



AUSTRALIAN *Wildlife*

Autumn Volume 2/2025
\$10 (non-members)



Journal of the Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia
Celebrating a new century of wildlife preservation in Australia
(Founded 1909)



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,
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



Contents

Features

7 116th Annual General Meeting

12 New Directors and Staff

13 President's Annual Report for 2024

19 Reflections on Saving our Native Wildlife – **Patrick Medway**

22 Passing of Dr Michael Augee of Wellington NSW – **Patrick Medway**

23 Marine Rescue Milestone for the Coffs Coast Wildlife Sanctuary – **Tiga Cross**

27 Mountain Pygmy-Possum Climate Adaptation Project Update – **Trevor Evans and Professor Mike Archer**

29 Stop Logging Native Forest A Brief Review of the Parliamentary Meeting – **Brian Scarsbrick AM**

30 Wildlife Fiction Short Story Competition - Runner's-up



8



23



9



27



20



31



22



32

Regulars

2 Australian Wildlife Society Threatened Wildlife Photographic Competition

5 From the President's Desk

6 Australian Wildlife Society University Research Grants

8 Australian Wildlife Society Awards 2024

26 Wildlife Ecology Research Scholarship

32 Fun Fact: Wombat

33 Book Reviews

35 Membership Form



Lucie Novakova - Editor



On the Cover

Front Cover:

The superb parrot (*Polytelis swainsonii*) is a medium-sized parrot with a swift and graceful flight. It is endemic to south-eastern Australia. Image: Ben Harvey @benji_not

Back Cover:

The regent parrot or rock pebbler (*Polytelis anthopeplus*) is a slim, medium-sized parrot, with predominantly yellow plumage and green tail. It is endemic to Australia, with two distinct populations: one in the eastern region (south-western New South Wales, north-western Victoria, and the Murray Mallee region of South Australia) and another in the south-west of Western Australia. Image: Mark Lethlean, 2021 birdlifephotography.org.au



Australian Wildlife Society

Conserving Australia's Wildlife
since 1909 ®

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 or 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**

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 second Wednesday of each month, excluding January.

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

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)

Contact

**National Office
Australian Wildlife Society
(Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia Limited)**

9/121 Queen Street
CAMPBELLTOWN NSW 2560

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**

9/121 Queen Street
CAMPBELLTOWN NSW 2560

Email: secretary@aws.org.au

Patron

Her Excellency the Honourable
Ms Sam Mostyn AC
Governor-General of the
Commonwealth of Australia



Directors

President

Stephen Grabowski

Vice Presidents

Dr Robin Crisman
Trevor Evans

Treasurer

Amy Woodley

Company CEO

Brian Scarsbrick AM

Public Officer

Kelly Piper

Directors

John Creighton
Steve Wisbey OAM
Mitchell Brennan
Joanne Scarsbrick

Scientific Advisory Committee

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

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

Welcome to the Autumn 2025 Edition of Australian Wildlife

Another year has passed and we now see ourselves kicking some significant goals for 2025. We held our 116th Annual General Meeting and we have seen some major changes to the board. Sadly, we have accepted the request from Patrick Medway AM to leave the Society. Having served on the board for over 30 years and holding a Life Membership, he has had a long and interesting commitment to the Society inspired in many ways by our late esteemed member Dr Vincent Serventy and many others who gave all of us support in helping to save our native wildlife in all their amazing forms. Personally, I am sad to see Patrick leave, but I am also grateful he has accepted to be a mentor when help is needed. His long-term dedication and devotion have seen the Society grow to new heights, much more than anyone had expected. He truly is a person of passion, willing to help with strong values for what the Society does. Patrick has offered, where possible, to continue to serve the Society and participate in all our wildlife conservation activities if necessary.



On the flip side, we now welcome our new Company CEO, Brian Scarsbrick. Brian is an innovator and strong networker with government, industry, the corporate sector and research/academic communities. Brian

has held senior positions throughout his career, from Regional Director of Agriculture to leading a small professional multi-disciplinary team

at Landcare Australia Ltd. and recently, Chief Executive Officer of The National Trust of Australia NSW (2012-2017). Brian succeeded in helping to bring about a culture change in addressing soil degradation and water and air pollution through developing 'win-win' partnerships between corporates, government and the community. In 2007 Landcare Australia Ltd. established a Carbon Trading Pool (CarbonSmart) for Landcare group biodiversity plantings. CarbonSmart then targeted large companies to reduce their carbon footprint, enhance their Corporate Social Responsibility image concerning environmental and social issues, and financially assist farmers through carbon farming. Brian became a member of the Society in 2019 and was appointed as a Director in March 2020. In 2021, Brian was elected as a Vice President. We now see Brian as the new Company Secretary.

The Society also continues to grow as we welcome Amy Woodley as the new Treasurer, Kelly Piper as the Public Officer and Joanne Scarsbrick as a Director / Head of Marketing, Directors Mitchell Brennan and Steve Wisbey OAM.

We find ourselves in the position, with a new National Head Office and some new Directors, to have the best opportunity to deliver outstanding results.

As mentioned before, I am determined to see that the Society is still around and active for at least 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 and their unique habitats for the

next generation of young Australians.

Across Australia, we are now funding several 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 (at present being shot for sport) and sea turtles on the Great Barrier Reef.

We have set up a GoFundMe page for the new project "Homes for Koalas". Our mission is to protect and restore koala habitats by addressing the critical threat of habitat loss caused by urban expansion and land clearing. Through community support and donations, we plant gum trees to rebuild and expand vital koala corridors, ensuring a sustainable future for this iconic species. Every tree planted brings us one step closer to safeguarding koalas for generations to come. Please donate at [aws.org.au](https://www.gofundme.com/f/homes-for-koalas).

With the acquisition of our new Environmental Education Centre property, we plan to run more koala education programs to protect this iconic native species. I would 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.

Donate Now

Homes for Koalas

Join us in protecting koala habitats! Every donation directly funds the purchase of gum trees to restore and expand vital koala corridors.

Please give generously so we can make our mark on saving these precious native animals and their habitat for the next generation of young Australians.

<https://gofund.me/db5ee1ef>



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.





116th Annual General Meeting



L to R: Amy Woodley, Kelly Piper, Trevor Evans, Stephen Grabowski, Dr Robin Crisman, Joanne Scarsbrick, Mitchell Brennan, Steve Wisbey OAM, Brian Scarsbrick AM, John Creighton

The 116th Annual General Meeting of the Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia Limited, trading as the Australian Wildlife Society, was held on Wednesday, 12 March 2025, at the Koala Conference Room, 8/121 Queen Street, Campbelltown.

The President, Stephen Grabowski, tabled the Annual Report for 2024 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 2024, showing a healthy financial balance overall.

Peter J. Varley, Chartered Accountant Registered Company Auditor, was confirmed as the Society's auditor for 2024. (Peter passed away, and we had to engage John Dickie, John Dickie & Co Accountants.)

The election of the Directors for the coming year took place.

Patrick Medway, the Company Secretary, retired and we thank him for his long-term service on the Board.

The following Directors were elected to the Board:

Joanne Scarsbrick, Kelly Piper and Amy Woodley.

The Society was pleased to announce the winners of its prestigious Wildlife Conservation Awards for 2024



Serventy Conservation Award
Kymberly Robinson, Rockhampton, Qld



Community Wildlife Conservation Award
Capricorn Conservation Council, Rockhampton, Qld



Youth Conservation Award
Taylor Ladd-Hudson from Sunrise Beach, Sunshine Coast, Qld



Wildlife Rehabilitation Award
Mandy Watson from Kangaroo Haven Wildlife Rescue, Kununurra, WA

2024 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 winner of the Serventy Conservation Award is **Kymberly Robinson** of Rockhampton, Queensland.

The Fitzroy Catchment in Queensland is home to six freshwater turtle species including the endangered Fitzroy River turtle (*Rheodytes leukops*) endemic to the catchment and the critically endangered white-throated snapping turtle

(*Elseya albogula*). One of the largest threats to these threatened species is the destruction of nests soon after eggs are laid. Predators include both non-native and native species with the current depredation rate not sustainable. Nest protection is critical for survival with almost hundred per cent of clutches being depredated before they hatch and as a result both populations are aging due to the limited hatchling recruitment.

For eight months of the year, Kymberly monitors 20 km of the Fitzroy River during the nesting season monitoring nesting banks and protecting clutches of eggs. Both species nest in aggregations at traditional nesting areas. The white-throated snapping turtle nests during winter laying a single clutch with an average of 10 eggs and the Fitzroy River turtle nests during spring laying one to two clutches with an average of 18 eggs. The clutches of eggs are relocated to a predator proof cage installed on the riverbank to ensure safe incubation until they hatch. The mesh is large enough to allow the hatchlings to run unassisted to the water as they emerge.

Acceptance from Kymberly Robinson

It is an honour to be awarded the Serventy Conservation Award for 2024, for the recognition of my conservation work with the endangered Fitzroy River Turtle and critically endangered white-throated snapping turtle.

I was first introduced to freshwater turtles at the age of 16 when I started as a volunteer protecting Fitzroy River Turtle nests. After my first time on the river, I was hooked! It was a different world using a boat to access the traditional

nesting areas in crocodile inhabited waters, looking for turtle tracks from the night before, hoping that the predators hadn't destroyed any nests overnight.

Nineteen years later, I'm still just as keen and have been leading the nest protection work since 2015. In just the last five years, over 5,000 hatchlings have successfully made it to the water as a result of the protection work. I have established Turtles of CQ Ltd, which includes a Facebook profile where I educate the public about freshwater turtles and their conservation. Over the years I have personally invested in my own boat and equipment to continue this important conservation project.

This passion to conserve these threatened species has led me to pursue further tertiary education. I am currently a PhD candidate at CQ University, looking at the nesting ecology of the Fitzroy River turtle. With little known about this cryptic species, I aim to broaden knowledge of the species to assist in management decisions to help conserve them into the future. In 2024, I published the occurrence of echidnas depredating both species' eggs. This is the first documentation of eggs being part of the echidna's diet.

This year is exciting as it will be my 20th nesting season! I look forward to continuing conservation and expansion of knowledge into the future, ensuring that these unique species are here for future generations.

A huge thank you to my support network and volunteers that have also contributed to the conservation of freshwater turtles.



Kymberly Robinson with Fitzroy River turtle.



Kymberly Robinson relocating eggs into a predator-proof cage on the riverbank.

2024 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 winner of the Wildlife Rehabilitation Award is **Mandy Watson** from Kangaroo Haven Wildlife Rescue of Kununurra, Western Australia.

