



NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2012

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• REHABILITATION • CONSERVATION • EDUCATION •

In this issue:

- Editorial (p1)
- DEC Basic Courses in Wildlife Rehabilitation (p2)
- 2012 Perth Royal Show (p2)
- Cheap and Easy Roost Boxes (p2)
- Modifying Pet Packs for Raptorial Birds (pp 2 / 3)
- Notice of Annual General Meeting (p4)
- How to Contact the Society (p4)
- Emergency Assistance (p4)

EDITORIAL

We have had a rather fruitful time in the Society of late in regard to donations and offers of help. We are still waiting to hear whether the Society and several of our individual members have been successful in a variety of applications for the Minister for the Environment's Environmental Community Grants, but private enterprise has been exceedingly generous in the interim!

Mr Angus Matheson of Jetpets at Perth Airport donated approximately fifty (50) ex-hire airline kennels, both PP20 and PP40, which are in very good condition and suitable for refurbishment and modification to suit raptorial birds. Kennels are being distributed to members. In addition, some surplus units have been passed on to other rehabilitators such as our friends at FAWNA and Pilbara Wildlife Carers. Not content with supplying us with kennels which can be used in our rehabilitation activities, Mr Matheson then went on to offer us some extremely competitive rates on transporting animals around the country! Members who need to transfer birds between towns should contact us for more information on accessing the discounted rates. The Society extends its profound gratitude to Jetpets and Mr Matheson for their assistance and support for our native animals and the volunteers who care for them.

Thanks go also to Ms Charlene Bysouth of Jarvis Carpets in Bunbury for her kind donation of outdoor carpet for use in lining pet pack floors and doors to make them safe for raptors.

Members, don't forget that if you need consumables for your wildlife rehabilitation operation, the Society keeps a range of items in stock for distribution either for free (donated items) or at cost (purchased items.) This includes the aforementioned airline kennels as well as a variety of consumables.

Remember that if you need something, check with us first to see if we have it in stock. Volunteer wildlife rehabilitators already give so much of themselves and their hard-earned cash. One of the Society's core functions is to support volunteers in meeting the financial costs associated with rehabilitating native raptors, so we want to give you stuff! It's what we do.

Our AGM will fall due soon and since last year's big weekend was such a success, we're doing it again! Rather than just have a meeting, we're going to go for training sessions, networking, freebies, AGM and annual dinner on the Saturday, followed by more training on the Sunday morning. This was very well attended last year and feedback was overwhelmingly positive.

It's that time of year where we ask our members to renew their annual subscription. Several of our members renewed as early as March — well done! Please remember that even if you use EFT to pay your subscription, we still need a renewal form from you for our records, so it is vital that you send your completed form to Noelene to ensure that your membership is correctly recorded on the register.

As ever, if you have any questions or need to catch up with us for any reasons, contact details are on the back page of this newsletter.

DEC BASIC COURSE IN WILDLIFE REHABILITATION

The Department of Environment and Conservation is continuing to run its Basic Course in Wildlife Rehabilitation throughout 2012 both in Perth and the regions. Course dates for the remainder of this year are as follows:

- June 16/17 (Kalgoorlie)
- July 28/29 (Kensington)
- August 18/19 (Katanning)
- September 8/9 (Kensington)
- September 13/14 (Kensington – special course put on for DEC Bush Rangers)

For more information or to book your place, please contact Lorene Bennett at DEC's Community Involvement Unit on (08) 9334 0251.

2012 PERTH ROYAL SHOW

Once again the Royal Agricultural Society has asked the Society for the Preservation of Raptors Inc to participate with a display in the Animal Nursery. We will need as many volunteers as possible in order to cover the full eight day programme. Volunteering to help out in the Society's education programme is a great way to learn about the birds as well as learning how to handle them under supervision. It's also an opportunity to meet and mingle with your fellow Society members.

The Royal Show is also the Society's biggest single fund raiser during the year, and the funds raised are then put toward supporting wildlife rehabilitation. We use the money we raise through the education programme to pay for medication, anaesthesia and surgical procedures, consumables such as dressings and topical applications, aviary building materials, equipment and training/networking opportunities for active members.

If you are going to be available during the week 29 September to 6 October and can spare at least half a day to volunteer at the Show Grounds, please contact Secretary Noelene on (08) 9453 6567.

CHEAP AND EASY ROOST BOXES

Enclosed litter boxes are all the rage with cat owners these days. For wildlife rehabilitators, an alternative use for a covered litter box is as a roost box suitable for small to medium cavity nesters such as Southern Boobooks, Barn Owls and Australian Kestrels.

The unit has a top and bottom element which clip securely together. The join should keep out any draughts. With the flap removed and the base lined with some outdoor carpet and astroturf, the cat box can then be positioned and secured in your aviary to make a cosy roost box.

Enclosed litter boxes are available from pet shops and various discount outlets. Pictured is the "Cathy" cat loo which costs \$20 from The Reject Shop.



MODIFYING PET PACKS TO APPROPRIATELY TRANSPORT RAPTORIAL BIRDS

Whilst an airline approved pet pack is undoubtedly the best type of box to use when transporting a small to medium sized raptor, the pet pack is only the starting point. Before it can be used to appropriately transport a raptorial bird (eagle, hawk, falcon or owl) it must be modified to ensure the bird's welfare.

