

# Volunteer Manual

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Wildcare Australia Inc.

# Table of Contents

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|   |    |
|---|----|
| 1 - WHAT IS WILDLIFE RESCUE AND REHABILITATION? | 5  |
| 2 - ROLES IN WILDLIFE VOLUNTEERING              | 6  |
| 3 - THE RESCUE AND REHABILITATION PROCESS       | 12 |
| 4 - ABOUT WILDCARE AUSTRALIA INC.               | 13 |
| 5 – THE SEQ WILDLIFE NETWORK                    | 17 |
| 6 - MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION                      | 19 |
| 7 - BECOMING A WILDLIFE CARER                   | 24 |
| 8 - FAQ'S FOR NEW CARERS                        | 28 |
| 9 - OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY              | 30 |
| 10 - FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR CARERS            | 32 |
| 11 - RECORD KEEPING REQUIREMENTS                | 33 |
| 12 - WILDCARE EDUCATION PROGRAM                 | 35 |
| 13 - RECOMMENDED WEBSITES                       | 41 |
| APPENDICES                                      | 43 |

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# Welcome to Wildcare Australia Inc.

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Thank you for joining Wildcare to help our local wildlife!

Our unique and wonderful wildlife need us now more than ever, particularly after the devastating effects of recent natural disasters including bushfires, heat stress and extreme weather events. In the coming years we expect to see the ongoing impacts of climate change and the unfortunate destruction of wildlife habitat, and these will continue to create challenges for our precious wildlife.

Wildcare Australia Inc. is South-east Queensland's largest native wildlife rescue and rehabilitation group. It is only because of our passionate and dedicated volunteers that we are able help thousands of sick, injured and orphaned native animals and release them back to the wild each year.

The Wildcare Management Committee, together with our Species Coordinators and Education Team, are here to support and encourage you to reach your full potential as a wildlife volunteer.

This Volunteer Manual has been developed to explain how wildlife rescue and rehabilitation works in South-east Queensland. We encourage you to keep it handy and refer to it as you continue on your wildlife journey. It contains:

- a brief overview of Wildcare and the benefits and responsibilities of being a Wildcare member and details the various ways in which you can get involved that will help our wildlife
- important information about State legislation and permit requirements
- vital health and safety information.

So, on behalf of Wildcare, welcome and thank you for joining the Wildcare Community. We wish you a rewarding experience as a wildlife volunteer. Every contribution you make helps our precious wildlife survive and thrive.

Sincerely



Karen Scott  
President  
Wildcare Australia Inc.

# Wildcare Contacts

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**Emergency Hotline:** 07 5527 2444

**Website:** [www.wildcare.org.au](http://www.wildcare.org.au)

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/Wildcare/>

## **Members-only Facebook groups:**

Wildcare Wildlife Transport Network - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/wildcaretransport>

Wildcare Community Group - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/wildcarecommunity>

## **Email Contacts:**

### **General enquiries**

- fundraising enquiries@wildcare.org.au
- community events
- general enquiries

### **Secretary**

- permits secretary@wildcare.org.au
- general enquiries
- fundraising

### **Membership Secretary**

- new and renewing memberships membership@wildcare.org.au
- changes to personal information

### **Treasurer**

- donations treasurer@wildcare.org.au
- general financial enquiries

### **Education Team**

- workshop registrations education@wildcare.org.au
- training resources

### **Hotline Coordinator**

- Hotline roster hotline@wildcare.org.au
- Training for new operators

### **Rescue Coordinator**

- applications to join the rescue list rescue@wildcare.org.au
- updates to rescuer availability

### **Record Keeping**

- email submission of records records@wildcare.org.au
- all record keeping enquiries

### **Media & Publicity**

- Requests for media approvals media@wildcare.org.au

### **Safety Team**

- Reporting incidents safety@wildcare.org.au
- Safety Management Manual enquiries

# 1 - What is Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation?

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**Wildlife RESCUE** is the process of helping wildlife when they become sick, injured or orphaned, which often occurs as a result of contact with people, domestic animals or man-made structures such as roads and buildings. It also includes assisting wildlife when they become displaced or are found in dangerous situations.

**Wildlife REHABILITATION** is the process of providing appropriate treatment and care to sick, injured and orphaned wildlife and nursing them back to health.

**Wildlife RELEASE** is the process of returning healthy, rehabilitated wildlife back to their natural environment.

Wildlife rescue and rehabilitation is a fast-growing not-for-profit sector across Australia, with a rapidly expanding knowledge base and ever-improving professional standards.

In South-east Queensland, wildlife rescues are predominantly undertaken by volunteers through local wildlife groups, such as Wildcare.

We are very fortunate in this region to also have the support of 3 not-for-profit organisations who operate specialist wildlife hospitals, all of which also offer volunteer and/or employed ambulances and rescuers. These facilities are discussed in more detail throughout this Manual.

## Is it for you?

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Many people express an interest in helping our wildlife but may not realise exactly what is expected of them or how to become actively involved. This Manual aims to provide you with a clear understanding of the various ways in which you can become involved. We believe that by being fully informed, you will be able to find an area of the wildlife volunteer sector to best suit your individual interests and circumstances.

The activities of wildlife volunteers span the initial rescue of an animal, transporting it to a veterinary clinic or wildlife hospital, providing actual care for the animal at home through to arranging a suitable release site to enable it to be returned to the wild. Some wildlife volunteers are able to undertake all of these activities, while others prefer to specialise in one particular area. Being a wildlife volunteer provides a great deal of flexibility so there is generally at least one area to which you can contribute.

## 2 - Roles in Wildlife Volunteering

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The role of wildlife volunteers in South-east Queensland is diverse.

We have summarised below a list of the different activities so you consider which may best suit your individual circumstances.

### Wildlife Rescuer

A wildlife rescuer responds to calls for sick, injured orphaned wildlife as well as those which are in immediate danger.

Once the animal is rescued, the rescuer assesses its condition, and then organises to transport it to a veterinary clinic, wildlife hospital or another wildlife carer, either directly or with the assistance of a Wildlife Transporter (see below).

