

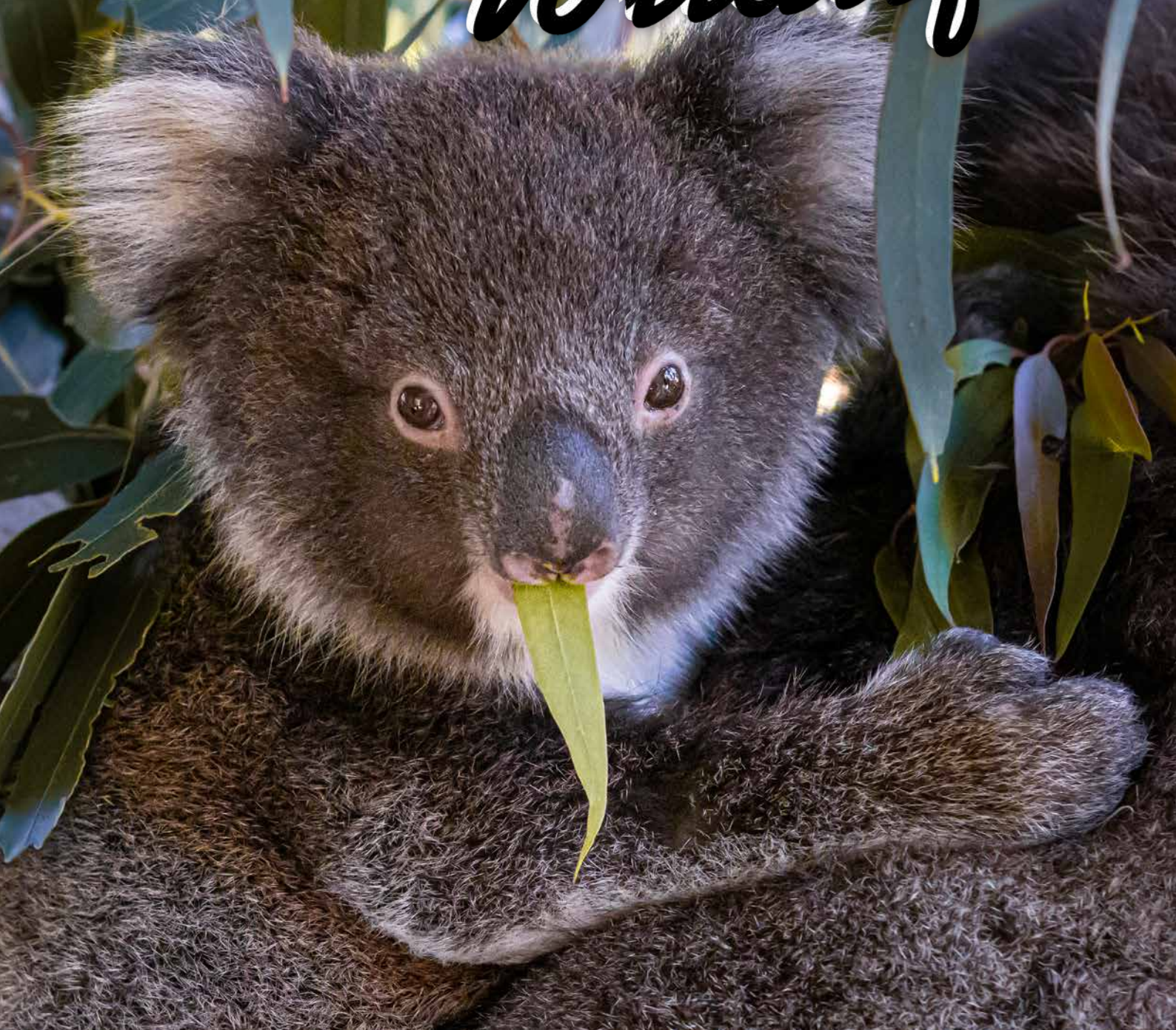


AUSTRALIAN

Wildlife

AUTUMN Volume 2/2024

\$10 (non-members)



Journal of the Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia

Celebrating a new century of wildlife preservation in Australia

(Founded 1909)

The Annual President's Luncheon 2024



L to R: Sue Emmett, Suzanne Medway AM, and Roz Holme OAM.



L to R: Trevor Evans and Dr Robin Crisman.



L to R: Angus Yule, Caitlin Gallagher, Sakkara Creighton, Gabriele Theiler, Rossana Creighton, John Creighton, and Alison James.



L to R: Sue Emmett, Suzanne Medway AM, Roz Holme OAM, Kev Holme, Ken Mason, and Patrick Medway AM.



L to R: Stephen Grabowski and Patrick Medway AM.

Contents

Features

5 From the President's Desk

7 115th Annual General Meeting

13 President's Annual Report for 2023

19 Snip Rings for Wildlife Asset Bank & Guide

21 Southern Koala & Echidna Rescue - **Steve Farrimond**

27 Under the Protective Skirts of Australian Grass-Trees - **Sophie Petit**

30 Building Momentum for Daintree Conservation - **Sigrid Wilkens and Mark Cox**



Regulars

2 Annual President's Luncheon Photos

6 Wildlife Ecology Research Scholarship

26 AWS University Research Grants

34 AWS Threatened Wildlife Photographic Competition

35 Book Reviews

36 Benefits of Membership

37 Membership Form

38 Annual President's Luncheon Photos



Megan Fabian
Editor, *Australian Wildlife*



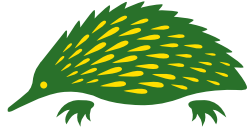
On the Cover

Front Cover Back Cover

A koala (*Phascolarctos cinereus*) joey. Southern Koala and Echidna Rescue respond to hundreds of calls about sick, injured, orphaned, or displaced wildlife in Adelaide, South Australia. They have established a purpose-built wildlife rehabilitation centre and have planted hundreds of eucalyptus trees as part of their koala rehabilitation program to ensure koalas survive and flourish into the future. Image: Southern Koala and Echidna Rescue.

Back Cover

A koala (*Phascolarctos cinereus*) resting in a tree in Warrnambool, Victoria. Koalas are widespread throughout eucalypt woodlands and forests in lowland Victoria compared to northern Australian states where koala numbers are declining. Image: Gryffn M.



Australian Wildlife Society

Conserving Australia's Wildlife
since 1909

Australian Wildlife

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

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

Print Post Approval No: PP 100024559

ISSN 0155-266X

Price \$10 (for non-members)

Membership

Student Members: \$0 (Conditions apply)

Individual Members: \$55

Family Members: \$70

(Husband, partner, and children jointly)

Concession Members: \$50

(Pensioner, student, and child)

E-mag Members: \$30

(*Australian Wildlife* will be distributed
via email as a PDF document - no hard
copy of the magazine will be sent)

Associate Members: \$85

(Schools or incorporated/unincorporated
associations with a principal object related
to conservation, nature study, or education)

Corporate Members: \$125

(Incorporated or unincorporated associations
not being associate members)

Includes postage within Australia.

Add \$40 for overseas postage

Three Year Membership

Individual Members: \$150

Family Members: \$190

Concession Members: \$135

E-mag Members: \$81

Associate Members: \$230

Corporate Members: \$340

Includes postage within Australia.

Add \$100 for overseas postage

Contact

National Office

Australian Wildlife Society

(Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia Limited)

PO Box 1294
CAMDEN NSW 2570

Tel: 0424 287 297

Email: info@aws.org.au

Accounts: accounts@aws.org.au

Editor Australian Wildlife:

manager@aws.org.au

Website: aws.org.au

Correspondence to:

Company Secretary:
Australian Wildlife Society

PO Box 1294
CAMDEN NSW 2570

Email: secretary@aws.org.au

Patron

His Excellency General the
Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Retd)
Governor-General of the
Commonwealth of Australia



Directors

President

Stephen Grabowski

Vice Presidents

Dr Robin Crisman
Trevor Evans

Treasurer

Dr Hayley Stannard

Company Secretary

Patrick Medway AM

Directors

Brian Scarsbrick AM
John Creighton

**Scientific Advisory
Committee**

Dr Mike Augée
Mammology/Palaeontology

Prof Richard Kingsford
Environmental Science

Geoffrey Ross
Wildlife Management

Dr Jennie Gilbert
Marine Conservation

Vanessa Wilson
Biodiversity and Wildlife

Dr Jodi Rowley
Amphibians

Patrick Medway AM
Ornithology

Member Notice

The Australian Wildlife Society (Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia Limited) is managed and controlled by an elected Board of up to ten volunteer Directors. The Society is endorsed as a deductible gift recipient under Subdivision 30-BA and registered with the Australian Taxation Office. Its gift fund is also administered under the Australian Taxation Office.

Any member who might like to consider serving as a Director of the Society is invited to contact the national office for more details. The most important qualification to serving as a Director is 'a commitment to and love of Australian wildlife'. The Society holds regular monthly meetings on the first Wednesday of each month in Sydney, excluding January.

Members are invited to consider submitting a short article with photographs for possible publication.

Our Mission

The Australian Wildlife Society (Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia Limited) is a national not-for-profit wildlife conservation organisation, formed in 1909, and is committed to the preservation of Australia's precious flora and fauna. We act as a watchdog and provide advice to government agencies and institutions regarding environmental and conservation issues concerning all aspects of wildlife preservation.

Our mission is to conserve Australia's fauna and flora through education and involvement of the community. We are dedicated to the conservation of our unique Australian wildlife in all its forms through national environmental education, advocacy, public awareness, community involvement, and hands-on conservation work.

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

Articles and comments expressed in this magazine do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Editor, Society, or members. Articles contributed from outside sources are included for the reading enjoyment of members and to encourage discussion on different points of view.

Articles may be copied or quoted with appropriate attribution.

From the President's Desk

Stephen Grabowski – President

"I encourage and appeal to our wider membership to continue to donate to our new Environmental Education Centre appeal as we reach out to a new generation of young Australians to help save our native wildlife."



Welcome to the Autumn 2024 Edition of *Australian Wildlife*

This year has kicked off with a flying start. We held our 115th Annual General Meeting, and I was officially elected National President of the Society. Having served on the board for over ten years and holding a Life Membership, I am enthusiastic about continuing to serve the Society and participate in all our wildlife conservation activities.

The Society has grown substantially over the years, and it is now the right time to establish a new National Head Office and Environmental Education Centre for the Society. We find ourselves in a position to secure our own National Head Office, and we have found a new location in the busy Macarthur region of south-west Sydney, New South Wales. We are proud to be moving into a Local Government Area that supports one of Australia's iconic species – the koala. We aim to open a new Environmental Education Centre and have all staff and board meetings in one new and exciting modern location.



President, Stephen Grabowski, welcoming the guests at the Luncheon.

As the new National President, I am determined to see that the Society is still around and active for another 115 years of wildlife conservation. It makes sense to me to secure a viable property

where we can work on projects that will make a huge difference to our mission to save our native wildlife for the next generation of young Australians.



2024 Board of Directors of the Australian Wildlife Society.

Across Australia, we are now funding a number of wildlife conservation projects to help save our precious native wildlife, such as black cockatoos in Western Australia, endangered greater gliders in Queensland, native water birds and quail in Victoria (from being shot for sport), and sea turtles on the Great Barrier Reef.

With the acquisition of our new Environmental Education Centre property, we plan to run more koala education programs to protect this iconic native animal. I encourage and appeal to our wider membership to continue to donate to our new Environmental Education Centre appeal as we reach out to a new generation of young Australians to help save our native wildlife.

We are also keen to hear back from our national membership about important conservation projects in your local area in which we may be able to assist you further. Please feel free to contact me or the National Office at any time.



Wildlife Ecology Research Scholarship

The Australian Wildlife Society Wildlife Ecology Research Scholarship is open to postgraduate research students from three Australian universities undertaking a research project that is of direct relevance to the conservation of Australia's native wildlife.

