



Winter Volume 3/2025
\$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

NATIONAL COLOURING-IN COMPETITION

The Australian Wildlife Society colouring-in competition is designed to inspire the younger generation to learn about Australia's native wildlife via visual art and creativity. We hope that the experience provides participants with the opportunity to explore and develop a deeper understanding of environmental and wildlife-related issues.

There will be one first, second and third place winner in each state and territory of Australia. The first place finalist in each state and territory will go into a draw to have their artwork published in the Society's magazine *Australian Wildlife*. All first place winners will receive an annual family membership, valued at \$70, and a certificate of congratulations. Their artwork will be published in the Society's e-newsletter and social media platforms. Second and third place winners will receive a certificate of congratulations and their artwork will be published in the e-newsletter and social media platforms.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

When you submit your entry, please include the following information:

- Your name and age
- Your state of residence
- Telephone number and/or email address
(this is how we will notify the winners)
- Parent/guardian signature as consent for entry into the competition

SUBMITTING YOUR ENTRY

- Entries are limited to one (1) entry per person
- To submit your entry, please take a photo or scan the completed artwork and email a copy to info@aws.org.au
- Please name your file according to the format: Name, Age, State
(For example: Mark5yoNSW)

CLOSING DATE FOR ENTRIES: 30 NOVEMBER

PARTICIPANTS WILL BE NOTIFIED BY EMAIL/PHONE IN MID-DECEMBER



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Lucie Novakova - Editor

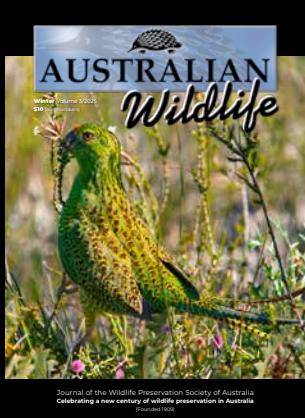
On the Cover

Front Cover: Western Ground Parrot

The critically endangered Western ground parrot or Kyloring is a relatively small, elusive and ground-dwelling parrot, which lives deep within patches of long-unburnt coastal heathland habitat on the south coast of Western Australia. The estimated population of the Western ground parrot is less than 150 individuals. Image: Alan Danks

Back Cover: Orange-bellied Parrot

The orange-bellied parrot is a small grass parrot with an orange patch on its belly and is one of Australia's most threatened bird species, with less than 50 parrots thought to exist in the wild today. Image: Gary King, 2022 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)

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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 Winter 2025 Edition of *Australian Wildlife*

Koalas in Crisis: Urgent Action Needed to Save Australia's Iconic Wildlife

Australia's beloved koalas, once a proud symbol of our unique biodiversity, are now in crisis. Continued habitat loss, land clearing and relentless development have pushed these treasured animals to the brink of extinction. Without urgent, coordinated action, their survival is in grave jeopardy.

Recently, concerned advocates, including local council representatives, councilors and state members of parliament met with me to address these alarming threats to the future of koalas. The need for stronger protections, immediate habitat preservation and far-reaching community involvement clearly stood out as clear mitigation strategies during these discussions.

Home for Koalas Project

In response to this crisis, the Australian Wildlife Society and community partners have launched the Home

for Koalas project. This initiative is dedicated to preserving and restoring critical koala habitats while raising awareness about their plight. Through community engagement, education and strategic partnerships with other passionate organisations, we aim to give koalas a fighting chance for survival.

The more money we raise, the more we can do to replenish koala homes. Our work is focused on protecting existing habitat, rehabilitating degraded land and advocating for stronger protections against harmful development. We all need a place to live, so let's work together for a better future.

The Home for Koalas fundraiser is live at: <https://www.gofundme.com/f/eer45q-homes-for-koalas>.

We invite all Australians and supporters globally to contribute. Every donation directly helps fund habitat restoration, community education, and policy advocacy to protect these iconic animals.

Land Clearing: Still the Number One Threat

Land clearing remains the number one threat to koala survival, destroying not only their food sources but also the interconnected habitats they rely upon for breeding and movement. Even the best rescue and rehabilitation programs cannot compensate if there is nowhere safe left for koalas to live.

A Call to Protect Australia's Heritage

We urgently call on all levels of government, developers, and communities to prioritise stronger land-clearing restrictions, robust planning frameworks and habitat restoration strategies. Australia's flora and fauna are a vital part of our national identity and koalas deserve far better than to vanish on our watch.

To learn more about the Home for Koalas project and join this life-saving mission, please visit: Australian Wildlife Society.

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>

Ocean

with David Attenborough

Katherine Smyrk, Lucie Novakova

After seven decades filming every aspect of the natural world, Attenborough delivers his greatest message of hope in a spectacular new film, Ocean with David Attenborough.

Through spectacular sequences of coral reefs, kelp forests and the open ocean, Attenborough shares why a healthy ocean keeps the entire planet stable and flourishing. The film emphasises the ocean's role in regulating the planet's climate and supporting life, while also revealing the impact of human activity on marine ecosystems, from destructive fishing techniques to mass coral reef bleaching.

"After living for nearly 100 years on this planet," he says in Ocean, "I now understand the most important place on Earth is not on land, but at sea." Admitting that he is nearing the end of his life, this movie is a furious call to arms.

"If I asked you, how much of the ocean was fully protected, what would you say? 20 per cent? At least 10, surely? The answer is less than 3 per cent. In practical terms, none of it."

He emphasises how vital the ocean is for humanity and how it can help us avoid complete climate catastrophe.

"Three billion people rely on our ocean for food. But ships sent by a few wealthy nations are starving coastal communities of the food source they have relied on for millennia," he rages. "This is modern colonialism at sea."

"We have drained the life from our ocean ... Now, we are almost out of time."

He is urging us to take action to protect the world's oceans. He shows us places where strict restrictions have led to remarkable ocean recovery, but in a way that has also supported fishing communities to thrive.

"It is my great hope that we all come to see the ocean, not as a dark and distant place with little relevance to our lives on land, but as the lifeblood of our home," he says. "I'm sure that nothing is more important."

He points to the 2022 UN Ocean Conference, where a global commitment was established to protect at least 30 per cent of the world's ocean by 2030. He attended the UN Ocean Conference in Nice France, which took place from June 9 – 13, 2025. He has been a vocal advocate for ocean conservation and participated in events surrounding the conference, including a special screening of his documentary, "Ocean with David Attenborough".

If you are interested in inspiring and educating local groups and communities about benefits of marine protected areas, you can request a streaming link to organise a screening through National Geographic website. National Geographic is making the documentary film available to educators at schools, universities, museums, and libraries for educational and charitable conferences and events for non-commercial purposes.

We congratulate Sir David on his outstanding effort to save and protect our wildlife in all its forms around the world.



Photo Credits: Ocean with David Attenborough





e-Interview with Taylor Ladd-Hudson

Meet Taylor Ladd-Hudson, a 16-year-old ocean advocate from Sunrise Beach, Sunshine Coast, QLD who has dedicated hundreds of hours to studying sharks' behaviour and volunteering with numerous ocean conservation and advocacy groups to build experience and connections to make a difference in the vast world of the ocean conservation. A prime example of a Gen Z, she leverages social media and technology, even piloting her own drone, to care for the ocean. Taylor also won the AWS 2025 Youth Conservation Award and we are so grateful we can share her conservation journey with you.

Taylor, you are such an inspiration. Tell us please, how did your ocean advocacy journey begin?

Since my first shark encounter, where I became hooked and fascinated by sharks, I knew I wanted my voice heard in the ocean advocacy and conservation space. At first, I didn't know how to submerge myself into this community until early 2020. I watched the screening of a movie called ENVOY: Shark Cull, based on the shark control program (shark nets and drumlines) that runs along the East Coast of Australia. And I knew that this was the space I wanted to be involved

in and make a difference in through the perspective of the youth's eyes. Shortly after, I started volunteering at the age of 12 for my local wildlife rescue groups and Sea Shepherd. Shortly after I began volunteering, I started to make connections in the ocean advocacy space, which led me to grow my opportunities in spreading my messaging on shark conservation.

How was your experience volunteering with Sea Shepherd?

Through volunteering with Sea Shepherd, I became heavily involved in their shark campaign, which was based around the removal and

replacement of the shark control program (shark nets and drumlines). This presented me with the sad opportunity to see firsthand at a young age what was happening in my backyard, especially on the southeast coast of Queensland.

What did you encounter?