Mandy Watson's journey in wildlife rescue began over two decades ago with a single rescued red kangaroo named Midnight. Today, she operates Kangaroo Haven Wildlife Rescue, where she has single-handedly rescued, rehabilitated and released over 800 kangaroos and wallabies. Kangaroo Haven has grown from its modest origins in a small unit in Kununurra to a fully functional 10-acre sanctuary, providing Mandy with the space and resources to care for a large number of animals, and along with 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.



Acceptance from Mandy Watson

I am beyond excited and incredibly proud to have received the Australian Wildlife Society Wildlife Rehabilitation Award. As wildlife carers, we often go unnoticed for the tireless work, love and heartache we pour into rehabilitating and releasing native wildlife back into the wild where they truly belong. When I read the email saying I had won, I was overwhelmed with emotion and cried—it truly meant the world to me. This recognition gives me the encouragement to continue doing what I love. I have been dedicated to

this work for over 20 years, and I hope to keep going for as long as I can. Thank you from the bottom of my heart for this honour, and a special thanks to Luke Hatchman, one of my amazing volunteers, for nominating Kangaroo Haven. I couldn't do this without the support of my volunteers, especially those who help in the early mornings before I head off to work at school.

At Kangaroo Haven, we are deeply committed to rescuing and releasing all native wildlife back into their natural habitats, where they belong. Our dedicated team cares for a wide range of native fauna, from

marsupials and reptiles to birds of prey—essentially, anything that comes into our care. Living in a remote part of the Kimberley, we recognize the vital importance of preserving the region's diverse wildlife and ensuring that these animals thrive. Education plays a key role in our mission, as many people unknowingly harm joeys and other wildlife by attempting to care for them improperly. For example, joeys are often brought to us in critical condition due to their lactose intolerance, which is not well understood. To address this, we actively engage with communities, providing education on the proper care of wildlife. By spreading awareness, we hope to ensure that the Kimberley continues to be home to a rich and diverse array of native animals for generations to come.



Kangaroo joeys snuggled up.



Mandy Watson with one of her volunteers feeding rescued kangaroo joeys at Kangaroo Haven.

2024 Community Wildlife Conservation Award

2024 Community Wildlife Conservation Award

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

The winner of the Community Wildlife Conservation Award is the **Capricorn Conservation Council** of Rockhampton, Queensland.

The Capricorn Conservation Council (CCC) has been actively engaged in wildlife conservation activities for over 50 years, demonstrating a longstanding commitment to preserving biodiversity of Central Queensland. The CCC was founded in 1973, protecting Mount Etna from invasive limestone mining which destroyed Ghost Bat habitats and nurseries. To this day, the CCC works alongside other organisations.



Capricorn Conservation Council Caring for Country on Konomie Island, rehabilitating the landscape alongside Central Queensland University Students, the Konomie Island Environmental Education Centre P&C and Worrabinda Shire Indigenous Rangers.

Acceptance from Capricorn Conservation Council

Thank you for this incredible recognition. The Capricorn Conservation Council is deeply honoured to receive the 2024 Community Wildlife Conservation Award. This award reflects the dedication and collaborative efforts of our team, volunteers, Traditional Owner partners and the broader community in protecting and advocating for the unique biodiversity of Central Queensland. This means so much to us!

For over 50 years, Capricorn Conservation Council has been

a voice for the environment, working alongside Traditional Owners, scientists, and local communities to protect biodiversity, advocate for sustainable policy and restore vital ecosystems. This award is a humbling recognition of that ongoing mission. Conservation is more than just protecting wildlife – it is about connection to Country, respecting cultural knowledge and ensuring that future generations inherit thriving ecosystems. We are incredibly grateful for this recognition, which strengthens our mission to continue this work and our legacy.

Capricorn Conservation Council leads conservation efforts across Central

Queensland through habitat restoration, species monitoring, and community engagement. From protecting critical wildlife habitats to advocating for the conservation of threatened species, our work is grounded in collaboration. We engage with research institutions, conservation networks and community volunteers to support citizen science programs and influence environmental policy. Our commitment to elevating Indigenous leadership ensures that conservation efforts are guided by cultural knowledge and deep respect for Country. Through youth engagement initiatives, we also empower the next generation to continue this vital work.



Capricorn Conservation Council and Environmental Advocacy in Central Queensland calling out for Climate Action and to protect the Great Barrier Reef alongside the community.



Capricorn Conservation Council Market Stall: Capricorn Conservation Council Coordinator with Capricorn Conservation Council Life Members.

2024 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 winner of the Youth Conservation Award is **Taylor Ladd-Hudson** from Sunrise Beach, Sunshine Coast Queensland.

Since her first shark encounter on the Great Barrier Reef at the age of 12, Taylor has been heavily involved in shark conservation efforts for the past 4 years. Taylor has dedicated hundreds of hours to studying sharks' behaviour, advocating for their protection and countless hours speaking to students raising awareness about the critical role they play in our ocean ecosystems. In 2024, Taylor spoke directly to and inspired over 3,000 school students across more than 50 schools in South-East Queensland. Additionally, Taylor's use of social media platforms has brought shark conservation into the global spotlight.



Taylor Ladd-Hudson at Sunrise Beach, Sunshine Coast Queensland.

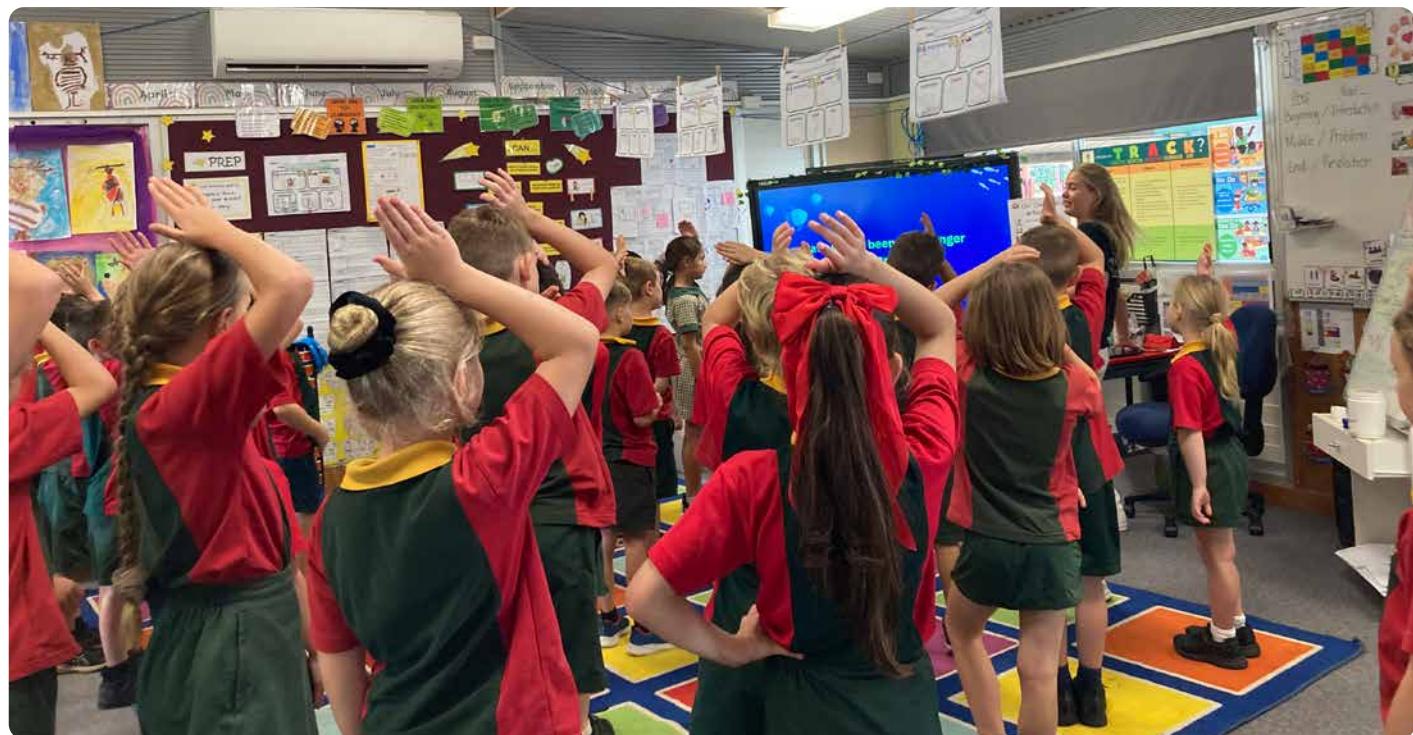
Acceptance from Taylor Ladd-Hudson

I'm incredibly honoured to receive the Individual Youth Conservation Award for 2024. Every recognition like this is not just a personal achievement but a celebration of the collective effort of scientists, conservationists and ocean lovers working tirelessly to protect what we love, our diverse Australian ecosystems.

My conservation work focuses on protecting sharks and sharing the important message of the critical role they play in maintaining healthy marine ecosystems. Through research advocacy and education, I'm striving to shift perceptions around sharks. Kids are taught about rips and dangerous swell,

jellyfish stings and what to do when bitten by a snake or spider but never any information on how to co-exist with sharks and the vital role they play in our oceans. I'm aiming to inform and empower the next generation of kids with the knowledge to provide them with confidence in the water to co-exist alongside shark's safety. On my journey in 2024, I talked to over 3,000 students in Southeast Queensland. I'm also currently collaborating with Valerie Taylor to raise awareness about the plight of grey nurse sharks along Australia's East Coast and the need for protected aggregation sites for them. I actively participate in citizen science initiatives focused on whales, sharks,

and sea turtles, contributing valuable data to support marine conservation efforts. Alongside this, I am working with government ministers to advocate for the removal and replacement of the shark control program along Australia's East Coast with non-lethal, science-based alternatives. Additionally, I am involved in rescuing and assisting with the rehabilitation of injured wildlife in my local area, ensuring that marine and coastal species receive the care they need to thrive. By combining storytelling, science and education, I hope to create lasting change for our oceans and their inhabitants.



Taylor speaking to school students in Southeast Queensland.



New Directors



Amy Woodley - Director

Amy is the founder of Start Fresh Accounting with over 15 years of experience in public practice. Registered Tax Agent, Member of Institute of Public Accountants, Justice of Peace, and Masters of Financial Planning, is among the many qualifications Amy holds. Amy takes a keen interest in her clients' businesses and lifestyle to help in any way possible. In 2021 she became a mum to twin boys, who now make her life twice as busy.



Kelly Piper Director

Kelly lives on a small acreage in the Riverina, where she enjoys the best of both worlds – working the land and being surrounded by nature. As a registered BAS Agent, she helps businesses stay on

top of their finances, but her true passion lies in wildlife and agriculture. She loves observing native animals, caring for the land and finding ways to balance farming with conservation. Whether it is crunching numbers, tending to the property, or spotting local wildlife, she finds joy in both precision and the great outdoors!



