many thanks David from the nature world.

David Butcher has been a leading figure in conservation and animal welfare for over twenty five years

Wandering albatross

This beautiful seabird is in danger from being hooked by long line fishing. This modern method of harvesting is as dangerous as drift nets, now being brought under control. The solution to the danger to wandering albatross came from a Tasmanian scientist who devised a method of throwing out thousands of baited lines, a kilometre long, by throwing them out from the side of the ship. By the time the baited hook reaches the stern it has sunk out of sight and the reach of the birds.

A drawing of the bird

Wildlife in decline

From all over the world comes warnings of mass extinctions from birds to butterflies. New Scientist warns 10,000 bird species are facing extinction from habitat loss, predation by alien species and climate change. The journal also warns that we are facing a mass extinction of wildlife 'on a par with the five others that have marked the history of life on the earth.'

National

Saving water

In the driest continent inhabited by humans in the world we need to economise on water. In 1980 an Australian company developed the world's first two button loo. The left hand button releases 5.5 litres of water. The right hand button, the traditional one, releases 11 litres. By using the economy button, an average household saves 32,000 litres a year.

Plastic bags

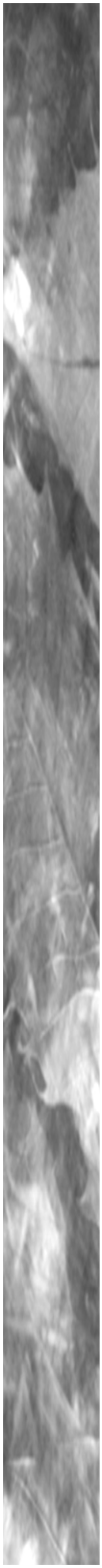
That blessing and curse of the shopper, the plastic bag, has at last been made bio-degradable in Australia. They are blending starch with other bio-degradable plastics. During the NSW Olympic Games it meant that 76 percent of food packaging was recycled. The Australian Cooperative Research Centre is working to make the use of bio-degradable nationwide, no more plastic containers to kill our wildlife.

Invasive species

Invasive species are a growing problem all over the world, and Australia, an isolated island state with a unique fauna and flora, is especially vulnerable. Over the years incredible harm has been done by such pests as foxes, rabbits, toads, carp, prickly pear, blackberries, rubber vine and the tree-killing disease phytophthora. At last count Australia had 2700 weed species and more than 200 marine invaders.

Weeds alone cost the economy $3.3 billion each year. Foxes are blamed for the extinction of several marsupials, and a new disease has been blamed for the disappearance of several frog species. The discovery of red imported fire ants in Brisbane in 2001 shows that major pests continue to invade.

Government reports concede that Australia is failing to address the threat properly. New pests keep entering the country, and entrenched pests keep multiplying. The war against feral fauna and flora was being lost while two thirds of all weeds



were deliberately introduced, a new conservation group claimed. The Invasive Species Council was launched in Melbourne recently by Council co-founder Tim Low. It was because Australia is not responding well that the Invasive Species Council was formed. They are the first group in the world formed to lobby against invasive species of all kinds (as opposed to groups that tackle other issues besides invasives).

The red imported fire ant (Solenopsis invicta) was discovered in Australia in 2001, when nests were found on more than 700 properties in Brisbane. If not eradicated, these ants will cost the Australian economy $6.7 billion over the next thirty years, according to federal government estimates. A $130 million eradication campaign is underway

Feral animals

Dr Ian Abott of Western Australia suggests that feral cats are not as big a problem as foxes. In southwestern Australia widespread baiting with 1080 has resulted in the rapid recovery of many native mammals even though feral cats are present which are not attracted by usual baits.

Also in Tasmania, cats have been present since the European settlement 200 years ago but they have no foxes, so wildlife is abundant

Some of our most loved creatures, such as bandicoots are, right now, on the verge of extinction as a result of invasive species, such as the European red fox

Wedgetail eagles

A study of our largest bird of prey showed when their staple food, the introduced rabbit, was dropped dramatically by the calicivirus, eagles did not seem to suffer. Birth rate is still 3.5 young a year. Both adults and chicks take other species - less favoured than rabbits - they take birds, very young kangaroos and wallabies at foot, small pigs and foxes. We know that in the Simpson Desert they feed largely on bearded dragon lizards.

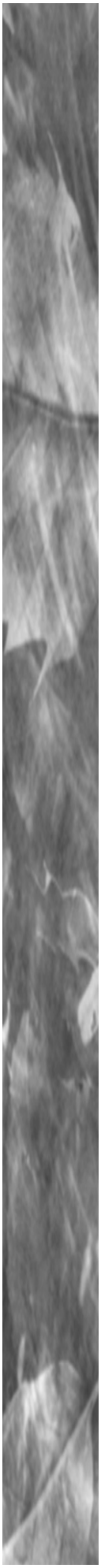
Wedgetail

Dieback

This disease comes under a number of names. Forty years ago we first heard of cinnamon fungus from a scientist. He told us of the work of Dr Podger of the CSIRO who identified the disease in jarrah in the west.

Since then it has spread eastwards arriving in New South Wales. Dr Podger claims the problem suffers from lack of interest by the national government. All his efforts, he claims, were met with the same difficulties as amused all television watchers of the programme 'Yes Minister'. Still, we do know one British Secretary whose coming to Australia has done our wildlife some good. Donald Trouson was the person who was the main worker in creating the 'Photographic Index of Australian Wildlife'. Our Society was involved in this project from its beginning to its final success.