Sick, injured and orphaned wildlife require appropriate care and treatment as soon as possible to ensure they have the best possible chance of survival – **wildlife rescuers are the key volunteers who make this happen.**

Becoming a wildlife rescuer is an easy process:

1. **Become a Wildcare member** – join online at <https://wildcare.org.au/help-us/join/>
2. **Register and attend an Orientation / Rescue and First Aid for Wildlife training workshop.** This workshop will teach you the fundamentals of basic rescue techniques to get you started rescuing the most common wildlife found in South-east Queensland. Once you attend the workshop, you will be provided with a digital copy of our comprehensive rescue manual free of charge.
3. **Get your basic supplies ready** – the rescue manual includes information on basic rescue equipment, most of which can be obtained free of charge or second-hand at low cost.
4. **Join the Wildcare Rescue/Transport List.** You can stipulate the days and times which you are available to assist with rescues. We don't expect you to be available 24/7 – you just help out when you can.

If you don't yet feel confident enough to rescue a wild animal, don't panic! We will only ask you to attend simple rescues when you start out and in fact, most rescues are quite easy – sick and injured wildlife are generally easy to capture and contain. The most commonly rescued species by Wildcare rescuers include birds (e.g. Noisy Miners, Lorikeets, Magpies, Kookaburras), mammals (e.g. possums, gliders and kangaroo joeys) and small reptiles (e.g. Blue-tongue Skinks and Water Dragons).

Once you gain more experience and confidence as a wildlife rescuer, you may wish to get involved with more specialised rescues such as large birds, snakes, large reptiles or koalas. If you'd rather just stick with rescuing the more common and smaller species, then that's perfectly okay.

**Detailed information about becoming a Wildlife Rescuer can be found in the Easy Reference Sheet – *Get Started – Become a Volunteer Wildlife Rescuer* which is included in this Manual's Appendices.**

## Wildlife Transporter

Wildlife Transporters are an essential part of the wildlife volunteer network – they help get rescued sick, injured and orphaned wildlife **FROM** a rescuer, carer or veterinary clinic **TO** a wildlife hospital or a wildlife carer.

This is a great way to start to get involved in wildlife rescues, particularly if you're not yet feeling very confident to start doing rescues. As the animals will already be securely contained for safe transport, no handling experience is required.

Wildlife transporters are asked to transport a wide variety of wildlife including birds, mammals, reptiles and koalas. You may even be asked to transport more specialised species, such as bats and snakes, but only when they are securely contained under strict conditions.

Becoming a wildlife transporter is an easy process:

1. **Become a Wildcare member** – join online at <https://wildcare.org.au/help-us/join/>
2. **Register and attend an Orientation / Rescue and First Aid for Wildlife training workshop.** This workshop will teach you the fundamentals of basic rescue techniques. It's important to attend this workshop as it covers the safe transport of wildlife and will enable you to be covered by Wildcare's permit and insurance cover. Once you attend the workshop, you will be provided with a digital copy of our comprehensive rescue manual free of charge.
3. **Get your basic supplies ready** - the rescue manual includes information on some basic equipment which is handy to have available, most of which can be obtained free of charge or second-hand at low cost.
4. **Join the Wildcare Rescue/Transport List.** You can stipulate the days and times which you are available to assist with transporting. We don't expect you to be available 24/7 – you just help out when you can.
5. **Join the Wildcare Transport Facebook group** – The Hotline and other Wildcare rescuers and carers will post in the group when they need assistance with transporting wildlife. Keep an eye out for requests for help.

**Detailed information about becoming a Wildlife Transporter can be found in the Easy Reference Sheet – Get Started – Become a Volunteer Wildlife Transporter which is included in this Manual.**

### ***What will you be rescuing or transporting?***

Listed below is a summary of the species most commonly rescued in the Gold Coast region. This data has been provided by the Currumbin Wildlife Hospital and is based on the 2020 calendar year. This will provide you with some insight as to the species you will most likely be rescuing, transporting or caring for.

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Birds   | 70% |
| Mammals (possums, gliders, macropods, koalas) | 11% |
| Reptiles                                      | 12% |
| Bats  | 5%  |
| Frogs   | 1%  |
| Monotremes                                    | 1%  |

## Wildlife Rehabilitator / Carer

Wildlife rehabilitators care for sick, injured and orphaned wildlife in their own home.

Once rescued, wildlife is generally taken to a wildlife hospital or local veterinary clinic for a veterinary assessment. Once assessed and treated, animals are fostered to wildlife carers who continue their treatment and care until they can be released.

Our aim as wildlife carers is to care for, and then release, healthy rehabilitated wildlife back to the wild. It is important to understand that the animal's eventual release is our primary aim, and to remember:

- We do not care for wildlife to keep them as pets.
- Wildlife should not be allowed to interact with domestic pets (more information about caring for wildlife when you have pets is included in the following section).
- We must ensure that wildlife are not domesticated, either purposefully or accidentally – they must remain 'wild' and not become accustomed to people.
- Wildlife with severe injuries which would render them unable to survive in the wild are generally euthanised on animal welfare grounds. Only very specialised animals, with some conservational value, are approved by the Department of Environment and Science (DES) for placement into captive care.

Becoming a wildlife carer is generally the next step you would take after starting as a wildlife rescuer. Once you've joined and completed the initial steps as listed previously for becoming a Wildlife Rescuer, it's a fairly easy process from there:

1. **Decide what species you are interested in rehabilitating** – this will give you an idea of which workshops to attend first. Don't worry if you're not too sure about this; as a Wildcare member, you're welcome to attend all of the training workshops free of charge to learn more about what is involved with caring for each group of animals.
2. **Register and attend the relevant workshops** – here you will learn what is involved with caring for that particular species. Attending a basic workshop for the species you wish to care for is a pre-requisite to obtaining a Wildcare Permit Authorisation. More information about our education program is included further along in this Manual.
3. **Start to get your equipment and facilities ready** – each species has specific housing requirements and facilities that you will need to in order to adequately care for them.
4. **Contact the relevant Species Coordinator** – you will discuss with them your individual circumstances and they will help you determine which species, and stage of development and care, will be most suited to you.
5. **Apply for a Wildcare Permit Authorisation** – once you have completed the relevant workshop(s) and have your facilities together, submit an application for a Permit Authorisation. More information on Permits is included later in this Manual.