Steve Wisbey OAM Director

Steve's interest in the Society started when he joined in February 2018. He was buoyed by the Society's work and the positive outcomes achieved by working through education and facilitating scholarships. Steve has always been passionate about Australian flora and fauna.

In the last decade, his experience in communications has allowed him to enjoy executive roles as Marketing Manager of

NFP organisations Macarthur Disability Services, Disability Macarthur, MG My Gateway youth employment apprenticeship organisation, NSW Harness Racing Club, and Blue Chip Automotive marques.

Steve successfully divides his time between consultancy, philanthropy, community work, speaking engagements, and business mentoring. In 2015, he received the Order of Australia Medal in The Queen's Birthday Honours for his decades of community work and fundraising in Macarthur, NSW.



Mitchell Brennan - Director

Mitchell is a marine biologist and conservationist, with a passion for the protection and conservation of threatened marine species and ecosystems. He has a particular focus on syngnathids, the family of fishes that includes seahorses, sea dragons and pipefish.

Mitchell is currently undertaking a PhD at the University of Technology Sydney, focused on developing the conservation methodologies for the Endangered White's

Seahorse, *Hippocampus whitei*. From this work, Mitchell has founded and leads the Sydney Seahorse Project. He is also a researcher on "Project Restore" at the Sydney Institute of Marine Science, which aims to restore degraded seascapes in highly urbanised environments.

Mitchell is a commercially qualified SCUBA diver (ADAS Part1R), has extensive experience in animal husbandry, is adept in a wide variety of fieldwork methods, is an active teaching assistant and lecturer for tertiary students at the University of Technology Sydney, and is a keen science communicator.

Mitchell endeavours to have a positive impact on Australia's unique flora and fauna, and brings a dedication to the marine environment to the AWS board.

Above: Mitch Brennan at Chowder Bay – Credit Sam Ruttyn



Joanne Scarsbrick Director

Joanne is a new Director and she will be running the AWS Uni program and leading the Marketing activities of the Society. She brings wealth of knowledge, experience and connections to the Society from her

past work at Manly Council and running her own businesses. She is very active, running yoga and personal trainer sessions for her community in Brooklyn, NSW.



Lucie Novakova Editor

Lucie Novakova is the new Editor of the Australian Wildlife Society magazine. Her background is in Corporate Sustainability and after graduating from University of Queensland in 2011, she worked as a Strategy Consultant for Deloitte Sydney for

six years. Since then, she's focused on using her skills to preserve nature and critically endangered species, as opposed to helping increase profits. She's worked as a Grants & Projects Manager for the Australian Ecosystems Foundation, organising private and government funding for the Foundation and its primary reserve Secret Creek Sanctuary. Lucie and her husband also own the Six Foot Track Eco Lodge, where they spend most weekends with their four children.

President's ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2024

A Year in Review

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, I am enthusiastic about continuing to serve the Society and participate in all our wildlife conservation activities. We said goodbye to Wayne Greenwood, Dr Michael Swinbourne and our first National Officer Manager, Megan Fabian. We welcomed Steve Wisbey OAM and Mitchell Brennan to the Board of Directors.

For the first time in over one hundred years, the Board of the Society purchased and established a new National Office and Education Centre at 9/121 Queen Street, Campbelltown, New South Wales, which was officially opened on Tuesday 20 August 2024 by Mr Gregory Warren MP, Member for Campbelltown.

One of the highlights of the year was presenting our five annual awards – the Serventy Conservation Award, Community Wildlife Conservation Award, Wildlife Rehabilitation Award and Youth Conservation Awards. 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.



Gregory Warren MP, the Board of Directors of the Society, Steve Wisbey OAM and Councillor Warren Morrison cut the ribbon to mark the official opening. Image: Megan Fabian.

Another highlight was the awarding of our University Research Grants offered to honours or postgraduate students at Australian universities for research projects directly relevant to the conservation of Australian wildlife – flora or fauna. The Dr Clive Williams OAM Memorial Wildlife Conservation 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 among all our members. Its 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 2024 wildlife of the year, Greater Gliders, 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 17.4 thousand followers on Instagram and 15.4 thousand followers on Facebook. Our followers continue to grow each month and we thank you for your support.

Membership

As of December 2024, we had 436 members in total, consisting of: 100 Individual Members, 14 Family Members, 30 Concession Members, 9 Corporate Members, 42 E-Mag Members, 18 Associate Members, 24 Life Members, 12 Complimentary Members and 187 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 PhD Candidate, Natasha Bartels, for her research on 'Coral "Conversations": can corals communicate with each other via chemo signalling under stress?'

The **University of New South Wales Wildlife Ecology Research Scholarship** was awarded to UNSW PhD Candidate, Ann Nielsen, for her research on 'Restoring Seagrass Scars by Combining Shoot Transplanting with Mimicry of Facilitation Processes.'

The **University of Newcastle Wildlife Ecology Research Scholarship** was awarded to UON PhD Candidate, Charlotte Rigolot, for her research on 'Understanding Koala (*Phascolarctos cinereus*) Population Dynamics to Inform Conservation Management Interventions.'

Annual General Meeting and President's Luncheon

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.



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.

The President of the Society, Stephen Grabowski, welcomed the esteemed guests and announced the Society's 2024 Wildlife of the Year – Greater Gliders. He also 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.

Wildlife Conservation Awards



L to R: Robert Westerman and Trevor Evans.

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's efforts in educating the community and safeguarding these birds are vital for their conservation and long-distance journeys.

Serenty Conservation Award

The winner of the **Serenty Conservation Award** was 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



L to R: Dr Robin Crisman, Heather Stephens, and Patrick Medway AM

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. 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.



L to R: Brian Scarsbrick AM, Alison James (Treasurer, The Agile Project), and Patrick Medway AM.

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.

Community Wildlife Conservation Award

The winner of the **Community Wildlife Conservation Award** was 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



Caitlin Gallagher presented Matthew Brooker with the Youth Conservation Award.

Individual Youth Conservation Award

The winner of the **Individual Youth Conservation Award** was 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 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.



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

Group Youth Conservation Award

The winner of the **Group Youth Conservation Award** was 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. No single-use items are allowed. Over 450 children are involved each week, and their practices have started to be embedded in their program.

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, the Invasive Species Council's exclusive evening, the 3rd Australian Biosecurity Symposium, Southern Highlands Landcare Network Greater Glider event, Rural Women's Network volunteer Thank You evening, Campbelltown Chamber of Commerce dinner and networking events and the Macarthur Business Showcase. Additionally, we delivered presentations to first-year students at Charles Sturt University.

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. 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.

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



George Lester
(Dr Clive Williams OAM Memorial Wildlife Conservation Scholarship Recipient)

School of BioSciences, The University of Melbourne

Project Title: Pollination Networks in East-Arnhem Land: Analysing Effects of Climate Change on Stingless Bees through DNA Metabarcoding of Foraged Pollen

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 2024:



Rose Lownds
School of Science, Western Sydney University
Project Title: Determining the Distribution and Migratory Flyways of Bogong Moths (*Agrotis infusa*) Using Genetic and Stable Isotope Analyses.



Alexandra Ikpe
School of Science, Technology and Engineering, The University of the Sunshine Coast

Project Title: Tracking an Elusive Predator, Mature Male Tiger Sharks, Along Eastern Australia.



Alice Howie
School of Natural Sciences, Macquarie University
Project Title: Sound as an Emerging Technology to Monitor Biodiversity Across Seascape.



Emmeline Norris
Centre for Tropical Environmental and Sustainability Science, James Cook University
Project Title: Utilising Drone-Based Thermal Imagery to Accurately Estimate the Abundance of the Endangered Spectacled Flying-Fox (*Pteropus conspicillatus*) and Model Population Trajectories.



Luke Florence
Department of Environment and Genetics, La Trobe University.
Project Title: Mycorrhizal Diversity in Australian Temperate Forests in the Context of Drought and Nitrogen Deposition.



Matthew Rose
Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies, University of Tasmania
Project Title: Collapsed Habitat Threatens Australian Marine Wildlife.



Natalie Grassi
School of Environmental and Conservation Sciences, Murdoch University
Project Title: Does Fragmentation Alter Predator Diets?



Rebecca Quah
School of Science, Edith Cowan University
Project Title: Is There Mosh-Room for Bettongs? Resource Use and Availability for Bettong Reintroductions to Dirk Hartog Island.

Wildlife Photographic Competition

Greg Dawson won the annual Judges' Choice prize of \$1,000 for his photograph of two diamond firetails (*Stagonopleura guttata*). The diamond firetail is a member of the grass finch family. They are listed as Vulnerable. This image was photographed at Monarto Woodlands in South Australia.



Diamond firetails (*Stagonopleura guttata*). Image: Greg Dawson.

Judy Leitch won the annual People's Choice prize of \$500 for her photograph of two grey-headed flying-foxes (*Pteropus poliocephalus*). The grey-headed flying-fox is listed as vulnerable due to droughts, flooding rains, tornadoes, cyclones, and heat stress events, significantly impacting pollen eaters like the grey-headed flying-fox.



Grey-headed flying-foxes (*Pteropus poliocephalus*). Image: Judy Leitch.

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 nineteen Conservation Group Grants:

Wildlife Queensland

We partnered with Wildlife Queensland to raise the profile of our 2024 Wildlife of the Year – Greater Gliders and provide additional support to ensure their survival in the future. Funds were allocated to Wildlife Queensland's new Greater Glider Project, which assisted Wildlife Queensland to: 1. identify preferred trees, hollows, and nest boxes, track glider movement with VHF collars, and employing specialists to catch individual animals; and 2. determine ideal environmental conditions in greater glider hollows using data loggers, comparing conditions between different populations and seasons. In addition, we created a fundraising campaign – *Guardians of the Greater Gliders*, to raise additional funds to meet the outcomes above.

Kaarakin Black Cockatoo Conservation Centre

Funds assisted Kaarakin in rescuing, rehabilitating, and releasing black cockatoos into the wild.

Insect and Acacia Study

Funds assisted Dr Kit Prendergast in creating an open-source database on all the known insect visitors to the different Acacia species.

S.A. Native Animal Rescue

Funds assisted S.A. Native Animal Rescue in obtaining food supplies, an incubator, an aviary and miscellaneous items such as thermo-controlled heat mats, rescue baskets, syringes, teats, and nets to help sick and injured wildlife with their rescue, rehabilitation, and release.

