



NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2011

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• REHABILITATION • CONSERVATION • EDUCATION •

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Editorial

We have had several new members join us in the last few months. We extend a warm welcome to you all and hope to see you soon at a meeting or training event.

Winter is here at last, and with it comes the breeding season and a rush of new life. In colder climes, of course, it's the other way around, where winter is the quiet time and nothing grows, but here it's our busiest time of year. The birds are getting busy, too, getting ready to go a-courting and of course with that comes territorial behaviour. When raptors get territorial it means we have to be extra careful about selecting release sites for first-year birds. If we release them back into their parents' territory as the older birds are about to embark upon a new breeding cycle, the youngsters could well be seen as interlopers and be attacked, injured or even killed. It's important to take this into account if you have any young birds ready to go back to the wild at this time of year. If you observe parent birds engaging in courtship and/or territorial displays in an area where you plan on releasing a bird, it may be prudent to discuss other options with your Wildlife Officer and/or mentor.

We are periodically receiving some very generous donations of medical equipment which is close to or just past its code for human use, but which is still acceptable for use in wildlife care and rehabilitation. We never know exactly what we're going to get when we receive a box of goodies, but we usually get a variety of catheters, syringes, saline (irrigation and injectable) and sundry items. Members, if there's anything you need for your kit, please give us a call or drop us an e-mail before you go out and buy equipment, because if we have it in the Society's medical box, you can have it for free. Items that are obviously too large or inappropriate for raptor care get donated to other wildlife organisations for use with other native fauna.

June also heralds the end of the Society's financial year, which coincides with the tax year. That means annual subscriptions fall due on 1 July 2011. A renewal form is included with this newsletter. If you are renewing your membership with us, please remember to complete the form and pay your subscription fees at your earliest convenience so that you can continue to receive membership benefits.

The Society's biggest single educational and fund raising event takes place between 1-8 October 2011. Yes, it's the 2011 Perth Royal Show. As always, we need volunteers and education birds for the event, so if you can help, please contact Noelene as soon as possible and let her know which days you will be available.

Don't forget, if you want to keep up with what's happening in the Society between meetings and newsletters, we are now on facebook, which everyone with internet access can follow and for members, there is the mailing list, hosted by Yahoo! Groups. Members who would like to subscribe to the mailing list should send us an e-mail via the website and we'll reply with instructions. Also on facebook are several Society members such as Eagles Heritage, the WA Birds of Prey Centre, Auzzie and Echo the Barn Owl.

We've decided to supersize the AGM this year. It's going to be a training weekend with free activities and workshops. See the back page for details.

DEC COURSES IN WILDLIFE REHABILITATION

Dates for this year's courses in Wildlife Rehabilitation have been determined.

Metropolitan courses in 2011 will be held at the new Western Australian Conservation Science Centre on the DEC campus.

- June 18/19 – Basic Course in Wildlife Rehabilitation – Busselton
- June 25 – Advanced Topic – Fluid Therapy – Kensington
- July 30/31 – Basic Course in Wildlife Rehabilitation – Kensington
- August 13 – Advanced Topic – Reptile Necropsy – Kensington
- August 20/21 – Basic Course in Wildlife Rehabilitation – Port Hedland
- September 10/11 – Basic Course in Wildlife Rehabilitation – Kensington

Attendance at the Basic course is important for anyone wishing to volunteer as a wildlife rehabilitator and will be an essential requirement in the new accreditation process. The cost of the metropolitan course is \$250, with discounts available to attendees who have accrued a minimum of 20 hours of service with a wildlife centre or association (such as the Society.) Registered Rehabilitators may attend free of charge but bookings are essential. The cost of the Busselton course will be \$200 (\$100 with 20-hour discount) and pricing for the Port Hedland course is yet to be determined. If you would like to attend either for the first time or as a refresher, you can contact Lorene Bennett at the DEC Community Involvement Unit on (08) 9334 0251 for more information or to book your place.

If you require a letter confirming that you have completed at least 20 hours of volunteer work with the Society, please speak with your mentor who will arrange the appropriate paperwork for DEC.

FREEBIES

We have a number of items available for free to members who are active in wildlife rehabilitation:

- Foley catheters (various sizes – for tubing/oral rehydration)
- Cetrimide wipes (with isopropyl alcohol)
- Alcohol swabs (sterile)
- Savlon antiseptic cream
- Rapaid cream (for rashes and inflammation of the skin)
- Stingose gel (for insect bites and stings)
- Burnaid gel (a cooling first aid gel for burns – used by St John Ambulance for burns in humans)
- Betadine (must be diluted for animal use)
- Packing gauze (wound treatment or bandages – ideal for figure-eight bandages on small birds)
- Kidney bowls and assorted dishes
- Various other items of equipment and consumables.

Prior to supplying any volunteer with sharps (scalpel blades, hypodermic needles etc) we will need confirmation that you have been appropriately trained and have a safe disposal system in place.

Please contact the Society (see back page for details) for more information.

FLUID THERAPY

Fluids and warmth are two of the most important treatments we can offer wildlife when it is admitted to our care. Before a raptor will allow itself to be rescued by a human, it must be incapacitated, either because it is physically restrained (eg: trapped or entangled) or because it is too weak or badly injured to flee.

As any experienced rehabilitator will know, we always assume 10% dehydration on admission and rehydrate accordingly. To do this, we must be competent in fluid therapy.