Scholarships are valued at \$5,000 for one year.

HOW TO APPLY

aws.org.au/scholarships/

APPLICATIONS CLOSE

31 May each year



UNSW
SYDNEY



UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY SYDNEY



THE UNIVERSITY OF
NEWCASTLE
AUSTRALIA





115th Annual General Meeting



The 115th Annual General Meeting of the Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia Limited, trading as the Australian Wildlife Society, was held on Wednesday, 6 March 2024, at Castlereagh Boutique Hotel, Sydney, New South Wales.

The President, Stephen Grabowski, tabled the Annual Report for 2023 and highlighted the Society's achievements in wildlife conservation over the past year. The full report is featured in this magazine.

The meeting tabled and adopted the audited Treasurer's Report for 2023, showing a healthy financial balance overall.

Peter J. Varley, Chartered Accountant Registered Company Auditor, was confirmed as the Society's auditor for 2024.

The election of the Directors for the coming year took place. Wayne Greenwood retired, and we thank him for his service on the Board. The following Directors were elected to the Board: Dr Robin Crisman, Trevor Evans, and Patrick Medway AM.

Annual President's Luncheon

The Annual President's Luncheon was held after the Annual General Meeting in the Adam's Room of Castlereagh Boutique Hotel, Sydney, and attended by an enthusiastic group of supporters, members, family, and friends.

The President welcomed the esteemed guests from near and far who joined us for this special occasion. The President announced the Society's 2024 Wildlife of the Year – Greater Gliders – and proposed a toast to 115 years of wildlife conservation by the Society.

The Society was pleased to announce the winners of its prestigious awards for 2023 during the luncheon proceedings.



2023 Award Recipients. L to R: Patrick Medway AM (AWS Company Secretary), Heather Stephens (Warrambugle Wildlife Rescue & Rehabilitation), Alison James (The Agile Project), Robert Westerman, Matthew Brooker, and Stephen Grabowski (AWS President).

Top: L to R: (Standing) Ken Mason, Dr Robin Crisman, Trevor Evans, Brian Scarsbrick AM, John Creighton, and Suzanne Medway AM. L to R: (Seated) Stephen Grabowski, and Patrick Medway AM.

2023 Serventy Conservation Award

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

The award for 2023 was presented to **Robert Westerman** of Hope Island, Queensland.

Robert (Bob) is a retired TAFE teacher and passionate birdwatcher. For more than two decades, he has dedicated his time to safeguarding the endangered migratory shorebirds of Broadwater on the Gold Coast by monitoring and collecting data. His quest has led him to map and record how shorebirds are distributed throughout the Broadwater and its associated systems. His efforts have resulted in a comprehensive database of around three thousand records from forty sites. Bob is always happy to share the recent figures of migratory birds on the Broadwater, including Curlew Island and Curlew Banks, using illustrated counts to showcase the importance of protecting these precious sites.

Bob has a passion for protecting the shorebirds and their homes and has teamed up with community groups, such as the Gold Coast Bushwalkers, to educate them about migratory birds and why they need protection. He has also engaged with the local Indigenous elders, the Kombumerri people, to seek insight on preserving the Broadwater. He has contacted the Gold Coast Waterways Authority multiple times to express his concerns about the destructive activities on the Broadwater affecting the migratory birds.

Bob has achieved some wins over the last few years, with Curlew Island being made an environmental reserve. He is currently working on having a trustee appointed to this site. His next goal is to protect the waters of the Broadwater to ensure a safe habitat for migratory shorebirds. Bob's efforts in educating the community and safeguarding these birds are vital for their conservation and long-distance journeys. His passion and dedication make him deserving of the prestigious Serventy Conservation Award.

Acceptance Speech from Robert Westerman

I feel stunned and humbled. I never seek recognition, but it is a special feeling when it happens. Conservation journeys are challenging, and knowing you have people on your side is encouraging. Awards like this one let you know you have supporters, giving you fresh fuel to get the job done.

I want to thank Sam O'Connor MP, Member for Bonney, Queensland, who nominated me. Sam has been a constant source of support. He has a love of the natural environment, and he is an important voice in the Queensland Parliament. I would also like to thank the Australian Wildlife Society for the role they have played for over one hundred years in caring for and protecting our precious wildlife. I am also thankful to the many other groups in Australia that are implementing similar work.

It is a time when rampant urbanisation is sucking dry everything in its path, and the average Australian's connection to our natural environment is diminishing – a time when nature needs every available voice to speak up on its behalf.

Organisations such as the Australian Wildlife Society are bridges that help us to keep in touch with the natural gifts of our wonderful land. These natural gifts set us apart from the rest of the world, and they are a source of unity at a time when there is so much diversity in our community. Care of the environment today seems to focus on using resources, clean energy, air, and water and less on the wealth of the natural life surrounding

us. I have found that nature is poorly understood these days or taken for granted, making it undervalued or open to exploitation.

My association with the southern part of the Gold Coast Broadwater started fourteen years ago when I found it was rich in birdlife, none of its features were named, and nothing here was managed or protected. Its features are now named, and I am confident that the mountain of data that has been assembled will eventually see it adequately managed and protected.

The Gold Coast Broadwater has been studied many times. Each study has identified the environmental significance of Curlew Banks and Curlew Island. Project developers are now leaving this area alone, but irresponsible behaviour is rife, threatening the viability of the banks. This situation arose because the southern part of the Gold Coast Broadwater was excluded from the Moreton Bay Marine Park in 1993 and not included in the Moreton Bay Ramsar Zone. This probably occurred because of the rigid political attitudes of that time. This left the southern Broadwater without any form of management or protection.

The sandbars of the Gold Coast Broadwater are rich in migratory birds, terns, and many other species. The key sites are Curlew Island and Curlew Banks. These sites meet the tests of national significance on several criteria. On any day between August and March, forty or more Far Eastern curlew (*Numenius*



2023 Serventy Conservation Award Recipient. L to R: Robert Westerman and Trevor Evans.

madagascariensis) and many other migratory birds will be present here. It is not uncommon to find up to 1,000 birds on Curlew Banks, including migratory birds and a wide range of other species.

My endeavour to map and record how shorebirds are distributed throughout the Gold Coast Broadwater has given me many precious encounters with nature. Discovering another one of nature's secrets is always a cause for elation. It is no longer a blank sheet and is much better understood, especially among public officials. The wheel is turning slowly against much friction – but in the right direction.

In 2019, Curlew Island was declared an Environmental Reserve, but this has never been fully implemented, as a trustee has not been appointed. We are working on this.

The last step is to have the waters of the Gold Coast Broadwater protected. A review of the Moreton Bay Marine Park is about to start, and changes to the park boundary will be considered as a result of data presented to the Department of Environment about shorebird areas outside the park boundary. I am hopeful of a positive outcome for this.

The challenge today is to look after our wildlife in a modern environment. Curlew Island and Curlew Banks have many special features, and I am confident that the conservation of our precious migratory birdlife and other species will be achieved here.

2023 Community Wildlife Conservation Award

The Community Wildlife Conservation Award is awarded to a community group contributing to wildlife preservation in Australia.

The award for 2023 was presented to **The Agile Project – Wildlife Rescue Inc.** of Cairns, Queensland.

The Agile Project is a dedicated team rehabilitating native animals in Cairns and surrounding regions. Over the past four years, they have successfully relocated 880 agile wallabies (*Macropus agilis*) from the suburbs of Cairns to a safe habitat. They provide a 24-hour hotline and offer animal rescue and care courses to ensure any distressed, injured, or displaced animals can be rescued and rehabilitated.

The group actively engages with the community through educational talks at local schools and community events and hosts informative stalls. They also work closely with and bring together regional stakeholders, such as the community, local Council, and developers, to ensure the conservation of native wildlife. Their efforts have been recognised with the Community Conservation Award for their outstanding dedication to community engagement and wildlife preservation.



2023 Community Wildlife Conservation Award Recipient. L to R: Brian Scarsbrick AM, Alison James (Treasurer, The Agile Project), and Patrick Medway AM.

Acceptance Speech from The Agile Project

From all The Agile Project members, we thank the person who nominated us and the Australian Wildlife Society for recognising our efforts through this award.

The Agile Wallaby Project was originally an initiative founded by Shai Ager in 2017 to establish protocols for a large-scale macropod relocation to be carried out under her guidance.

A few years later, the group evolved into a rescue and rehabilitation service that helps not only wallabies and other macropods but all native species across Far North Queensland. We commit to ensuring accountability for ethical practices, responsible resource management, and fostering a supportive environment prioritising the mental health and well-being of all individuals involved in our wildlife rescue and conservation efforts. Our central committee does its best to foster a culture of open communication and mutual respect to meet the highest standards of ethical conduct, transparency, and responsibility in all activities. We see this

as a priority due to the demanding nature of the work we are exposed to. Doing so ensures our members feel supported and helps with the longevity and continuity of their time as volunteers.

Like other dedicated non-profit wildlife rescue groups around Australia, we:

1. Have a 24 hours a day, 7 days a week rescue hotline,
2. Provide training in triage, care, and humane capture of native animals,
3. Have a dedicated team of rescuers and carers,
4. Create fundraising events to assist with the demanding costs of releasing an animal back into the wild, raise public awareness, and educate the community, and
5. Work alongside key stakeholders such as councils and developers to achieve the best outcomes for wildlife.

With over 160 members, we are a very active volunteer group with people out on the roads, answering phones, working

behind the scenes, and raising animals from their homes daily.

Additionally, our group includes citizen scientists who help with research, data collection, and studies that contribute to developing better wildlife management practices across Australia. Our original large-scale macropod relocation of over eight hundred agile wallabies was so successful that it helped set a precedent for an alternative approach to human-wildlife conflicts. The success has been well-documented, and state government bodies even use it as a reference in their legislation and processes. Our founder and other experienced macropod handlers now travel Australia, teaching what so many others told us was 'impossible' and proving large-scale relocation success in agile wallabies and many other species, contributing to the biodiverse range of fauna across the country.

Following the recent Cyclone Jasper, Cairns and the surrounding area were impacted by the worst floods our area has seen in one hundred years. Our rescue hotline received over 150 wildlife rescue callouts in 24 hours. That week, we had over fifty joeys come into care and let's say our bird records 'flew out the window' because we simply could not keep up. Many of these flood-affected wildlife victims are still in care and are experiencing ongoing medical problems. The receipt of \$5,000 from the Australian Wildlife Society will be a significant help in continuing to provide these animals with the love and care they deserve, and will assist us in purchasing medical supplies and covering vet bills. To be recognised for our work by receiving this award is a great honour and much appreciated.

Once again, on behalf of The Agile Project, thank you to the Australian Wildlife Society for their generosity and recognition of the tireless work our volunteers do for our native wildlife.



L to R: Shai Ager (President) and Alison James (Treasurer) relocating an agile wallaby (*Macropus agilis*). Image: The Agile Project.

2023 Wildlife Rehabilitation Award

The Wildlife Rehabilitation Award is awarded to an individual or a wildlife conservation group contributing to preserving Australia's wildlife. The award is intended to acknowledge and commemorate the individuals or wildlife conservation groups working tirelessly to rescue, rehabilitate, and conserve Australia's native wildlife. Many people find the experience of rehabilitating native wildlife rewarding; however, it is time-consuming and can be very expensive.

The award for 2023 was presented to **Warrumbungle Wildlife Rescue & Rehabilitation Inc.** of Mendooran, New South Wales.

Founded by Tanya O'Donoghue in December 2022, Warrumbungle Wildlife Rescue & Rehabilitation Inc. is a small group of passionate and dedicated volunteer wildlife carers specialising in rescuing and rehabilitating Australian native animals in the beautiful Warrumbungles area of New South Wales.