It was devastating to see multiple years in a row baby humpback whale fighting for their lives at Noosa's main

Above: Taylor at Marcus Beach, Sunshine Coast, Queensland. Photo: Rolling Stone Images

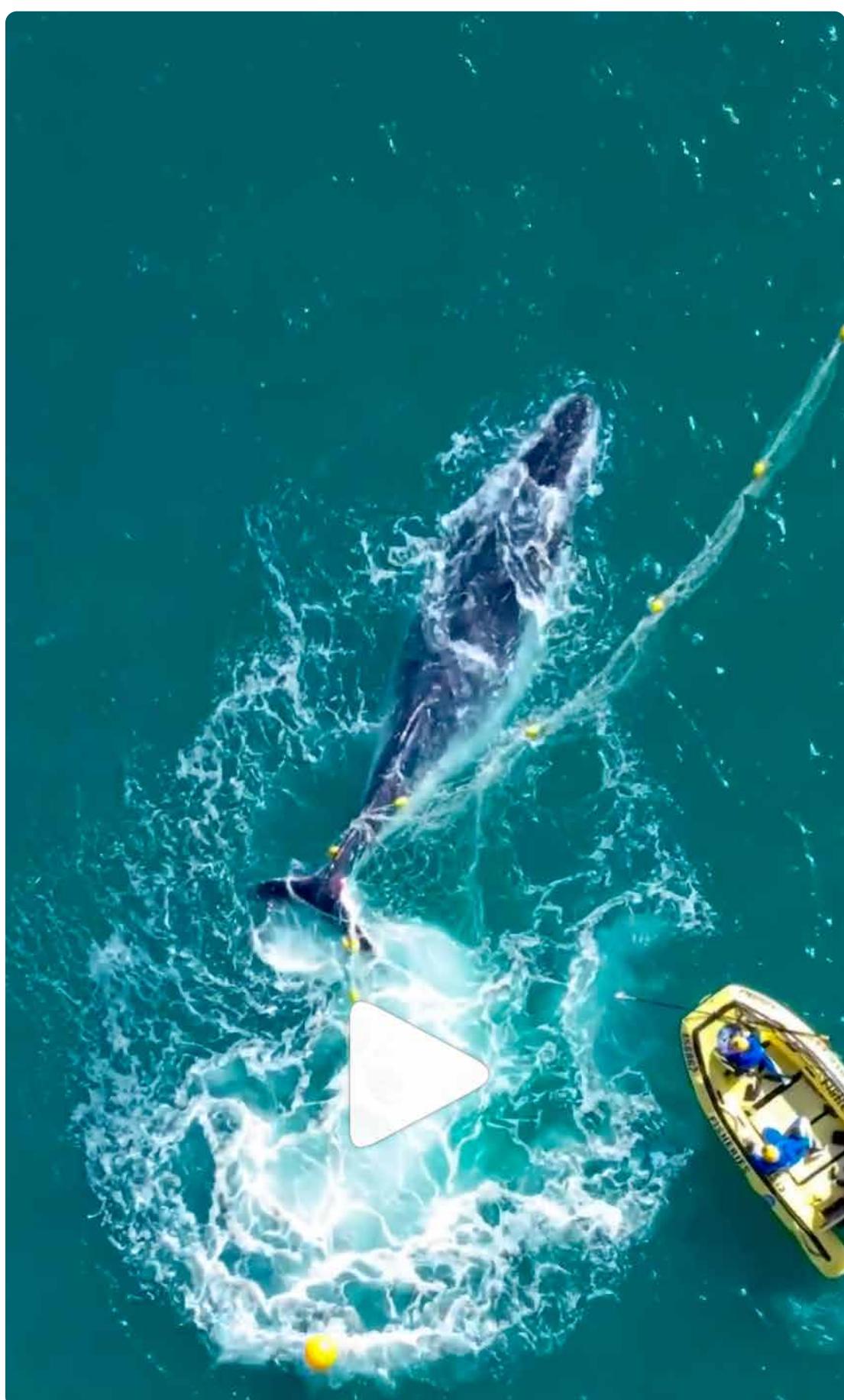
beach in the two shark nets that lie only a few hundred metres off world reserve popular surfing breaks such as Tea Tree. The bright orange and yellow buoys I once used to paddle around at nipper training were now strung across the baby whales, with the ropes that connected the net cutting deeper and deeper into this distressed animal. These sad situations, I tried to use them to my best advantage, gathering original content via drone to disperse to media stations, hoping to spread the message about how the program not only impacts shark populations but a diverse range of marine life, including our beautiful migrating humpback whales which are caught as bycatch.

You mentioned that through volunteering, you made connections in the ocean advocacy space. What other organisations have you been involved with?

Apart from Sea Shepherd, other conservation and education organisations I've been involved in and work alongside include Wildlife Noosa, North Shore and Column Coast Care, Surfrider, ENVOY foundation and String of Pearls.

That is a very impressive list! Could you also tell us a bit about your relationship with the iconic Valerie Taylor and your involvement in the documentary 'How to Save a Shark'?

Working with Valerie Taylor has been one of the most special and surreal experiences of my conservation journey. She's been a hero of mine for as long as I can remember—her bravery, ground



In this video that Taylor posted on Instagram, a baby humpback whale struggles to fight for its life in the shark nets off Noosa Main Beach, Queensland on the 26th August, 2022. In the post, Taylor reveals the sad truth: "It struggled for over 12 hours until it was finally released by a brave DAF Rescue team. Migrating species like humpback whales don't have spare energy to waste fighting for their lives in the Shark Control Program (shark nets and drum lines) that line our Queensland coastline. Last whale season, 15 whales fell victim to this program, including this baby humpback." Photo: Taylor Ladd-Hudson



SHARK NETS AT BONDI BEACH, NSW

200m

Imagery: ©2022 CNES / Airbus, Maxar Technologies, Map data ©2022 | Google

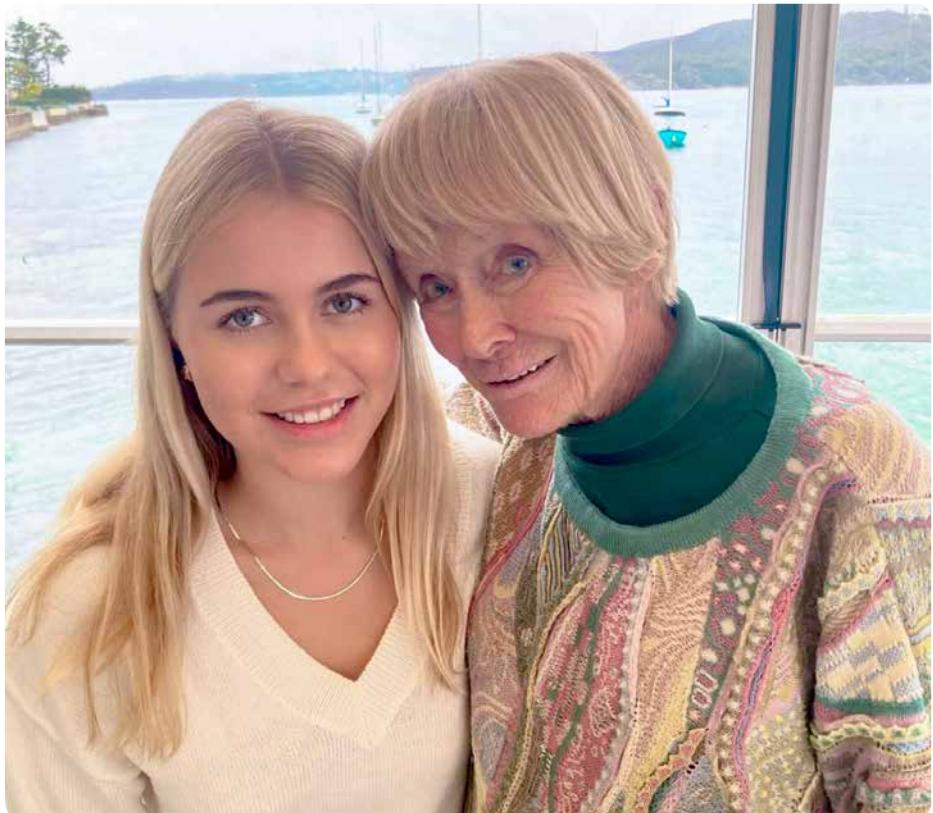
A shark net is one of the two mitigation strategies used by the New South Wales and Queensland government in their Shark Control Program. They are not a barrier and marine life including sharks are able to swim under, around and over. This mitigation strategy provides a false sense of security as beachgoers predominantly believe that it is a full barrier. Image: Sea Shepherd

breaking work and lifelong dedication to sharks and the ocean have paved the way for so many of us. Getting to know her personally has been incredibly inspiring; she's not only a legend in the conservation world but also kind, humble and full of wisdom. She's generously shared her knowledge and encouraged me every step of the way.

How to Save a Shark is a documentary that I'm truly proud to be part of. It highlights the urgent need to protect the critically endangered Grey Nurse shark along Australia's East Coast. Through the film, we tell a story that blends science, advocacy and hope. It's been an honour to contribute alongside Valerie and others who care so deeply about the future of our oceans. The documentary is more than just a project to me—it's a call to action, and I hope it inspires people to see sharks in a new light and get involved in their protection.

When is the documentary coming out?

We are aiming to finish production by the end of this year, and I am hoping it will be available for viewers on popular streaming platforms shortly after that.



Taylor with the iconic Valerie Taylor, who has spent her life protecting the critically endangered grey nurse shark. Together they are protecting what they love.
Photo: Daniel Ladd-Hudson



Taylor presenting at this year's Ocean Lovers Festival in Bondi Beach. Photo: Ocean Lovers Festival

We will be on the lookout for this! As an ocean advocate, what do you think are the most pressing issues?

