

#SnipRingsforWildlife Receives a Leg Up

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In 2020, the Society launched a new campaign called #SnipRingsforWildlife.



SNIP RINGS FOR WILDLIFE



The campaign aims to raise awareness and encourage individuals to protect Australia's wildlife by snipping through plastic rings, rubber bands, hair ties, the loops of facemasks, and dome-shaped plastic lids, in their entirety, before disposing of them.

Each year, thousands of birds and semi-aquatic wildlife such as platypus, turtles, and water dragons are strangled, obtain significant injuries, and often die horrific deaths from ring-shaped items. Native wildlife becomes entangled in these items that wrap around their beak or muzzle, preventing them from eating. These items can also tangle up their feet, wings, or fins, limiting their

movement. Young animals can become entrapped in these items, and as they grow, these items cut into their flesh, sometimes amputating limbs or killing the animal. Other animals mistake these items for food and ingest them.

Despite contacting numerous manufacturers, informing them of the danger that ring-shaped items pose to native wildlife, and encouraging them

to improve their products, the issue persists. We acknowledge and commend the companies that have already taken action to make a positive change and improve their products for Australia's wildlife. However, most companies are not taking action. Jars, bottles, and tetra packs with plastic lids now come with a recycled plastic ring that snaps apart from the lid upon opening or a peel-off seal under the cap.



Meeting with Mark Couré MP. L to R: Wayne Greenwood, Ken Mason, Mark Couré MP, and Patrick Medway AM.



Mark Coure MP is presented with a history book by Director Wayne Greenwood of the Society's wildlife conservation work since 1909.

The Society created a #SnipRingsforWildlife ePetition on change.org, which currently has just under 2,000 supporters, but we would now like to take the change.org ePetition to the next level – a Parliamentary ePetition. A Parliamentary ePetition of more than 20,000 signatures has a 'take note debate' in the Legislative Assembly.

On Wednesday 19 May 2021, the Society met with Mark Coure MP, the Member for Oatley, New South Wales. The Society's Chief Executive Officer, Patrick Medway AM, provided Mark with a brief overview of the Society's wildlife conservation projects and business operations. Mark expressed a great interest in our wildlife conservation projects across New South Wales. The Society asked for Mark's support to present the #SnipRingsforWildlife ePetition in Parliament on behalf of the Society. Mark has an ongoing commitment to reducing waste and understood the

SIGN THE PETITION

TO PROTECT ME



bit.ly/SnipRing

Image: WIRES Northern Rivers

This Australian water dragon (*Intellagama lesueurii*) got his head stuck through the plastic ring of a discarded bottle and would have slowly starved to death if it had not been rescued. Image: WIRES Northern Rivers.

deadly impact that ring-shaped items have on native wildlife. Mark agreed to present the ePetition in Parliament to help protect wildlife from the risk of entanglement and dying horrific deaths from ring-shaped items. As the meeting concluded, Directors Wayne Greenwood and Ken Mason presented Mark with a history book of the wildlife conservation work of the Society since its inception in 1909.

A new online ePetition has been launched calling on the New South Wales Parliament to urgently take action to prevent native wildlife from becoming entangled in ring-shaped items and dying preventable deaths. We need as many New South Wales residents as possible to sign the ePetition that asks the New South Wales Legislative Assembly to:

1. Implement a ban on ring-shaped items to protect native wildlife from the risk of entanglement and death,
2. Encourage companies to change their products to a more wildlife-friendly option (e.g., from plastic rings to a peel-off seal under the cap), and

3. Encourage the community to snip through ring-shaped items before disposing of them.

If we can reach 20,000 signatures by the end of September it will trigger a debate in the New South Wales Legislative Assembly, and politicians will be forced to openly declare whether they will or will not protect native wildlife from the risk of entanglement from ring-shaped items.

Please keep an eye on our website, social media platforms, and newsletter for the most recent updates in relation to the launch of the #SnipRingsforWildlife ePetition. The Society also encourages everyone to get behind #SnipRingsforWildlife to help raise awareness, inspire conservation action, and protect native wildlife from the risk of entanglement and death.

It is important to remind ourselves that we can act, both as individuals and collectively, to create real change and protect our precious wildlife for future generations.



This platypus (*Ornithorhynchus anatinus*) was bound and killed by injuries from a rubber band. The band was tangled tight around the animal's neck and cutting into its flesh under its left flipper. Image: Wildlife Rockhampton.



Patrick Medway AM, Ken Mason, and Wayne Greenwood stand in front of the Australian Wildlife Society banner at the National Office in Hurstville, New South Wales.