Melaleuca Wildlife Shelter

Funds assisted Melaleuca Wildlife Shelter in obtaining additional supplies, such as enclosures, netting, carrier baskets, hanging baskets and colostrum, to improve their shelter husbandry and allow for more sick and injured wildlife to be rehabilitated.

Morton Bay Koala Rescue

Funds assisted Morton Bay Koala Rescue in obtaining ten Ledlenser Outdoor Headlamps to assist with their nighttime rescues of sick, injured, orphaned, displaced and deceased koalas.

Regional Victorians Opposed to Duck Shooting

Funds assisted RVOTDS in erecting a sign and publishing two half-page ads to help the coalition raise awareness and publicise its campaign against duck shooting in Victoria.

Sunraysia Wildlife Carers

Funds assisted Sunraysia Wildlife Carers with developing a flight cage for birds of prey.

Coffs Coast Wildlife Sanctuary

Funds assisted Coffs Coast Wildlife Sanctuary in purchasing crates to rescue and transport injured wildlife.

Green Heroes

Funds assisted Green Heroes in developing the OceanID mobile digital application.

Trowunna Wildlife Sanctuary

Funds assisted Trowunna Wildlife Sanctuary in establishing a Youth Wildlife Conservation, Environmental and Cultural Education program.

Save our Wildlife Foundation

Funds assisted Save our Wildlife Foundation in purchasing fifty possum nesting boxes to provide essential shelter for ringtail and brushtail possums when they are released back into the wild.

Southern Koala and Echidna Rescue

Funds assisted Southern Koala and Echidna Rescue develop their koala kindy precinct.

Wombat Enclosures

Funds assisted Ms Laura Davidson, Wildlife Carer, in developing multiple wombat enclosures for different stages of wombat care and rehabilitation.

Murrindindi Ranges Wildlife Shelter

Funds assisted Murrindindi Ranges Wildlife Shelter with their rescue, rehabilitation and release operations, including purchasing rescue and transport equipment, Wombaroo milk formula, medical supplies, improving enclosures and petrol expenses to transport animals.

Nepalese Association of Agriculture, Forestry and Environment in Australia

Funds assisted the Nepalese Association of Agriculture, Forestry and Environment in Australia with purchasing native grasses, shrubs and ground cover plants specifically suited to Tooarranna habitat requirements for their 'Tooarranna Haven: Bringing Back Bush Cover Project' to assist in the recovery of the broad-toothed rat.

We Spot Turtles!

Funds assisted We Spot Turtles! with facilitating a sea turtle monitoring pilot program with NGOs and community groups during the nesting season, particularly with travel and logistics to trial sites for setup and support, marketing and communication to onboard pilot users, and sighting data processing during the trial period.

Cairns Turtle Rehabilitation Centre

Funds assisted Cairns Turtle Rehabilitation Centre in treating, rehabilitating and releasing injured and sick marine turtles brought in from the Great Barrier Reef and Cape York Peninsula.

Cedar Creek Wombat Rescue and Hospital

Funds assisted Cedar Creek Wombat Rescue and Hospital in continuing its work in rescuing wombats and other wildlife that need medical care, whether from accidents, injuries, mange, or extreme weather events.

Key Projects

Guardians of the Greater Gliders

We established *Guardians of the Greater Gliders* – a fundraising campaign that aimed to raise as much funds as possible between the end of February and 30 June 2024 to provide additional support to ensure greater gliders survival in the future. One hundred percent of the funds raised went to Wildlife Queensland's new Greater Glider Project.

Platypus Alliance

We continued our efforts 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 South Australia. Queensland is the only state in Australia that has not fully banned the use and sale of enclosed yabby traps. However, the state government is considering a ban.

Snip Rings for Wildlife

The Society continued its 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.

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.

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 number of 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 Megan Fabian for drawing our beautiful 2024 Wildlife of the Year – Greater Gliders.

Short Story Competition

The Society developed a new Wildlife Fiction Short Story Competition. This national competition sought original short stories that entertain, convey a message, capture a moment, or evoke a certain mood about Australian wildlife (flora or fauna) while shedding light on the challenges they face in the modern world. This was the competition's inaugural year and we were extremely impressed with the interest in and the quality of entries, with many stories being incredibly emotive and powerful. The response to this competition was overwhelming, with a remarkable 166 entries received. Winners received a cash prize, a certificate and their short story published in the *Australian Wildlife* magazine.

Financial Report Summary

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

Thank you to all our Members

This will mark our 116th anniversary. We thank you most sincerely for your tremendous support, 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 2025.

Stephen Grabowski, PRESIDENT | 31 December 2024

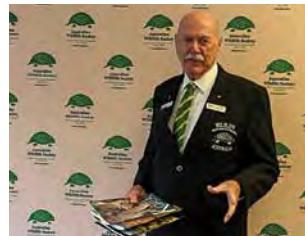
Homes for Koalas

A new initiative by the Australian Wildlife Society, *Homes for Koalas*, was launched on Wednesday, 11 December 2024 and officially opened by The Hon Stephen Kamper MP, Minister for Small Business, Minister for Lands and Property, Minister for Multiculturalism and Minister for Sport.

Homes for Koalas is a fundraising campaign to purchase trees and land to provide homes for our iconic koalas. I invite all members to support this new project to save our local koala population from extinction. Please give generously so we can make our mark on saving these precious native animals and their habitat for the next generation of young Australians.



Homes for Koalas Launch. L to R: Mr Stephen Kamper MP and Stephen Grabowski.



CEO Patrick Medway AM gave a talk on the history of the Society and our involvement in koala conservation over the past 115 years.



Members and guests at the launch of *Homes for Koalas*.

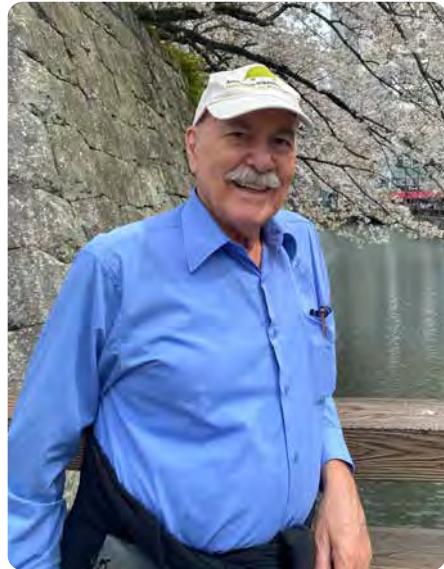


Children from Campbelltown Public School hold a framed image of koalas killed for their skins in 1927.

Reflections on Saving our Native Wildlife

by Patrick Medway

Looking back over my time with the Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia, I am amazed at the number of wonderful people I have met along the way. I especially remember Vin Serenty who moved from Western Australia to Sydney in the 1970s and wrote over 65 books on wildlife conservation issues. Vin was strongly supported by his wife Caroline and they wrote a book together on the Koala.



Growing up in country New South Wales in the 1950s, I enjoyed a close personal contact with nature and our bushlands. I was born in Yass, attended Merimbula Public School and then Bega High School. I was fortunate enough to have wonderful teachers who encouraged a love of nature studies and wildlife conservation. All students participated in the Gould League of Bird Lovers program which was at the time sponsored by the NSW Department of Education. I joined each year and received a bird badge and membership card, and this gave me a strong sense of belonging and wanting to protect and preserve our native birds. The students planted native trees

and set up bird baths in the school grounds and worked hard to protect native bushlands as safe havens for native birds.

My interest in bird watching was encouraged and as a result our school entered teams in the annual Gould League of Bird Lovers bird calling competitions held in Sydney each year. Merimbula Public School and Bega High School entered several teams and over several years took out the annual Bird Call Championships in the Sydney Town Hall in 1955. On one occasion our winning team was featured in an article in the Australian Women's Weekly.

There was a growing awareness to protect the bushlands and seashores from over-development if the native birds were going to survive in their natural habitat. Land clearing was and still is a major concern and the destruction of bushlands continues across Australia today. Agriculture and housing development pose a great challenge to all agencies and councils as the population of Australia continues to grow.

Highlights include the long campaign to save Towra Point Nature Reserve beach area for the migrating wading birds such as the eastern curlew, godwits and many other waders



Towra Point steering committee meeting at Towra Point.



which roost and feed on the beaches around Botany Bay Sydney. I arranged for the Executive officers of the Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia to visit the Towra Nature Reserve and took many photos of the beach erosion. We were strongly supported by Bernie Clarke OAM who was a tireless campaigner for Botany Bay.

Vin Serenty and I co-authored ***Conservation Victories and Battles Yet to Win*** to highlight many of the Society's success stories, such as expanding the protection zones of the Great Barrier Reef, removing feral animals and weeds from national parks, protecting the koala and its vital habitat. Many of the Society's early conservation work was in Western Australia; saving Kings Park, the numbat and its habitat and the Abrolhos Islands sea bird colonies, and the Dryandra woodlands. We were heavily involved in saving the Lord Howe Island woodhen, the northern hairy nosed wombats in Queensland and even hosted the Earth 2000 conference in Sydney with international guest speakers such as Professor Jared Diamond. Under my leadership as editor of ***Australian Wildlife*** magazine we wrote extensively on water, climate change and global warming as well as sustainable development of Australia and the role an individual could play in conservation.

Over the past fifty years, the Wildlife Preservation Society has grown and developed into a significant wildlife conservation body. The Society is self-funded and doesn't receive any government assistance which gives it a sense of independence. We do make a point of actively working with all government agencies who have both the responsibility and the financial resources to preserve and protect the natural environment.

In my lifetime, I have seen the emergence of the National Parks and Wildlife Service of NSW and several other focused wildlife conservation groups such as the Australian Koala Foundation, the Platypus Centre in Victoria, the Bilby Foundation, BirdLife Australia, the Wombat Preservation Society and many other focused wildlife conservation groups.

The Society held several high-profile functions, hosted by the Minister for the Environment in the NSW Parliamentary Dining Rooms in Sydney. I think the largest gathering was when Dr. Vin Serenty retired as our President in 2001. The Premier of NSW Bob Carr MP hosted this special event as a great honour to Vincent and to thank him for his amazing contribution in promoting wildlife conservation and protecting the natural environment.

It was a rare privilege to be elected the National President of WPSA in 2002, which led up to the Society's centenary year in 2009 when Suzanne Medway was elected National President in 2010.

In 2003 I had the supreme honour of being made a Member of the Order of Australia, becoming an AM for my contribution to environmental education and wildlife conservation.

I served on the Kangaroo Management Advisory Board for a term, the NSW Pest Animal Council and the Greater Sydney Pest Committee to help protect our native wildlife.

I have been encouraged and honoured to have the support of a strong team of volunteers on the board of directors who so willingly and sincerely offered their time and expertise to keep the Society moving forward.