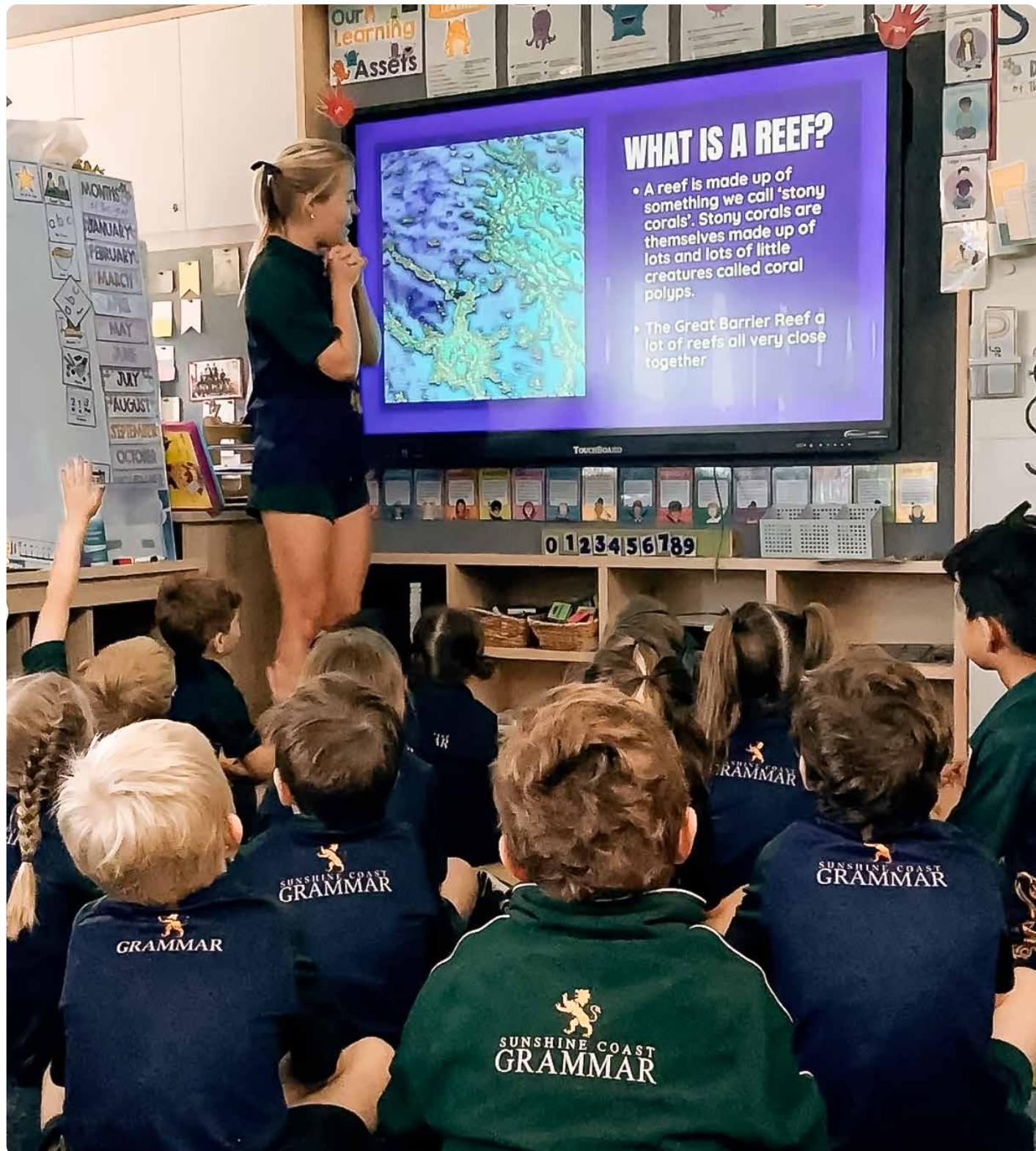
The ocean-related issues that concern me most are the rapid decline of shark populations, habitat destruction and the lack of effective protections for marine species that are crucial to healthy ecosystems. Sharks, in particular, are often misunderstood and feared, which makes it even harder to gain support for their

protection—despite the fact that they play such a vital role in keeping our oceans balanced and thriving.

The thing that scares me the most is the belief that someone else will save our oceans and sharks. That mindset—waiting for someone else to act—creates dangerous inaction. The reality is, we all have a role to play, whether it's through education, advocacy, policy change, or simply making more sustainable choices in our daily lives.

What are your thoughts on what needs to be done to address these issues effectively?

What needs to be done is a combination of stronger legislation, better enforcement, and greater public awareness but just as importantly, we need to shift the narrative - helping people understand that ocean conservation isn't just for scientists or activists, it's for everyone. Empowering younger generations,



Taylor speaking to two prep classes at Sunshine Coast Grammar about Great Barrier Reef, its importance and how we can protect it.
Photo: Sunshine Coast Grammar School

giving them tools and opportunities to speak up and take action, is something I believe in deeply because when we all take responsibility, real change becomes possible.

Like Sir David Attenborough in his new movie 'Ocean', are you hopeful and optimistic that the ocean can be saved?

I believe 100% that the ocean can be saved and we are not too late. One of my favourite quotes is: "A drop becomes a ripple, a ripple becomes a wave, and waves change tides." I truly believe that the most powerful and lasting change in ocean conservation comes from individuals taking small, meaningful actions. Each of us has the ability to create that first drop and when enough people do that - when enough ripples are made - those waves of change become unstoppable.

How can we make lasting change?

If everyone took just one small step - whether it's learning the truth about sharks, speaking out against shark culling, avoiding products that harm shark populations or supporting shark conservation efforts - it would, without a doubt, lead to a tide of transformation for these vital and misunderstood creatures.

Small actions, when multiplied, have the power to shift public perception, influence policy, and ultimately help protect sharks and the balance of our oceans.

And what should be the key focus for the government to make a lasting change in ocean conservation?

Shark net removal in New South Wales is a significant and much-needed step forward in the fight for both human safety and marine conservation. These nets have long been used under the premise of protecting swimmers from shark attacks but they come at a devastating cost to marine life, often trapping and killing harmless, non-target species like dolphins, turtles, and rays. In fact, the majority of marine creatures caught in these nets are not the sharks they're meant to protect against.

The recent decision to remove shark nets earlier in the season is a step in the right direction, allowing more marine animals to thrive without the threat of being trapped. However, this is just the beginning. There's still a lot of

work to do in shifting to non-lethal, effective alternatives like smart drumlines, drone surveillance, tagging technology, eco-barriers and personal protection devices, which can provide the same level of safety for swimmers without harming the ecosystem.

As a Gen Z member, how do you leverage social media and technology in your ocean advocacy work?

Social media plays a crucial role in my ocean advocacy work by helping me reach a wider audience and connect with people who care about the ocean, sharks, and conservation. It's an incredible tool for raising awareness, sharing educational content and showcasing the work I'm doing, whether it's through sharing facts, personal stories, or updates on important projects. It also allows me to engage with a global community—learning from others, collaborating and amplifying the voices of those pushing for change. Ultimately, social media helps turn awareness into action and it's an essential platform for driving conversations about the urgent need to protect our oceans. Check out my social media platforms @taylor_x_ocean on Instagram, TikTok and YouTube!



Taylor presenting at the "Big Ideas" panel discussion during WOW Schools Day 2024, with a focus on inspiring young change-makers and addressing global challenges faced by girls. Photo: WOW Schools Day 2024



How Invasive Species are Reshaping Australia's Wildlife Future

By Jack Gough, CEO Invasive Species Council

Australia is in the grip of an extinction crisis. The wildlife that define this country – the mammals, frogs, birds and plants found nowhere else on Earth – have been vanishing faster than almost anywhere else.

And while climate change and land clearing dominate the national conversation, another catastrophe is unfolding – quieter, but far deadlier.

It surprises many people to find out that invasive species have actually been the number one driver of animal extinctions in Australia and are predicted to continue to be the highest impact driver of the next wave. Cats, foxes, chytrid fungus, wolf snakes, black rats – these are names etched into the obituary of species after species. Of the next 100 extinctions likely to occur in coming decades, invasive species are likely to be a major cause of 70.

This is not just a problem from the past either – since the 1960s, Australia has probably lost at least 7 mammals, 6 frogs, 4 lizards (2 survive in captivity), 2 fishes (one surviving in a translocated population), one bird and one invertebrate (a mealybug) due to invasive species. These make up 86% of all formally listed and probable extinctions since 1960.

Yet it remains the least talked about and least understood part of Australia's environmental collapse.

Our island advantage – and our island curse

Australia is a global biodiversity jewel. We live on a continental-scale island that evolved in isolation – our lands and seas are rich with wildlife and ecosystems that are extraordinarily unique.

But it is this isolation that has also left our wildlife defenceless against many outside invaders. And our shameful extinction rate is the tragic result.

Global travel and trade are speeding up this extinction process by bringing ever more invaders. Our protected areas are being trashed, trampled, choked and polluted by a tsunami of invasive species. Every day, we lose a little more of what makes Australia special.

The megathreats we know

Cane toads, rabbits, foxes – they're the household invasive species most Australians will recognise: infamous, entrenched and in many places, seemingly here to stay. But they're just the tip of the iceberg.

The real heavyweights of extinction are feral cats, driving at least 25 species to extinction. Every year they kill more than 1.5 billion native animals – from tiny skinks to endangered numbats.

Adding 300 million wildlife deaths to that tally are roaming pet cats. Frustratingly, this is easily preventable. That's why Australia's states are slowly adopting cat containment or curfew laws, with NSW as the last holdout. After years of advocacy which sparked a parliamentary inquiry, the NSW government is now finally reviewing legislation that currently prohibits councils from implementing such laws. If done right, reform could bring the sounds of frogs, birds and bandicoots back to suburban streets.

Above: Feral cat. Photo: Mark Marathon

Beyond roaming pet cats, there are other threats we still have a real shot at stopping.