Tree dieback: these denuded landscapes in Northern Queensland could be a natural phenomenon reacting to drought



Shirley Strickland

Shirley was a committed environmentalist, who helped write the conservation policy for the Australian Democrats. She also assisted our Society in many local battles in Western Australia. The first was to save the southern jarrah forest from bauxite mining. We lost but had a promise from the then opposition that if elected it would save the northern section. This they did, conserving most with a new national park. Shirley was a good friend whose fame as an Olympic athlete helped our cause, just as did the novelist Tim Winton in the battle to save Ningaloo Reef from a marina development at Coral Bay.

Tasmania

Possibly the most famous Tasmanian is Bill Mollison. He is the inventor of permaculture, a framework for sustainable agriculture. Now America is discovering permaculture. How does this affect wildlife? For thousands of years agriculture has destroyed fertile land. Our best examples today are the Murray-Darling Basin and the Hawkesbury in NSW.

Hobart is to be at the forefront of Australia's efforts to help stamp out illegal fishing in the Southern Ocean. Australia, New Zealand and the United States are convincing fellow members of the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources of the value of a centralised vessel monitoring system. The Commission manages the harvesting of the Southern Oceans' living resources and has its head office in Hobart. The main illegal fishing focus has been on poachers taking the valuable Patagonian toothfish. One of the main strategies for tracking illegal vessels is a tamper-proof vessel monitoring system on board legal fishers, similar to an aircraft black-box recorder. It is the means to double-check exactly where the legal fishers are at any point in time, so any satellite imagery picking up any other vessels in the area would know that those vessels were up to no good, or had some severe malfunction.

The patagonian toothfish, whose flesh is known as 'white gold' on a lucrative black market, costs up to $US70 a serving in Asian and US restaurants

New South Wales

This State lost a great conservationist when Ivor Wyatt died recently. His work for the National Trust in NSW was legendary, while his work for nature conservation helped the Trust to remember the other part of their work. Ivor's work for the Nature Conservation Council of NSW was also untiring. In the words of Thoreau, when Ivor came to die he knew he had lived.

Western Woodlands

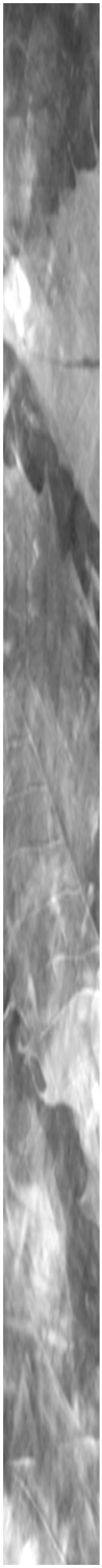
This group is working hard to save this valuable wildlife region. They asked us to become part of a deputation to press their claim for action to create more national parks, since at present only two and a half percent of the region is conserved. Bob Carr refused to receive us. Perhaps he is ashamed of NSW and its poor record. In Tasmania twenty percent of the State is designated as national parks, while in Victoria seventeen percent is designated national parks. The international figure is suggested as ten percent of any nation to be so conserved; ideally the rest Regional Parks.

The Pilliga woodlands is a stronghold of our icon, the koala, the Brigalow woodlands are remarkably rich yet poorly protected.

Here are some of the groups supporting the work to which we are proud to add our name: the NSW NCC, Total Environment Centre, National Parks Association of NSW, Wilderness Society, Friends of Pilliga, Dubbo Field Naturalists and the Central West Environment Council.

They have worked hard to gain a hearing. It is sad Bob Carr has personally refused. We always thought we carried some weight as a good friend of his government!

Koala and baby



Stop Press!

A fifteen year research project by the University of Sydney has shown Sydney Harbour is poisoned by heavy metals, pesticides and other toxic chemicals washed in by storm water drains. Filters attached to outlets help, but our Society considers all stormwater should go into holding ponds for tertiary treatment as with sewage.

The State government has axed its Stormwater Trust whose aim was to clean up the polluted water before it reached our waterways and the sea

Value of native plants

The Power House Museum is trialling an old site at Castle Hill once developed as plantations of oil-rich Australian plants. Many of the trees are still remaining. One of these, Melaleuca alternifolia, is marketed as the active ingredient in a growing range of products. This highlights one reason why we should conserve our native plant species.

Wedgetails

New South Wales has learned ecological commonsense. The State will issue no more licenses to farmers to shoot eagles. A simple minded farmer, seeing an eagle devouring one of his lambs, 'knows' it is a danger to his stock. However, the eagle is as much a carrion feeder as a predator. Many studies have shown that few lambs die because of eagle predation and the eagle's diet is made up of rabbits, reptiles and other small prey as well as carrion

Malabar Headland

Peter Ryan chairman of the Friends of Malabar Headland, gave Bob Carr a plan which would ensure that, if this defence land was handed to the State, it could develop as a national park. The Federal Government has been working to improve the site but this new initiative would create another natural history jewel in the State's crown.

Malabar became famous when an overseas artist wrapped part of it in plastic. We attacked the scheme on the base it was damaging the ecology. Nesting fairy penguins would abandon the area while the smaller creatures would either escape or die. The EPA listed the area as being at risk because contaminants were leaching from the site to the southern end of the beach

Fur seals visit the beach

Humpback whales travel past on migration, with the headland as a prime viewing site

Sydney Harbour Federation Trust

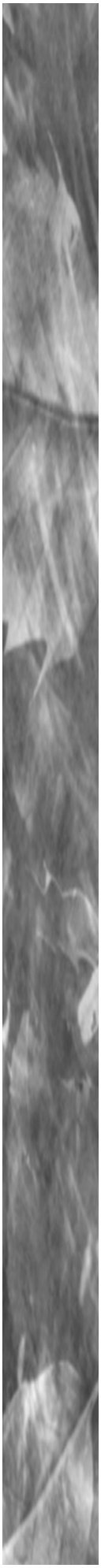
Seven site plans have been accepted by government and conservationists alike, more of our bushland will not only be conserved but also allow access to the public by walkways. In addition, the plans for new Olympic parklands park, which will be twice as large as Centennial Park, has been put forward by the Premier. This includes Bicentennial Park, the Brickpits, woodlands and estuaries to make a wonderful addition to the Harbour. Pockets of the old Cumberland Plain with turpentine woodland are to be included. The Society's Councillors will make an inspection so we can add our advice.