Wildcare has developed a series of **Species Fact Sheets** for the species most commonly rehabilitated in South-east Queensland. These include information on what training you need to complete, what is involved with caring for them as well as an overview of the equipment/facilities required. These Species Fact Sheets are included in this Manual and are available on our Wildcare website under the Carers Resources tab - <https://wildcare.org.au/carers-resources/>.

The Species Fact Sheets series include:

- Birds
- Bandicoots & Small Mammals
- Bats
- Macropods (kangaroos, wallabies)
- Possums
- Gliders
- Echidnas
- Koalas
- Lizards
- Turtles
- Snakes



Because the requirements for our native wildlife vary so significantly, it is not practical for wildlife carers to have facilities to care for all species. We encourage our wildlife carers to choose species which will best complement their individual circumstances and their available facilities.

Below are some examples of how wildlife carers specialise in different areas:

- Some choose to specialise in certain groups of species (e.g. birds, possums or reptiles).
- Some specialise even further by focusing on one individual species (e.g. lorikeets, Common Brushtail Possums or snakes).
- Some specialise in a specific age or stage of development (e.g. adult, furred or unfurred orphans).
- Some prefer to care for healthier, stronger individual animals whereas some carers (particularly those with a vet nursing background) may choose to care for more compromised animals which require medical or intensive care.
- Some care for baby birds or orphaned joeys which require around the clock monitoring and feeding whilst others may care for juvenile (teenager) or adult animals which have a less demanding feeding schedule.
- Some may only look after one or two animals at a time, while others have the time and facilities to care for more animals.
- Some prefer to undertake the final stages of the rehabilitation process and are able to provide a safe release site on their property for rehabilitated animals.

Focusing your rehabilitation activities on just one or a few specific areas makes it much easier to plan your facilities. It is also much less time-consuming. For example, having 6 animals housed in one enclosure and being fed the same diet is much easier than having 6 different species, all in different enclosures and all requiring different diets and feeding schedules.

We hope that after reading this you can appreciate that regardless of your individual circumstances, there is generally an area which will fit into your lifestyle. Attending the Wildcare training workshops, along with speaking to the Species Coordinators, will help you decide which path to take.

**Detailed information about becoming a Wildlife Carer can be found in the Easy Reference Sheet – Get Started – Become a Volunteer Wildlife Carer which is included in this Manual.**

## Wildlife Release Site

Some wildlife volunteers, who live on suitable properties, may also be interested in becoming a wildlife release site.

Our wildlife carers are always looking for properties with suitable habitat on which to release rehabilitated wildlife. In many instances this is a short-term commitment of 1-2 weeks which allows the animal time to become accustomed to the area before they are released.

While you do not necessarily need to complete training workshops to act in this capacity, we do still encourage you to do so, so that you can be responsible for more of the animal's care.

**Detailed information about becoming a Wildlife Release Site can be found in the Easy Reference Sheet – Get Started – Become a Wildlife Release Site which is included in this Manual.**

## Hotline Volunteer

The Wildcare Emergency Hotline is undoubtedly the most essential part of the wildlife rescue and rehabilitation process. The Hotline receives calls about a vast array of wildlife-related matters, but the most crucial role is to coordinate the rescue of wildlife in need.

Hotline volunteers (usually referred to as Hotline operators) coordinate with rescuers and transporters to ensure that animals are rescued promptly to enable them to receive appropriate care.

Becoming a Hotline operator is a very rewarding experience, although it can also be very challenging (especially during Spring and Summer)! If you have good organisational and communication skills, and don't mind talking on the phone, then this role may be a good fit for you.

To become a Hotline operator, you must be a Wildcare member and have completed the Orientation/Rescue and First Aid for Wildlife workshop. Although not required, every additional workshop you attend will help you to better understand the calls that come in from the public.

From there, our Hotline Coordinator can provide training to you and start you off on short, generally quieter shifts. We have an amazing group of volunteers in the Hotline Team and mentors are available to help and support you.

The Hotline is manned by volunteers from their own home and rostered shifts are generally 2-3 hours. Even just one shift a fortnight is a tremendous help to our wildlife. And as one of our Hotline volunteers recently commented, there aren't many volunteer opportunities that you can do in your pyjamas!

## **Volunteering with a wildlife carer**

If you don't feel that you can commit to caring for wildlife at home, you may like to consider helping one of our busy wildlife carers at their home. We have some members who care for large numbers of animals, particularly during Spring/Summer, and would appreciate even a few hours of help to clean enclosures, set up aviaries, and prepare food. You may also be able to assist a busy carer with collecting fresh native vegetation to feed to animals in their care.

For insurance requirements, you do need to be a Wildcare member and at least 18 years old to volunteer at a carer's home. It is also beneficial for you to have completed some of the training workshops so that you can be of more assistance.

Volunteering in this way is a great opportunity to get some hands-on experience and to learn from some of our very knowledgeable and experienced carers.

## **Volunteer at a wildlife hospital or facility**

Some of our members volunteer at one of the dedicated wildlife hospitals in South-east Queensland. This is a great way of getting 'on the job' experience and learning more about our wildlife.

Some of the volunteering opportunities include:

- **Volunteer ambulance driver** – attending simple rescues and collecting wildlife from veterinary clinics and residents;
- **Animal care assistant** – assisting with cleaning and feeding duties under the supervision of a wildlife vet nurse; and
- **Wildlife hospital reception** – accepting animals admitted to the wildlife, processing admission paperwork and other general administrative duties.

There is more information about these organisations later in this Manual.

## **Administrative roles**

Like all not-for-profit organisations, there is a huge amount of work required 'behind the scenes' to keep things running smoothly.

If you have strong administrative skills, you might like to volunteer to help with some of these tasks. Some of the skills which we frequently require include:

- Graphic design skills to create social media posts, flyers, posters etc;
- Editing skills to proof-read and edit training resources, policies and resources;
- Social media experience to help with the Wildcare Facebook page;
- Website knowledge to edit website content; and
- Microsoft Excel knowledge to help with data entry and record-keeping.

## Woodworking skills

We have a continual demand for timber nest boxes, particularly for possums and gliders but also for our hollow-nesting bird species such as lorikeets and rosellas.

If you have the knowledge and tools to be able to build nest boxes, we would love to hear from you. If you're local to the South-east Queensland area, and able to make a quantity of the boxes, we would love to discuss this with you further.