Tanya, a retired vet nurse with over 30 years of experience as a wildlife carer, previously managed Warrumbungle Wildlife Shelter for nearly a decade before establishing Warrumbungle Wildlife Rescue & Rehabilitation.

Despite operating in a remote, poorly serviced area, the group tirelessly works to assist a variety of native wildlife year after year, from birds and kangaroos to snakes and platypuses. Their primary goal is to nurse these animals back to health and release them back into their natural habitats whenever possible. They are building a triage centre, complete with a special humidity crib for pinkie animals that come into care.

With decades of knowledge and experience, their small network is rich in skills and abilities, making them a highly qualified and deserving candidate for the Wildlife Rehabilitation Award.

Acceptance Speech from Warrumbungle Wildlife Rescue & Rehabilitation Inc.

After caring for wildlife for many years here, it became apparent early on that animals in remote locations were not prioritised for rescue because of the vast distances needed to travel. Often, these animals died or suffered because of the

lack of effort or the distance required to be covered to rescue them. That was not good enough for me. They were equally deserving of rescue, as animals closer to our major regional towns and communities. So, I decided to make very long trips to save these animals and get them the best care. I often drove through the night and straight into Dubbo, New South Wales, to the Wildlife Hospital at Taronga Western Plains Zoo.

While most times this worked out well, there were other times when I realised that the animals were too unwell to continue the journey, or I could not get them to the zoo before closing hours. Then, I decided to apply for funding through the Humane Society International Australia to build a small Triage Clinic. When finished, I hope it will also attract and facilitate researchers, vets, and other conservationists interested in our Arid zone wildlife. The Triage Clinic is still a work in progress, and hopefully soon, with more funding, it will finally be finished and kitted out. The Triage Clinic will treat our injured and orphaned wildlife and provide a safe area for larger animals who come into care for other reasons.

My other great concern is safe release sites. We, as carers, spend enormous amounts of time and effort caring for these animals with one goal in mind – to release the animals back into the bush. These animals need a safe place to orient themselves and readjust to their new environment. Sadly, release sites are becoming few and far between. I feel there needs

to be funding from governments and other animal and conservation bodies to help find solutions to this very worrying problem.

Our Arid zone animals do it pretty tough out here. More so in recent years. The recent drought, powered by climate change, decimated entire populations of kangaroos in some areas. Commercial shooting, inclusion fencing, and a lot more heavy vehicles on the roads only added to population crashes. Water sources were also fenced off. I have seen droughts before, but nothing on the scale like the death and suffering I saw through this last drought. Millions of lives were lost, but no one seemed to notice because we are a fair way west of the Great Dividing Range.

We are extremely honoured to receive this recognition. I hope it will give us a louder voice and a higher platform to speak out for our native wildlife, especially our kangaroos. I hope, too, that from now on, my voice is louder on their behalf. If it is, and someone listens, then I have succeeded.

When I drive out here now in certain places, the silence of their absence is deafening. I hope that we can change that. I am very humbled to receive this award. It was quite a shock, albeit a very pleasant one.

In finishing, to quote Joy Murphy Wandin, an Aboriginal Elder:

*"I am a Boorai of this Country.
The old ones tell me I belong here.
I walk this land like no other.
Following my dreaming tracks."*



2023 Wildlife Rehabilitation Award Recipient. L to R: Dr Robin Crisman, Heather Stephens, and Patrick Medway AM.



Tanya O'Donoghue holding a swamp wallaby (*Wallabia bicolor*) joey.

2023 Individual Youth Conservation Award

Australia's youth play a vital role in conserving Australian flora and fauna and can significantly contribute to wildlife conservation through innovative projects and ideas. It is young people who can drive lasting and sustainable change, who will become the next ambassadors in wildlife conservation and, hopefully, the successors to the Board of the Society. We aim to inspire young people to have a stake in wildlife conservation by rewarding and recognising their efforts.

The Individual Youth Conservation Award for 2023 was presented to **Matthew Brooker** of Whitwarta, South Australia.

Matthew took it upon himself to volunteer and conduct work experience at Kangaroo Rescue South Australia, where he assisted the team in caring for kangaroos and other wildlife. He also assisted with reintroducing endangered animals to support the survival of the land.

In addition, Matthew successfully secured a scholarship with Earthwatch Australia as part of their student challenge program. Living and working at Calperum Station, a reserve on the north side of the Murray River, South Australia, guided by Earthwatch scientists, Matthew conducted hands-on research surveying fauna and flora and monitoring carbon and water.

Matthew has also assisted with bird monitoring with Birdlife Australia, where he travelled to the Yorke Peninsula, South Australia, to monitor the nests of the endangered eastern hooded plover (*Thinornis cucullatus*).

Matthew has a keen interest in wildlife and land conservation and hopes to one day become an ecologist.

Acceptance Speech from Matthew Brooker

I was surprised to be nominated for the Youth Conservation Award and even more shocked when I won! I have always loved animals, and we have always had dogs as pets at home. We currently have two rescue German Shepherds.

When it came to seeking work experience for school, I knew I was interested in animals but that being a veterinarian was not for me. So, I expanded my search and came across Kangaroo Rescue South Australia.

The week I spent at Kangaroo Rescue South Australia was an eye-opener. Not only was it work involving animals, but they also taught me how important native flora is for the care and future of

our native animals. No one thinks twice about pulling up weeds or plants where they live, not considering that the weed or plant might contribute to a native animal's existence.

So, when an opportunity came up for the Earthwatch Fellowship to spend a week with scientists learning about conservation, I thought I would try that, as by now, I knew I wanted a future that involved either animals or conservation. I thought this experience might help me decide which direction to take.

I also joined a volunteer program with BirdLife Australia to help monitor the hooded plover, an endangered species on the Yorke Peninsula, South Australia.

The species is dwindling due to being shorebirds and how Australians flock to the beach in the warmer months, their breeding season. Humans, dogs, and cars on the beach destroy the bird's nests and eggs.

All these experiences have led me to want to work in the field of environment and conservation. This year, I am concentrating on my Year 12 studies so I can hopefully get into university to study Environmental Science, as that is where I want to work in the future in some capacity.

Thank you, and I feel honoured to receive this award.



2023 Youth Conservation Award Recipient (Individual). Caitlin Gallagher presenting Matthew Brooker with the Youth Conservation Award.



Matthew Brooker installing a pitfall trap.



Matthew Brooker presenting his acceptance speech.

2023 Group Youth Conservation Award

Australia's youth play a vital role in conserving Australian flora and fauna and can significantly contribute to wildlife conservation through innovative projects and ideas. It is young people who can drive lasting and sustainable change, who will become the next ambassadors in wildlife conservation and, hopefully, the successors to the Board of the Society. We aim to inspire young people to have a stake in wildlife conservation by rewarding and recognising their efforts.

The Group Youth Conservation Award for 2023 was presented to **MacGregor Outside School Hours Care** of MacGregor, Queensland.

MacGregor Outside School Hours Care has been operating for four years. Their sustainability group meets regularly to conceptualise ideas to promote conservation within the community. The group periodically goes to the park for clean-ups, has engaged an Indigenous consultant to facilitate education and conservation programs with staff and children, has planted a native garden space with native bees, and has numerous recycling/litter collection programs within the school. Over 450 children are involved each week, and their practices have started to be embedded in their program. No single-use items are allowed, and this has extended to fetes. In addition, many families have begun picking up the programs at home.

Acceptance Speech from MacGregor Outside School Hours Care

We at MacGregor Outside School Hours Care, operating as a not-for-profit organisation under the auspices of the Parent and Citizens Association of MacGregor State School, are deeply honoured and humbled to have been awarded the prestigious 2023 Group Youth Conservation Award by the Australian Wildlife Society. This recognition stands as a testament to the dedication and innovation of our team in fostering environmental stewardship among the youth in our community.

Central to our winning initiative is the Forest Friday program, a cornerstone of MacGregor Outside School Hours Care's offerings, where a local Indigenous Elder, affectionately known as Uncle Steve, leads a group of

students on weekly excursions to walk on Country within the nearby parklands. Through these outings, participants gain invaluable insights into Indigenous culture and traditions while also learning about the significance of preserving our local environment. Uncle Steve's guidance and wisdom have been instrumental in enriching the experiences of the children, fostering a deep connection to the land, and instilling in them a sense of responsibility towards its conservation.

This accolade is not solely attributed to MacGregor Outside School Hours Care but is equally shared with Uncle Steve and the dedicated team comprising educators, administrators, and volunteers who have tirelessly worked to cultivate this unique partnership. Together, with

the unwavering support of the MacGregor State School Parent and Citizens Association, we have been able to broaden community understanding of our nation's First Peoples and integrate Indigenous perspectives into our collective consciousness.

Moving forward, MacGregor Outside School Hours Care remains steadfast in its commitment to sustainability, ensuring that our programs continue to uphold the values espoused by the Australian Wildlife Society. Through environmental education, public awareness campaigns, advocacy efforts, hands-on conservation activities, and active community involvement, we strive to nurture a generation of environmentally conscious citizens passionate about preserving our natural heritage for generations to come.



2023 Youth Conservation Award Recipient (Group). L to R: Zoe (Student), Katherine Gotera (MOSHC Coordinator), Imogen (Student), and Bella Campbell (MOSHC Lead Educator).



MOSHC Operations Manager, Amanda Lowe, with Coordinator, Nathan Chu, and students Aaden, Maximus, Isaac, San, Joshua, Ahana, Alexis, and Alexander.

President's

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2023



A Year in Review

I was delighted and humbled to be appointed President of the Society in November 2023. As a long-standing member of the Society, Board Member, and Life Member, I am dedicated to supporting the ongoing wildlife conservation work of the Society. I want to acknowledge and thank our resigning President, Dr Julie Old, for her valuable contribution to the Society and wildlife conservation. I am pleased to announce that we also welcomed two new Directors to the Board, John Creighton and Dr Mike Swinbourne. Their expertise and passion for wildlife conservation will undoubtedly strengthen our organisation and help us succeed in our endeavours.

One of the highlights of the year was presenting our four annual awards – the **Serventy Conservation Award, Community Wildlife Conservation Award, Wildlife Rehabilitation Award, and Youth Conservation Award**. We are aware of the wonderful work conducted by wildlife conservation organisations and volunteers. We know that many organisations and thousands of volunteers are working tirelessly to save Australia's threatened wildlife, the humble and more common species, and the habitats in which they live. We are proud to acknowledge and reward these individuals and wildlife conservation groups and encourage them to continue their wildlife conservation work on behalf of the community.

The Society established a Roll of Honour to highlight past luminaries who have significantly contributed to the longevity and success of the Australian Wildlife Society and are respected in the wider conservation field for their contribution to the preservation of Australian wildlife. The luminary added to the Roll of Honour for 2023 was Dr Al Glen.

Another highlight was the awarding of our University Research Grants offered to honours or postgraduate students at Australian universities for research projects of direct relevance to the conservation of Australian wildlife – flora or fauna. The Society is immensely proud to have awarded our first Dr Clive Williams OAM Memorial Wildlife Conservation Scholarship in honour of our former Director, Dr Clive Williams. The scholarship was awarded to the highest-ranked application of all our University Research Grants.

We also awarded three special scholarships at the University of Technology Sydney, the University of New South Wales, and the University of Newcastle. The Society is proud to support the next generation of young Australians and their research on conserving Australia's biodiversity for future generations.



Our Mission: Australian Wildlife Society, founded in 1909, is a national not-for-profit wildlife conservation organisation. We are dedicated to protecting Australian wildlife (flora and fauna) through national environmental education, public awareness, advocacy, hands-on wildlife conservation work, and community involvement.