Death of a great ecologist

Robert Davidson will be remembered as the man who solved one of our local 'dieback' problems. Huge numbers of eucalypts were dying. It was thought Christmas beetles were the enemy but he considered a combination of old age, combined with the eating of all young plants by stock, to be responsible. Working for the CSIRO he published a book 'Bushland on Farms'. Since farmers control most of our rural land it is important that we work closely with them

Water Saving Plants

Frank Sartor, the State Minister for Energy and Utilities, is hoping to encourage home gardeners to use less water. He was looking at a Perth scheme where plants are given a one, two, three drop rating. Water misers like gums and hakeas are 'one' while willows are 'three'. The Australian Plant Association has a free brochure available with such a list.



Salvation Jane or Paterson's curse?

This weed of western NSW has two names depending on your point of view. In bad times it provides food for stock, but it can also suppress better grass. Now a research team from the University of Sydney has shown how one day it may prove a salvation for farmers. The plant contains essential oils normally only found in fish. Since doctors recommend two meals of fish a week for good health, the weed could offer a new food source. Of course it will take time before science can be turned into profit, though hopefully farmers have contacted the university for further information.

Queensland

A new report has a frightening prediction for the Great Barrier Reef because of coral bleaching caused by rising water temperatures. The report stated water temperature rises of less than one degree in 1998 and 2002 coincided with bleaching. By the middle of this century only five percent of living coral will be left, taking from 50 to 100 years to recover. Since coral bleaching is occurring all over the world, eco-tourism will suffer the same as in all other places.

About thirty years ago Sir Maurice Yonge, who as a young man led the British Royal Society expedition to the reef in the twenties, reported that silting from soil blown into the sea from over-grazing on the State's farmlands was killing the reefs of Low Isles where they were working. Now we have a much larger and more widespread threat.

Northern hairy nosed wombat

Our Society helped save this species from extinction. This almost unknown story is told in our new book 'Conservation Victories'. We provided some funds for the protective fence recently built to enclose the animals' habitat. A 20 kilometre deer-type fence now encloses 2,500 hectares.

There are now only 110 animals left of the world's largest burrowing mammal. Young wombats need fresh green pick and long competition with grazing cattle was the first step in population decline. Now predation by the feral dog, known as the dingo, has helped cause a new population crash. When numbers increase some will be used to stock national parks in suitable country. The State is to be congratulated on this task.

The Northern hairy-nosed wombat, Lasiorhinus krefftii, is the largest wombat species. It is critically endangered with only 110 surviving in the last wild population at Epping Forest National Park. The northern hairy-nosed wombat is the world's largest burrowing herbivore. Adults weigh up to 40 kg and can live to 10 years of age in captivity and at least 17 years in the wild. There are no Northern hairy-nosed wombats in captivity because wombat husbandry is not well understood and so far wombats have not been reliably bred in captivity

Shark nets

These killer nets are not selective. They kill anything which comes their way. Patrick, our National President, had some great comments reported in the media: 'Hundreds of marine creatures are killed, including protected species. The nets are psychological rather than scientific.' He then went on to explain that sharks are seen going out from the nets as well as going in.

The media's interest was after a whale calf was a victim. Our Society has for many years suggested using baited shark hooks as a barrier, attracting only the target. South Africa is experimenting with undersea electric cables to deter sharks.

A boat laying shark nets to kill any animals swimming into them

Northern Territory

Study aims to reduce fishing by-catch

Operators in northern Australia's prawn fishery have collected data on more than 1,000 sea snakes and hundreds of other species in a study aimed at reducing the incidental catches of sea life. The CSIRO study is entering its second year and is trying to get a better picture of the by-catch, or non-target species caught inadvertently. We need to understand their availability, their abundance, before we can take the next step, which is the management measure necessary to reduce the impact of trawls on those populations.

Western Australia

For our western members, the last issue of Landscope has much of interest on Shark Bay and the Montebelloes. Many years ago at a dinner party an American world authority on evolution told us that in the Islands we had 'test tubes' of evolution. The Islands housed many species like the barred bandicoot which had become extinct on the mainland.

At Shark Bay many of these still-living species are being released in secure sanctuaries fenced off from attack by feral cats and foxes as well as competition with rabbits which had killed them off on the mainland.

Barred bandicoot

The WEB

The newsletter of the Threatened Species Network on a number of species. Here is their comment on the western swamp tortoise. Our Society was a leading group in rescuing them from almost certain extinction. 'The recovery team is trying to locate and protect suitable habitat areas for the introduction of captive bred animals...due to the very specialised requirements....this is proving difficult.'

The conditions are simple, the ponds must be shallow enough to produce tadpoles and other creatures for food for the tortoise but dry out in the summer killing off any long-necked swamp tortoises which stray in.