We have an Easy Reference Sheet on our website under the Carers Resources tab on making possum boxes.

## Sewing

Our wildlife rescuers and carers are usually so busy that they don't get much spare time to make the variety of items which they need. If you are a keen sewer, and have access to a sewing machine, you may like to volunteer some time to help in this way.

On our website under the Carers Resources tab, you will find several Easy Reference Sheets with sewing projects including:

- Joey pouches (both single liners and double outer pouches)
- Rescue Basket Covers
- Large wallaby rescue bags

We periodically have other sewing projects which we require help with, which are posted in the Wildcare Community Facebook page.

## Other activities

There is a wide variety of other tasks which we often ask members to help with.

We have projects, such as our Glovebox Buddies, which we need members to help put together in readiness for displays and events and to distribute to emergency services such as SES, Queensland Fire Services and Rural Fire Services and Queensland Police.

We sometimes need help with collecting, sorting and distributing donations of linen and other supplies and cleaning and sorting our storage shed on the Gold Coast.

We will also often request assistance with fundraising campaigns or where we need specific skills (such as IT skills).

We usually post these calls for help in the Wildcare Community Facebook group.

## Summary

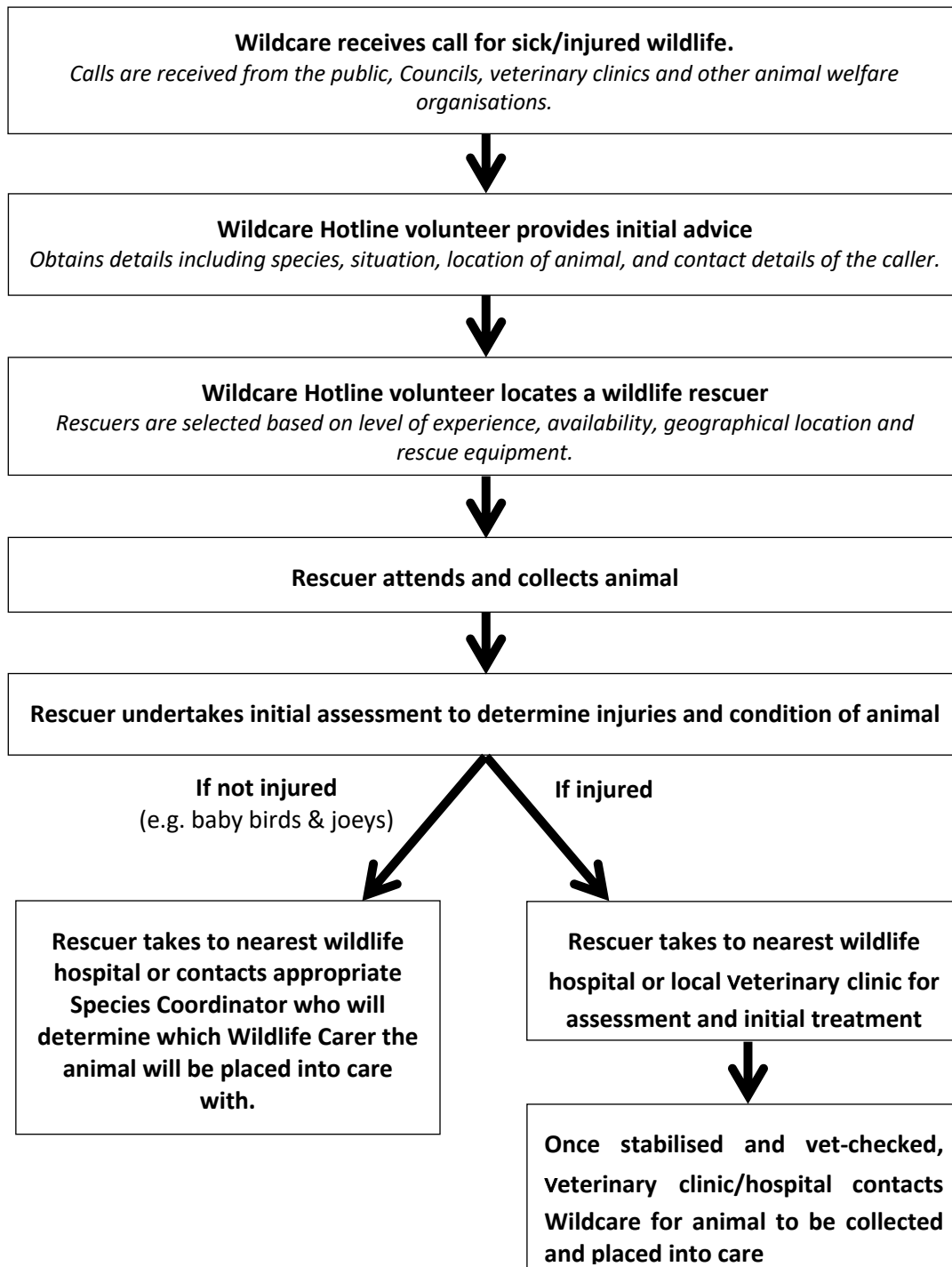
We hope that after reading the above information, you will appreciate that there are many ways in which you can become actively involved with helping our local wildlife and the volunteers who rescue and care for them.

Remember: we all have varying individual circumstances. Some Wildcare members are able to contribute a lot more than others because they may have fewer commitments whilst other members may only be able to contribute on an ad hoc basis. There is no 'one size fits all' approach when it comes to helping our wildlife. Any contribution you can make is important and makes the world of difference to every animal you help.

### 3 - The Rescue and Rehabilitation Process

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Below is a brief outline of how rescue calls are responded to.



## 4 - About Wildcare Australia Inc.

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### History

Wildcare Australia Inc. was formed in late 1993 by Dr Jonathon Hanger and was originally called the Australian Koala Hospital Association Inc. Wildcare is an Incorporated Association, a registered charity with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) and is listed on the Register of Environmental Organisations.

The wildlife rescue and rehabilitation component of Wildcare was originally formed by Eleanor Hanger, Gail Gipp and Sharon White, who started a 24/7 wildlife hotline for South-east Queensland. From there, Wildcare expanded and now covers a large area from the NSW border, west to Boonah to as far north as Gympie.