In 2020, we employed our first full-time office manager and in 2024 the Board approved of the purchase of our new National Office and Education Centre at 121 Queen Street, Campbelltown NSW 2560.

I am optimistic that the new board of directors will continue to move forward, and guided by its Constitution, will preserve and protect our precious native wildlife in all its amazing forms for the next generation of young Australians.

Sincerely,

Patrick W Medway AM

LIFE MEMBER

12 March 2025



Clearing weeds at Towra Point Nature Reserve 2020



Passing of Dr Michael Augee of Wellington NSW

By Patrick Medway

The Society is deeply saddened by the passing of Dr Michael Augee, who was a long-term friend of AWS. He was an Associate Professor at UNSW with a strong interest in archaeology and ancient mammals across Australia. He was a member of many wildlife conservation societies and

lived at Wellington NSW. He ran the Wellington Caves Fossil Museum for many years. There was a large model of an ancient wombat – diprotodon – outside this museum. Dr Vin Serenty and Mike Augee were long-term friends and Mike had been a guest speaker at many wildlife conferences. Our last memory of Mike was when

he drove a small bus for the Society members from Sydney to Wellington and Dubbo and back over a week-long wildlife tour of this area. We held several BBQs each evening to talk about the wildlife we had seen during the day. Many happy memories remain of those 'good old days'. He will be really missed. Our thoughts are with his family and friends.



Photo credit: Wellington Times.

Marine Rescue Milestone

for the Coffs Coast Wildlife Sanctuary

Tiga Cross



At the Coffs Coast Wildlife Sanctuary, located in Coffs Harbour, we are dedicated to protecting and preserving the incredible marine wildlife that calls our coastline home. Over the past year, our team has made remarkable strides in rescue and rehabilitation, as part of our marine animal rescue and conservation efforts.

Following a generous grant from the Australian Wildlife Society, we've recently acquired 150 new crates designed specifically for safely transporting injured and rehabilitated animals. Safe and secure transport is essential – especially for larger animals like seals and birds of prey – and this equipment ensures the comfort and safety these animals need while allowing us to work more efficiently. The crates' top-and-bottom separation design has also simplified our initial assessments and procedures.

With summer upon us, we're ready to face the busy rescue season ahead. Last year, we rescued 100 shearwaters in just two weeks, and this new equipment will help us manage large volumes of rescues even more effectively.

Reflecting on a Year of Rescues

Over the past 12 months, our team has rescued nearly 100 sea turtles, rehabilitated and released more than 30, and continues to care for another 20. Many turtles come to us with float syndrome, a condition that leaves them unable to dive and often leads to entanglements or boat injuries. Turtle rehabilitation is no small task – it can take six months or more – but we've seen incredible recoveries, like green sea turtle Nikki, who is regaining strength after losing a flipper due to entanglement and float syndrome – which causes the turtles to be unable to dive for food, and leaves them malnourished, and susceptible to debris and boats.

Seals have also been a focus of our work this year, with more than ten individuals monitored, including leopard seals, Australian fur seals, and New Zealand fur seals. One New Zealand fur seal was successfully rescued and released back into the wild after an injury suspected of being a shark bite.



"Nikki" the green sea turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) was found at Boambee Beach, Coffs Harbour, covered in barnacles and with a substantial damage to the front flipper resulting from entanglement. Image: member of the public.

Above: CCWS volunteers attending a humpback whale (*Megaptera novaeangliae*) rescue at Smokey Cape earlier this year. Unfortunately the whale did not survive. Image: CCWS volunteers.



"Nikki" the green sea turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) underwent critical surgery to remove the remainder of the flipper. Image: CCWS staff.

We've also assisted in ten whale strandings, providing critical assessments for finned and humpback whales, and cared for two dolphins, both of which we were able to release safely. In addition, we rescued and rehabilitated over 100 seabirds, including shearwaters, pelicans, and giant petrels, often exhausted from their long migrations.

Keeping Our Oceans Clean

While rescue work is vital, preventing harm is equally important. That's why we've partnered with the City of Coffs Harbour through the Seal the Loop Program to keep fishing waste out of our oceans. Together, we've placed bins across the region to collect old fishing lines, hooks, bait bags, and rubbish. So far, we've removed over 1,000 km of a fishing line and 2,000 hooks. This initiative, supported by



The Sanctuary team, alongside local Girl Guides group, are actively involved in the Clean Up Australia program each year as part of their ocean conservation and protection efforts. Image: CCWS staff.



Sanctuary volunteers empty the 'Seal the Loop' bins along the Coffs Coast regularly. The bins are designed to gather fishing waste materials to prevent them from entering our waterways.



Sanctuary team members successfully caught a pelican (*Pelecanus*) with entanglement. The pelican received care at the Sanctuary before successfully being released days later. Image: CCWS volunteer.

our incredible volunteers, is making a tangible difference for marine life. We also participate in community programs like Clean Up Australia Day, leading by example to protect the environment we all share.

As a not-for-profit organisation, none of this would be possible without our passionate team of over 100 volunteers and 20 TAFE students, alongside our staff, who dedicate their time to training and rescue work. Their commitment is the heart of our mission, and I'm so proud of what we've achieved together.

Every rescue brings us closer to a brighter future for Australia's marine wildlife, helping us ensure these precious animals thrive in the wild. To find out more about the Coffs Coast Wildlife Sanctuary and the work that we do, visit: www.coffscoastwildlifesanctuary.com.au



"Nikki" the green sea turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) two weeks post-surgery and well on the way to being rehabilitated for release. Image: CCWS staff.



The transportation crates in use with the rescue of a southern giant petrel (*Macronectes giganteus*) in need of assistance from the Sanctuary due to ill health. Image: CCWS staff.



Mutton birds (*Puffinus tenuirostris*) often strand during migration as they're distracted by the night lights. More than 100 mutton birds were rescued in the 2024 migration season. Image: CCWS volunteers.



Mutton birds (*Puffinus tenuirostris*) are released after rescue and rehabilitation by volunteers from CCWS, NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service and WIRES who work together each season for the animal rescue efforts. Image: CCWS volunteers.



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

UTS
UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY SYDNEY



THE UNIVERSITY OF
NEWCASTLE
AUSTRALIA



Mountain Pygmy-Possum

Climate Adaptation Project Update



Trevor Evans

Owner of the Secret Creek
Sanctuary and Founder of the
Australian Ecosystems Foundation Inc.

Professor Mike Archer

School of Biological, Earth &
Environmental Sciences, UNSW

This is an update on the mountain pygmy-possum (*Burramys parvus*) climate adaptation project the Wildlife Preservation Society contributed \$30,000 towards in 2021.

From the opening day of the newly built mountain pygmy-possum breeding facility at Secret Creek Sanctuary on 11 September 2022, we have been engaged in Stage 1 of the Burramys Project. This has included testing the suitability of our breeding facility to ensure that the diet we provide is sufficiently nutritious, and that the temperature and other conditions provided enables and encourages the possums to breed. The results are demonstrating that it is working extremely well! Consequently, the population has grown from fourteen mountain pygmy-possum individuals to thirty individuals. This has clearly demonstrated the suitability of the facility to produce a thriving colony of this critically endangered species. However, because the fourteen original possums were from a captive-bred population their offspring are not regarded to be suitable for release, so they will become educational and display animals at other licensed establishments.

During Stage 2 of the Burramys Project, we will have obtained permits to collect possums from the wild this coming summer and a year later. The possums will be sourced from the four

known populations on the NSW side of Mount Kosciusko National Park. These possums will be bred in the Secret Creek Breeding Facility and some of the young produced trial-released into the wild in areas of elevation around 1,000 m or lower, such as restricted rainforest/wet forest habitats in or near Lithgow. The areas where these trials will occur will have habitats that more closely resemble those that have supported this lineage for the last 25 million years, rather than the alpine habitats where they currently will struggle to survive as heating from climate change transforms those habitats.

We will provide another update on this project once Stage 2 begins, ideally in late 2026/early 2027.

How the breeding facility works

The Breeding Facility consists of outdoor enclosures with thermally stable, insulated rock-walls that have nest boxes deep inside. There is an option for the possums to go inside the enclosed nest box or spend time in the adjacent outdoor environment, enabling them to spend time where they feel most comfortable.

The nest boxes built into the walls enable the possums to move indoors if temperatures exceed the insulating capacity of the outdoor enclosed area such as might occur in the case of a nearby bushfire. To maintain a cool and moist environment, a drip system mists the enclosures during hot and dry conditions. In addition, the centre has research and observation rooms, an office area, quarantine rooms, storage room and food preparation areas.

The goal of the Burramys Project: Future-proofing this critically endangered species by translocating them into their long-term ancestral comfort zone, lowland wet forest environments.

"We now have a facility that will enable these alpine possums to adapt to a very different environment of the kind that their ancestors enjoyed and thrived in for millions of years. The Breeding Facility will provide the bridge to help them transition back into those far more comfortable environments and survive the lethal changes coming to the alpine zone," says AEFI Secretary Trevor Evans. *"It's just great to be able to finally see this dream – which has been over a decade in the making – turn successfully into reality."*