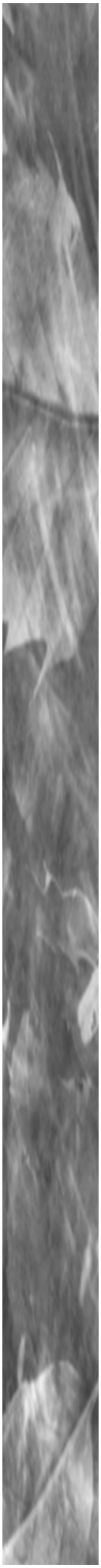
Western swamp tortoise

Short-necked tortoise

The world's rarest reptile seems safe with the release of 25 individuals into a new reserve at Mogumber. Our Society was involved with the first finding, its introduction to the scientific world, and the appeal for funds to buy the two wetlands in which the last remnants survived. We were also involved in finding funds for the breeding program. This has been a singular triumph which will be described in our new book 'Conservation Victories with Battles Yet to Win".

The rare swamp tortoise

The animal with a back-pack of electronic gear for easier finding



Andrew Burbidge

The retirement of this senior figure after 33 years working for wildlife conservation is a sad day. Andrew was involved with the research on the shortnecked tortoise at the start of his career. He also played a large part in the building of the present day CALM as one of the premier wildlife conservation government groups in Australia. Farewell Andy we are sad to see you go.

Andrew working in the field tracking the tortoise

Dugongs

Shark Bay has one of the world's largest and most diverse sea grass beds in the world. Here dugongs feed safely. They are also possibly the world's largest group of these marine mammals. A research project studying this population combines CALM, the Yagdalah Aboriginal Corporation, Edith Cowan University, the James Cook University and the Gordon Reid Foundation. Unesco World Heritage Trust and the National Heritage Trust assisted with funding. It is hoped this will serve as a model for other research projects involving traditional owners, government and scientific groups.

Wallabies return

The rare black-flanked rock wallaby found only in this State now numbers only about a thousand individuals. It is safe on some islands of the Recherché group though on the mainland predation by foxes and cats has reduced their numbers. Competition by goats for sheltering rocks also removed many. Fortunately CALM is taking out goats, foxes and, hopefully, cats. Now some wallabies are being returned to the Avon valley where they were once reasonably common.

$16.6 million boost for WA's natural resources

The long-nosed potoroo. Recent synonyms Potorous apiclais, Potorous gilbertii. It is presumably extinct in southwestern Western Australia, where no living specimens have been collected for over 80 years

Western Australia's natural resources will be further protected by $16.6 million from the Australian and West Australian Governments to tackle priority conservation and land management issues. Of the $16.6 million, the Australian Government has contributed $15.9 million, with the WA Government providing $700,000 and in-kind support through other expenditure.

Priority projects include the Western swamp tortoise recovery plan, essential conservation work for Gilbert's potoroo, and coastal management through fencing, revegetation, interpretive signage, compost toilets and designated access. The funds will also help continue the conservation of eucalypt woodlands in the wheat belt through conservation covenants, encouraging landholders to be involved with the Land for Wildlife program, voluntary management agreements and land acquisition. The funds will support continued sustainable land management practices for the Avon and South West regions. Ongoing rehabilitation of local landscapes in the Avon will help communities to maximise the environmental benefits while maintaining viable agricultural production systems. Other areas from the South West to the Kimberleys will also be involved.

Work with local government in the South West region will reduce water consumption and funding continues for the Harvey River and Murray River restoration programs and the extension of efficient drainage practices in the Serpentine River catchment. The investment will help communities in the Rangelands region to better understand the benefits of improved fire regimes on erosion control and reduction of wildfires. This will be

done by improving fire management and control skills in communities, identifying biodiversity at risk from fires and improving the understanding of fire issues in the Kimberley. These funds will also help establish priorities for wetland conservation and management through a broad wetland survey of the Kimberley sub-region to identify the values and threats to these wetlands.

Dryandra

Our Society played a significant role in the saving of these woodlands and they are flourishing. One of our members, Andy Darbyshire, has sent a fascinating account of how CALM is releasing many captive-bred endangered species into this woodland. Now, with foxes diminished by their work, they hope to be able to prove native species can breed faster than the introduced fox, whose numbers are kept low by regular baiting through the Western Shield program.

Wildflowers

This State has most of the more popular flowers in this $400 million dollar market worldwide. Bob Beale in the Sydney Morning Herald wrote how 'everyone is making a dollar out of Australian native flowers except us but that is about to change.' The headline shouts 'Gloves come off in the global battle over the kangaroo paw, one of the most popular of the State's many wildflowers'. Geraldton wax, smokebush, banksias (of which the State has most), boronia, are increasingly popular, the article states, 'in a world weary of the same old roses and chrysanthemums.' We doubt if the world ever tires of any flowers. However, we have the scientific edge in being able to develop new strains which can be more easily cultivated in home gardens and are also showier than original stock. For example there are now 200 varieties of the kangaroo paw.

South Australia

A great honour for Australia

We all know of the geological ages like Cambrian, named in honour of a place in Wales where these rocks were first named. All such ages were named by scientists from the northern hemisphere, until now. A new age has been added, Ediacaran. It was geologist Reg Sprigg who was responsible for the naming of this geological age. Sir Douglas Mawson was his professor. Reg remembered his belief that in the unaltered sandstones of the Flinders Ranges might lie fossils, earlier than the Cambrian; the first multi-celled creatures. Reg found them at Ediacra! It is now a nature reserve.

