

Honouring Suzanne Medway AM

and her Dedication and Commitment to Wildlife Conservation

Megan Fabian

Suzanne Medway AM was born in Allawah, Sydney, and educated at Kingsgrove High School and St George TAFE NSW. She has had considerable experience in middle and senior management positions in commercial business and holds an Associate Diploma in Business (Office Administration).

Suzanne has had prior board experience serving as a director on the Business Enterprise Development Agency board in Mascot, Sydney, and the Business Enterprise Centre board in Southern Sydney. She also served as Secretary and then Vice President of the Central Gold Coast Chamber of Commerce and board member of the Brighton Le Sands Chamber of Commerce.

Suzanne was awarded Environmental Volunteer for 2010 in the prestigious NRMA Helping Hands Award and was the recipient of the 2012 New South Wales Seniors Week Achievement Award for outstanding achievement in Environment, Science, and Agriculture. Suzanne was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia in 2013 for her distinguished service to wildlife conservation and environmental education across Australia and was named Rockdale's 2019 Local Woman of the Year.

Suzanne has been a member of the Australian Wildlife Society since 1988 and was elected as Secretary/Executive Director in 2002. She was awarded Honorary Life Membership of the Society in February 2009 to recognise her outstanding and distinguished service to the Society. Suzanne has also edited three books for the Society – *Conserving Australia's Wildlife*, *Conservation Victories*, and *Battles Yet to Win*, and *100 Years of Saving Australia's Wildlife*.

Suzanne has served in the role of President of the Society for the past twelve years and has performed countless hours of voluntary work for wildlife conservation. During this time, Suzanne has modernised the office administration, created and maintained the website, increased the membership base, and raised the Australian Wildlife magazine's standard to a very professional level, along with the Society's newsletter, to name a few. Suzanne has overseen several significant achievements during her tenure.



Suzanne has also been the Chief Editor of the Australian Wildlife magazine for the past nineteen years. She revamped the magazine and took it to new heights by using computer technology to promote the importance of wildlife conservation right across Australia. Today, the magazine's readership has spread across Australia and internationally, carrying a strong message of environmental education, wildlife conservation issues, and preservation of native Australian wildlife. It is now the flagship of the Society.

Suzanne has always been a strong advocate against single-use plastics, as they have a deadly impact on native wildlife through entanglement and additional harm. In 2020, she oversaw the establishment of a new campaign called *Snip Rings for Wildlife*. The campaign aims to raise awareness and encourage individuals to protect Australia's wildlife, by cutting through plastic rings, rubber bands, hair ties, the loops of facemasks, and dome-shaped plastic lids, in their entirety, before disposing of them.

She also oversaw the establishment of Australian Wildlife Week, which is commemorated across the country during the first week of October each year to encourage a positive relationship between humanity and nature.

Suzanne is a role model and a fantastic motivator. She has inspired me to reach my goals, as the National Office Manager of the Society, through her dedication and commitment to wildlife conservation

action. She is always encouraging and supportive, implements 100 percent effort to ensure desired results are achieved, and does not give up when confronted by obstacles such as inaction by governments or manufacturers. For example, Suzanne established the New South Wales Platypus and Turtle Alliance to advocate for a complete ban on enclosed yabby traps to help save platypus and other air-breathing semi-aquatic wildlife (birds, water dragons, turtles, rakali) from preventable deaths. Advocating for the ban and change in legislation has been an ongoing and labour-intensive process, and not once has she been deterred or discouraged.

Suzanne is exceptionally proud of guiding the Society through its centenary celebrations and onto a very sound financial footing. For the first time

in over one hundred years, driven by Suzanne, the board established a new National Office to cope with the expanding work of the Society in wildlife conservation – one of its most outstanding achievements. The National Head Office of the Society is located at 29B/17 Macmahon Street Hurstville, New South Wales.

Over the years, Suzanne has had the privilege of supporting her 'heroes', the rescuers and rehabilitators who do the hands-on wildlife conservation work and educating the community on just how precious and unique Australia's wildlife is. Her overall responsibility has been nurturing, growing, and making the Society more relevant in today's harsh environmental climate. After many years of succession planning, the time has come for Suzanne to hand the 'reigns' over to a younger generation with new and exciting ideas to move the Society forward.

With the support of a dynamic board of directors, the Australian Wildlife Society has continued its position, held since 1909, as a peak environmental and wildlife conservation Society, recognised not only in Australia but internationally.

Over the page is a two-page spread honouring Suzanne's dedication to wildlife conservation over many years. The Society's directors would like to thank Suzanne for her leadership and wish her all the best in the future.

Above: Suzanne Medway AM at the Society's Annual General Meeting in 2003.

Honouring Suzanne Medway AM

Patrick and Suzanne nursing a rehabilitating wombat joey at Cedar Creek Wombat Hospital in 2019.

Suzanne with a dingo (*Canis lupus dingo*) at Secret Creek Sanctuary in 2005.

Suzanne celebrating the opening of the New National Office in Hurstville, NSW, in 2019.

Suzanne with a spotted-tail quoll (*Dasyurus maculatus*) at Secret Creek Sanctuary in 2005.

Patrick and Suzanne at the New South Wales Woman of the Year Awards in 2019.

Suzanne with two Kangaroo Island western grey kangaroos (*Macropus fuliginosus fuliginosus*) and some emu chicks (*Dromaius novaehollandiae*).

Suzanne with a southern hairy-nosed wombat (*Lasiorchinus latifrons*) in 2012.

Suzanne at the VET Expo in Sydney in 2003.

Suzanne at the VET Expo in Sydney in 2004.

Suzanne at National Tree Day, which the Society held in 2010.

Suzanne with a Tasmanian devil (*Sarcophilus harrisii*).

Suzanne standing in front of one of the Society's earlier banners.

Suzanne with a koala (*Phascogale cinereus*) at the Society's Gala Ball in 2019.

Suzanne presenting at a Wombat Conference in Albury, NSW, in 2011.

Suzanne with a bare-nosed wombat (*Vombatus ursinus*) in 2011.