Take weeds. Some – like lantana and blackberry – are so deeply embedded in the landscape that full eradication is no longer possible. But the next lantana is already out there – in gardens or about to take off in the landscape. About 30,000 foreign plant species have been introduced to Australia and some 3,000 have already naturalised – many still sold in nurseries and online. They fuel fires, choke rivers and outcompete native plants, sending wildlife hungry and shelterless. That's why a recent national commitment from the Albanese Government to tackle invasive garden plants is such a big deal. It gives us a chance to shut the gate before the next weed catastrophe escapes.

Deer are another crisis in motion. Their numbers are exploding across the east coast. They strip native forests bare, damage waterways and cause road accidents. But we can still stop their westward spread. In Tasmania, the window of opportunity is still open – but only just. To act in time, the state government must increase program funding and remove the protected status that still treats deer as a resource rather than a threat. South Australia is showing what's possible, with a nation-leading full eradication plan underway.

Invaders are fundamentally altering Australian ecosystems – by changing fire regimes, nutrient cycles, vegetation structure, pollination and seed dispersal. Invasive buffel grass fires are killing large numbers of river red gums in central Australia. Without urgent



Polyphagous shot-hole borer. Photo: DPIRD

action, gamba grass could convert much of our northern savannas into treeless gamba monocultures. In the Murray-Darling Basin, invasive carp now make up 90% of fish biomass in many places. They muddy waters, damage vegetation, undermine river banks and carry parasites that infect native fish.

On Christmas Island, an Australian territory in the Indian Ocean, invasive scale insects turned invasive yellow crazy ants into the killers of millions of native red land crabs, leading to rainforest transformation because the crabs no longer ate seeds and seedlings.

And then there are fire ants. They swarm, sting and destroy. If we don't eradicate them from south east Queensland, they'll march across most of the country – killing wildlife, displacing native insects and costing

us at least \$2 billion a year. We still have time to wipe them out – and with enough funding and public pressure, we just might.

We're not prepared for what's coming

Australia has one of the strongest agricultural biosecurity systems in the world – forged in the wake of foot-and-mouth disease being detected and then eliminated 150 years ago. Unfortunately, biosecurity for nature is only a relatively new concept and remains underfunded and undervalued by the federal government.

The result is a system that still allows the import of thousands of high-risk plant and aquarium species and which new hitchhiking invaders often slip through. It means responses are fragmented and frequently too late when there isn't a direct threat to agriculture. That's the problem with a



Numbat. Photo: Bruce Thomson

10 POTENTIAL INVADERS THAT KEEP US UP AT NIGHT!

- **Stony coral tissue loss disease** – A fast-spreading marine pathogen threatening coral reefs in the Caribbean which could be a catastrophe for the Great Barrier Reef.
- **Bird flu (H5N1)** – A global wildlife pandemic, with catastrophic death tolls of wild birds and marine mammals overseas.
- **Polyphagous shot-hole borer** – A tiny beetle already killing trees in Perth. It spreads a deadly fungus that could devastate urban and some native forests across the continent.
- **Rock snot (Didymo)** – A freshwater invader that blankets rivers with thick, suffocating sludge. Once established, it's almost impossible to remove.
- **Boa constrictors and ferrets** – Exotic pets with the potential to escape and become major predators of native wildlife.
- **Rosy predator snail** – A snail that causes mass extinctions of other snails, already a scourge in the Pacific.
- **White nose syndrome** – A fungal disease that has wiped out millions of bats in North America.
- **New strains of myrtle rust** – New eucalyptus-killing strains of a fungus already here and pushing trees and shrubs in the Myrtaceae family to extinction could cause mass forest die-off and plant extinctions.
- **Climbing perch** – A freshwater fish from South Asia able to survive for days out of water and even move across land that is likely to outcompete native fish and choke its predators with sharp spines.
- **Avian vampire fly** – A parasitic fly from South America that lives in bird nests, feeding on the blood and tissue of young hatchlings.

Each of these species represents a disaster-in-waiting – and Australia's biosecurity system is currently not good enough to stop them.

system largely built around reaction rather than prevention.

In response to our advocacy and sustained public and media pressure last year we were able to get the federal government to commit \$100 million to prepare for the deadly H5N1 bird flu strain, with \$35.9 million directly set aside for wildlife. This was an unprecedented response but something that should be embedded into a business-as-usual response for environmental threats of this scale.

Islands of hope

Invasive species may be the worst extinction driver for animals – but with the right tools, response and ambition, wildlife on the brink can be revived. And nowhere is that more evident than on our islands.

On Macquarie Island, the removal of rabbits, rats and mice has allowed seabird colonies to recover after decades of decline. On Dirk Hartog Island, feral cats and goats were eradicated – making way for the reintroduction of dibblers, hare-wallabies and other species extinct on the mainland. On Lord Howe Island, native birds and reptiles are thriving again after a bold eradication effort targeting black rats and house mice.

That's why the Invasive Species Council is calling for a dedicated, long term national island eradication and recovery program – to expand feral-free havens for wildlife.

On the mainland too, recent success stories are offering hope. Kosciuszko National Park is starting to recover for the first time in 2 decades after thousands of feral horses were

removed when a 23-year ban on aerial culling was lifted. In and around Cairns, over 700 hectares have been cleared of yellow crazy ants – the largest eradication of this ant species in the world – protecting the World Heritage listed Wet Tropics rainforest from the devastating impact of invasive ant supercolonies.

These wins show what's possible – when government ambition meets strategic, well-coordinated solutions.

We can choose a wildlife revival

Australia's extinction crisis is not inevitable. It's the result of choices – what we fund, what we regulate, what we ignore.

Whether the next chapter is one of recovery or regret depends on our governments taking the invasive species threat to wildlife seriously.



Macquarie Island. Photo: AAD



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Wildlife Fiction

SHORT STORY COMPETITION

The **Australian Wildlife Society's Wildlife Fiction Short Story Competition** is a national competition that seeks 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 a modern world.

Winners receive a cash prize, a certificate, and their short story published in the *Australian Wildlife* magazine. Use your creative talents to raise awareness and let your words make an impact!

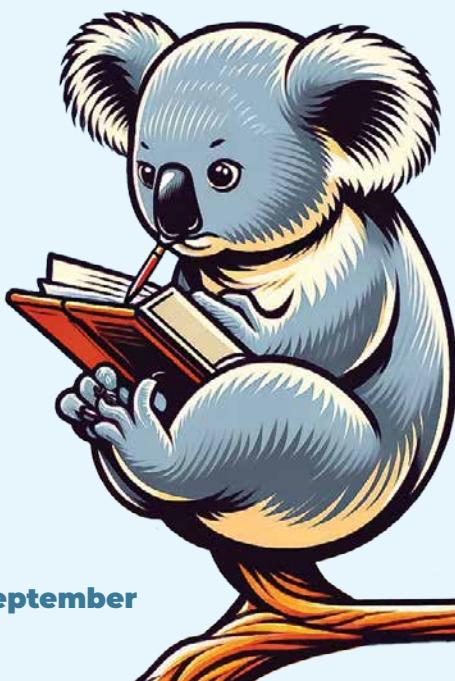
A Junior Prize of \$250 and a Senior Prize of \$750 will be Awarded

Rules of Entry:

1. The entry must be about a native Australian species – flora or fauna.
2. The entry must be the work of the entrant.
3. A junior is regarded between the ages of 8 to 17 years old.
4. A senior is regarded as 18 years and older.
5. The short story must be between 500 and 1,000 words. Short stories that do not adhere to this rule will be automatically disqualified.
6. By submitting an entry, entrants grant the Australian Wildlife Society rights to the short story. Entrants retain the copyright to their entry but accord the Australian Wildlife Society the right to use the short story in any of its marketing or promotional material arising therefrom.
7. There shall be no charge for entry, and entrants may only submit one entry.
8. The entry will be submitted in a Word document: single-spaced, Times New Roman, and font size 12. Start with a heading in font size 16, Bold, Title Case, followed by the author's first and surname, followed by the story. A short story Word template can be found here: bit.ly/SSTemp
9. The prize category (either 'Junior' or 'Senior'), the author's first and surname, and the story's title must be in the 'file name' and 'email subject line' of the entry submitted, e.g., Junior_John Smith_The Magical Marsupial. The entry will be submitted to info@aws.org.au
10. Directors of the Australian Wildlife Society or their families are ineligible to submit an entry.
11. The final result is at the discretion of the judges.

The Closing Date for Entries is 31 August 2025

The Winner Will Be Announced Towards the End of September



Secret Creek Conservation Precinct

Lucie Novakova, Trevor Evans

In the last issue, we informed you, our members, about the successful mountain pygmy-possum climate adaptation project taking place at Secret Creek Sanctuary in Lithgow. This has been a successful, high-profile project, and the contribution of AWS has been instrumental in making it the success it has so far.

In the last issue, we informed you, our members, about the successful mountain pygmy-possum climate adaptation project taking place at Secret Creek Sanctuary in Lithgow. This has been a successful, high-profile project, and the contribution of AWS has been instrumental in making it the success it has so far.

In this issue, we wanted to share the exciting news that the Sanctuary reopened to the public on 12th April after five years of restoration works post the damaging 2019/2020 bushfires. A blessing in disguise, Secret Creek has evolved into a Conservation Precinct thanks to

various government funding for bushfire affected communities, as well funding from Australian Ecosystems Foundation (AEFI, established in 2002), for which the Secret Creek Sanctuary is the primary conservation reserve and the keystone of wildlife conservation programs. Secret Creek Sanctuary and AEFI closely collaborated with other organisations, such as Lithgow-based First Nations group One Mob, as well as University of NSW and Byron Bay Wildlife Hospital to design and deliver the following infrastructure underpinning the Secret Creek Conservation Precinct:

The Cultural & Visitor Centre is the new welcoming entry into the Secret Creek Sanctuary and boasts large indoor reptile and fish displays, as well as a gift shop featuring local and First Nations artists.