Australian Wildlife Magazine

The magazine has a proud record and history and has proved extremely popular amongst all our members. The magazine's readership has spread across Australia and internationally, carrying a strong message of environmental education, wildlife conservation issues, and the preservation of native wildlife. We invite members to distribute copies to family and friends and invite them to become members.



E-newsletter

Our monthly e-newsletter, *Wildlife Wisdom*, has also proven extremely popular with our members. The content and quality of the newsletters have developed over time. It continues to feature the vital work of the Society and news from our members. We encourage members to forward *Wildlife Wisdom* to their family, friends, and networks to help spread the important message of wildlife conservation across Australia.

Website

Our 2023 wildlife of the year, Proteaceae, was featured. Changes to the structure and layout of our website will be an ongoing process as we strive to make it more user-friendly and informative for our users.

Social Media

We are active on five social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, and YouTube). We aim to keep our followers up to date with important actions of the Society and the collective work being promoted nationally. We reached sixteen thousand followers on Instagram and fourteen thousand followers on Facebook. Our followers continue to grow each month, and we thank you for your support.

Membership

As of December 2023, we had 549 members in total, consisting of: 108 Individual Members, 13 Family Members, 45 Concession Members, 11 Corporate Members, 41 E-Mag Members, 14 Associate Members, 24 Life Members, 9 Complimentary Members, and 284 Student Members. Please consider becoming a member of the Society to help protect Australia's native wildlife and natural habitats. Student membership is free.

Wildlife Ecology Research Scholarships

The **University of Technology Sydney Wildlife Ecology Research Scholarship** was awarded to UTS School of Life Sciences PhD student, Lisa Danzey, for their research on 'Alpine Plant Thermal Tolerance in a Mosaic of Extreme Microclimates.'

The **University of New South Wales Wildlife Ecology Research Scholarship** was awarded to NSW Centre for Ecosystem Science PhD student, Jan Kreibich, for their research on 'Large-scale restoration of indigenous-managed wetland in Eastern Australia, focusing on flood-dependent vegetation health using remote sensing.'

The **University of Newcastle Wildlife Ecology Research Scholarship** was awarded to UON School of Life and Environmental Sciences PhD Candidate, Nadine Nolan, for their research on 'Does seasonality and genetic diversity influence sperm quality in the endangered amphibian *Litoria littlejohni*?'

Conservation Group Grants

The Society carefully considers all requests for grants from conservation groups emphasising wildlife and habitat preservation.

This year, we were fortunate to be able to offer five Conservation Group Grants:

Invasive Species Council

Funds assisted the Invasive Species Council in preventing the impact of feral species on Australia's native species and their fragile habitats nationally.

Bangalow Koalas

Funds assisted Bangalow Koalas in planting and maintaining 333 trees over three years as part of a wildlife corridor.

Murdoch University Wildlife Association

Funds assisted Murdoch University Wildlife Association with its club activities, particularly its Wildlife Necropsy Workshop and Quiz Night.

Rainforest Rescue

Funds assisted Rainforest Rescue in planting 500 trees to restore damaged rainforest and rebuild the habitat of countless Daintree flora and fauna.

Southern Koala and Echidna Rescue

Funds assisted Rainforest Rescue in developing temporary enclosures to provide shelter for echidnas, koalas, and other native species in the event of a bushfire or any other event causing capacity overflow.

Annual General Meeting and President's Luncheon

The 114th Annual General Meeting of the Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia Limited, trading as the Australian Wildlife Society, was held on Wednesday, 1 March 2023, at Castlereagh Boutique Hotel, Sydney, New South Wales. The President of the Society, Dr Julie Old, welcomed the esteemed guests and announced the Society's 2023 Wildlife of the Year – Proteaceae. She also proposed a toast to 114 years of wildlife conservation by the Society.

The President then introduced the Guest Speaker, Caitlin Gallagher, who presented a talk on 'the significance of youth participation and engagement in wildlife conservation now and in the future'.

The Society was pleased to announce the winners of its prestigious awards for 2022 during the luncheon proceedings.



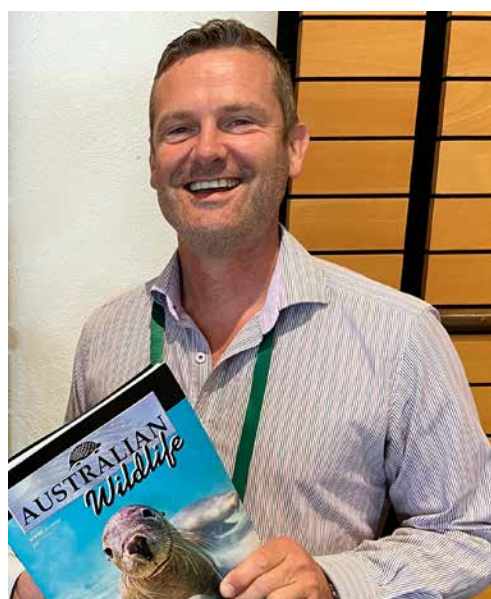
L to R: Wayne Greenwood, John Creighton, Noel Cislowski AM, Trevor Evans, Dr Julie Old, Patrick Medway AM, Dr Robin Crisman, and Stephen Grabowski.



Guest Speaker, Caitlin Gallagher, spoke about the significance of youth participation and engagement in wildlife conservation now and in the future.



L to R: Dr Robin Crisman, Dr Julie Old, Trevor Evans, Alison Williams, Catherine Williams, Patrick Medway AM, John Creighton, and Stephen Grabowski.



Dr Al Glen was added to the Society's 2023 Roll of Honour for his outstanding and continued commitment to the Society and its University Research Grants.

The Society also announced a new University Scholarship in Honour of Dr Clive Williams OAM to pay tribute to Clive's dedication and contribution to wildlife conservation. The Dr Clive Williams OAM Memorial Wildlife Conservation Scholarship is offered to honours or postgraduate students at Australian universities. The scholarship is available for research projects directly relevant to protecting Australia's wildlife, both flora and fauna. Each year, one \$5,000 scholarship will be awarded. We were joined by Clive's daughters, Catherine and Alison Williams, who were presented with a Certificate of Appreciation and a native plant – Grevillea 'Big Red'.



Australian Wildlife Society
Conserving Australia's Wildlife since 1909

Dr Clive Williams OAM

Memorial Wildlife Conservation Scholarship



Dr Clive Williams OAM Memorial Wildlife Conservation Scholarship
is named in Honour of Dr Clive Williams OAM. Clive joined the Society in 1986 and served on the Board of Directors for over thirty years. Clive significantly contributed to the Society's major wildlife conservation projects, including Towra Point Nature Reserve rehabilitation and restoration work for migratory wading birds, Rockdale Wetland Corridor restoration, and National Tree Day programs.

Wildlife Conservation Awards



Patricia LeeHong with her certificate, trophy, and Rusty the koala (*Phascolarctos cinereus*).

Serventy Conservation Award

The winner of the **Serventy Conservation Award** was Patricia LeeHong of Murphys Creek, Queensland.

Patricia is passionate about educating young people on the importance of wildlife conservation, showing them what she does, and allowing them to help so they can continue to conserve our precious native species. In 2010, Patricia established the Wildlife Rescue, Rehabilitation and Education Association, a non-profit organisation with members from diverse backgrounds who unite in a common goal to provide resources for the rescue and rehabilitation of Australian fauna. Patricia has given thirty years of service to wildlife conservation.

Wildlife Rehabilitation Award

The winner of the **Wildlife Rehabilitation Award** was Quoin Turtle Rehabilitation Centre of Gladstone Harbour, Queensland.

Quoin Island Turtle Rehabilitation Centre is located on Quoin Island in Gladstone Harbour, the gateway to the Southern Great Barrier Reef. They are dedicated to the rescue and rehabilitation of critically endangered and endangered sea turtles. Of the 236 turtles taken in by Quoin Island Turtle Rehab Centre, 213 were green sea turtles (*Chelonia mydas*), 14 hawksbill sea turtles (*Eretmochelys imbricata*), 6 flatback sea turtles (*Natator depressus*) and 3 loggerhead sea turtles (*Caretta caretta*). All species are either endangered or critically endangered.



2022 Wildlife Rehabilitation Award. L to R: Dr Julie Old, Kim Oudheusden, and Dr Robin Crisman

Community Wildlife Conservation Award

The winner of the **Community Wildlife Conservation Award** was the Snowy Mountains Wildlife Rescue LAOKO Inc. of Berridale, New South Wales.

Snowy Mountains Wildlife Rescue LAOKO Inc., formed in 1988, is the second longest-running wildlife rescue group in New South Wales. It is a community organisation run entirely by volunteers caring for orphans, rehabilitating injured wildlife, and providing community education and training programs. Snowy Mountains Wildlife Rescue rescues injured and orphaned native fauna in the entire Snowy Monaro region. They have an emergency phone number operated 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, by volunteers.



2022 Community Conservation Award. L to R: Dr Julie Old, Lisa Petroff, and John Creighton.

Youth Conservation Award

The winner of the **Youth Conservation Award** was Talitha Huston from Gidgegannup, Western Australia.

Talitha wrote a bird book called Birds of the Perth Hills, complete with hand-painted maps, all her own photographs, her own 'skittish rating', and photography tips for each bird. The book was received well because there is no bird book for the Perth Hills. She sold 120 copies at the Blue Sky Festival launch in Mundaring, Western Australia, and, within one week, had sold two hundred copies. To date, Talitha has sold over 6,000 copies and donated the proceeds to a wildlife charity in her region.



2022 Youth Conservation Award. L to R: Dr Julie Old, Wayne Greenwood, and Talitha Huston.

Key Projects

Platypus Alliance

We continued our efforts on a national scale to protect semi-aquatic air-breathing species, such as platypus, rakali, and turtles. Enclosed yabby traps are banned in Victoria, Australian Capital Territory, Tasmania, Western Australia, New South Wales, and, most recently, South Australia (1 July 2023). We strongly advocated that Queensland take action and join the other states and territories in banning enclosed yabby traps. Unfortunately, platypus and rakali are still reported trapped in enclosed yabby traps.

Snip Rings for Wildlife

The Society continued our efforts to educate the community about the negative impact of ring-shaped items on native wildlife and the actions they can implement to help prevent wildlife from falling victim to the risk of entanglement and death. We embarked on an exciting new project: creating a children's book centred around the Snip Rings for Wildlife initiative. This captivating book aims to educate young minds about the importance of protecting native species from the detrimental effects of plastic ring-shaped items. We are finalising the book and hope to see it published next year, reaching a wider audience and instilling a sense of responsibility towards wildlife conservation in future generations.

Australian Wildlife Week

Australian Wildlife Week is an annual nationwide celebration during the first week of October. This year, to celebrate, we hosted a Webinar and Art Exhibition. Through these engaging activities, we hope to encourage Australians to develop a deeper understanding of wildlife conservation issues, equip them with the necessary skills to make informed decisions and inspire them to take concrete actions to protect our precious wildlife. A recording of the webinar is available on our YouTube channel.

Wildlife Photographic Competition

The annual judges' prize of \$1,000 was won by **Beth Walker** for their photograph of a **Gouldian finch (*Erythrura gouldiae*)**.

The Gouldian finch is an endangered species, and there are more Gouldian finches in captivity than in the wild. This photograph was taken in Wyndham, Western Australia. There are ten different finch species in the Kununurra and Wyndham regions, and they are often seen together at waterholes, but the most beautiful of all is the Gouldian finch. There are also three different face morphs: red, black, and yellow, with yellow being extremely rare. This photograph features a black and red-faced Gouldian finch staring directly at the camera.



