

Rehab Easy Reference Sheet

Procedure for using wildlife for media purposes

Version 1 (December 2020)

Introduction

The Department of Environment and Science (DES) imposes restrictions on how and why wildlife, which are being held under a Rehabilitation Permit, can be used for media purposes.

It is imperative that wildlife volunteers understand these restrictions and the process to seek approval for rehabilitated wildlife to be used for media purposes.

Legislation

Extract from the Nature Conservation (Wildlife Management) Regulations 2006 below:

213 Displaying particular animals authorised with approval

(1) This section applies if -

(a) the holder of a rehabilitation permit is a voluntary wildlife care association; and

(b) the chief executive has given the holder a written approval authorising the holder to display an animal kept under the permit.

(2) The holder, or a relevant person for the holder, may display the animal.

(3) For subsection (1)(b), the chief executive may give the written approval only if the chief executive is satisfied -

(a) the animal does not have any visible signs of illness or injury; and

(b) the purpose of the display is -

(i) an approved display purpose; or

(ii) to raise funds to assist in providing care and treatment for animals kept under the permit.

Wildcare is required to seek approval for any wildlife held under its Rehabilitation Permit where it is proposed to use such wildlife for any media or display events.

A 'media event' may include:

- Newspaper or magazine article
- Television filming (e.g. news segment, television show)
- Filming for social media news (e.g. educational/promotional short clips/films)

A 'display event' may include:

- Taking an animal to a place for the purpose of putting it on display to the public (e.g. environmental expo, school, community talk)

Wildlife must only be displayed for Approved Display Purposes which include:

- 1) Give public information about the ecological role of the animal;
- 2) To promote education about, and the conservation of, the animal;
- 3) To promote an understanding of ecology and the conservation of the animal; or
- 4) To raise funds to assist in providing care and treatment for animals kept under the rehabilitation permit.
- 5) The display must not be conducted for a commercial purpose.

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Procedure for using wildlife for media purposes (continued)

Procedure to obtain approval to use wildlife for media

Outlined below are the steps required to be taken to use wildlife held under the Wildcare Group Rehabilitation Permit for media purposes.

Step 1 – Contact the Wildcare Media Coordinator

Contact the Wildcare Media Coordinator and provide them with the following information to enable them to assess whether the media event meets the requirements of Section 213 of the *Nature Conservation (Wildlife Management) Regulations 2006*.

- **Details of the media event including:**
 - Type of media (*e.g. photographs, filming*)
 - Name of media outlet (*e.g. newspaper, news channel, television show*)
 - The proposed date and time of the filming
 - Where the media event will take place (*this **must** be the member's address noted on the Rehabilitation Permit Authority issued by Wildcare*).
- **Details of each animal proposed to be used including:**
 - Species (*e.g. Rainbow Lorikeet, Common Ringtail Possum*)
 - Reason for care (*e.g. orphaned, hit by vehicle, injured by cat*)
 - Current stage of rehabilitation (*e.g. pre-release, hand-raising*)
 - Confirmation that the animal has no visible signs of injury or illness (*to ensure compliance with 213(3)(a) above*).
- **Purpose of media event including:**
 - The aim of the media event (*e.g. to educate the public about responsible pet ownership, to reduce vehicle/wildlife collision, to raise funds to cover costs associated with rehabilitating wildlife*)

Step 2 – Approval from the Wildcare President

Once the Wildcare Media Coordinator is satisfied the media event complies with the Regulations, the Coordinator will provide all relevant information to the Wildcare President and recommend that approval for the media event be sought from DES.

The Wildcare President will then prepare the appropriate notification form and submit to DES.

Please allow at least 3 days before the media event to enable these steps to be taken. Please remember that Wildcare has no paid admin staff and this work is undertaken outside of business hours.

The media or display event must not proceed until the Wildcare President has approved the request and the appropriate notification form lodged with DES.

There may be some circumstances where it is not practical to seek DES approval prior to the media event taking place. These circumstances would generally be limited to wildlife rescues where a news outlet may arrive on scene. In these cases, details must still be provided to the Media Coordinator as soon as possible after the event so that a retrospective notification can be submitted.

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Procedure for using wildlife for media purposes (continued)

Step 3 – Standards when using wildlife

Wildcare imposes strict conditions on how wildlife can be used for media events.

The following conditions must be met during all media events:

- The media event must only take place at the registered Wildcare member's property as listed on their Permit Authorisation issued by Wildcare.
- Any wildlife used must be in good health with no visible signs of injury or illness.
- Wildlife should not be subjected to any unnecessary stress. Photographs and filming should be taken of the animals in their enclosures wherever possible. They should not be made to 'pose' in unnatural positions.
- Wildlife should not be used for filming and photography for longer than 30 minutes (or a shorter period of time if the animal is distressed).
- Wildlife should not be handled by multiple people. Ideally, the animal should only be handled by the licensed Wildcare member however where appropriate, they can be handled by one other person (e.g. the show host). They must not be passed around for multiple people to hold.
- The use of wildlife should be restricted to a time when they are naturally most active to prevent them being woken unnecessarily. Animals in rehabilitation are recuperating from injury or illness and need adequate rest.
- All activities where wildlife is used, must be conducted in accordance with the *"Code of Practice - Care and Rehabilitation of Orphaned, Sick or Injured Protected Animals by Wildlife Care Volunteers"*.

Social Media

Where wildlife is to be used for social media purposes, approval may not be required in some instances.

The above steps must be taken in the following instances:

- Where wildlife is being filmed/photographed by a third party (e.g. news outlet, journalist, private photographer);
- Where the wildlife is being filmed/photographed by the Wildcare member and the member is to profit from the result (e.g. selling wildlife photographs, prints, selling video rights etc).

Where a Wildcare member holds a Permit Authority under Wildcare's Group Permit, no approval is required to be sought in the following instances:

- Where wildlife is being filmed/photographed by the licensed wildlife rehabilitator themselves at the address listed on their Permit Authority (i.e. they are not being transported from the address where they are being rehabilitated);
- The photos/videos are being used by the Wildcare member or Wildcare on social media platforms (e.g. Facebook, Instagram).
- The photos/videos are being used by the Wildcare member for their own personal use;
- The photos/videos are being used by the Wildcare member or Wildcare for educational purposes;
- The photos/videos are being used by the Wildcare member for personal fundraising activities (e.g. GoFundMe) provided that the funds being raised are solely to assist with their volunteer wildlife rescue/rehab activities.

Where wildlife are being used for social media, members must comply with the Wildcare Easy Reference Sheet - *Use of Injured Wildlife Images on Social Media*.

[http://wildcareaustraliainc.camp9.org/resources/Documents/ERS/ERS%20-%20InjuredWildlifeImagesSocialMedia%20\(Aug%202020\).pdf](http://wildcareaustraliainc.camp9.org/resources/Documents/ERS/ERS%20-%20InjuredWildlifeImagesSocialMedia%20(Aug%202020).pdf)

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Procedure for using wildlife for media purposes (continued)

Procedure to obtain approval to use wildlife for display purposes

Wildcare does not generally approve the use of wildlife for display purposes. Using wildlife in this manner would require the animal to be moved from the place of its rehabilitation which can cause significant stress to the animal.

Where a Wildcare member wishes to use an animal for this purpose, they must contact the Wildcare President to discuss whether the use is in line with Wildcare's standards.