The newly restored 1.2-km Sanctuary walking track leads visitors through natural bushland and secluded gully to see all of the enclosures and top spots, where animals free-range. The main part of the walk is wheelchair and pram accessible and equipped with interpretive signage. More than 50 interpretive signs were installed along the track to educate visitors about the wildlife species in the Sanctuary, as well as local native plants, such as the Wollemi pine.

Continued on page 21 >



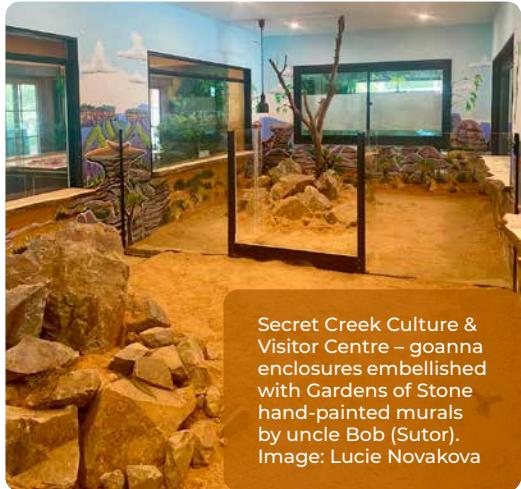
Secret Creek Cultural & Visitor Centre – the entry. Image: Lucie Novakova



Secret Creek Culture & Visitor Centre – Blue Mountains reptile displays including lizards and snakes, as well as fish. Image: Lucie Novakova



More than 50 interpretive signs can be found at animal enclosures, aviaries as well as top free-range spots along the walking track. Image: Lucie Novakova



Secret Creek Culture & Visitor Centre – the pond at the back of the building at the start of the walking track. Image: Lucie Novakova

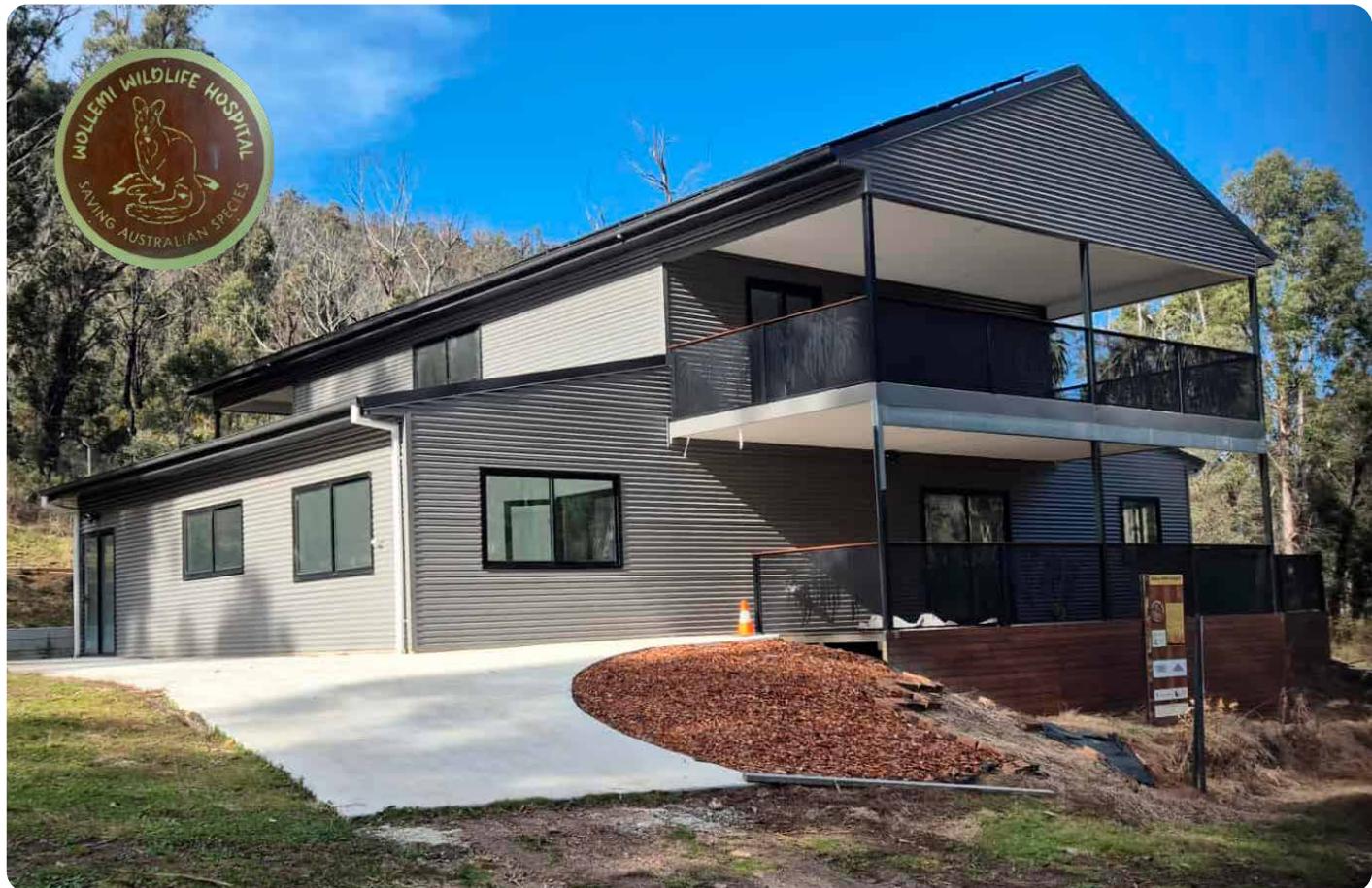
The Sanctuary Café provides a casual family friendly eatery environment and offers a range of nourishing food and drinks, including plant-based options and barista made coffee. Inside the café, you can relax in Bundy's Reading Den, offering a comfortable lounge to sit in an a wide variety of books to choose from.

The Wollemi Wildlife Hospital & Rehabilitation Centre will serve the Blue Mountains and Central West region, which are surrounded by six NSW National Parks providing habitat to a variety of endangered and rare species. Close collaboration with Byron Bay Wildlife Hospital and their staff informed the design, function and fit out of the building as well as the outdoor rehabilitation area. A fully fenced, predator-free Sanctuary as well as the 1000-acre AEFI property on the Newnes Plateau adjacent to the Sanctuary will provide opportunities for release. The building is not yet operational due to shortage of funding, and AEFI & Secret Creek are looking for sponsors to make the Hospital operational and start treating injured wildlife.

The Visitor Centre, Café and a part of the walking track are wheelchair accessible. The opening times are Wed - Sunday, 10am - 4pm and bookings are not necessary. See page 22 for a map of the facility.



Sanctuary Café. Image: Tenille Evans



Wollemi Wildlife Hospital & Rehabilitation Centre. Image: Lucie Novakova

WELCOME TO SECRET CREEK SANCTUARY

You're now on Wiradjuri country in Lithgow, on the edge of Gardens of Stone National Park and the Blue Mountains World Heritage Area. The sanctuary was set up to provide a feral proof enclosure where endangered native species are protected from predators. Many of the species that are in captive breeding programs at Secret Creek will eventually be reintroduced to their natural habitats as part of AEFL's wildlife conservation programs.

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ABOUT SECRET CREEK SANCTUARY

The Secret Creek Sanctuary was established in 2003 with the creation of Eastern Quoll breeding facility and construction of a ten-acre feral-proof fence to exclude foxes, cats, wild dogs and rabbits from the area, creating a protected bushland environment. Within the sanctuary, many breeding conservation programs have been established to secure the future of threatened native species; including critically endangered mountain pygmy-possums, pure-bred dingos, parma wallabies, long-nosed potoroos, endangered spotted-tailed quolls and brush-tailed rock-wallabies, as well as red-necked pademelons and coastal emus. Many of the species that are in captive breeding programs at Secret Creek will eventually be reintroduced to their natural habitats.



How Much Food Does a Platypus Need to Eat?

Platypus' idea of fine dining is a mixed plate of bottom-dwelling (or benthic) aquatic insect larvae and worms, gradually savoured over the course of 8 to 16 hours of foraging activity. Small frogs and fish may also occasionally be eaten, though the platypus' ability to consume relatively large prey item is limited by the fact that it lacks true teeth, being equipped instead with rough grinding pads at the back of its jaws.

As a warm-blooded and relatively small mammal that is normally active for long periods in the water, the platypus is predicted to have high energy requirements.

But what does this mean in practice – how much food does a platypus need to thrive and reproduce? And how strongly do platypus food requirements affect its conservation management?

The best available information concerning platypus food consumption relies on research conducted in captivity, most recently by Dr Jessica Thomas at Healesville Sanctuary in Victoria. By carefully measuring the amount of food (mealworms, earthworms, fly pupae and freshwater crayfish) eaten each day by two males and five females (none of which were raising young), she found that each animal typically consumed the equivalent of between 13% and 21% of its own body mass in prey items each day.