The Council areas where we are most active include:

- Gold Coast
- Logan
- Scenic Rim
- Redlands
- Brisbane
- Moreton Bay
- Sunshine Coast
- Noosa

While we have members in other Council regions, we aren't able to offer as comprehensive support to members in those areas and we don't receive as many rescue calls in those areas. We do however network with other wildlife groups to ensure the best outcome for our wildlife.

### Aims and Objectives

Wildcare's aims and objectives are to:

- Rescue and care for sick, injured, orphaned and displaced native wildlife with the intention of returning them to the wild.
- Provide training to volunteers in all aspects of wildlife rehabilitation.
- Promote the protection of wildlife by maintaining and re-establishing habitat, and by controlling feral and domestic animals.
- Advise the community on solutions to wildlife problems.
- Raise public awareness of Australia's unique wildlife and its diverse habitat requirements through community talks and education programmes.
- Operate an efficient wildlife organisation in South-east Queensland, which can be contacted at any time by any person in the community needing assistance with the care or rescue of native wildlife.

### Licensed Wildlife Rehabilitation Group

Wildcare is licensed by the Department of Environment and Science (DES) and holds a group Rehabilitation Permit. The Wildcare Group Permit can be endorsed by the Wildcare President to those members who have undertaken the necessary training and have the appropriate facilities to care for certain species of wildlife. This authorisation enables licensed wildlife carers to legally possess sick, injured and orphaned wildlife for the purpose of rehabilitating and releasing them back to the wild.

### Organisational Structure

Wildcare operates entirely by volunteers and has no paid staff. Like most wildlife volunteer wildlife groups, we do not have an administrative office or central call centre – our volunteers undertake their roles from their own homes, using mostly their own equipment and resources.

There is a variety of key volunteers within the group who provide a high level of support to members and ensures that it operates as professionally and efficiently as possible, including:

## **Management Committee**

Wildcare is overseen by a Management Committee, which consists of a President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and several Committee Members. The Management Committee is responsible for overseeing the operation of the organisation. The Management Committee is elected at the Annual General Meeting each year and meets each month.

## **Education Team**

The Wildcare Education Team consists of two Education Coordinators who are responsible for developing the Education Calendar, creating new training manuals and resources, developing standards of care and ensuring that all training material is of a high standard.

The team also includes an Education Administrative Officer who manages workshop venue bookings, workshop registrations, Certificates of Attendance, maintaining a comprehensive training database as well as distributing training resources to members.

## **Hotline Coordinator**

The Hotline Coordinator provides training and mentoring to new Hotline volunteers. They are also responsible for managing the Hotline roster.

## **Rescue Coordinator**

The Rescue Coordinator works closely with the Hotline Coordinator and maintains the Wildcare Rescue List. They process all new requests to be included in the Rescue List and maintains all associated documents used by the Hotline volunteers in running the emergency service.

## **Membership Secretary**

Our Membership Secretary processes all new and renewing memberships each year and maintains the Wildcare membership database.

## **Permit Coordinators**

Requests for Wildcare Permit Authorisations are evaluated and prepared by the Permit Coordinator so that they can be assessed and approved by the Wildcare President.

The Permit Coordinator then distributes the approved Permits to members and maintains a database of registered wildlife carers for the Wildcare Species Coordinators and DES.

## **Species Coordinators**

These roles are held by wildlife carers who have extensive experience with a particular species. They are responsible for providing support and mentoring to new and less-experienced wildlife carers, as well as delivering training workshops and upholding standards of care. They are also responsible for placing wildlife, which are ready for foster, with individual carers.

When you start out as a wildlife carer, the Species Coordinators play an important role in getting you started and provide ongoing mentoring. For experienced wildlife carers, the Species Coordinators provide ongoing support and advice and are an important part of the caring network.

## **Public Media Coordinator**

The Media Coordinator liaises with local media outlets (such as newspapers, magazines, television) to raise awareness of wildlife issues and the work of Wildcare's many volunteers.

## **Social Media Coordinator**

The Social Media Coordinator oversees Wildcare's social media presence on various platforms. They manage a small team of volunteers who create and disseminate important information about our local wildlife as well as share stories about wildlife which are currently in care.

### **Asset Coordinator**

The Asset Coordinator maintains Wildcare's comprehensive Asset Register so that we can keep track of equipment which is on loan to Wildcare members.

### **Grants Coordinator**

The Grants Coordinator is responsible for researching and applying for grant funding through various avenues. They also manage the expenditure and acquittal of successful funding applications.

### **Events Coordinator**

Our Events Coordinator organises Wildcare's attendance at various environment displays and events through South-east Queensland. The purpose of these events is to increase the public's awareness of Wildcare and the needs of our local wildlife. The Events Coordinator will often email members requesting their assistance with these displays.

### **Record Keeping Team**

The Record Keeping Team is responsible for the collection and collation of data from active Wildcare rescuers and rehabilitators. This information is relied upon heavily by the Management Committee and Species Coordinators and is an integral part of funding applications.

### **Safety Team**

Wildcare has a small team of members who are responsible for overseeing all aspects of health and safety within the organisation. The Safety Officers are responsible for conducting risk assessments, assisting in identifying potential hazards, developing corrective actions and distributing safety information and advice to members. They are also responsible for maintaining the Wildcare Safety Management Manual.

### **Emergency Response Team**

The Emergency Response Team comprises a small group of experienced wildlife volunteers who are specifically trained to respond to natural disasters such as bushfires, heat stress, flooding and other extreme weather events.

## Revenue and Expenses

Like all not-for-profit organisations, Wildcare is reliant upon both internal and external means to raise funds to cover operational expenses.

Revenue is raised through:

- **Grant Applications** – We apply for community grants wherever possible however funding opportunities for environmental causes are often limited. We have been successful in the past in securing funding, enabling us to purchase specialised equipment which is loaned to active Wildcare members. Other successful funding applications have helped with the expenses associated with running our extensive education program.
- **Sponsorship** – We rely on sponsorship from local businesses to enable us to purchase some of the specialised food and supplements which our wildlife require.
- **Monetary donations** – We rely heavily on donations from the community and local businesses to help cover expenses and to provide direct assistance to our wildlife volunteers.
- **Membership Fees** - Your membership fee helps cover some of the costs of the Wildcare training program which enables us to continue to provide volunteer training free of charge.