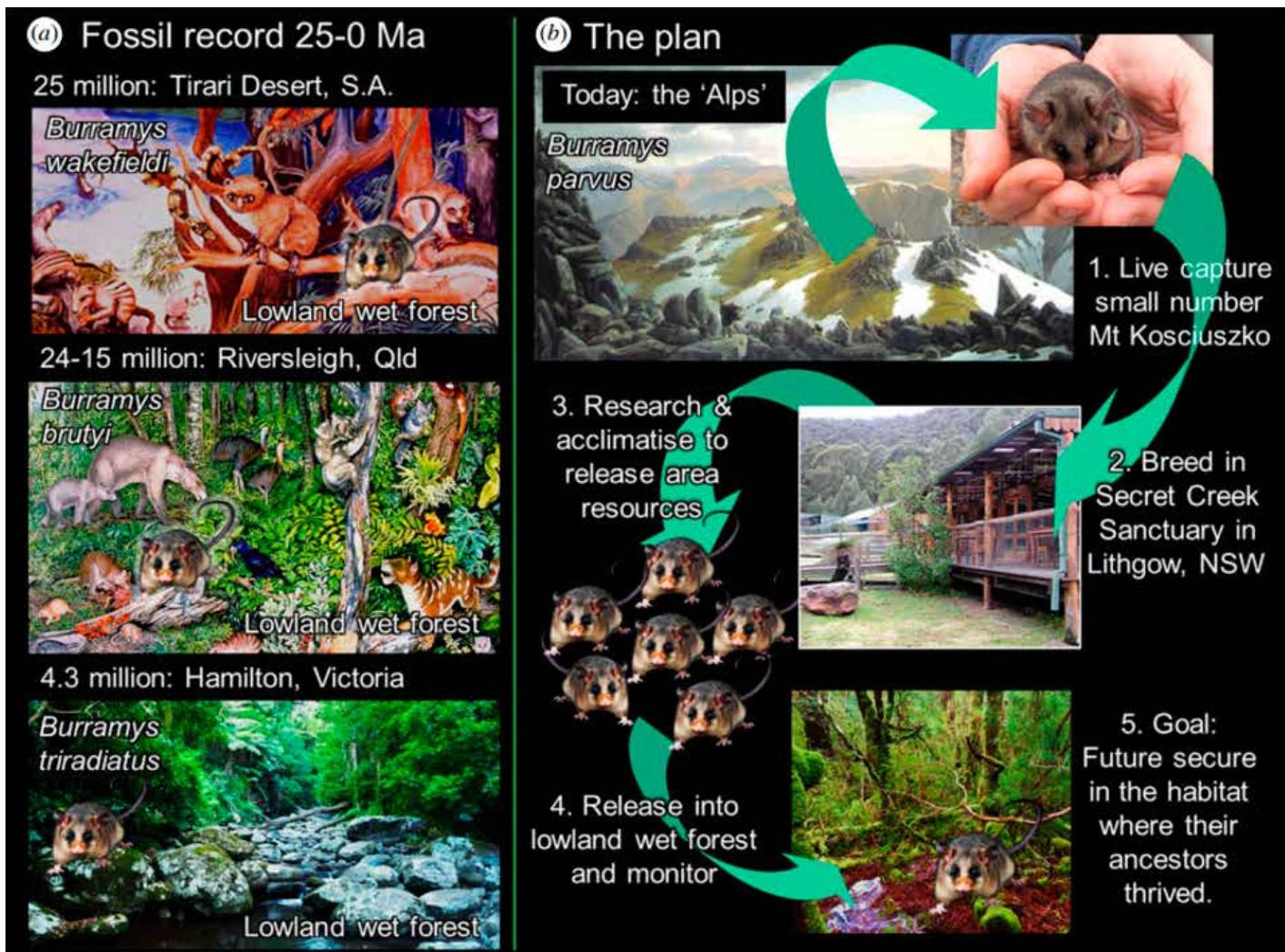
Above: One of the possums at the at Secret Creek Sanctuary Mountain Pygmy-possum Breeding Facility. Image credit: Maxime Messageot.



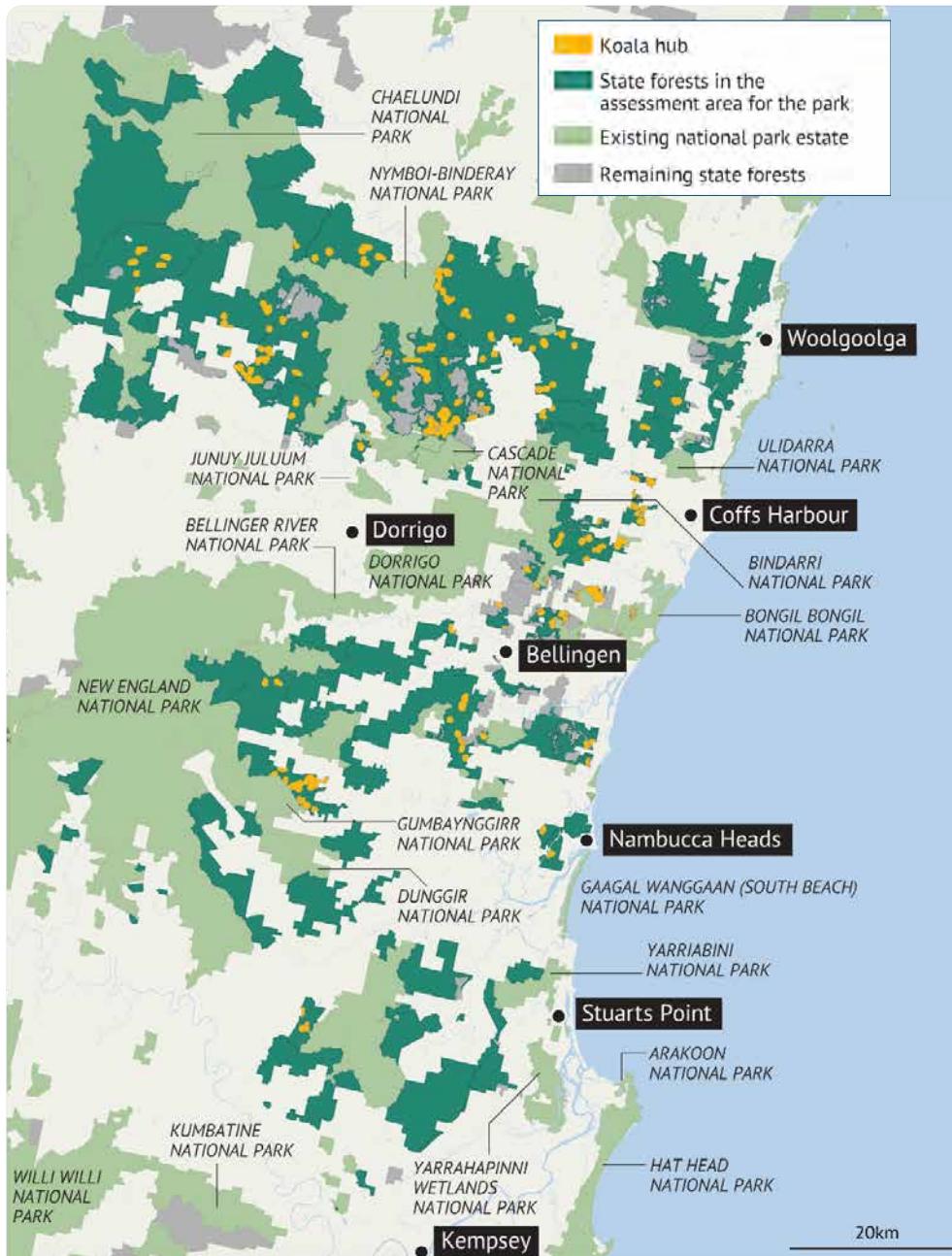
One of the internal habitat cages with rock-walls at Secret Creek Sanctuary mountain pygmy-possum Breeding Facility.
Image credit: Lucie Novakova.

Mountain pygmy-possum (*Burramys parvus*)

These critically endangered possums are the only hibernating marsupial in Australia. They are normally found in Victoria's alpine regions and Mt Kosciuszko in New South Wales where they hibernate for about 7 months of the year in rock piles under the snow. They emerge in spring weighing only 40 grams! Unfortunately, research suggests there are only 2,000 left in the wild as their main food source, the bogong moth, has massively dropped in abundance. Mountain pygmy-possums were first found as fossils and thought to be extinct, until a live one was discovered at Mt Hotham ski lodge in 1966.



The goal of Burramys Project: Widening the environmental range in order to future-secure this possum in the habitat where their ancestors thrived.
Image credit: Archer, M. et al., 2019. The Burramys Project: a conservationist's reach should exceed history's grasp, or what is the fossil record for? Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B, 374: 20190221.



Stop Logging Native Forest

A Brief Review of the Parliamentary Meeting

Brian Scarsbrick AM

For the first time in history, the New South Wales Government is considering protecting our magnificent State Native Forests from logging 'for good'. In addition, the New South Wales Government is about to announce their long promised 'Great Koala National Park', which is critical for the survival of the species.

On Wednesday 20 March 2025, a meeting was held in the New South Wales Parliament House to hear from MPs, Expert Panelists and Conservation Movement Leaders on 'how and why 2025 is the Year we can protect our forests, restore koala and greater glider populations'.

At the meeting the speakers included:

- Dr. Kitter Ashman – Threatened Species and Climate Ecology with WWF
- Dr. Brendan Mackay – Director of the Griffith Climate Action Beacon at Griffith University, Queensland
- Dr. David Cross – UNSW Chief of Staff
- Graham Phelan – Economist, Frontier Economics

I support the following:

The 'number one priority' is that the New South Wales Government should announce their long promised 'Great Koala National Park' this year.

This would immediately stop the New South Wales Forestry Corporation from logging, resulting in 45% decrease in logging activity in the region, which is occurring within the proposed park area and is exactly where koalas are living now - koala habitat is being destroyed now!

Our breathtaking forests are being destroyed – cut down and pulped for wood chip and cardboard!

Victoria and Western Australia have ended native forest logging, and the New South Wales Government should follow suit and halt the destruction of koala habitat and stop killing innocent wildlife!

Above: The proposed Great Koala National Park: How state forests could be added to the existing national parks in northern NSW. Source: NSW EPA, DCEEW, Sydney Morning Herald



Wildlife Fiction SHORT STORY COMPETITION

2024 Runner's-up

The grass IS ALWAYS greener

Nora Campbell | Senior Category Runner-up

The earth rumbles, gentle and soft. From the warmth and safety of her burrow, it's almost comforting. But the second rumbling, coming from inside her own body, pushes the wombat to wake, and yawning, begin her nightly journey.

She stands in the last body-length of the tunnel, sniffing cautiously. The crisp autumn air is full of the usual scents. Fallen eucalypt leaves, decomposing slowly in the dirt; fungi creeping ever further into the base of the great trees, shaded from the sun by rich, wet ferns; her own scent, untouched from where she left it hours ago. Nothing unusual. Nothing dangerous. Poking her head out, she is greeted by a brilliant pink and orange sky, already starting to bleed violet. She clammers the last few paw-lengths and stands in the open, blinking sleepily at the sky. The rumbling is more subtle above ground, but now she can hear the intermittent roars that accompany it. Although the sounds are unsettling, they are easy to ignore as the beasts never veer from their predetermined path.

Slowly, luxuriously, she arches her back, and then stretches out each leg, one at a time. Next, she refreshes her scent, leaving fresh cubes next to the old ones. Finally feeling awake, she begins to amble through the dense undergrowth to where she knows a bounty of fresh grass awaits. As she walks, the wind rustles the leaves above, and a lyrebird sings nearby. It's pleasant, and she thinks for the first time in a while of her mother, who had taken her along this very track, many moons ago. They had chosen a nice spot for her very own

burrow, and then her mother had gone her own way. She has been alone since then and will be until it is time for her to have joeys of her own, a time she can feel is drawing nearer.