This equated, on average, to a daily energy intake of 921 kilojoules per kilogram of body weight across the entire year. Slightly less food was eaten by both sexes during the breeding season, when they apparently had other things on their mind (August to October, mean daily intake = 810 kilojoules/kg) and slightly more food was eaten in the months after breeding concluded (November to March, mean daily intake = 1007 kilojoules/kg).

Unsurprisingly, the food intake of a lactating female platypus rises sharply compared to baseline values, peaking in the final weeks before her offspring leave the nesting burrow.

For example, captive studies again conducted by Jessica Thomas concluded that daily energy intake by a female platypus in the final month of lactation rose to as much as 2093 kilojoules/kg, requiring her to consume more than one-third of her own body weight (36.4%, to be exact) in prey items.

These findings strongly suggest that the abundance and productivity of aquatic invertebrates are likely to be critical factors limiting both platypus population size and the number of juveniles that can be weaned annually in a given area.

Any habitat management activities that bolster the size and stability of aquatic invertebrate populations – for example, fencing out livestock to limit their access to the channel and adjoining banks, encouraging vegetation to grow on creek and river banks and along gully lines to control erosion, and tolerating the occurrence of fallen logs and branches as very positive habitat features in the water – are in this light expected to help sustain platypus population size and healthy levels of juvenile recruitment.

Given the platypus' reliance on pool habitats as places to feed when flow ceases, special effort should also be devoted to mapping where reliable pools are located, working to protect their habitat quality, and ensuring that they continue to hold adequate water even in the course of protracted dry spells.

An Unsuspected Predator of Freshwater Turtle Eggs

Kymberly Robinson

Australian freshwater turtles face numerous threats, including egg destruction by predators before they get a chance to incubate and hatch. The reduction of hatchling recruitment into the river can significantly impact on the population, posing a threat for long term survival.

The endangered Fitzroy River turtle (*Rheodytes leukops*) is an endemic species to the Fitzroy Catchment in Central Queensland. Nesting occurs during spring, laying 1-2 clutches, with an average of 18 eggs. The critically endangered white-throated snapping turtle (*Elseya albogula*) is predominantly found in the Fitzroy, Burnett and Mary Catchments. Nesting occurs during winter laying only 1 clutch, with an average of 10 eggs.

Both species use traditional nesting banks where the nests are aggregated leaving them vulnerable to depredation. Predators of freshwater turtle eggs in Australia include the European red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*), pigs (*Sus scrofa*), dingo (*Canis lupus*), goannas (*Varanus spp.*) and rakali (*Hydromys chrysogaster*).

A recent discovery of another native predator, the short-beaked echidna (*Tachyglossus aculeatus*) was unsuspected.

The echidna has been documented depredating the eggs of both the endangered Fitzroy River turtle and critically endangered white-throated snapping turtle across the Fitzroy, Burnett and Mary Catchments. The

echidna's diet previously had been documented as insectivorous.

Unlike other predators that dig the eggs out of the chamber, leaving the eggshell scattered around the nest site, the echidna is more cryptic. Clutches of eggs were being found in-situ, still intact in the nest chamber. Each egg had a single puncture hole with the contents consumed. Egg depredation by echidna was confirmed through direct observation. An echidna was caught in the act feeding on a clutch of white-throated snapping turtle eggs.

Echidnas have a good sense of smell and will continue to forage where there is a concentrated food source. The echidna's presence was observed to increase during the peak of turtle nesting. The Fitzroy River turtle eggs were recorded to have a higher depredation by echidna rate than the white-throated snapping turtle where it has increased from 2.8% of nests in 2018 to 47.4% in 2022 where it has become a significant predator. The reason for the increase in depredation is unknown.

These observations and results are part of a long-term study of freshwater turtle nesting activity.

The occurrence of threatened turtle eggs being depredated by echidna has been published in the CSIRO Australian Journal of Zoology. You can read more at <https://www.publish.csiro.au/ZO/fulltext/ZO23029>

Top: Echidna foraging on nesting bank. It probed the substrate with its beak to detect freshwater turtle eggs. Credit: Reprinted from Australian Journal of Zoology, 71, K Robinson et al, Depredation of eggs of threatened freshwater turtles by the short-beaked echidna, Copyright (2024).

Top Right: Photographs showing (a) an echidna encountered in situ, (b) an echidna removed from where it was feeding, exposing an egg chamber of *E. albogula*, (c) *E. albogula* eggs depredated by echidna showing beak puncture, and (d) depredated *E. albogula* eggs and echidna. Credit: Reprinted from Australian Journal of Zoology, 71, K Robinson et al, Depredation of eggs of threatened freshwater turtles by the short-beaked echidna, Copyright (2024).

Bottom Right: Photographs of nests showing (a) depredated *R. leukops* clutch by echidna in damp sand, (b) close up of *R. leukops* depredated eggs in an egg chamber. Credit: Reprinted from Australian Journal of Zoology, 71, K Robinson et al, Depredation of eggs of threatened freshwater turtles by the short-beaked echidna, Copyright (2024).



FUN FACT Echidna

Adorable waddle and prickly exterior – meet one of our most iconic Aussie animals – echidna.

1. They are an egg-laying mammal, one of two in the world! And in case you're wondering, the only other is the platypus.
2. There are two types of echidnas – the Long-beaked Echidna and the Short-beaked Echidna.
3. Believe it or not, echidnas have toothless jaws. Instead, they put their slender snouts and strong claws to work, tearing open logs, ant hills and other food sources, then use their long sticky tongues (we're talking 15 - 18 cm long!) and pads on the roof of their mouth to break down their food.
4. Echidnas love nothing more than a satisfying meal of ants, termites, worms and insect larvae – and have been known to eat roughly 40,000 per day! A very recent study has revealed that echidnas feed on freshwater turtle eggs. We cover more detail in the following article.
5. Echidnas are often referred to as 'ecosystem engineers'. While they might not seem the most active of animals, they spend a remarkable amount of time digging and moving soil – an average of 8 trailer-loads of soil each year. This improves soil mixing and water penetration, reduces run-off and erosion, and ultimately makes for healthier soils, which can lead to plant growth.

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



KNOW YOUR EGG-LAYING MAMMALS

MONOTREMES



Wildlife Fiction SHORT STORY COMPETITION

2024 Runners-up

Breach

Margaux Buttula | Junior Category Runner-up

I am looking across the white-capped waves of Port Phillip Bay as a biting wind tears through my thin sweater. I am underdressed but stop short of admonishing myself. I had dressed in a hurry this morning – woken unceremoniously from unsettling dreams of desert sands and ghostly cries. The night before had been hot – blistering winds from the north had rattled my windows, causing me to toss and turn, preventing me from falling asleep. When I awoke, sheets twisted into a ball at my feet, it was with a groggy film across my eyes and a foreboding sense of dread that something unexpected and terrifying lay just beyond the horizon.

A cup of too-hot coffee rested beside my computer as I flicked through the news. It was a while before I saw it – a hidden, tenuous headline, designed to remain so, hoping desperately to remain undiscovered – ‘Corio Refinery Breach’. That word – breach – springs to mind breaking dam walls, breaching a protest picket line, a breach of the law. All these things applied – as I would soon find out.

So now I am looking across the white capped waves of Port Phillip Bay – regretting my hurried choice of clothing, camera lens at the ready. The refinery is cordoned off and I have driven to the Avalon Coastal Reserve to get a better view of the refinery. I wade slowly through the old salt marsh, down towards the water’s edge. I stop short and raise my camera slowly. In the distance I can see a white-faced heron, prostrate on the shoreline, wings glistening with oil, shining like diamonds around her neck.

‘Why are you here?’ she asks. ‘You can’t help me’.

The air is thick with the acrid smell of fuel, evoking memories of when I was a kid – sitting in the backseat while mum filled the tank. This was once a salt farm. Cubic metres

stretching farther than the eye could see. The horizon mottled with birds, a cacophonous symphony which would never be the melodious type, but it was joyous, nonetheless.

I used to run across these wetlands, but now, I walk. I walk along what once used to be salt ponds, now in varying colours of beige, their putrid stench an antithesis of the once salty air that filled our lungs.

As I trail along the shore, the chunk-laden water washes over my feet, leaving a shine from the grease. The white-faced heron is buried under the sludge before me, desperately trying to peel its decrepit body from the foul sludge, trembling as it struggles to lift itself. Even its instincts fail to bring it to safety.

Crouching before the frail bird, I lift it out of the oily muck. The sickening grime leaves streaks on my hands and clothes as the bird squirms, its feathers matted with unidentifiable chunks of filth. One of its wings is at an odd angle, like a broken matchstick or a tattered wing on a balsa wood glider.

With a chain of shrill screeches from the bird, its body writhes within my grasp. In a panicked flurry I drop the bird back into the sludge. I quickly step back and surprisingly, despite its broken wing, the heron takes off into the sky its wings still weighed down by the muck as it totters in the air.

‘You wish to help?’ she asks. ‘You bring only suffering’.

I raise my camera, twisting the lens as it focuses on the white-faced heron, and peek through. I’m astonished. Quickly pulling my gaze from the camera lens, I look around me, taking in the foul waters, a vile concoction of chunks and grease, a visual assault. Hesitantly, I raise the camera once more, staring in awe.

The white-faced heron lands on a piece of driftwood, floating languidly on the cerulean waves. The bird shakes off its once-matted feathers

and the oil slick turns to dust like the salt flakes of the marsh. It stretches its glistening wings in the sunlight, face upturned, beak slightly agape. Turning the lens, I cannot help the beginnings of a beaming smile that begins to twitch at the corners of my mouth. Salt glistening around me, buried to my ankles in the crystals, I can feel that familiar salty burn against my skin.