Some of the general expenses incurred by Wildcare include:

- **Education program** – The cost of offering a free education program to volunteers is considerable. Expenses include venue hire costs, computer, audio-visual and training equipment and resources.
- **Emergency Hotline** – The costs associated with operating a 24/7 Hotline are expensive, but as the Hotline is integral to the efficient rescue of wildlife, it is imperative that we keep this service operating.
- **Animal expenses** – Wildcare provides direct assistance to many of our volunteer carers to help them cover some expenses for food and supplements.
- **Emergency response expenses** – Wildcare has a small team of volunteer Trauma Carers who respond to reports of critically injured wildlife, such as kangaroos hit by cars. Many of these animals need to be sedated and humanely euthanised as a result of their injuries. The costs of the veterinary drugs are extensive.
- **Storage facilities** – One of our greatest expenses at present is the leasing of facilities to store the many resources which Wildcare owns and uses, such as training equipment and materials, emergency response equipment as well as donated items such as joey pouches, linen etc.
- **General administration** – Advances in technology have enabled us to reduce expenses considerably in some areas as we have converted to digital format for many applications. However, this increased reliance on technology has increased our expenditure considerably in other areas. Subscription costs to an online database as well as cloud-based sharing platforms, which enable the Wildcare volunteers to work remotely, have become much more expensive.



## 5 – The SEQ Wildlife Network

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There are many organisations, including both not-for-profit, government and commercial businesses in Queensland involved in the wildlife rescue and rehabilitation sector. Wildcare networks closely with all of these organisations to ensure the best possible outcome for our local wildlife.

### **Department of Environment and Science (DES)**

[www.des.qld.gov.au](http://www.des.qld.gov.au)

DES is the Queensland government department which is primarily responsible for the State's fauna and flora. They are responsible for all permits involving wildlife, including Rehabilitation Permits and Recreational Wildlife Permits.

DES is responsible for developing and ensuring compliance with the *Code of Practice – Care of Sick, Injured or Orphaned Protected Animals in Queensland*. The Code of Practice is included in this Manual.

As a wildlife volunteer, you should become familiar with the DES website as it contains relevant information on many wildlife related issues.

### **Currumbin Wildlife Hospital**

Millers Drive, Currumbin Qld 4223

<https://currumbinsanctuary.com.au/wildlife-hospital>

The Currumbin Wildlife Hospital was established by the Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary and provides an essential community service by admitting and treating over 13,000 native animals each year.

The wildlife hospital provides support to local wildlife carers volunteers by providing free veterinary treatment for sick, injured and orphaned wildlife in their care. The Hospital also has extensive rehabilitation facilities to care for specialised species such as raptors, seabirds and koalas.

The Hospital also operates several volunteer wildlife ambulances which attend wildlife rescues, transports wildlife from veterinary clinics to the Hospital and coordinates the release of wildlife back to the wild. More recently, it has partnered with WIRES to facilitate a paid emergency responder ambulance which is able to rescue more specialised species such as koalas and adult macropods.

The Wildlife Hospital has a number of volunteer opportunities as well, details for which can be found here:

<https://currumbinsanctuary.com.au/get-involved/volunteering/hospital-volunteer>

### **Australia Zoo Wildlife Hospital**

Steve Irwin Way, Beerwah Qld 4519

[https://wildlifewarriors.org.au/wildlife\\_hospital/](https://wildlifewarriors.org.au/wildlife_hospital/)

The Australia Zoo Wildlife Hospital is an initiative of Australia Zoo Wildlife Warriors and is situated in the grounds of Australia Zoo at Beerwah on the Sunshine Coast.

The Hospital admits in excess of 6,000 animals each year. The Hospital provides essential support for wildlife carers by providing veterinary assistance free of charge. The Hospital includes specialised rehabilitation facilities for many species including koalas and sea turtles.

The Australia Zoo Wildlife Hospital also offers volunteering opportunities, details of which can be found at

<https://wildlifewarriors.org.au/get-involved/volunteering>

## **RSPCA Queensland**

139 Wacol Station Road, Wacol Qld 4076

<https://www.rspcaql.org.au/>

<https://www.rspcaql.org.au/what-we-do/care-for-wildlife/rspca-wildlife-hospital>

The RSPCA Queensland runs a large animal care campus in West Brisbane and provides care for all animals, including pets, livestock and wildlife. The RSPCA Wildlife Hospital at Wacol accepts wildlife admissions 24/7 and admits over 26,000 animals every year.

The RSPCA operates animal ambulances in the South-east Queensland region which respond to critically injured wildlife as well as non-native wildlife. They also operate a number of volunteer wildlife ambulances which collect wildlife from the community and veterinary clinics.

The RSPCA operates the State-wide 1300 ANIMAL telephone service. The Wildlife Section of the website contains fact sheets and brochures on wildlife related issues.

There are a number of volunteer opportunities available through the RSPCA as listed at: <https://www.rspcaql.org.au/volunteer/volunteer-positions>

## **Local Veterinary Clinics**

The work of our volunteer wildlife rehabilitators is made easier by the enormous contribution that local veterinary clinics provide. Most veterinary clinics will accept sick, injured or orphaned wildlife from the general public and will provide emergency treatment at no charge.

## **Other Wildlife Rehabilitation Groups & Conservation Groups**

Wildcare works closely with other wildlife rescue and rehabilitation groups by maintaining a good line of communication to enable the sharing of information and knowledge. Wildcare's training program is open to all wildlife carers and our experienced trainers have been invited by other wildlife groups to provide training to their members in various species including koalas, bats, birds and orphaned mammals. Likewise, many Wildcare members are also members of other groups (i.e. Bats QLD, WILVOS, etc).

Wildcare also works closely with other conservation groups such as Gecko, Land for Wildlife and Wildlife Queensland as well as many local councils and their environmental staff. These organisations and Wildcare share the common goal of trying to help protect our wildlife and their natural habitat.