It is properly dark now, the moon a softly glowing slither, surrounded by a few pale stars. As she grows closer, the air begins to smell sour, and the clamour grows louder with every step. Now the ground is shaking properly, the vibrations moving through her feet and into her body, drowning out the thumping of her own heart. She pauses in the last of the undergrowth, two body-lengths away from the dark track that splits the bush. On the other side, a little further up, she can just make out the decomposing body of what had once been a wallaby. It had almost made it across but perished in the last stretch. The side of the death-track is littered with bones and ghosts.

A bright light burns through the darkness, the sound grows unbearably loud, and something rushes by, too fast for her to see more than a blur. In its wake, it leaves an acidic smell that seems to burn her nose. Silence follows. She puts one paw gingerly on the track. It is hard and cold, like stone, only darker than any rock she has seen before. It is hard to pick up any new scents over that of the death-track itself. She listens hard but can't hear anything. She wants to go cautiously, sniffing the air and knowing the other side is safe before she dives into the scrub, but she knows there might not be time. She takes the first few tentative steps, then pauses, looking around. A low tremor sounds in the distance.

She starts to hurry.

The track is vibrating harder now.

She begins to run, as fast as she ever has.

The light is blinding, it's like the sun itself has come down from the sky and decided to chase her.

Her paws touch the hard gravel of the other side of the death-track just as the beast reaches the spot that she had been in only heartbeats before. Although she has never seen one veer from the track, she half expects it to turn and follow her, even as the terrible roar fades into the distance. Panting, she continues moving forward until her paws touch grass and her ferns brush her face. Then, she sits, back against a tree, shivering. She can hear another beast approaching, but the sound is softer now, further away. She has made it once again. Her body has not joined the others on the side of the death-track, a feast for the ravens when they wake. Slowly she resumes walking, and step by step, she begins to calm.

Ahead is a series of narrow, leafless trees, connected by thin, deceptively strong vines with sharp thorns. She finds her usual spot, and wriggles under this strange barrier, emerging in a field of uniformly short grass. A feast for a wombat, stretching as far as her eyes can see. A few sheep stand in the distance but despite their intimidating size, she isn't scared. She knows from experience they won't bother her. Bending her head, she takes a bite of the grass, then another, and another. Her terror, just minutes before has been, not forgotten, but diminished in her mind. It is hours until sunrise when she will have to return to her burrow. Hours before she will need to face the death-track again. The night is young and there is plentiful grass to graze at, softer and sweeter than any she has tasted on the other side.

Bella Beaumont | Junior Category Runner-up

Click.

Although it was questionable, I had done it a hundred times before. It depicts their sadness, and yet their enjoyment. You could never fully understand. Their faces were different from ours. For one their ears were at the very top of their heads and fluff stood out from them.

Click.

I know it was just for a school project. Everyone was thinking about how to attract a reader with their fancy headings, special wording and...well, photography. We were told to bring our own. I did...

Click.

I suppose they have been through this for a long time. They don't turn away nor do they whine out loud and complain about the bright lights and loud shuttering. All I can do is show pictures and get told that I was just doing the same thing. I was. But no one listens without any visuals.

Click.

A small sniffle comes out from behind me.

...

My camera hangs from my neck as I turn to face the small animal. He seems quite comfortable in his mother's grey arms. It makes you think just how different we are. We eat, we sleep and we love.

Click.

From behind me students gather around to witness this display of life, careless to how sensitive our eyes are. But instead, the mother wraps her arm around the small child's eyes. One hand reaching for leaves and the other shielding a vulnerable creature from the deadly light.

Click.

No one dares to stop.

Click.

The mother still decides to ignore the continuous lights and slowly shifts over to the right, away from all the cameras.

...

"What is this? Oh, come on! Turn around you stupid Koala! Do something interesting and wholesome!" A girl shouts from behind me.

...

Yet, the creature does not move. Instead, her eyes turn back and gaze deeply into my own. I was one person against twenty. What was I to do? Nothing.

Click.

I scroll through the few photos I happened to catch. In each of them, the animals had either desired their freedom or had given up.

Click.

I had suspected at least one, at least, but none of them even looked happy. They didn't even try to hide the fact. They gave their signs. Filled food bowls. Lying around lazily. Yet no one recognised them. They snapped their photos and walked on.

Click.

"Alright class, it is time to move on, I'm sure the Koalas want their rest." The teacher chuckles lightly.

Click.

Of course they want their rest. Each day children and adults alike come around and through strange bright lights into their eyes and expect them to be okay. I particularly did not enjoy the idea of being some kind of mannequin for another's attraction.

Click.

I may not be able to do anything about it now, but one day I will.

Click.

If you were to tell someone they were eating a pet dog or cat as a joke, they would yell, shout, complain. But what about the others? What about the chickens, pigs and cows?

Click.

They provide for us each day and yet we don't think twice about putting their skin into our mouths. I think. I eat but I still think.

Click.

Who decided that there were specific animals that we could eat and what we could not?

Click.

Who decided that we caged a few animals and then left the others alone?

Click.



I think about it. Day and night. But one day my thoughts will not be enough. I have lived with the taste of a carnivore for a long time. The plants taste horrible on my tongue. I am my own personal hypocrite.

Click.

But, one day I will change. Not for me. For them. Until then, I'm sorry.

...

As I look through my photos once more, I face the Koala mother. Her body is limp and with slow breathing. And yet the smaller one still grips tightly onto her.

...

I would find a way to help. One at a time. If I could even get a singular article out, then this wouldn't be for nothing. Just one. Then one hundred. Then one thousand. Even if it took me a century I wouldn't stop until the message came across.

Click.

I would be proud if it were the last thing I ever did. If it were the only thing I ever did. As long as they gained their freedom once again. Nothing should be raised away from their real home.

Fun FACT Wombat

John Creighton, affectionately known as 'The Wombat Man', is the founder of the Wombat Care Bundanoon which has now grown and expanded to become the Southern Highlands Wildlife Sanctuary.

The humble and wonderful wombat. So much more than meets the eye. Yes, there are so many amazing things to know, learn and appreciate about our wonderful wombats. Sure, they poop cubic poop, their teeth are always growing and despite their slow and wobbly appearance, they can run almost as fast as Usain Bolt.

1. They use their butts as their major defence. Indeed, their rear end and back side consist mainly of thick cartilage and are used like a shield to protect themselves from predators. This 'shield' is very firm and resists the predator's bites and scratching. It serves them well if they are caught out in the open but it is especially effective if they can reach the safety of their burrow. In the burrow they can use their butts as a weapon to push back at their predators and crush their skulls against the burrow as the offender climbs on top of them.



The bare-nosed wombat joey about 8 months old and rescued from his mum that died from roadstrike. At Wombat Care Bundanoon. Image: John Creighton.



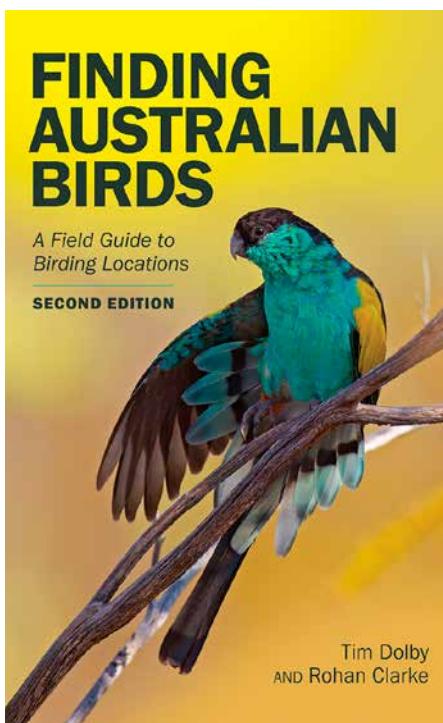
John holding one of the rescued bare-nosed wombats at Wombat Care Bundanoon. Image: Ashley Mackeviciu.

2. They can live up to a ripe old age of thirty years! Wombats can live to over thirty years in captivity and quite a few have done so. The oldest recorded lived for 34 years! Most wild wombats will live between five and twenty years.

3. There are actually three different species of wombats. The bare-nosed wombat (*Vombatus ursinus*), the southern hairy-nosed wombat (*Lasiorhinus latifrons*) and the northern hairy-nosed wombat (*Lasiorhinus krefftii*). The bare-nosed wombat is found through the cool and moist sections of eastern Australia, Victoria and Tasmania. They are what most people think of when we mention wombats, they have shorter, coarser fur, a pointy face and small round nose. The southern hairy-nosed wombat lives in the drier, sandy and grassland areas in South and Western Australia. They are smaller in stature of all three types but have large ears and a flat furry nose. The northern hairy-nosed wombat has the largest body, ears and nose of all three species. They are now exclusive to living in protected areas in their natural area of Queensland. They are critically endangered, but they are slowly making a comeback through care and management. In the 1980s they were on the brink of extinction with only 35 left in existence. As of 2024 there are over 400 living in their safe conservation areas.

There is always more to learn and appreciate about our wonderful wildlife.

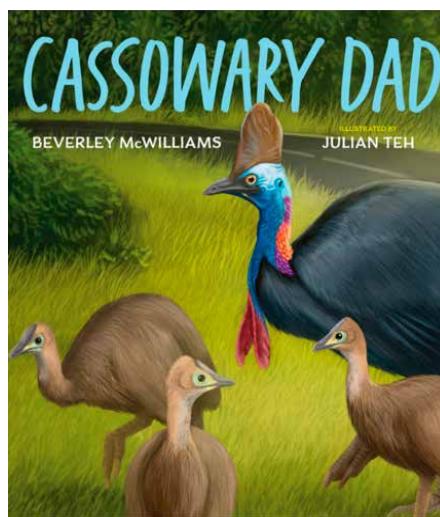
Book Reviews



Finding Australian Birds – A Field Guide to Birding Locations – Tim Dolby and Rohan Clarke

Finding Australian Birds is a comprehensive and meticulously crafted guide that stands out for its thoroughness and thoughtful approach. The authors have done an exceptional job in providing specific information on where to find birds across Australia, making it an invaluable resource for birders who are keen on exploring diverse birding locations. One of the standout features of this book is its detailed trip ideas, which offer readers a well-rounded experience of birding adventures across the country. The authors' dedication to covering a wide range of locations ensures that readers have access to a wealth of information, making it easier to plan birding trips that are both enjoyable and productive. However, it is important to note that this book is primarily geared towards advanced birders who already possess a substantial amount of knowledge about birds. While it excels in guiding readers to birding locations, it does not provide detailed information about the birds themselves. As a result, readers who are new to birding or those who seek to learn more about the birds they encounter may find themselves needing an additional resource that offers comprehensive bird descriptions and identification tips.