I kneel in the salt feeling the sting of the crystals against my torn-up knees. It doesn’t bother me; I raise my camera to the bird, a grin on my face as I snap a photograph of it.

The heron was whole and beautiful. The salt sparkling off its wings as it ruffles the pristine feathers that adorn its body. I knew it was too good to be true...and it was.

I pull my eye from the lens, lowering the camera to my lap as I frantically flick through the photos on the screen, my excitement fading quicker than it came.

The reality in the photos is disgusting, hideous, even morbid.

Disbelieving, my breath hitches as I look to the driftwood with wide eyes, my arms trembling as I drop the camera into the sludge that I kneel in, the pollution turning my skin red.

The camera lens reveals only what I wish. In the distance is the reality of human destruction. The heron’s body was dark, torn, and lifeless. A trail of greasy feathers afloat in the water, its limp body bouncing with the waves. I can’t do anything but watch as the driftwood repeatedly hits the channel buoys, its hollow bones slowly being crushed under the pressure.

I felt sick to my stomach. I could feel the bile in my throat rising. Hacking up my lungs, tears well in my eyes as my throat burns.

‘You see me, human?’ she asks. ‘You are just like the rest’.

moon Bound

Sarah Doran | Senior Category Runner-up

The sand beneath their tiny webbed feet had finally turned cool, a faint salty scent had filled the air. Four sets of little wide eyes stared up at miniature particles of sand tumbling one after the other as the evening sea breeze whisked across their nest. Tarcoola knew this was it. The moment his mother had been preparing him and his siblings for. The most dangerous mission of all was now only moments away.

Tarcoola, a Flatback baby sea turtle was the eldest of three siblings. The four baby Flatback turtles had learnt from their wise and beautiful mother about the great mission to the moon they must take. It was the mission all turtles must embark on. For the turtle who finds the moon, finds the great sea and only then will life's big adventure really begin.

The white light was much brighter tonight, dancing across the sand just the way his mother had described it would. The moon was finally calling them. Calling them home.

Tarcoola had spent the last few nights staring up into the starlit sky with his friend Djinda from the turtle nest next-door. Tarcoola couldn't imagine there would ever be another turtle kinder than Djinda. She told Tarcoola fascinating stories about the stars that her mother had taught her. Djinda didn't have any siblings that survived to hatch like she had. She was grateful to have found a friend in Tarcoola. He was grateful in return for her company too. He could listen to her tell stories of the stars all night long. Tarcoola loved that he had found a friend who loved the night sky as much as he did.

Tonight was a very different night to the previous nights he'd spent with Djinda staring up the stars though.

Tarcoola was now listening intently to his mother's final words of wisdom with his brother and sisters as they got ready for their big take off.

"Stay together. As fast as your legs can carry you, run towards the moon. It will get brighter as you get closer. The sound of the

sea will get louder, that's how you'll know you're getting closer. Follow Tarcoola all the way until you reach the moon. Once you feel the water beneath your feet, you'll be there. You'll be at the moon. Keep running until you feel yourself become weightless in the ocean. You'll know when you've made it. There is no feeling quite like it".

Tarcoola knew it wasn't just a matter of running fast towards the moon. His mother had told them of the dangers that lurked in the moonlight. Predators. Seabirds were known on this beach for making baby sea turtles their dinner on the night of a full moon.

Tarcoola wondered if Djinda was being given a similar final lesson right now too. He hoped that they would find each other at the moon. That they would share more stories of the night sky as they became weightless in the sea for the first time together. He wasn't sure though.

Turtle families kept to themselves on the night of the full moon. It was a final time for families to be together. All he knew was that all baby turtles on the beach would be charging for the moon tonight.

It was time to go. The turtles lined up one behind the other and waited for their mothers command. "Get ready my babies, GO!" yelled Tarcoola's mum.

They were off. Tarcoola charged out of the nest with his brother and sisters following closely behind. As they came out into the bright moonlight, things got confusing. Tarcoola paused. Why were there two moons? Two moons in opposite directions? He remembered his mum telling them the sea will get louder as you head towards the moon. He started to run again. It was happening, the sound of the sea was getting louder. Just as he hit full speed he noticed something in the distance. It was Djinda running in the wrong direction. She was running towards the other moon. He didn't understand why there were two moons but he knew the one Djinda was running towards was not the moon that lead to the sea. He had to do something. He had to stop her.

Tarcoola yelled out to his brother and sisters "Keep running in this direction. I'll be right behind you again soon. I have to get Djinda". His siblings nodded with wide fearful eyes and they kept running towards the sea.

Tarcoola spun around in the other direction and ran as fast as he could toward Djinda. "Djinda, stop!" but she didn't stop. She couldn't hear him. The sound of the sea started to fade as he got closer to Djinda. Instead, other sounds became louder. Cars and the sound of human voices were on the air. It wasn't another moon they were running towards. It was human's manmade lights. They were everywhere on the streets, drowning out the night sky.

Tarcoola caught up to Djinda who's eyes were wide and teary now. "Oh Tarcoola, what have I done?". "It's ok" Tarcoola replied. "The humans made a fake moon but we're going to be ok. The real moon is this way. Follow me".

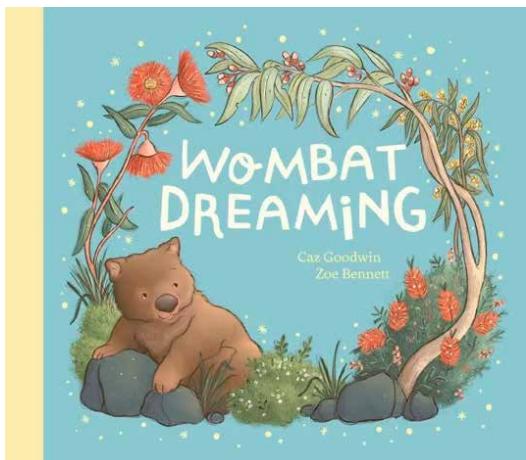
The pair of baby turtles were now in full pursuit towards the real moon. The sound of the sea grew louder. They were getting closer.

Then another sound echoed behind them. The squawk of seagulls filled the air. Tarcoola knew what this was. The seagulls were awake and turtle was on the menu.

"WE HAVE TO RUN FASTER, DJINDA. FAST LIKE THOSE SHOOTING STARS YOU TOLD ME ABOUT".

The turtles legs were spinning faster than ever. The birds squawks grew louder but all of sudden, SPLASH. Tarcoola and Djindra suddenly became weightless. They were swimming in the moonlit sea for the very first time. Tarcoola saw his brother and sisters smiling with delight just up ahead. They had made it. The great turtle adventure had begun.

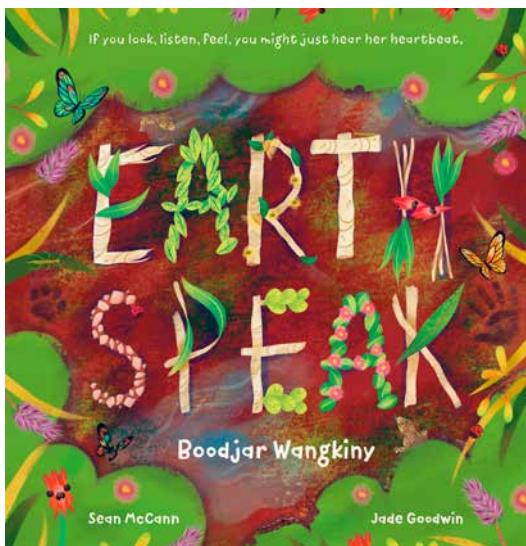
Book Reviews



Wombat Dreaming – Caz Goodwin,
illustrated by Zoe Bennett

Lil loves doing yoga with her friends, but some poses aren't easy when you're a roly-poly wombat with short legs. Take a deep breath, salute the sun and watch as Lil finds her own way to lead the bush yoga class. An affirming new picture book featuring an adorable wombat to remind us of our individual and unique talents.

Publisher: Affirm Press
RRP: \$19.99



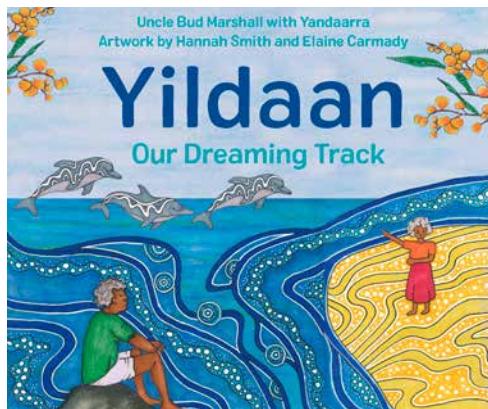
Earthspeak – Sean McCann & Jade Goodwin

A joyful story celebrating the natural world, the sharing of culture through Noongar language and the awe that comes from seeing, hearing and feeling how elemental forces shape the earth.

"Papa says we're going to a special place today. If we djinang (look), ni (listen), goordoo (feel), we might hear boodjar wangkiny (earth speak). We might even feel her heartbeat. I wonder what that will sound like? Will the earth's heart beat just like ours?"

A bush walk in a stunning landscape becomes a heartfelt invitation for children to engage with their senses, care for the environment, and learn some Noongar language words along the way.