## 6 - Membership Information

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### Membership Types

Wildcare members are categorised depending upon their level of involvement, including:

#### **Member Only** – these members:

- do not rescue or care for wildlife (but may assist with transporting contained wildlife)
- financially support the organisation through their annual membership subscription
- have no obligation to lodge Rescue/Carer Records with Wildcare
- are welcome to attend the Wildcare training workshops free of charge
- are welcome to apply to become a Registered Carer at any time during their membership

#### **Registered Carer** – these members:

- do rescue and/or care for wildlife
- do hold a Rehabilitation Permit Authority issued by Wildcare
- must lodge Rescue/Carer Records with Wildcare
- must complete Wildcare training workshops to maintain their Permit Authorisation

#### **Associate Carers** – these members:

- do rescue and/or care for wildlife
- do **not** however hold a Permit Authorisation issued by Wildcare
- must be licensed either directly through DES or through another wildlife rescue group
- do not have to lodge Rescue/Carers Records with Wildcare (however if they hold a Permit directly from DES they can submit Records to Wildcare for inclusion with our data)

If you wish to become an active wildlife rehabilitator (a Registered Carer), please read the next section entitled “Becoming a Wildlife Carer”.

### Membership Period

The Wildcare membership year runs from 1 July to 30 June of the following year. Membership renewals are sent out in May each year. Pursuant to our Constitution, any membership that is not renewed by the end of August will be deemed to have lapsed.

If you joined Wildcare between January and June, then your membership will carry forward until June of the following year. For example, if you join in February 2021 then your membership will be current until June 2022.

### Membership Cards

When you join online, you are given the option of requesting a membership card. If you have selected this option, once your membership is approved, the card will be sent to you via post. Wildcare has printed lanyards available at a nominal cost which enables you to display your membership card when representing Wildcare.

If you are not intending to become actively involved in the rescue and care of wildlife, you may elect not to receive a membership card to save plastic and postage.

Please note that your membership card is not an authorisation to rescue or care for wildlife under Wildcare. Once you become a registered rescuer or carer, you will obtain a signed Permit Authorisation with your name, address and the species you are authorised to rescue and care for.

If you lose your card, please contact the Membership Secretary and request a replacement.

## Website

The Wildcare website contains a lot of useful information about native wildlife and can be found at [www.wildcare.org.au](http://www.wildcare.org.au).

The website includes a Carers Resources tab which includes links to all of the documents and policies which members will need to access including:

- Current training calendar
- Record keeping templates and guidelines
- Relevant legislation and Codes of Practice relevant to wildlife volunteers
- PDF versions of our brochures
- Easy Reference Sheets on a variety of wildlife rescue and care topics
- Membership forms
- Rescue and permit forms
- Species Fact Sheets
- Rescue examination and progress charts
- Wildcare Policies and Procedures

As we continue to create more resources, these are added to the Carers Resources tab.

We recommend that you become familiar with the Wildcare website so that you can access the resources quickly.

## Wildcare Facebook groups

Wildcare has several Facebook groups including:

**Public Facebook page** - <https://www.facebook.com/Wildcare>

This is where we share information to the general community about rescue stories, upcoming events and the progress of individual animals in care. We try to keep this social media page positive and educational.

Be sure to click 'Like' at the link above.

**Wildcare Wildlife Transport group** - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/wildcaretransport>

This members-only Facebook group helps us facilitate the rescue and transport of wildlife which needs to get to or from a wildlife hospital, veterinary clinic or wildlife carers.

You must be a current financial Wildcare member to access this Facebook group and you must answer the 3 questions when requesting to join.

**Wildcare Community Group** - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/wildcarecommunity>

This members-only Facebook group is where we share all non-rescue/transport related information. Members share educational and interesting stories about Australian wildlife, share their experiences with wildlife which they have rescued or cared for as well as other relevant information.

This Facebook group is also where we put out requests for help for a variety of projects and tasks.

Again, you must be a current financial Wildcare member to access this Facebook group and you must answer the 3 questions when requesting to join.

## Wildcare Uniforms and Dress Code

We expect all members to dress appropriately when representing Wildcare and to always present yourself in a neat and tidy manner.

Wildcare has several uniform options available for purchase by Wildcare members to identify yourself as a wildlife rescuer including:

- Polo shirts embroidered with the Wildcare logo (available in both ladies and mens sizes).
- High visibility safety vests for attending rescues – screen printed on the back with “Wildcare Wildlife Rescue”.
- Lanyards to place your Wildcare membership card – these are printed with Wildcare on them.

We also offer packs of business cards for purchase by members, which includes a blank space on the reverse to include your personal information if you wish.

We aim to take a selection of these items along to training workshops so they can be purchased there. However, if there is a specific item or size which you require, we recommend placing an order at least 3-4 days beforehand by emailing [enquiries@wildcare.org.au](mailto:enquiries@wildcare.org.au).

Otherwise, a Merchandise Order Form is available to download on the Wildcare website under the Carers Resource tab and can be emailed to [enquiries@wildcare.org.au](mailto:enquiries@wildcare.org.au).

## Wildlife Brochures and Posters

Wildcare has a series of brochures which we encourage members to distribute where appropriate at rescues. We currently have brochures on:

- **Wildcare** – information on what we do and how to become involved
- **Helping Native Baby Birds** – information on how and when to intervene with baby birds
- **Feeding Wildlife** – cautions the community about incorrect feeding methods and foods
- **Homes for Wildlife** – encouraging the community to maintain suitable habitat in their own backyards for our wildlife
- **Wildlife and Pets** – information for pet owners to help them protect their local wildlife from coming into contact with pet dogs and cats.

We also have available brochures from other organisations including Wildlife Friendly Fencing and local councils. Brochures are provided free of charge and are available for collection from the Wildcare storage shed (by prior arrangement) or at some training workshops.

We also have several posters which are available to members to place in business and public areas (with permission). We have a general Wildcare poster, as well as educational posters on baby birds and koalas.

## Email Updates

Wildcare aims to keep members up to date by sending regular emails. If you do not receive these emails, please check your junk folder to make sure that the emails are not going there. Otherwise, please contact the Membership Secretary to check that your email address has been recorded correctly.

Although we do try to send updates regularly via email, we do disseminate a lot of information through the Wildcare members-only Facebook groups listed above.

## Annual General Meeting

Our Annual General Meeting is held in June of each year. The AGM is a time to thank key volunteers, vote for a new Management Committee and report back on the previous year's activities.