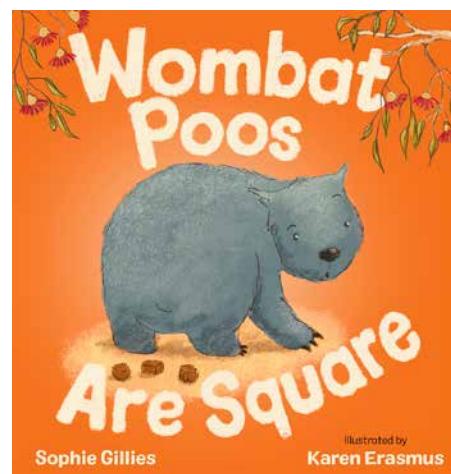
Publisher: CSIRO Publishing
RRP: \$59.99



Cassowary Dad – Beverley McWilliams and Julian Teh

Follow Cassowary Dad as he nurtures and teaches his chicks about their rainforest home. Tap, tap, CRACK! Three stripy chicks hatch... After patiently incubating his mate's eggs, Cassowary Dad must raise the chicks alone. Cassowary Dad nurtures, teaches and protects his chicks. But looking after three chicks is not easy. When a cyclone tears through their rainforest home, will this devoted dad be able to save his family? This book is a heart-warming tale about the magnificent Australian cassowary and is recommended for ages 5 to 9.

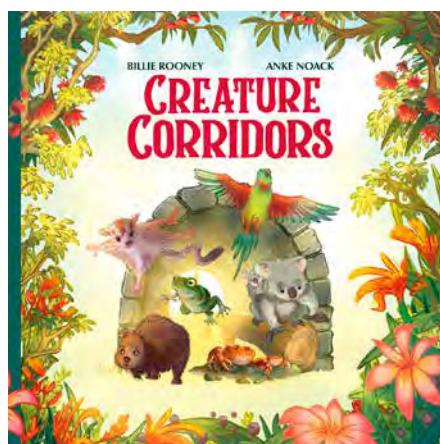
Publisher: CSIRO Publishing
RRP: \$26.99



Wombat Poos Are Square – Sophie Gillies and Karen Erasmus

All Australian creatures from galahs and potoroos to stingrays and goannas do their own distinctive poos. Join in on this fun, funny and fascinating journey to explore the wonderful world of Australian animal poo. Discover the many different animals and their own distinctive droppings. You will learn which animal has a sparkly poo, which animal poos hundreds of times a day and whose poos are square. Through beautiful illustrations and humorous and rhyming text the reader will learn about our Australian wildlife and the many reasons why their poo is important for our environment. From sparkly to sandy to square, explore the unique poos that Aussie animals do.

Publisher: CSIRO Publishing
RRP: \$26.99

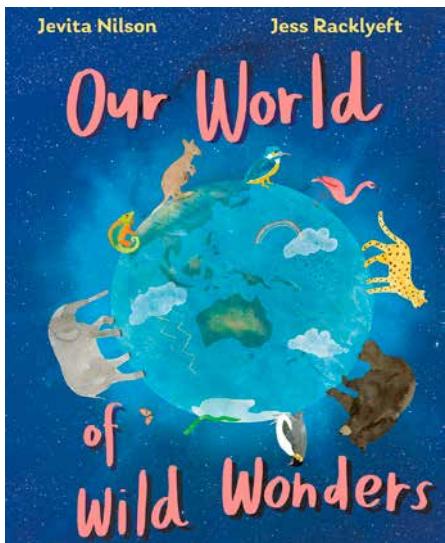


Creature Corridors – Billie Rooney and Anke Noack

Creatures are on the move. This captivating and wonderfully illustrated book follows kangaroos, koalas, birds, fish, crabs, cassowaries, lizards and more through the many types of wildlife corridors that exist across forests, rivers and seas. These corridors provide much needed space and safe passage for them to move around and go from place to place and exist in their natural environment. The importance of these corridors is highlighted, and the reader will learn about how different wild animals travel to find food, shelter or a place to breed.

The challenges, risks and dangers that different animals face, including mammals, birds, fish, and reptiles. The difficulties and dangers they face are addressed as human development, construction and land clearing are affecting their habitat and impacting their survival and biodiversity. Through engaging illustrations and accessible text, we come to understand the importance of these creature corridors and how we can all share our world with the animals by preserving them in the future.

Publisher: CSIRO Publishing
RRP: \$26.99

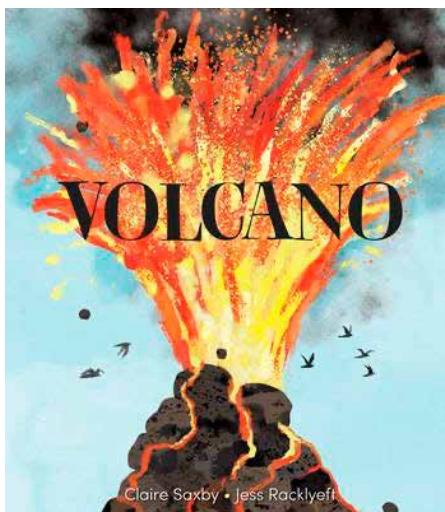
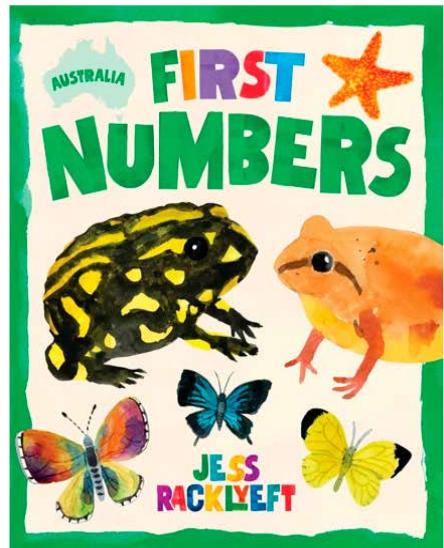


Our World of Wild Wonders - Jevita Nilson and Jess Racklyeft

Go on a wild journey and explore the amazing animal species that inhabit our planet. Earth's wildlife is nothing short of extraordinary. There are colour-changing chameleons in the forests of Madagascar and cliff-climbing goats in the European Alps. There are fluorescent fish in the depths of the Mariana Trench and wildfire-surviving echidnas in the Australian bush. The World of Wild Wonders explores the unique animal species that inhabit our planet. Some mighty, some meek, but all are wondrous in their own special way. This book is full of amazing facts that will kindle kids' interest in wildlife. Readers will learn about the diverse range of animal species across the

globe and the unique adaptations that help them survive in different habitats. Ideal for both young children as a read-aloud book and primary aged children interested in non-fiction. The book aligns strongly with the school curriculum in the areas of English and Science, and contains a 'wild facts' section and a glossary at the end of the book. Come on the journey and explore.

Publisher: CSIRO Publishing | **RRP:** \$24.99

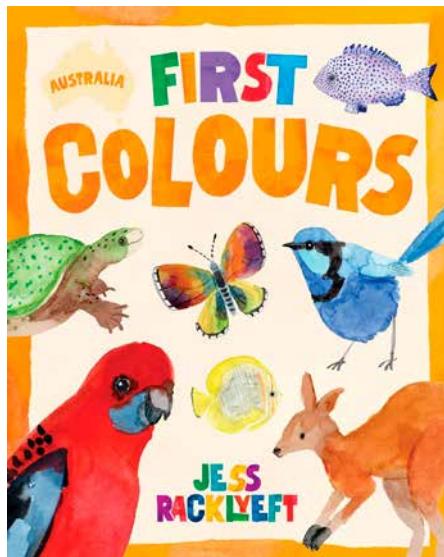


Volcano - Claire Saxby and Jess Racklyeft

Explore the fascinating world of an underwater volcano with award-winning picture book creators Claire Saxby and Jess Racklyeft. Deep in the ocean, far beyond the reach of even the brightest sun, the earth quakes. Hagfish scatter and snailfish flutter. Lava pillows flash and fade, rumpling the seabed as a new volcano births a mountain. Where hot meets cold, a chimney forms. Here begins a colony of unexpected creatures. Other chimneys grow and cool, grow and cool, while the mountain stretches ever upwards. A rumble becomes a roar and the sea boils. Lava fireworks the sky. A new island is born. This book is a great education on how

volcanos form and sealife is created. The illustrations are beautiful and very visually engaging for 4+ old readers.

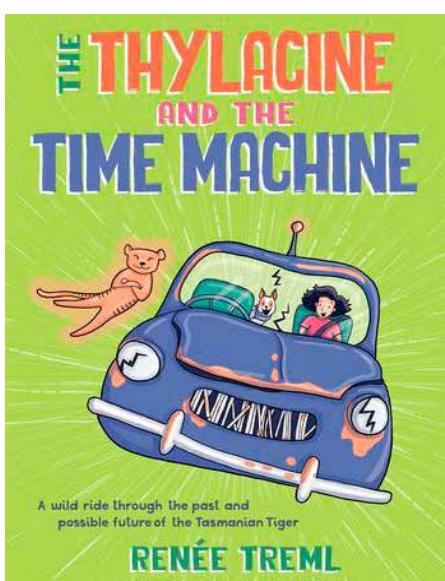
Publisher: Allen & Unwin | **RRP:** \$24.99



Australia: First Numbers & Australia: First Colours - Jess Racklyeft

"From the deepest blue sea to the centre's red sand, can you find a rainbow across this wild land?" These wonderful and colourful first concept books engage children aged 0 to 4 years in the learning of colours and numbers through seeking out Australian plants and animals. Cleverly written content makes it engaging and fun to work through learning and remembering the numbers and colours. The illustrations by the author are beautiful, bold and vibrant throughout both books. The 'board book' pages are strong and thick enough to withstand many years of children's exploration and enjoyment. The kids will love turning the pages of these books again and again as they build their early vocabulary and first concepts of numbers and colours. Both books give the littlest nature-lovers an introduction to learning through the beauty of Australian wildlife.

Publisher: Affirm Press
RRP: \$14.99



The Thylacine and The Time Machine - Renée Treml

Great informative, pictorial book for young curious readers and adults as well. It's not only a history lesson on Thylacines that were once found all over Australia but it's an adventure into learning about 'de-extinction' - bringing an extinct species back to life...! The author even exposes the truth that dingoes are our 'first introduced animals'. Read the book to find out more of our last dominant marsupial predator but also how our "Australian" dingo came to live here in our continent. A must read! Thank you, Renée Treml, for an invaluable contribution to our past and potential future.

Publisher: Allen & Unwin
RRP: \$17.99

Membership Form

Membership

Become a member of the Australian Wildlife Society

Simply fill out this form

Name:

Address:

City/Suburb: Postcode:

Email: Phone:

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
9/121 Queen Street,
CAMPBELLTOWN NSW 2560
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.