Ediacaran fossil found with Reg Sprigg

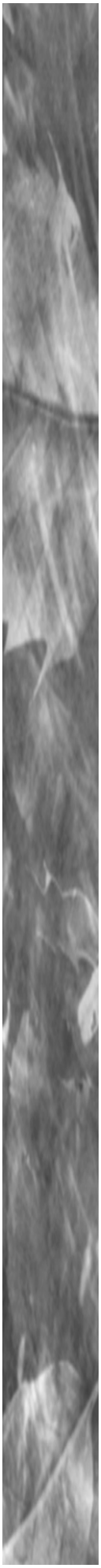
Pups at Herring

by our Antarctic correspondent Bruce Alden

An Emperor penguin last week and now seal pups at Herring Island. The explosion of life for the brief Spring and Summer of the Antarctic at Casey has begun. All through the long dark, dreary blizzard infested winter, animal life had just about completely disappeared from the Casey Environs. True, we had seen a few Weddell seals, (Leptonychotes weddelli) and very occasionally a bird had been sighted but for all intents and purposes the place was devoid of life. Then all of a sudden, there is life on the ice. Weddell Seals start appearing in greater numbers, fat and very pregnant. Adélie penguins (Pygoscelis adeliae) have been seen on the rookeries, heading unerringly to where they were hatched on a bed of pebbles. A few Snow petrels (Pagodroma nivea) are already finding their nests in rock crevices and ledges.

The seal pupping, unfortunately, almost coincided with the arrival of the Aurora Australis with 40 new summering and wintering crew. This is an extremely busy time and it is nearly impossible to get off Station, so when the opportunity came for a trip to go to Herring Island to see the new pups, I was pretty keen to go along. Things never quite go as expected. This time it went even better by default.

Weddells at Herring Island



A convenient cushion

Quad riding in the Antarctic for a man that wears glasses can be a painful experience. It is mandatory that we wear full face helmets for safety reasons. Pull the helmet over your head, force the glasses on under the helmet, breath deeply and hey presto, instant blindness. Your glasses now have a thin coating of ice that is extremely difficult to remove and render them to all intents and purposes useless. Okay, try the other tack, go without the glasses. Goodo, that's okay if you are not in whiteout. In conditions of total low cloud cover, everything becomes white, sky and ground, one sheet of white. There are no shadows, no definition to the snow surface. You can drive straight over an ice cliff and not realise a thing, till you hit the bottom! It is a difficult concept to describe for those that have not experienced it. It is hard to comprehend being able to see an object 20 km away but you can't see the huge drop in front of you. You cannot see the bumps and dips in the ice. It's as if you are floating in a sea of white.

The predicted conditions for the morning were overcast, whiteout. I thought, no, not again, I'll hang fire and I might get another opportunity. I was lucky. The first group of riders went out early in almost total whiteout, they returned with the cloud breaking up and what little wind was there gradually dying out. I had won the lottery. Long time between wins I might add. Even if I could not wear my glasses, at least I would be able to see the snow surface and avoid the worst of the bumps. The -14°c temps I would endure! So, five of us decided for an afternoon sortie to Herring Island to the Weddell seal pupping grounds. The Island is about 12 kms to the SSE from Casey, the coastline running in that direction till it hits the Vanderford Glacier. The first part of our ride would be up onto the ice plateau and then down to Robinson Ridge. From there we would use the sea ice highway to the Island. The sea ice at Casey is notoriously unreliable. Around the Station, it can break out at any time, hence the detour up onto the plateau to enable us to get down onto safe ice locked in by islands.

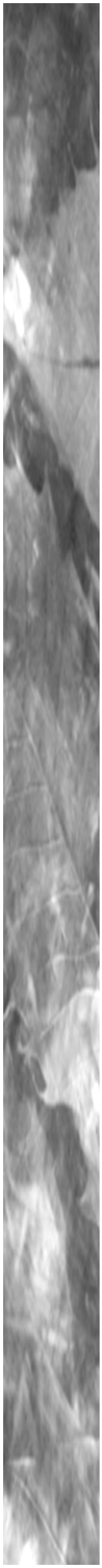
So, away we went. For some reason my glasses just refused to fog up. I could see the snow surface in the brilliant sunshine and, for the first time at Casey, the ride was enjoyable. Admittedly, the visor was up allowing a freezing breeze to chill the face but it would be worth it in the end. A week before, the Senior Electrician and I had travelled to the Ridge pulling a large steel bar behind a dozer and this had knocked the tops off the worst of the sastrugi, the snow ridges that form in the wind. So, travel was relatively smooth and swift and oh, the joys of being able to see where you are going!

Once on the relatively smooth sea ice, progress was rapid and we could maintain a constant speed of around 60 kms per hour, bliss. The Island hove into the distance and, at its foot, we could see the big fat seals hauled out onto the ice. The floating ice moves up and down with the tide and this cracks the ice where it joins onto the rocks. The seals can get onto the ice through these cracks.

Hurry up Bruce!

We parked the quads a good 200 metres from the seals, as close as we are allowed to go with these vehicles. Then, it was out with the cameras, off with the gloves and we trudged over to the seals. The seals looked like so many fat slugs on the ice and beside some of them we could see the tiny pups. We looked pretty fat ourselves in our freezer suits. The mothers rolled a little, gave us the once over and, sensing we presented no danger, settled back down on the ice, snorting occasionally and emitting strange hollow sounding noises. There were not a lot of pups but enough to keep us happy. A few of the mothers appeared to be in labour. We were hoping to witness a birth but, unfortunately, it didn't happen.