Often, we will be able to deliver fluids by way of a lubricated tube inserted into the upper gastrointestinal tract via the mouth. The tube bypasses the glottis, reducing the risk of aspiration. In the case of the diurnal raptors, fluid is delivered to the crop. In the case of the owls, the fluid is tubed directly into the proventriculus (stomach.) Generally, the preferred fluid for tubing is Hartmann's solution (also known as Compound Sodium Lactate or CSL, similar to Lactated Ringer's Solution) which contains a beneficial mix of fluid and electrolytes designed to restore balance to a dehydrated body. Normal saline can also be used but it does not contain the same mix of electrolytes and lactate.

Sometimes, however, the mechanics of shock have progressed too far to make tubing viable. In the case of extreme shock and dehydration, the animal's gut ceases to function and will not absorb fluids that are delivered via tube. In this case, fluid must be delivered via injection.

If a veterinarian is available, they may elect to administer fluid using one of two routes: subcutaneous or intravenous (there is a third route, intraosseous, but this is not commonly used in raptors in small animal practices.) The most usual route is subcutaneous. The advantage of administering fluid subcutaneously is that it is very difficult to give too much. There is no risk of regurgitation and aspiration, and the animal will absorb only as much as it needs, so fluid can be given bolus (in a large amount.) While volunteer wildlife rehabilitators are not permitted to administer intravenous fluids, we can be trained to deliver fluid safely and effectively via subcutaneous injection.

Learning to give subcutaneous injections is both quick and easy. Courses are run regularly at Kanyana, and DEC is presenting an advanced topic on the subject with a hands-on component on June 25th. There is a cost involved, but this is usually quite reasonable. Rehabilitators in regional areas can approach their local vet for training in subcutaneous fluid administration, and if your vet agrees, he or she may teach you how to give fluids in this way.

Some rehabilitators find the mechanics somewhat challenging: there is a need to maintain a sterile work area while injecting; sterile equipment and injectable fluids must be used; safe handling of sharps must be observed; and the animal must be effectively restrained so that the injection may be given without injury to the patient or the rehabilitator. With raptors, this means it is absolutely essential to have an assistant on hand. It is also necessary to have an arrangement in place with your vet, hospital, pharmacy or GP clinic for the safe disposal of used sharps.

Members who have undertaken training in fluid therapy but require assistance in setting up their equipment can contact the Society for assistance. We can set up a free starter kit for you to get you going, and can also access replacement equipment and consumables at low cost if need be. As these kits contain sharps, we will ask you to demonstrate that you have been trained and are competent in their safe application and disposal (ie: course certificate, note from your vet etc.)

BALINGUP SMALL FARM FIELD DAY

Secretary Noelene and newsletter editor Nancy attended the Balingup Small Farm Field Day in April to represent the Society at a combined environmental display run as a cooperative effort between DEC Kirup, FAWNA, WAWRC and the Society.

It was a great day with perfect weather. Numbers were down on last year, thanks in no small part to the Quit Forest Rally being run in Nannup on the same day. We had Echo the Barn Owl and Cikala the Southern Boobook as our display birds. Cheryl, Vicki, Carol, Jeff and Linda from FAWNA brought an Echidna, a Brush-tailed Possum and a Ring-tailed Possum. Peter and Shelagh from DEC provided information about DEC and Land for Wildlife.

Despite it being relatively quiet for this event, we still managed to raise \$171.45, only about \$30 down on last year, which isn't bad, all things considered.

We didn't win the award for Best Informational Display this year. That particular honour went to the Landcare people next door, so we'll just have to see what we can come up with for 2012!



*Echo decides his handler needs preening.
Photo by Wendy Slee.*

NOTICE OF MEETING

The next Ordinary General Meeting of the Society will be held at 45 Stringybark Drive, Forrestfield WA on Friday, 10 June 2011 at 6:00 pm. Tea and coffee will be available.

RSVP to Noelene Jenkins, Secretary on (08) 9453 6567.

The 2011 Annual General Meeting will be discussed at the Ordinary General Meeting. The AGM will be held at Eagles Heritage and we have narrowed the dates down to two possible weekends : 6/7 or 13/14 August. It is envisaged that the AGM will be held on the Saturday evening, to be followed on the Sunday morning by a training day covering a variety of different topics. As with many Society events, training sessions will be free to members.

Training topics under consideration include:

- Necropsy
- Kestrel Leucocytozoon
- Incorporation of Pain Management in the treatment of Trichomaniasis
- Capture and restraint of large raptors

Other topics may be presented if there is sufficient interest from members. Let us know what you'd like to learn, practice, upskill or simply have a refresher in.

HOW TO CONTACT THE SOCIETY

General inquiries (including membership and newsletters)

- e-mail: via the website
- Website: www.raptor.org.au
- Post: PO Box 415, Forrestfield WA 6058

Coordinator – Philip Pain

- Telephone: (08) 9757 2960 (Margaret River)
- Fax: (08) 9757 2964

Emergency assistance

Perth Metropolitan Area

- Marra and Dion – Perth Raptor Care, Midvale Ph: (08) 6369 0705
- Yvonne – Western Australian Birds of Prey Centre, West Swan Ph: 0438 388 383
- Warren and Vienesza – Canning Vale Ph: 0448 055 020 (Warren) or 0417 753 597 (Vienesza)

Country WA

- Philip – Co-ordinator SPR, Eagles Heritage Raptor Wildlife Centre, Margaret River Ph: (08) 9757 2960
- Brian and Nancy – EarthWings, Nannup Ph: (08) 9756 066
- Janelle and Glenn – Just Raptors, Geraldton Ph: (08) 9938 1447
- Rose – Pilbara Wildlife Carers Association Inc, Karratha Ph: 0438 924 842