Gouldian finch (*Erythrura gouldiae*). Image: Beth Walker

Colouring-in Competition

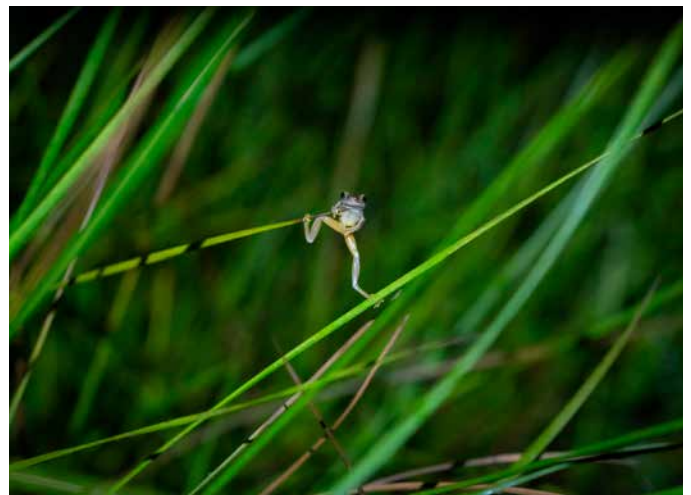
The national colouring-in competition is designed to inspire the younger generation to learn about Australia's native wildlife via visual art and creativity. The response to the colouring-in competition was overwhelming, with a remarkable 158 entries received. Each entry showcased the talent and creativity of our young participants, making the judging process incredibly challenging. Our panel of experts had the difficult task of selecting three winners from each state and territory. Thank you to Dr Oselyne Ong for drawing our beautiful 2023 Wildlife of the Year – Proteaceae – a waratah.

Webinars, Conferences, and Presentations

The Society focuses on continuous improvement and enhancing the impact of wildlife conservation. We actively participated in various wildlife conservation conferences, webinars, and meetings. These included the annual conference by the Nature Conservation Council of New South Wales, Narrandera Koala Festival, Camden Wombats Landcare's Open Day, Australasian Ornithological Conference, Campbelltown Koala Forum, Australasian Bittern Conservation Summit, Port Macquarie Koala Conference, Australian Mammal Society Conference, Australian Wildlife Rehabilitation Conference, and Australian Association for Environmental Education Biennial Conference. Additionally, we delivered presentations to first-year students at Charles Sturt University and students (and teachers) from the University of North Carolina as part of their global immersion elective organised by Global Academic Ventures.

Penny Harnett won the annual people's choice prize of \$500 for their photograph of a **Littlejohn's tree frog (*Litoria littlejohni*)**.

This species reaches up to nearly 7 centimetres, but the juvenile pictured, showing its flexibility and white belly, is about the size of a 20-cent coin. Native to eastern New South Wales, this frog was photographed at Watagans National Park, New South Wales. A team of scientists from the University of Newcastle are working on an integrated conservation approach to save the endangered species.



Littlejohn's tree frog (*Litoria littlejohni*). Image: Penny Harnett

University Research Grants

The Australian Wildlife Society's University Research Grants are offered to honours or postgraduate students at Australian universities conducting research that contributes to the conservation of Australian wildlife (flora or fauna). Ten grants are awarded each year: one \$5,000 scholarship and nine \$3,000 grants. The Society is proud to have awarded our first Dr Clive Williams OAM Memorial Wildlife Conservation Scholarship in honour of former

Director Dr Clive Williams. The scholarship is awarded to the highest-ranked applicant of all our University Research Grants. Grants may be used to purchase equipment and consumables, travel expenses related to field research, or attend a conference where the student presents their research. We are delighted to announce the winners for 2023:



Jack Bilby
(Dr Clive Williams Scholarship Recipient),
School of Biological, Earth and Environmental
Sciences, University of New South Wales.
Project Title: Beating the Heat: How do
Bandicoots Respond to Extreme Heat in Burnt
and Unburnt Habitat?



Natarsha McPherson
School of Biological Sciences,
The University of Adelaide.
Project Title: Distribution and Density of the
Southern Hairy-Nosed Wombat (*Lasiorhinus
latifrons*) under the Influence of Future Climate
Change and Invasive Rabbit Competition.



Anne Ibbotson
School of Biomedical Sciences and Pharmacy,
The University of Newcastle.
Project Title: The Potential for Stress and
Reproductive Hormones to Inform Conservation
Decisions for Endangered Amphibians.



Oceane Attlan
School of Biological Sciences,
The University of Western Australia.
Project Title: Temperate Marine Ecosystems
under Tropicalisation: An Insight of Species
Reshuffling and Ecological Function Changes
along the Western Australia Coastline.



Hannah Gerke
Fenner School of Environment and Society,
The Australian National University.
Project Title: Measuring Movement Behaviour
and Personality of Eastern Brown Snakes
in Urban Areas: Snaking our Way Towards
Successful Conflict-Driven Translocation.



Olivia Johnson
Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies,
University of Tasmania.
Project Title: Safeguarding Threatened
Reef Species.



Holly Farnan
Centre for Tropical Environmental
and Sustainability Science,
James Cook University.
Project Title: Investigating the Effects of
Insecticide Exposure and Pathogens on
Bee Diversity, Abundance, and Health.



Paula Ruiz
Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies,
University of Tasmania.
Project Title: Mechanisms of Stability for
Degraded 'Turf-Dominated' Reef States.



Natalie Grassi
School of Environmental and Conservation
Sciences, Murdoch University.
Project Title: Faunal Assemblages and Ecology
at Conservation Connectivity Areas Within a
Fragmented Agricultural Landscape.



Raquel Parker
School of Life and Environmental Sciences,
The University of Sydney.
Project Title: Using Carcasses to Investigate
Ecosystem Processes in Feral Predator-Free
Fenced Areas, NSW.

Donations, Bequests, and Gifts

We continued with our bequest program during the year to encourage donors to support our wildlife conservation work across Australia. We are incredibly grateful to all our members for considering using the bequest program to help the Society with its long-term planning. Do not hesitate to contact the National Office for more details on the bequest program and how to join 'Friends of the Australian Wildlife Society' to make a regular monthly donation to support our national wildlife conservation efforts and programs. We are a tax-deductible gift recipient registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission. Our public fund is listed on the Register of Environmental Organisations under item 6.1.1 of subsection 30-55(1) of the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997*.

Financial Report Summary

The Society's Directors, Finance and Investment Committee, and the Public Fund Committee continue to exercise tight and effective control over the Society's finances, reviewing and adjusting the investment portfolio as required throughout the year.

A Special Thank you to all Members

This will mark our 115th anniversary. We thank you most sincerely for your tremendous support and continued dedication and commitment to helping the Society preserve and protect Australia's native wildlife and natural ecosystems for future generations. I wish every member of the Society a happy, healthy, and prosperous 2024.

Stephen Grabowski
PRESIDENT | 31 December 2023



Snip Rings for Wildlife

Est. 2020



Snip Rings for Wildlife Asset Bank & Guide

Snip Rings for Wildlife, established by the Society in 2020, aims to raise awareness and encourage individuals to protect Australia's wildlife by snipping through ring-shaped items such as plastic rings, rubber bands, hair ties, loops of facemasks, and plastic dome-shaped lids, in their entirety, before disposing of them.

Each year, thousands of birds and semi-aquatic, air-breathing species such as platypus, turtles, and water dragons are strangled, obtain significant injuries, and often die horrific deaths from discarded litter, including ring-shaped items. Wildlife often becomes entangled in ring-shaped 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 trapped in these items, and as they grow, these items cut into their flesh, sometimes amputating limbs or killing the animal.

Jars, bottles, and tetra packs now come with a ring that snaps apart from the lid upon opening or a peel-off seal under the cap. While it is a step in the right direction, it poses another issue: being made of plastic.

The campaign operates on three levels: community, organisational, and governmental:

Community – Engage and educate community members and encourage them to snip through ring-shaped items (and dispose of them correctly) to protect Australia's wildlife,

Organisational – Write to manufacturers and businesses to encourage them to improve the design of their products to a wildlife-friendly alternative. We also encourage community members to do the same and provide a template letter to make it easy for them to do so, and

Governmental – Meet with and write to Ministers, state and federal, to influence a positive change in legislation and policy by advocating for a ban on ring-shaped items to protect native wildlife from the risk of entanglement and death.

While we continue urging manufacturers and the government to take action, we ask our followers to Snip Rings for Wildlife. All you need to do is snip the ring-shaped item in half, place it in the bottle, put the cap back on, and then you can place the item in your recycling bin.

**SNIP RINGS FOR WILDLIFE
ASSET BANK & GUIDE**

Safeguard our precious wildlife!
Join the fight against entanglement
in ring-shaped objects.

Image: WIRES Inland Rivers

The QR code provides access to our Snip Rings for Wildlife Asset Bank & Guide, which contains everything you need to share the campaign and encourage people to snip through ring-shaped items to protect Australia's wildlife. Please also visit our website: <https://www.aws.org.au/snip-rings-for-wildlife/>

We must remind ourselves that when we work together, we can create real change!



Guardians of The Greater Gliders



Greater gliders are three species of large gliding marsupials, all found in eastern Australia.

Unfortunately, these species are listed as Endangered and threatened with extinction due to the logging of hollowbearing trees and the loss and fragmentation of their natural habitats.

We have established **Guardians of the Greater Gliders** – a fundraiser that aims to raise as many funds as possible between now and 30 June 2024 to provide additional support to ensure their survival in the future.

One hundred percent of the funds raised will go to Wildlife Queensland's new Greater Glider Project.

Donations of \$2 or more are tax-deductible.

Donate Now!





SKER Southern Koala & Echidna Rescue | Steve Farrimond

Southern Koala and Echidna Rescue is a not-for-profit charity governed by a Board, with forty dedicated volunteers managed by our Operations Manager. Founded by Mish and Wade Simpson in 2018 and later registered in 2020 with a vision to be recognised as one of South Australia's leading wildlife welfare facilities, contributing to a sustainable future for koalas (*Phascolarctos cinereus*) and echidnas (*Tachyglossus aculeatus*).

We have a multifaceted remit covering rescue, rehabilitation, research, and revegetation. Our mission is to ensure South Australia's native wildlife continue to enjoy a quality life in the wild by providing advice, advocacy, rescue, and rehabilitation services, specialising in the rehabilitation of koalas and echidnas. We also support multiple research programs nationwide, providing valuable data and samples from wild populations.

We provide rescue services across Adelaide's southern suburbs, the Adelaide Hills, and Fleurieu Peninsula, and more broadly across South Australia for echidna rescue and advice. We are proud of the collaboration we have established with like-minded organisations across South Australia and nationwide, the service we provide to our community,

and most importantly, the care we provide for injured, sick, displaced, or orphaned wildlife.

Specialist Rehabilitation Centre

Located on a 22-acre property in the Southern Adelaide region, Southern Koala and Echidna Rescue has successfully engineered a specialist rehabilitation centre that can provide exceptional veterinary care to Australian native animals and become a national knowledge hub for koalas and echidnas.

Incorporating an operational veterinary hospital providing triage, x-rays, ultrasounds, administering anaesthesia and delivering on-site medical treatments, phase one of the centre offers the capacity to provide care and rehabilitation for up to twelve adult koalas in our purpose-built

outdoor enclosures, internal hospital enclosure, and pre-release yards, plus two separate koala "kindy" pens equipped to house multiple koala joeys, along with multiple enclosures for echidna rehabilitation. Phase one also incorporated bushfire preparedness implementations, including a second access driveway, a registered farm fire unit and the installation of the Embarr Argus radiant heat and ember detection system.

We greatly appreciate the financial support received from many of our followers and members, plus grant funding from the Australian Wildlife Society, WIRES, NAB Foundation, Federal government (Preparing Australian Communities – Local Stream), and outstanding in-kind support from WG Builders and many other local trades and suppliers to complete phase one. Phase two of construction commenced in February 2024, with five additional external koala enclosures being established.

Top: Koala (*Phascolarctos cinereus*) rescue. Image: Michael Eastwell.