Of all the young of any animals I have ever seen, the Weddell pup has to be the cutest, most cuddly bundle of fur ever invented! Those huge eyes look at you and you just melt, they really are an attractive animal. They rolled around their



mothers, scratching, poking with their flippers and telling Mum it was time for another feed. The mother's milk must be extremely nourishing as they gain weight at an astonishing rate. The pups appear to have no fear of humans and will actually hump towards you, they seem quite inquisitive. The mothers do check you out initially. Then they do what all new Mums do, put the head down and catch 40 winks. Occasionally, a few of the slightly larger pups would be a bit adventurous and hump away a few metres. The mothers would then squawk at them and hump over to where the miscreant lay on the ice. All these pups seemed very healthy. At Davis in 1976, during the pupping season, many pups perished when we had an unusually warm spell. The pups born wet, died. Normally, the water on their fur turns to ice almost immediately and falls off leaving the coat nice and dry and the pup warm. In warm conditions, the coat remains wet and the pup dies from the cold. The mothers would stay with their dead pups for days, nudging them with their noses trying to bring them back to life. Their red bloodshot eyes paid testimony to their grief, very upsetting. Fortunately, we were spared that sad spectacle.

After a couple of hours, our digital camera cards were full and it was time to think about going home. We rested on our quads for a few minutes and had a good look at our surroundings. To the East, the sea ice stopped abruptly at the foot of the huge ice cliffs of the Peterson Glacier. To our South, we could see the hills of Browning Peninsular. To the West lay other islands of the Windmill group and close at hand, Herring Island with its wonderful seals and pups. The sun blared out of a near cloudless sky. Sometimes it is pretty good to be in the Antarctic.

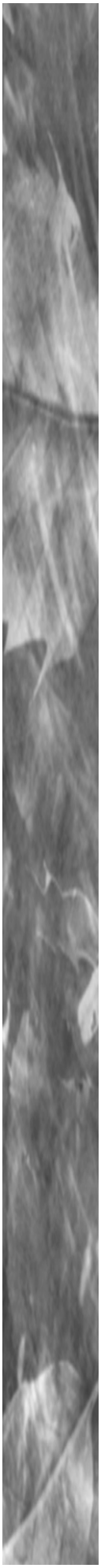
Me and me mum

And they are all mine!

RSPCA and wildlife

Our Society recently made a cash donation to the RSPCA Wildlife shelter that was burnt in the January bushfires last year. RSPCA Wildlife operates within the RSPCA (ACT) Inc where there is one fulltime Wildlife Officer supported by a large, loose network of volunteers. RSPCA Wildlife rescues and rehabilitates injured and/or orphaned wildlife in the Australian Capital Territory. The RSPCA Wildlife Steering Committee meets regularly to schedule and plan training courses, public awareness-raising, fund-raising and other activities, and to discuss current issues

In the Spring 2004 RSPCA (ACT) Newsletter their Wildlife Officer reported that for the financial year 2003-04 they received 2,454 animals. Amongst these were 146 cockatoos, 144 currawongs, 375 galahs and 277 magpies, 6 microbats, 5 echidnas, 165 possums, 8 wallabies, 5 wombats, 7 ringtail possums and 6 sugar gliders. 34% were able to be rehabilitated successfully and were returned to the wild.



Land clearing in Queensland

Around half a million hectares of bushland is cleared each year in Queensland alone. That's an area three times the size of Fraser Island, or more than ten suburban house blocks every minute. More than three quarters of all land clearing in Australia happens in Queensland.

The bushland that is being targeted for clearing includes a huge variety of different plants and animals. Over 80% of all land clearing in Queensland is to make way for new cattle grazing paddocks. The rest is for sugar cane and other crops, as well as houses, roads, factories and tourist developments.

Queensland still has a chance to protect our native bushland now, before it's too late. By controlling land clearing we can prevent huge salinity problems in the future and save dozens of species of native wildlife from becoming endangered.

Threatened species go under the bulldozer

Some people may think that wildlife, particularly birds, can easily escape from areas being bulldozed and move into adjacent bushland. Unfortunately this rarely happens. If there is other suitable bushland habitat nearby it will already have populations of the different species - which mostly protect their territories from refugees. If escaping wildlife makes it away from the bulldozers they rarely if ever are able to establish new territories amongst their competitors.

The process is usually very mathematical. When a hectare of bush is cleared most of the animals living there die immediately, or soon after. Only a few hardy, adaptable species, such as magpies, some cockatoos, the larger kangaroos and a few lizards can live in the altered landscape. In Queensland millions of birds, lizards, frogs and mammals die every year because of land clearing. This includes greater gliders, sugar gliders, bettongs, geckoes, native mice, finches, pigeons, honeyeaters, wallabies, bats, parrots and many more...

Koalas

At least a thousand koalas are likely to die each year from clearing of bushland in Queensland. In south-east Queensland important high density populations of koalas are continually threatened by clearing and fragmentation of habitat. In central Queensland koalas live in lower densities of around one koala to every one to two hundred hectares of habitat. Research has shown that these animals are directly knocked down and their habitat destroyed during 'chaining' operations. These ongoing losses put many populations at risk of local and regional extinction.

Major Mitchell Cockatoo

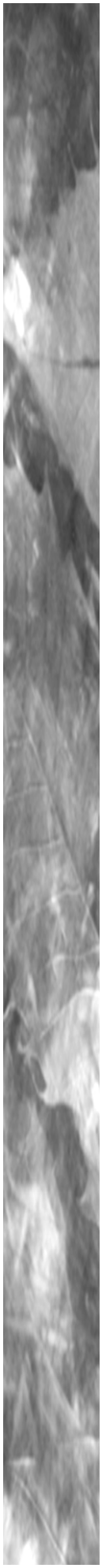
The pink or 'Major Mitchell' cockatoo depends on intact bushland for food and for nesting hollows. Unlike some of it's' relatives such as the galah and sulphur-crested cockatoo, it can't adapt to life in an intensively farmed landscape. Populations of pink cockatoos are threatened in southern and central Queensland as clearing moves further inland.