Publisher: Allen & Unwin
RRP: \$26.99



Yildaan – Our Dreaming Track – Uncle Bud Marshall with Yandaarra, illustrated by Hannah Smith and Elaine Carmady

In Yildaan, Uncle Bud's story of being on Country mingles with ancestor's stories and shows how these two parts of life are inherently connected. Using a mix of Gumbaynggirr and English language, and featuring art and photographs from

Nambucca Heads in the beautiful Gumbaynggirr Country.

"Giinagay, welcome, I'm Uncle Bud. I'm a Gumbaynggirr man, an Aboriginal Elder from Nambucca Heads. This is my Country. I want to tell you about this place and about my Elders. I want everyone who comes here to know where they are. I want them to follow in the footsteps of our ancestors and be part of Yildaan, our Dreaming track."

Publisher: Allen & Unwin
RRP: \$29.99



Nature's Last Dance – Natalie Kyriacou OAM

Award-winning environmentalist Natalie Kyriacou OAM confronts the extinction crisis with courage, curiosity and fervour in Nature's Last Dance, a powerful story of survival and extinction. Blending science, politics, storytelling, and advocacy, Natalie leads readers on a journey across hunting grounds, through jungles and oceans, inside communities, and into the heart of battles to survive against all odds.

This is nature writing like you've never seen before, diving headfirst into a fierce, funny and deeply human journey of wild extinction, where drug lord hippos roam, birds romance rocks and whale poo gets the notice of Wall Street. We are currently experiencing the

earth's sixth mass extinction event and for the first time in history it is not being driven by natural phenomena, but by human activity. Natalie states, 'Welcome to the Anthropocene: the reign of the human. Land and sea both bear the scars of humanity's rule. Today, one million plant and animal species face extinction.'

In Australia alone, more than 2,200 species are now listed as threatened, and we have the highest extinction rate of mammals of any continent in the world.

It's easy to feel overwhelmed by the statistics, but Natalie is tackling the crisis with radical hope. 'The question motivating this book is: against the backdrop of extinction and destruction, can tales of hope, joy, absurdity and scientific marvel provide the fuel for humanity to confront and reverse the extinction crisis?'

Publisher: Affirm Press
RRP: \$36.99



YOUR LEGACY FOR AUSTRALIA'S WILDLIFE

The Wild Life Preservation Society of Australia was founded in 1909 by a group of enthusiastic bushwalkers. Our founders suggested the need for such a group in a talk with the Naturalists' Society of New South Wales. The Swedish Consul-General for Australia, Count Birger Mörner, organised the first preliminary discussion in the Consulate on 11 May 1909. As an outcome of this discussion, it was decided to call a public meeting for the formation of the Society. Fifty people attended and were enrolled as the first members of the Society. Within one week, the newly formed Wild Life Preservation Society of Australia had grown to more than one hundred members.

The Provisional Committee worked hard and in the same year, the inaugural meeting adopted a constitution and elected the first chairman, the Hon. F E Winchcombe MLC, head of a large firm of woolbrokers, skin and hide merchants. There were six women on the first council of twenty-five people, and some who were later to become famous as naturalists.

Our Society pioneered the recognition of the need for legal protection for Australia's animals and plants.

Today we are known as the Australian Wildlife Society (AWS). We are a national not-for-profit wildlife conservation organisation. Our mission is to conserve Australia's wildlife (flora and fauna) through national environmental education, public awareness, advocacy, hands-on conservation work, and community involvement. AWS is a tax-deductible gift recipient and registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission. Its public fund is listed on the Register of Environmental Organisations under item 6.1 of subsection 30-55(1) of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997. AWS is funded through membership fees, sponsorships, partnerships, donations, and bequests. The Society is managed and controlled by an elected



board of ten volunteer directors. We hold regular monthly meetings, on the first Wednesday of each month, to discuss important wildlife conservation matters and make a number of significant decisions.

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

**YOUR BEQUEST WILL HELP US TO CONTINUE TO PRESERVE
AUSTRALIA'S WILDLIFE FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS**

HOW YOUR BEQUEST WILL BE USED

By remembering AWS with a bequest in your will, you are making a unique commitment. Your bequest to AWS will help us continue to preserve Australia's wildlife for future generations.

We rely on our supporters' generosity to enable us to continue working towards the conservation of Australian wildlife (flora and fauna) in all its forms through national environmental education and advocacy. Without you, our work would simply not be possible. Whatever the amount you bequeath to AWS, your contribution is invaluable.



A bequest is one of the most effective and long-lasting ways you can help AWS. Your promise of future support is deeply appreciated. If you have included a bequest to AWS in your will, please let us know. We thank you personally for this bequest of support. At all times your privacy will be fully respected and the information you provide will remain strictly confidential.

Your bequest will go directly to our wildlife conservation projects across Australia. Some examples listed below:

- Supporting wildlife rescue groups rehabilitating injured wildlife.
- Active involvement in national environmental education.
- Lobbying and advocating for the protection of wildlife habitat.
- Offering university grants and scholarships to honours or postgraduate students at Australian universities.
- Offering annual conservation group grants.
- Conservation activities during Australian Wildlife Week.
- The presentation of our four prestigious annual awards.
- Platypus Alliance conservation activities to preserve platypus populations and other semi-aquatic air-breathing species.
- Our #SnipRingsforWildlife Campaign to protect wildlife from the risk of entanglement and death.



HOW TO MAKE A BEQUEST

If you already have a will but would like to leave a bequest to AWS, you can do so by making a simple addition to your existing will. This is called a codicil. If you do not have a will at the moment, you can simply include a bequest when you write a new will. Whatever your circumstances, we would advise you to see a solicitor to ensure that your wishes will be followed.

When catastrophic events occur and our immediate action is required, it is essential that all our programs continue without interruption. Financial flexibility is crucial to our ability to respond to priority needs, so we ask that you do not designate your gift to a particular project or region.

Types of bequests:

- 1** A residuary bequest is the most effective way to leave a bequest to AWS. It is a gift of what remains after you have made provisions for your loved ones. A residuary gift will keep up with inflation. It will mean your bequest will achieve as much in our projects in the future as you would like it to now.
- 2** Leaving a percentage of your estate allows you to decide what proportion of your total estate you would like to give to AWS. A percentage gift will also keep up with inflation.
- 3** A pecuniary bequest is a fixed sum of money to be left to AWS. This type of gift will not keep up with inflation.

Recommended Bequest Wording

Please take this information with you when you visit your solicitor to draft or update your will. We suggest the following wording:

“I give and bequeath

- the residue, or
- [.....] percentage of my whole estate, or
- [.....] percentage of the residue, or
- the specific sum of \$[.....]

to the Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia Limited, for its general purposes, and declare that the receipt of the Treasurer for the time being of the Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia Limited shall be a complete discharge to my Executors in respect of any sum paid to the Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia Limited.”

Your solicitor may also require the following detail:

ABN: 13 817 470 816



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.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is a bequest?

A bequest is a gift left in your will. It's also known as a legacy. You can leave a bequest by writing a new will, or by adding a codicil (an addition) to your existing will. We recommend you consult a solicitor who can help you write your will.

What is the best way to leave a bequest in my will to AWS?

The best way to leave a bequest to AWS is to leave a monetary bequest (i.e., not property, shares, etc.) and a residuary bequest. This is a gift of what remains after all your other provisions have been made, enabling you to put your loved ones first. A residuary bequest also keeps up with inflation, and is the most effective way to provide a gift to AWS. You can also leave a percentage of your estate or pecuniary bequest, which is a fixed sum of money to be left to AWS.

I want to leave a bequest to a specific project. Can I do this?

Having flexible funds is essential to our ability to respond rapidly and where the need is greatest. Leaving a bequest for the Society's general use is the most effective as it means that your gift will definitely be used where it is needed most. Leaving a bequest to a specific type of work or location might mean that it cannot be used. This can occur if we are no longer working there or doing the kind of work specified in the future. As such, we ask that you do not designate your gift to a particular project or region.

Can AWS help me write my will?

No, we don't have that kind of legal expertise. We recommend you consult a solicitor who can help you write your will. There is also a public trustee in every state of Australia that offers will-writing services.

Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia Limited Trading as Australian Wildlife Society

Address: 9/121 Queen Street,
CAMPBELLTOWN NSW 2560, Australia

Tel: +61 4 24 287 297

Email: secretary@aws.org.au

ABN: 13 817 470 816

Web: aws.org.au/bequest-information/



Can I make AWS the Executor of my will?

No, we appreciate your trust in the Society but we do not have the necessary resources. We try to keep administration costs low so that the maximum amount can go towards our projects in the field. As such, we choose not to take the role of Executor of a will as this can often be a lengthy and involved legal process.

Can I leave you my house, other property or shares?

Yes, but monetary gifts are preferred as AWS would need to convert any property or shares into cash to be able to use them. This means additional time and resources spent trying to get the best price and sell these items before we can put your bequest to use.

My relative has passed away and left a bequest in their will for AWS. What do I need to do?

We very much appreciate bequests that are left to us by generous supporters. Please ask the Executor to notify us in writing of the bequest by sending a letter to the National Office or via email, and we can start the process of transferring the bequest to AWS.

Why is having a will so important?

If you do not have a will when you die, state laws will determine how your assets will be distributed. Leaving clear instructions and sharing your decisions with your family and friends can give you the peace of mind that your final wishes will be understood and respected after you are gone. We recognise that writing a will is one of the most significant decisions you'll ever make. That's why we know it's important to take your time and have all of the information you need to help you make up your mind.



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.