Koala Kindy enclosure. Image: Steve Farrimond.

Rescues and Operating Model

Since the start of 2019, over 2,800 phone calls have been made to Southern Koala and Echidna Rescue, resulting in over 1,500 rescues, with more than 670 animals receiving medical intervention and over 390 animals being released to the wild. As community awareness grows through education and all forms of media, calls to our 24/7 rescue hotline are increasing yearly. We received 575 rescue calls from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023, with 606 calls received between 1 July 2023 and 29 February 2024.

We have been fortunate enough to gain philanthropic support for 2023, enabling casual employment of two vets for a minimum of 16 hours a week, plus part-time employment of our Operations Manager two days per week. These successful appointments have enabled us to expand our research collaboration, assess and treat more wildlife on-site, effectively manage our growing volunteer group, and expand advocacy engagement across multiple stakeholders.

Our board has prioritised two key strategies for 2024-2025, both deemed vital for the ongoing success and growth of the organisation. Strategic Priority One – secure funding for a full-time Operations Manager. A full-time resource manager for our volunteer team will help deliver our mission and key priorities,



Rehabilitation Centre. Image: Steve Farrimond.

including rescue, on-site wildlife veterinary care, research/biodiversity initiatives, advocacy, and education programs. Strategic Priority Two – secure funding to increase part-time veterinary hours to 30 hours per week. These additional hours will ensure veterinary capacity is available on-site 6 days per week.

There is a veterinary crisis impacting Australia. The number of veterinary professionals is reducing due to stress and burnout, affecting the availability of veterinarians to service the general community and wildlife rescue organisations. A reduction in veterinarians presents multiple challenges, including attracting voluntary hours from vets, obtaining access to external vets offsite, and, most significantly, the shortage in vets drives up the cost of vet employment, and poses a risk to Southern Koala and Echidna Rescue as a charity which employs veterinarians through funding.

If you know a vet based in South Australia who might have an interest in learning more about Southern Koala and Echidna Rescue, please refer them to Mish Simpson at mish@sker.org.au

Research

Southern Koala and Echidna Rescue is a science and solution-driven organisation, and we strive to use the best available science in all aspects of decision-making, including empowering our team to harness a solution-focused mindset.



Echidna (*Tachyglossus aculeatus*) release. Image: Steve Farrimond.

In February 2022, we lost a great friend and colleague, Dr Joanna Griffith. Consequently, we developed the Jo Griffith research initiative to honour her life's work and passion for wildlife research. We are committed to supporting research programs across Australia that can benefit from receiving data and samples from wild koala and echidna populations.

We currently support programs in Universities across South Australia, New South Wales, and Queensland researching: 1. Koala milk protein and pouch microbiome, 2. Marsupial lactation, 3. Koala health and disease, 4. Koala genetics, 5. Cortisol stress response and its minimisation in rescued wildlife, and 6. Echidna genome and molecular and biomedical science.



Rehabilitation Centre interior. Image: Deb Farrimond.



Echidna rehabilitation enclosures.
Image: Steve Farrimond.



Rehabilitation Centre hospital enclosures.
Image: Steve Farrimond.

Revegetation and Biodiversity

Southern Koala and Echidna Rescue have developed a biodiversity plan in partnership with Biodiversity McLaren Vale to revegetate and maintain our 22-acre property, eradicating feral species and planting out native species. We have established a koala food source plantation with a vision to harvest browse on-site within the next six or seven years, feeding koalas in care without needing volunteers to travel across our region to source food.

In line with our scientific approach, we are undertaking experimental approaches to long stem planting, adopting practices developed in New South Wales to assess if the same practices will be successful in the heavier soils across the Adelaide Hills, South Australia. We hope to share positive outcomes with other conservation groups in South Australia once the research is complete.

We have recruited experienced revegetation volunteers to manage our property and extend our biodiversity activities to other landholdings within our region with the support of the landowners, working to build wildlife corridors and reduce the impact of urban and road development.

Advocacy and Community Education

Southern Koala and Echidna Rescue actively engages and corresponds with local, state, and federal government ministers and departments, providing advice or opinion on urban developments and advocating for changes that will deliver better outcomes to protect



Pre-release enclosures. Image: Deb Farrimond.



Koala pole rescue. Image: Michael Eastwell.



Koala pole rescue (continued). Image: Michael Eastwell.

native wildlife, such as reduced speed limits in high impact zones, improved lighting and signage, and effective barriers.

During 2023, we worked with the Department of Infrastructure and Transport to obtain improved signage on the Southern Expressway in Adelaide, South Australia, to enhance driver awareness of wildlife on this road and increase the number of reports for injured wildlife. We will continue further engagement, proposing improved lighting and more effective barriers in line with barrier designs implemented in Queensland and collaborating with like-minded groups to represent requirements that deliver better outcomes for native wildlife.

Apart from engagement with the government, we undertake activities to broaden community awareness. We regularly present to school groups, Scouts and Girl Guides, and other community services such as St John Ambulance SA, plus we attend numerous community events.

Want to Know More or Get in Touch?

Southern Koala and Echidna Rescue is poised to deliver great outcomes for Australia's native wildlife. If you would like to know more or support us with phase two construction and our strategic priorities, get in touch with Mish Simpson at 0403 435 482 or mish@sker.org.au

Funds provided by the Australian Wildlife Society assisted Southern Koala and Echidna Rescue in developing temporary enclosures within the rehabilitation centre that can be used to provide shelter for echidnas, koalas, and other native species in the event of a bushfire or any other event causing capacity overflow.



Rehabilitation Centre rehabilitation enclosures (right view). Image: Deb Farrimond.



Rehabilitation Centre rehabilitation enclosures (left view). Image: Deb Farrimond.



Eucalypt plantings. Image: Steve Farrimond.



Eucalypt plantings (ground-level view). Image: Steve Farrimond.

Australian Wildlife Society

University Research Grants



The Australian Wildlife Society's University Research Grants are offered to honours or postgraduate students at Australian universities conducting research that contributes to the conservation of Australian wildlife (flora or fauna).

Ten grants are awarded each year: one \$5,000 scholarship and nine \$3,000 grants. The Dr Clive Williams OAM Memorial Wildlife Conservation Scholarship is awarded to the highest-ranked applicant of all our University Research Grants. **Applicants must be a member of the Society.** Student membership is free and you can join via our website www.aws.org.au. Please send a copy of your student ID to accounts@aws.org.au

Grants may be used to purchase equipment and consumables, travel expenses related to field research, or attend conference where you present your research. **The grant is paid directly to the student.**

PREPARING YOUR APPLICATION FOR A GRANT

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

APPLICATIONS EXCEEDING FOUR PAGES WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED

Title: Please state the title of your research project. Underneath the title, please include your name, school, and university.

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

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

Schedule: Outline a proposed timeframe for completing your project, listing significant milestones, including submitting a final report/article to the Australian Wildlife Society by the first week of September.

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

Brief CV: The final page of your application should consist of a short CV demonstrating your ability to produce high standard results. Also include the details of two referees who can comment on the proposed project, one of whom should be your academic supervisor.

Please prepare your application as a single Word document and submit it as an email attachment to info@aws.org.au. Please name your file: 'Your Name AWS Grant Year', e.g., 'John Smith AWS Grant 2024'.

CLOSING DATE: APPLICATIONS ARE DUE BY 31 MAY EACH YEAR

APPLICANTS WILL BE NOTIFIED BY EMAIL IN JULY

CONDITIONS OF SPONSORSHIP

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

Dr Clive Williams OAM

Memorial Wildlife Conservation Scholarship

Dr Clive Williams OAM Memorial Wildlife Conservation Scholarship

is named in Honour of Dr Clive Williams OAM. Clive joined the Society in 1986 and served on the Board of Directors for over thirty years. Clive significantly contributed to the Society's major wildlife conservation projects, including Towra Point Nature Reserve rehabilitation and restoration work for migratory wading birds, Rockdale Wetland Corridor restoration, and National Tree Day programs.





Under the Protective Skirts of Australian Grass-Trees | Sophie Petit

Wrapped up in blankets and equipped with a cup of smoking hot chocolate, I sent Deb out into the pouring rain. It was the highest mean rainfall for June in the Adelaide Hills, South Australia, in twenty years.

Deb Frazer is a brave woman. She had already spent the hottest summer and coldest winter days and nights measuring the temperature under grass-trees (*Xanthorrhoea semiplana*) subspecies (ssp.) *semiplana*. Much research has examined the microclimates of different natural shelters, but the effect of downpours has been generally overlooked.

Yet, wetting affects the insulation of bird and mammal coats and halves thermal resistance. Research on livestock has shown the terrible impacts of wetness in the cold, leading to death. The South Australian rainy season in the Mediterranean climate belt occurs in winter and can get quite cold.

We generally assume that animals will seek shelter when it is cold and raining. And without a second thought, we turn on the kettle as we settle in front of a bowl of soup.

But where do animals seek shelter? Shelter is an essential resource and should be part of high-quality, well conserved habitats. Rock structures, tree hollows, and burrows protect

animals from extreme weather. It turns out that grass-trees, Australian icons, can join the list of precious shelters, at least in some of the ecosystems in which they occur.

Australia has twenty-nine grass-tree species in the genus *Xanthorrhoea* (family Asphodelaceae) distributed across most parts of the country. They have a long association with Aboriginal history, serving various purposes across different Indigenous groups. Also called yaccas, they are known to host a diversity of vertebrates and invertebrates. They feature long skirts of curving leaves, and their nectar-rich flowers are produced at the top of stupendous, long wooden scapes. While some species grow trunks over hundreds of years, others remain close to the ground.

Thermal, Waterproof Refuges

In *Xanthorrhoea semiplana* ssp. *semiplana* found in the Adelaide Hills and Mount Lofty Ranges, the leaves die and dry up at the bottom of the canopies and stay in place, creating increasingly sturdy, thick, waterproof roofs curving to the ground. Our previous research showed they host

many native animals, including bandicoots and bush rats. Another student and I have observed echidnas resting under the thick canopies of grass-trees. But what is the thermal value of this plant as a shelter?

Deb and I found that on the hottest days of summer, the mean temperature under the thickest grass-tree canopies could be 20°C lower than in random spots around grass-trees or in ambient shade. The temperature at our four study sites remained extraordinarily stable under grass-trees, while external temperatures could exceed 40°C, which is believed to be lethal to several vertebrate species.

Although the differences in winter temperature between external and grass-tree canopy temperatures were much smaller, significantly warmer conditions were observed under grass-trees at night. In both summer and winter, the temperature variation was low under the grass-tree canopy. Temperature stability in winter could facilitate the maintenance of torpor – an energy-saving strategy used by many small vertebrates.

As Deb struggled through the downpour, she recorded soil wetness

Top: A grass-tree (*Xanthorrhoea semiplana*) ssp. *semiplana* at Mount Crawford, Adelaide Hills. Image: Sophie Petit.



Old grass-trees with thick skirts can provide waterproof shelters to wildlife, even in torrential downpours. Image: Sophie Petit.

under grass-trees. She was amazed to find that under 80 percent of large and old grass-trees, the soil was perfectly dry and partially dry under 20 percent of the other grass-trees. As expected, young grass-trees without full and thick skirts were nowhere near as good at providing shelter from the rain. Considering their exceptional habitat value, old grass-trees certainly play a role in determining the foraging times of animals, which are likely to use grass-trees when the weather is inclement.

The remarkable ability of at least some grass-tree species to protect a diversity of animals from deadly climatic extremes, combined with their anti-predator services (for example, large cats, foxes, and birds would have a difficult time penetrating the sturdy canopy of dead leaves), strengthens the mounting evidence that these plants are keystone species in Australia. Animals – whole populations of some species – can use their services to survive drastic environmental conditions. Grass-trees need to be present along with their generous old skirts of leaves. Will they be?