Major Mitchell cockatoo

Salinity - on the rise in the Sunshine State

For a long time Queenslanders thought they were immune from the kinds of salinity problems affecting the southern states. But now salt is on the rise in Queensland, and the problem can no longer be ignored. Despite this the State Government has failed to put a stop to land clearing in salinity prone areas.

Two thirds of all land clearing in Queensland is happening in catchments that have been identified



as priority areas for action to prevent salinity. In the Condamine-Balonne catchment in southern Queensland 373,000 hectares are predicted to have rising groundwater and salt-damage by 2050. Despite this, the region has one of the highest rates of land clearing in the whole of Australia.

Research in NSW has found that the cost of damage caused by salinity is $1 million per year for every 5,000 hectares visibly affected by salinity. Using these figures, we estimate that salinity is already costing Queensland $10 million a year and that could rise to as much as $600 million a year by 2050. Experts estimate that 3.1 million hectares of land in Queensland faces a high risk of becoming salt-damaged by 2050 if not managed correctly. Around 2.6 million hectares of this is in agricultural areas.

Already 48,000 hectares of land in Queensland is suffering from salt-damage. This is mainly in the eastern part of the state, with small patches beginning to appear in western Queensland. An increase in salinity levels has already been noticed in half a dozen river systems including the Condamine River on the Darling

The devastation of natural habitat by land clearing

Land clearing - polluting the Great Barrier Reef

The greatest threat to the Great Barrier Reef has been identified as land-based run-off resulting from agricultural activities - cattle grazing, vegetation clearance and intensive cropping.

Cattle grazing is the single largest land-use in the catchments of the rivers that flow out onto the Great Barrier Reef. Clearing land for cattle grazing can result in greatly increased soil erosion. The eroded topsoil is washed down rivers and onto the Great Barrier Reef. It is estimated that between 1 and 30 tonnes of soil are eroded off each hectare of cleared land. These soils are washed down the rivers carrying nitrogen and phosphorous.

Due to a combination of land clearing, over-grazing, fertiliser and chemical use, it is estimated that four times as much nitrogen and phosphorous is ending up on the reef, compared to pre-European times. This is polluting the waters of the Great Barrier Reef, damaging coral and marine life.

The amount of sediment and nutrients washed off the land and onto the Great Barrier Reef has increased at least fourfold in the last 150 years with much of this increase occurring in the last 40 years. Even more worrying is the fact that almost all pollutant loads are increasing annually, and showing no sign of abatement.

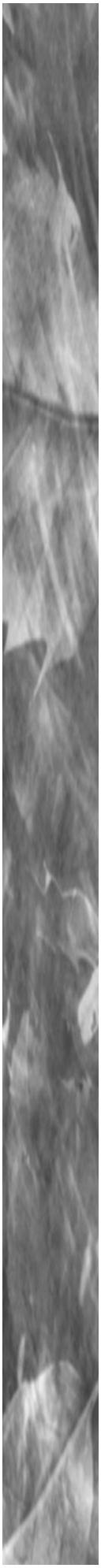
Land clearing laws in Queensland

Although Queensland has some laws to control land clearing, they do not go far enough and land clearing rates are still out of control. We need to lobby the State Government to tighten land clearing laws and fund a financial adjustment package help farmers manage their land in a more sustainable way.

The Vegetation Management Act (2000) governs land clearing on most private or freehold land. This prohibits clearing of endangered types of bushland (around 5% of what is left). It also stops land clearing in a region once 70% of the original bushland has been cleared. The Act gives the Government the power to ban land clearing in areas which are prone to salinity or soil erosion. It also gives the State the power to stop clearing in high conservation value areas. However, neither of these powers has ever been used. Since the Vegetation Management Act was introduced the State Government has given out permits to clear more than 700,000 hectares of bushland - an area almost six times the size of Brisbane.

Clearing on leasehold land is governed by the Land Act (1994). This prohibits clearing of endangered and threatened types of bushland on leasehold land.

Poisoned and burnt native woodland in central Queensland - land now at risk of salinity



Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia
Community Wildlife Conservation Award
Nomination Form for 2005

The Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia Community Wildlife Conservation Award will be awarded to a community conservation group that is making a major contribution to wildlife preservation in Australia.

Our Society knows that many organisations and thousands of volunteers are already working tirelessly to save our threatened species as well as the humble and more common Australian species and the precious wildlife habitat in which they live. We are all aware of the wonderful work being carried out by volunteers across the country in saving our sick and injured wildlife. They spend many hours and days caring for a single animal that has been injured by a car, savaged by a feral animal or hurt in bush fires. We want to recognise and help these conservation groups continue with their good work on behalf of the whole community. Our Society will present a plaque and a cash award of $2,500 to the winning conservation group that is helping to save our precious Australian wildlife.

Persons may nominate their own organisation or they may choose to nominate a third party who they believe should receive recognition. All nominations must be supported by a referee (see below).

Name of nominee: _____

Address: _____

_____

Telephone: _____Fax: _____E-mail: _____

Summary of achievements. (Please summarise in less than two hundred words why this nomination should be considered for the Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia Community Wildlife Conservation Award.)

_____

_____

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Press clippings, testimonials and photographs can be attached to support nominations - do not send books or videos.

The Wildlife Preservation Society will accept nominations for the Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia Community Wildlife Conservation Award via e-mail to wildlifepreservation@optusnet.com.au or mail to PO Box 42 Brighton Le Sands NSW 2216 or fax to 02 9599 0000.

Deadline for submission 31 December 2004.