To begin, the pet pack must be lined with flooring material. Plain plastic is slippery, as is newspaper. During transport, the bird can slide around and may lose its footing, leading to distress and injury. To safely transport a bird, the floor should be lined with outdoor carpet (one without a loop pile which can entangle talons) cut to size so that it does not move in transit. This allows the bird to stand comfortably and maintain its balance.

Continued on page 3

MODIFYING PET PACKS TO APPROPRIATELY TRANSPORT RAPTORIAL BIRDS (continued)

For long journeys or when using the box as short-term accommodation, a layer of artificial turf may be added to help keep the bird's feet clean

A perch is often desirable, especially in the larger PP40 box. Perches allow birds to sit comfortably and securely and also provide clearance for wing and tail primaries. A perch may be made from a baton of timber or even a piece of PVC pipe with two end caps on it, but the perch must be covered to allow the bird to grip. Artificial turf is the ideal covering for raptor perches, and for long journeys or short-term accommodation, a layer of insertion rubber may be included between the perch and the cover. The cover may be attached with tech screws or cable ties, but if using cable ties, ensure that the ties are secured with the joining at the bottom of the perch and that the ties are cut off. The perch must also be low enough that the bird cannot squeeze underneath it and injure itself on the joinings of the cable ties. The perch should be secured with at least two screws at either end to prevent rotation.

Pet pack doors are made of welded steel mesh which is unforgiving in the event of impact. Birds can become distressed if they can see through the door to perceive people and other animals moving around outside. They may try to escape through the locked door, leading to facial injuries for the bird and potential talon injury for anyone attempting to handle the crate. To protect both bird and handlers, the door should be lined with a piece of outdoor carpet. To do this, simply cut a piece of carpet to size, use a leather punch to make small holes in the carpet and attach it to the mesh using small cable ties.

A nervous bird or one undertaking a long journey may also benefit from having a strip of cardboard or outdoor carpet taped across the holes in the sides of the pet pack. In hot weather, however, it may be preferable to leave these uncovered to allow for ventilation.

Wild raptors travelling in unmodified pet packs can experience severe distress and injure themselves in transit. It is essential that pet packs be appropriately modified to ensure the safety and well-being of their occupants.



Clockwise from top:



- Interior view of modified PP40 airline kennel with carpet lining and artificial turf covering on lightweight timber perch.
- The door of the kennel, lined with carpet which has been secured using cable ties. The cable ties are fastened on the outside.
- The kennel has a removable fitted fabric cover which is secured using velcro. There is a hole at the top to allow access to the handle. The cover was made out of a donated Jacquard tablecloth which was not suitable for use inside hospital boxes.

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Society will be held at 4:30 pm on **Saturday, 4 August 2012** at the Eagles Heritage Raptor Wildlife Centre, 341 Boodjidup Road, Margaret River WA. As usual, the positions of Secretary and Treasurer will fall vacant and nominations are invited. Nomination and proxy forms will be circulated to members along with the official Notice of Meeting. Please remember that only members in good standing may vote or be elected to office, so make sure you get your membership renewal in if you haven't already!

The AGM will be followed by the annual Members' Dinner. A fluid therapy training workshop is planned for the Sunday morning. More details will be circulated with the official Notice of Meeting.

Please advise Secretary Noelene of your attendance or apologies for the meeting, dinner and training.

HOW TO CONTACT THE SOCIETY

General inquiries

- e-mail: via the website
- Website: www.raptor.org.au
- Post: PO Box 415, Forrestfield WA 6058
- facebook: www.facebook.com/raptor.org.au
- **Coordinator:** Philip Pain – Ph: (08) 9757 2960 (Margaret River)
- **Secretary:** Noelene Jenkins – Ph: (08) 9453 6567 (Perth)
- **Treasurer / Webmaster / Newsletter Editor:** Nancy Tang – Ph: (08) 9756 0669 (Nannup)

Education Programmes and Displays

- Philip Pain – Co-ordinator SPR, Eagles Heritage Raptor Wildlife Centre, Margaret River Ph: (08) 9757 2960
- Marra Apgar and Dion Mendel – Perth Raptor Care, Midvale Ph: (08) 6369 0705
- Yvonne Sitko – Western Australian Birds of Prey Centre, West Swan Ph: 0438 388 383
- Brian Mawby-Brown and Nancy Tang – EarthWings, Nannup Ph: (08) 9756 0669
- Janelle Ende – Just Raptors, Geraldton, Ph: (08) 9938 1447
- Rose Best – Pilbara Wildlife Carers Association Inc, Karratha Ph: 0438 924 842

EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

Perth Metropolitan Area

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

Country WA

- Philip Pain – Co-ordinator SPR, Eagles Heritage, Margaret River Ph: (08) 9757 2960
- Brian Mawby-Brown and Nancy Tang – EarthWings, Nannup Ph: (08) 9756 0669
- Janelle Ende – Just Raptors, Geraldton, Ph: (08) 9938 1447
- Rose Best – Pilbara Wildlife Carers Association Inc, Karratha Ph: 0438 924 842