Some animals shelter directly under grass-trees; others place their burrows under grass-trees. Image: Sophie Petit.

Grass-trees in Peril

Historically, the two *X. semiplana* subspecies were extensively cleared for agriculture from many ecosystems, including the Adelaide Hills and Mount Lofty Ranges, the Yorke Peninsula, and Kangaroo Island. They are now the victims of two other afflictions: a disease-causing oomycete (*Phytophthora cinnamomi*), recognised by the Australian government as a 'key threat', and an increasing incidence of fires.

Highly susceptible to the soil pathogen *Phytophthora*, grass-trees die *en masse* in infected areas, along with other native plant species, dramatically reducing the habitat for local animal communities. Infections are facilitated by humans, vehicles, animal passage, and fires. Fires affect grass-trees negatively in an indirect way by increasing *Phytophthora* infestations, as well as with severe burns that end up killing the plants.

Although the resilience of grass-trees to bushfires is well known, it may be overestimated according to recent research. Moreover, even if grass-trees are not killed by fires, their old, thick

skirts of dead leaves burn, leaving no shelter for animals in post-bushfire environments.

As South Australia becomes hotter and dryer with the changing climate, it burns more easily. People are understandably scared. The bushfires of 2019-2020 ravaged widespread areas in Australia, including South Australia. With the support of part of the community, government organisations have been involved in conducting extensive prescribed burns in native ecosystems, sometimes inaccurately called 'fuel reduction burns' and even more inaccurately 'ecological burns'. This feel-good terminology hides the negative impacts of frequent prescribed fires. Long-unburnt habitats, where most of our biodiversity thrives, are becoming a rare occurrence. Prescribed burning is often not backed by research, and ecological studies in other Australian ecosystems show that recently burnt habitats are drier, have more fuel, and burn more easily than long-unburnt ones.

Protecting grass-trees and their skirts goes a long way towards safeguarding Australian wildlife and biodiversity. It is inappropriate to 'manage' the few areas of nature and wilderness we have left without research to support the radical strategies undertaken. This research should include long-term scientific monitoring, which is rarely carried out.

As we sip hot chocolate by the heater in the cold, rainy winter and sleep in the cool air conditioning on 45°C days, shouldn't we also protect the grass-trees from our actions, the very plants that provide many of our animals a cosy home with a solid roof?

Further Reading

Petit, S. and D. S. Frazer. 2023. The role of grass-tree *Xanthorrhoea semiplana* (Asphodelaceae) canopies in temperature regulation and waterproofing for ground-dwelling wildlife. *Pacific Conservation Biology* 29(5): 445–455. <https://doi.org/10.1071/PC23014>

A version of this article has also been published in *Current Conservation*.



Unfortunately, some landholders believe that the skirts of grass-trees should be burnt. The skirts of these *Xanthorrhoea semiplana* ssp. *tateana* were burnt on Kangaroo Island. This subspecies can grow tall trunks. Image: Sophie Petit.

Building Momentum For Daintree Conservation

Sigrid Wilkens and Mark Cox

Even though the World Heritage-listed Daintree Rainforest, the oldest continually evolving and surviving rainforest, contains rare and threatened plants and animals found nowhere else on the planet, it is still under-protected. At Rainforest Rescue, we have made it our mission to protect and restore this biodiverse wildlife haven, and coming into our twenty-fifth year of operation, the momentum is truly building. In the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, it is an exciting time to be part of the green movement, sharing, collaborating, and inspiring change in Queensland's stunning Far North. We have been busy with all sorts of things, including construction, protection, monitoring, maintenance, data collection and analysis, and planting as many rainforest seedlings as possible!

Nurturing Nature with our Native Nursery

One of our most ambitious goals yet was to build and operate the largest native rainforest plant nursery in the region. After construction was almost completed in late 2023, our Nursery Team successfully transitioned from our old nursery site in Diwan to the new site in Cow Bay. The team is several months into the cycle of native seed collection, germination, and growth of rainforest plants. This new nursery will be an important part of restoration projects within the Daintree region. As the green economy gathers pace, a place

for the propagation and production of rainforest flora is a symbol of intent and capacity building for the future. In a few years, this nursery will be capable of producing one hundred and fifty thousand plants annually to produce one million seedlings within a decade of operation!

Meanwhile, our previous nursery in Diwan had a change of hands to Jabalbina Yalanji Aboriginal Corporation, along with horticultural training provided by our nursery manager, Marine Deliens, so they can use this space to grow rainforest plants for their own restoration projects.

Jabalbina Yalanji Aboriginal Corporation's General Manager, Josh Paterson, was enthusiastic about the opportunity: *"Having on-ground partnerships, especially in the restoration of country, is really important to us. The generosity of Rainforest Rescue through their training and gifting of the native nursery means we can facilitate the ongoing vision of developing Yalanji Bama (our people) as caring custodians of the Bubu (land) as they return to live and work on country."*

Despite Tropical Cyclone Jasper in December 2023 packing a punch with winds and rain, and then even more

record-breaking rain, our new nursery weathered the storm just fine. It was built to last and in a well-drained area. Miraculous!

Restoration Sensation

In November last year, Rainforest Rescue and Terrain NRM supported the Mossman Botanic Garden project with an epic community tree planting, setting the stage for a twenty-first-century botanic garden focused on nature-positive, tropical rainforest conservation.

After a week of ground prep and eight months of careful seed collection, propagation and nurturing of ready-

to-plant seedlings, Rainforest Rescue proudly supplied the four thousand trees now thriving across a hectare of the Mossman Botanic Garden site. The Rainforest Rescue Land Management Team will provide maintenance over the next two years to ensure the success of this biodiverse patch of young rainforest, which is playing a significant role in public education and visibility on the growing need for restoration.

It is hard to think of a better way to reach a new level of restoration scale than with a community project that will become a world-class 'gateway to the Daintree'.

In the last few weeks, we have started to plant out our new restoration site – ten hectares of cleared land, making up what used to be the Daintree Air Strip. The land management team has been powering through the very persistent

Top Left: Aerial view of the newly planted rainforest section of Mossman Botanic Gardens. Image: Hayden White.

Top Right: Rainforest Rescue's New Native Nursery is filling up with rainforest seedlings. Image: Martin Stringer.

Bottom Right: Sigrid Wilkens and Fred Holden, a research officer from James Cook University, sampled soil at the restoration site Tranquility on the Daintree. Image: Martin Stringer.



Nursery Manager, Marine Deliens, planting a tree at Mossman Botanic Gardens. Image: Sigrid Wilkens.



Volunteers planting trees at Mossman Botanic Gardens. Image: Sigrid Wilkens.

wet season weather, getting soaked to the bone and yet full of smiles. This site will also allow us to experiment with our restoration methodologies and improve our data collection to ensure we are working and using our funds to the best possible efficiency.

Rainforest to Reef

Our latest rescue of under-protected rainforest late last year was Lot 1 Cape Tribulation Road – almost four stunning hectares of both critically endangered Littoral Rainforest and endangered Wet Tropics Lowland Rainforest. This property is a prime example of the importance of the relationship between rainforest and reef. These two World Heritage areas are interconnected, relying on each other for survival. Managing Director of The Great Barrier Reef Legacy, Dean Miller, says, “*Rainforests act as the kidneys of the land, holding fast the soil and ensuring water draining off these magnificent places is clear and nutrient-poor, so corals don’t suffocate*”.



Rainforest Rescue's latest protected property, Lot 1 Cape Tribulation Road. Image: Branden Barber.

This purchase is one of only two property rescues this far north in the Daintree region, moving us closer to our long-term goal – creating connected corridors that encourage wildlife and plant species to thrive on land while protecting our reef.

Digging Deeper: Soil and Carbon

Keeping a close eye on our trees, we have also been digging into another world beneath. Improving the health of our soil is vital, not only for biodiversity but for climate action. Last year, we were lucky enough to engage soil scientists Fred Holden and Dr Paul Nelson from James Cook University to develop a soil monitoring program at our restoration site, NightWings, a former sugar cane farm. From this, we hope to answer the question: *'How do degraded soils recover after the trees come back?'*

In this spirit of scientific collaboration, we have partnered with Dr Alex Cheesman of James Cook University to develop a methodology for estimating carbon sequestration in our planted trees and carbon storage in our protected forests. These are valuable metrics to pass on to business partners and foundations who support our work in these two areas. It is also a step in the right direction towards a green economy, where humans and nature are no longer in competition but can thrive alongside each other.



Conservation field labourer, Nico Walker, smiling despite the rain at the former Daintree Airstrip restoration site. Image: Barbara Maslen.

How Can You Help?

To support Rainforest Rescue's work in protecting and restoring the World Heritage Daintree Rainforest, head to bit.ly/RRDdonation or come and get your hands dirty at our Twenty-Fifth Anniversary Community Tree Planting Day on 18 May! More info at bit.ly/3Ntiqaz

Funds provided by the Australian Wildlife Society

assisted Rainforest Rescue in planting five hundred trees to restore damaged rainforests and rebuild the habitat of countless Daintree flora and fauna.



It is a day of celebration as Rainforest Rescue's former nursery is officially handed to Jabalbina Yalanji Aboriginal Corporation. Image: Mark Cox.

Australian Wildlife Society

Threatened Wildlife Photographic Competition

A national competition that awards and promotes the conservation of Australia's threatened wildlife through the medium of photography.

The Australian Wildlife Society invites photographers to raise the plight of threatened wildlife across Australia. Our Society aims to encourage the production of photographs taken in Australia by Australians, reflecting the diversity and uniqueness of Australia's wildlife whose conservation status is listed as Vulnerable, Endangered, or Critically Endangered.

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

Rules of entry:

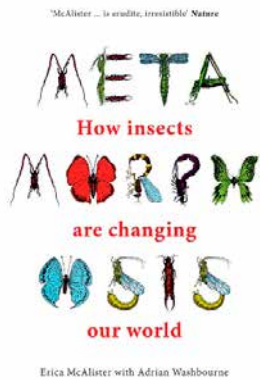
1. The subject of each entry must be officially listed as either a Vulnerable, Endangered, or Critically Endangered Australian species – fauna or flora,
2. The entry must be the work of the entrant,
3. The photograph must have been taken within the twelve months prior to the date of entry,
4. The name of the threatened species, photographer, and date taken must be included in the 'file name' of each photograph submitted. For example, koala_JohnSmith_1.1.11,
5. Entrants retain the copyright to their entries but accord the Australian Wildlife Society the right to use the photographs in any of its publications or any reprint arising therefrom,
6. Entries are to be submitted to – photo@aws.org.au. It is recommended that image files are no larger than 2mb,
7. All entries must be accompanied by a short paragraph (maximum 150 words) describing the status of the threatened species, the photograph's location, and the reasons and circumstances for choosing to photograph it,
8. Directors of the Society or their families are ineligible to submit entries,
9. There shall be no charge for entry and entrants may submit more than one entry, and
10. The final result is at the discretion of the Directors and will be announced in August each year.

CLOSING DATE FOR ENTRIES IS 30 JUNE

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



Book Reviews



Metamorphosis: How Insects are Changing our World – Erica McAlister and Adrian Washbourne

Embark on an extraordinary journey through the realm of insects and the invaluable insights they offer. Whether it is the astonishing properties of resilin, the protein that makes fleas jump, or the proboscis of the mosquito's mouth being used to develop smart needles, the authors reveal the wonder of insects, the historical figures who have made great breakthroughs in understanding them, and the increasingly vital role they play in ensuring life continues. A particular favourite, especially to the female adventurers and passionate entomologist, Margaret Fountaine, is the order Lepidoptera, which consists

of more than 140 families of butterflies and moths. These winged insects undergo complete metamorphosis, an incredible life cycle showcasing nature's ability to transform and adapt. Discover how amazing insects truly are and their transformative impact on our world.