Name of nominator: _____

Address: _____

_____

Telephone: _____Fax: _____E-mail: _____

Name of referee: _____

Address: _____

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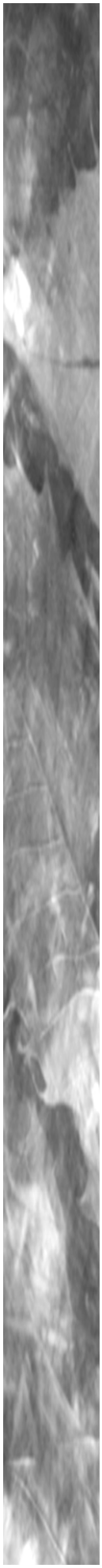
Telephone: _____Fax: _____E-mail: _____



Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia
Serventy Conservation Award
Nomination Form for 2005

The Serventy Conservation Award is named in honour of our President of Honour, Dr Vincent Serventy AM, his brother, the late Dr Dominic Serventy, an international ornithologist, and his older sister Lucy Serventy, who was our oldest Life Member.

This Award is intended to honour conservation work that has not been done as part of a professional career for which the person will have been well paid and honoured. It is given 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.

Persons may nominate themselves or they may choose to nominate a third party who they believe should receive recognition. All nominations must be supported by a referee (see below).

Name of nominee: _____

Address: _____

_____

Telephone: _____Fax: _____E-mail: _____

Summary of achievements. (Please summarise in less than two hundred words why this nomination should be considered for the Serventy Conservation Award.)

_____

_____

_____

_____

Press clippings, testimonials and photographs can be attached to support nominations - do not send books or videos.

The Wildlife Preservation Society will accept nominations for the Serventy Conservation Award via e-mail to wildlifepreservation@optusnet.com.au or mail to PO Box 42 Brighton Le Sands NSW 2216 or fax 02 9599 0000.

Deadline for submission: 31 December 2004.

Name of nominator: _____

Address: _____

_____

Telephone: _____Fax: _____E-mail: _____

Name of referee: _____

Address: _____

_____

Telephone: _____Fax: _____E-mail: _____

WPS MERCHANDISE

Many of our members have expressed interest in purchasing gift merchandise for friends and family (or even themselves)! This is a great way to support WPS, so we have responded below with a mail order system. Simply send your cheque or credit card details (with expiry date) and we will post your order out to you. All prices include GST and 20% member's discount. All proceeds go towards our conservation projects.

Polo shirts: $35.00
(navy with white logo/ white with navy logo)

Cap: $13.00
(navy with white logo)

WPS ceramic mug: $6.00
(white with blue logo)

Kids T'shirts: $15.00
(navy with white logo/ white with navy logo)

Drink bottle bag: $15.00
(navy with white logo, bottle not included)

Product	Quantity	Size	Cost per item	Total
Polo shirts	_____	S, M, L, XL, XXL	$35.00	_____
Children's T shirts	_____	4-6, 8, 10	$15.00	_____
Caps	_____	n/a	$13.00	_____
Mugs	_____	n/a	$ 6.00	_____
Drink bottle bag	_____	n/a	$15.00	_____

Add 10% Postage & Handling (min $5): _____
Please allow 14 days for delivery **TOTAL:** _____

Delivery Details

Name: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____

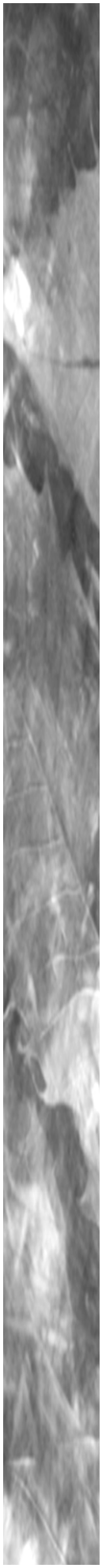
***Payment Details* (please tick)** ❒ Cheque ❒ Money order ❒ Mastercard ❒ Visa ❒ Bankcard

Card Number: |_|_|_|_|_|_|_|_|_|_|_|_|_|_|_|_|

Name on Card: _____ Expiry: _____

Signature: _____

Send this order by MAIL:
PO Box 42,
Brighton Le Sands NSW 2216
or for CREDIT CARD payments
by fax to: 02 9599 0000



Membership Form...

WILDLIFE PRESERVATION SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA, INC.

Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia, Inc. (Founded 1909)
PO Box 42 Brighton Le Sands NSW 2216

Membership

Why not become a member of the Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia Inc?
Simply fill out this form.

Name: .....

Address: .....

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

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

Membership category (please circle)

Individual: $30 Family: $45 Concession (pensioner/student/child): $15
Associate (library, school, conservation groups): $50 Corporate: $150
(Includes GST and postage within Australia. Add $10 for overseas postage)

Payment Details **(please tick)** ❒ Cheque ❒ Money order ❒ Mastercard ❒ Visa ❒ Bankcard

Card Number: _____ Amount $ .....

Name on Card: _____ Expiry: _____ Donation $ .....

Signature: _____ **Total** $ .....

Mail to the: **Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia Inc.,**
PO Box 42, Brighton Le Sands NSW 2216.

Consider - A Bequest

Another way which you can support the work of the Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia Inc. is to remember us in your will.

If you would like to make a bequest to the Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia Inc., add the following codicil to your Will:

I bequeath the sum of $..... to the Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia Inc. for its general purposes and declare that the receipt of the Treasurer for the time being of the Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia Inc. shall be complete discharge to my Executors in respect of any sum paid to the Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia Inc.

"The challenge to the present adult generation is to reduce the increasing pressures on the Earth and its resources - and to provide youth with an education that will prepare them emotionally and intellectually for the task ahead."

VINCENT SERVENTY AM
President of Honour

PATRICK MEDWAY AM
National President