Publisher: CSIRO Publishing | **RRP:** \$34.99

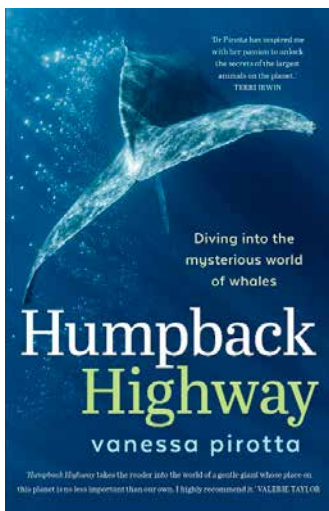


Tasmanian Gardens – Meg Bignell and Alice Bennett

From the rugged coastline of the Tasman Peninsula to the low hills of Risdon Cove, Tasmania is a haven for nature lovers and garden enthusiasts alike. Be in awe as you dive into the underwater garden – through the marine forests of giant kelp (*Macrocystis pyrifera*), a threatened ecological community where numerous invertebrates shelter, feed, and reproduce; you will be in awe as you swim by these towering underwater plants, reaching an astonishing 30 meters in height. Perhaps, you might like to remain above sea level and be mesmerised by the enchanted garden that features a variety of

native plants and attracts an array of wildlife, including superb fairywrens (*Malurus cyaneus*) or take a stroll through open bushland within the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre's cultural hub which features plenty of native bushtucker foods, including bulbine lily (*Bulbine bulbosa*), native spinach (*Tetragonia tetragonioides*), and kunzea (*kunzea ambigua*), to name a few. Tasmanian gardens are not just about aesthetics but also serve as important habitats for native wildlife.

Publisher: Thames & Hudson Australia | **RRP:** \$77.99

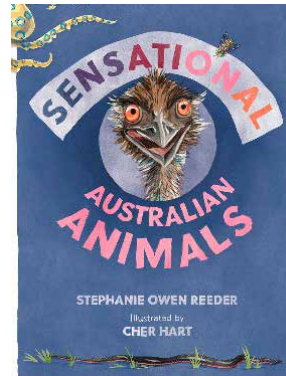


Humpback Highway: Diving into the Mysterious World of Whales – Vanessa Pirotta

Get ready to plunge into the depths of the ocean with *Humpback Highway*! This book takes you on a fascinating journey into the world of humpback whales, uncovering their secrets and shedding light on their incredible lives. From their intriguing life cycle to the obstacles they face from humans, you will learn all about these majestic creatures. And do not forget about the importance of whale snot and poo. Discover how these bodily functions play a crucial role in the health of the ocean. With cutting-edge technologies, we can now track their movements, listen to their conversations, and even observe them underwater. You will be amazed by the wonders of the

ocean and the incredible lives of humpback whales!

Publisher: NewSouth Publishing | **RRP:** \$32.99

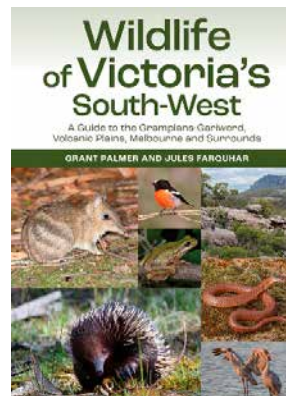


Sensational Australian Animals – Stephanie Reeder and Cher Hart

Explore the fascinating world of native Australian animals through the five basic senses – sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch. Brace yourself for mind-boggling discoveries: meet glow-in-the-dark mammals, turtles with bum-breathing skills, and lizards that clean their eyes with their tongue! Unveiling over 145 truly astounding animals – from the Society's 2024 'Wildlife of the Year' greater glider (*Petauroides volans*), renowned for its remarkable night vision and tree-to-tree gliding adventures, to Irukandji (*Carukia barnesi*), an extremely venomous and tiny species of rare jellyfish, *Sensational Australian Animals*

showcases the strange things these animals can do with their eyes, ears, nose, mouth, and skin. Get ready for a sensory overload like never before!

Publisher: CSIRO Publishing | **RRP:** \$29.99

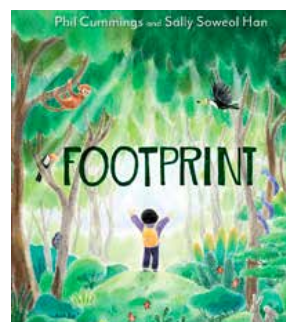


Wildlife of Victoria's South-West – Grant Palmer and Jules Farquhar

Wildlife of Victoria's South-West is an extensive photographic field guide to the region's wildlife. It covers all the region's mammals, birds, reptiles, and frogs. From the southern long-nosed bandicoot (*Perameles nasuta*), a nocturnal forager amongst leaf litter that digs for prey using its front feet, to the mallee spade-foot frog (*Neobatrachus pictus*), a nocturnal terrestrial burrower that inhabits flooded ditches, dams, and swamps, the south-west supports a remarkable array of wildlife. With detailed profiles of 432 taxa, this guide offers valuable insights into identification, range, conservation status, and habitat and ecology.

Additionally, it provides information on various habitat types, conservation and management, along with nineteen prime locations to observe and appreciate the local wildlife.

Publisher: CSIRO Publishing | **RRP:** \$49.99

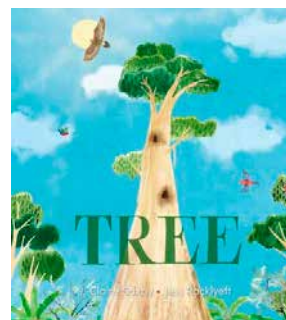


Footprint – Phil Cummings and Sally Han

A lyrical and beautifully illustrated picture book that empowers children to think about the natural environment in a mindful and positive way. Explore forests and mountains, cities and fields, and animals in their natural habitats as you ponder the footprint humans have left on the Earth. With each page turned, you will be inspired to reflect on the impact we have on the Earth and encouraged to take action to preserve its wonders. This book serves as a gentle reminder that every step we take leaves

a legacy, and it motivates children to be mindful of their actions and choices.

Publisher: Allen & Unwin | **RRP:** \$24.99



Tree – Claire Saxby and Jess Racklyeft

Behold the towering giant of the forest, standing tall among its peers, a testament to time and nature's resilience. Home to a diverse array of wildlife, from a greater glider (*Petauroides volans*) that emerges from her hollow as night falls to a boobook owl (*Ninox boobook*) soaring above the bustling wildlife below, this tree – a mighty mountain ash (*Eucalyptus regnans*) – is a sight to behold. Within its sturdy trunk, a bustling world of water and energy sustains life in a delicate balance.

Safeguarding this magnificent tree is crucial for the well-being of the entire ecosystem, ensuring the harmonious functioning of nature's intricate web.

Publisher: Allen & Unwin | **RRP:** \$24.99

Benefits of Membership



1

Receive the quarterly issue of **Australian Wildlife** via email or post to keep up-to-date with the collective work promoted nationally.

Receive the **monthly e-newsletter**. Keep up-to-date with news from our members and the work of the Society.

2



3

Access the **Members' Resource Centre**. Your destination for resources and materials on various wildlife-related topics.

Contribute to our **social media platforms**. Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, and our Website.

4



5

You have the **right to vote** on important matters at Society general meetings (financial members only).

Receive other benefits such as **awards, scholarships, grants**, and the opportunity to **network** with like-minded people.

6



Membership Form

Membership

Become a member of the Australian Wildlife Society

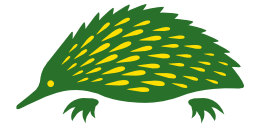
Simply fill out this form

Name:

Address:

City/Suburb: Postcode:

Email: Phone:



**Australian
Wildlife Society**

Conserving Australia's Wildlife
since 1909 ®

Membership category (please tick)

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

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

Three year membership (please tick)

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

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

Membership: all prices include GST

Payment details (please tick)

☐ Direct Debit ☐ Cheque ☐ Money Order ☐ Mastercard ☐ Visa Card Security Code (CSC) _ _ _ _

Card Number:

Amount \$

Name on Card: Expiry:

Donation \$

Signature:

Total \$

Mail to the: Australian Wildlife Society
PO Box 1294, CAMDEN NSW 2570
Email: accounts@aws.org.au
Website: www.aws.org.au

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

Membership Hotline: Mob: 0424 287 297

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

Membership Benefits

Magazine: Receive the quarterly issue of *Australian Wildlife* via email or post to keep up-to-date with the collective work promoted nationally.

E-Newsletter: Receive the monthly e-newsletter. Keep up-to-date with news from our members and on the work of the Society.

AWS Portal: Access the Members' Resource Centre – your destination for resources and materials on various wildlife-related topics.

Social Media: Contribute to our social media platforms: Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, and Website.

Right to Vote: You have the right to vote on important matters at Society general meetings (financial members only).

Other Benefits: Awards, Scholarships, Grants, and the opportunity to network with like-minded people.

LEAVE A BEQUEST IN YOUR WILL

If you would like to find out how to leave a bequest to the Society or how your bequest can make an impact, please download our bequest information pack.



The Annual President's Luncheon 2024



L to R: Brian Scarsbrick AM, Joanne Scarsbrick, Stephen Grabowski, Sisilia Citrajaya, Trevor Evans, and Dr Robin Crisman.



L to R: Matthew Brooker, Brigitte Brooker, Shona Nichols, Patrick Medway AM, Heather Stephens, Kay Brenton, and Robert Westerman.



L to R: Angus Yule and Caitlin Gallagher.



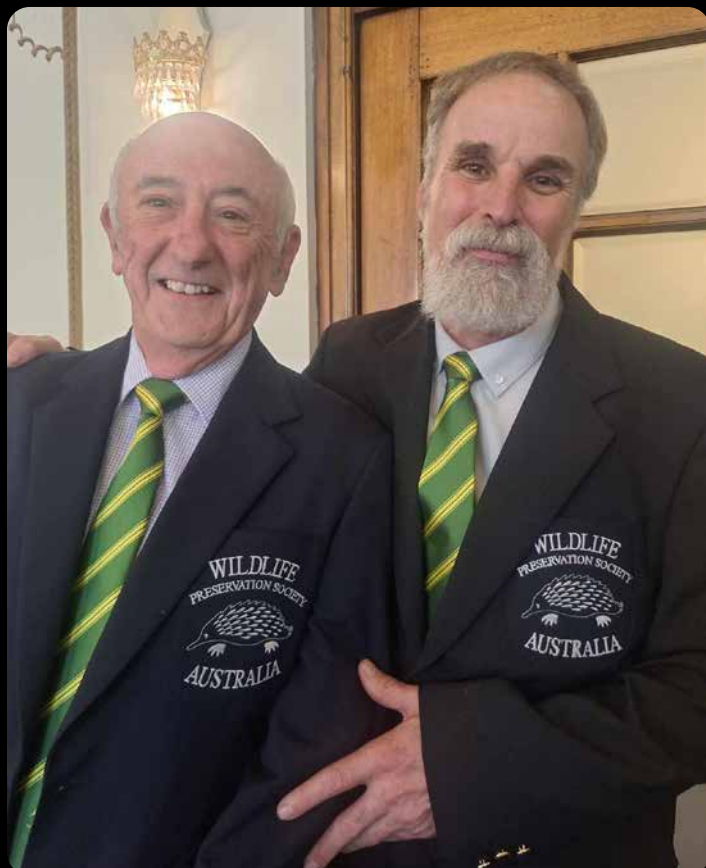
L to R: Megan Fabian and Gabriele Theiler.



L to R: Robert Westerman and Kay Brenton.



L to R: Sisilia Citrajaya and Rossana Creighton.



L to R: Ken Mason and John Creighton.