An invitation to attend the AGM is sent to all members several weeks before the scheduled date and financial members are welcome to nominate for a position.

## Privacy and Confidentiality

As a volunteer, you may be given access to other volunteer's private details such as address, telephone number and permit details. Private information relating to another person must never be given to a community member, another volunteer or organisation, without first obtaining the express permission of the volunteer.

On occasion, a Management Committee member may deal with a member on a sensitive issue. If you need to know of an issue in your role as a volunteer, you will be expected to keep such information confidential and may be asked to sign a Confidentiality Agreement.

Wildcare has a zero-tolerance policy when it comes to gossiping and a breach of this policy may result in termination of membership.

It is often necessary for the Wildcare Committee to discuss your rehabilitation experience and membership with other entities including the Department of Environment and Science (DES), RSPCA (Qld), wildlife facilities such as the Currumbin Wildlife Hospital, Australia Zoo Wildlife Hospital and other wildlife care groups that you are, or have been, involved with. In such cases, such discussions will remain confidential and will only be undertaken if it relates directly to your volunteer activities with Wildcare.

A list of our current membership database is required to be sent to DES each year to fulfil our obligations under our Group Rehabilitation Permit.

## Insurance

Wildcare is a member of Queensland Water and Land Carers Inc. (QWaLC). One of the benefits of being a QWaLC members is that it enables us to be covered under their insurance policies. The QWaLC insurance includes cover for:

- Primary Liability
- Personal Accident
- Protector Liability

Details of these insurance policies can be obtained from the Wildcare Secretary. If you do sustain a serious injury, please advise the Management Committee as soon as possible so that we can liaise with QWaLC.

Please remember that volunteering with for wildlife has some risks involved. Wildcare is not responsible for any injury sustained whilst undertaking volunteer work and no guarantee is provided that the insurance cover provided by QWaLC will cover you for medical expenses and/or loss of income.

## Donations

There may be situations where a monetary donation is offered to you whilst attending a rescue. You can direct the person to the Wildcare website, where they can make a secure donation through our online portal. <https://wildcare.org.au/help-us/donate/>

If the person would rather make a cash donation, please accept it graciously and obtain the person's name, email and address. You can then either:

- Pass the donation, along with the details, to the Wildcare President or Treasurer. The person will be forwarded a letter of thanks and a tax-deductible receipt; or
- You can make the donation personally through the above link on behalf of the person so that a receipt is automatically generated to them and you can keep the cash donation in exchange.

Any queries regarding donations, can be made to the Wildcare Treasurer at [treasurer@wildcare.org.au](mailto:treasurer@wildcare.org.au).

## **Involvement of Children**

Pursuant to DES and Wildcare policies, volunteers must be 18 years and older to rescue and rehabilitate wildlife in their own right.

Whilst we recognise the importance of teaching children about our native wildlife, it is Wildcare's policy that children under the age of 18 years of age should not:

- Attend to the 'rescue' or 'collection' of ANY sick, injured or orphaned animal on their own
- Should not physically handle any sick, injured or orphaned animal
- Should not feed any sick, injured or orphaned native animal

Wildcare encourages children under the age of 18 years of age to:

- Attend and observe rescues with an adult provided that they are not directly involved in the actual rescue
- Assist with the preparation of housing for native wildlife
- Assist with the preparation of food including the collection of native vegetation for native wildlife
- Assist with the daily maintenance involved in caring for sick and injured wildlife (e.g. cleaning of housing facilities and feeding utensils), and in doing so, also learn the level of hygiene required for personal safety as well as the animal's wellbeing.
- Assist with catching and growing live food (e.g. grasshoppers, caterpillars, mealworms etc).

This policy has been introduced to:

- Ensure that native wildlife have as little contact as possible with people to prevent humanization whilst in care
- Reduce the level of stress that sick, injured and orphaned native animals are exposed to whilst in care
- Prevent undue injury to children

Wildcare has developed an Easy Reference Sheet *Activities for Junior Members* which outlines information sourced from a variety of organisations that offer opportunities for children to learn more about our local wildlife. This Easy Reference Sheet is available to download on the Wildcare website under the Carers Resources tab.

## **Resignation**

If at any time you feel that you can no longer continue your role as a Wildcare volunteer, we ask that you notify the Secretary in writing via email to [secretary@wildcare.org.au](mailto:secretary@wildcare.org.au) or via post to PO Box 2379, Nerang Qld 4211.

Your resignation will take effect upon receipt of such correspondence or at a later date if you desire.

## **Termination of Membership**

A copy of our Termination of Membership Policy is available on the Wildcare website under the Carers Resources tab or by requesting a copy from the Wildcare Secretary by email at [secretary@wildcare.org.au](mailto:secretary@wildcare.org.au).

## **Grievances**

A copy of our Grievance Policy is available on the Wildcare website under the Carers Resources tab or requesting a copy from the Wildcare Secretary by email at [secretary@wildcare.org.au](mailto:secretary@wildcare.org.au).

Should you feel it necessary to lodge a formal grievance then you can lodge same, in writing, with any member of the core Management Committee (President, Vice-President, Secretary or Treasurer).



## 7 - Becoming a Wildlife Carer

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Becoming a wildlife carer requires commitment and dedication, even if you are only caring for a small number of animals. Each and every animal in your care requires your full commitment so it's important that you fully understand what is involved before taking the final step in becoming a wildlife carer.

In this section, we outline in more detail your obligations as well as permit and education requirements.

### **Your Obligations as a Wildlife Rehabilitator / Carer**

Our native animals have very specialised needs. Looking after them is very different from looking after a dog or cat. They have special dietary requirements, specific housing needs and many will require veterinary care.

To assure the welfare of our wildlife, we must ensure that you are ready for this commitment and have gained adequate knowledge before placing sick, injured or orphaned wildlife in your care. Not being fully prepared for the commitment, is likely to result in additional stress and suffering to the animal (or may even result in its death).

### **Training**

The section entitled "Wildcare Education Program" in this Manual contains comprehensive information regarding the Wildcare training program.

The following is a summary of your training obligations in order to become a Registered Carer with Wildcare.

New Members must complete:

- Wildcare Orientation / Rescue and First Aid for Wildlife workshop
- Caring for Orphaned Wildlife (only required if you wish to care for orphaned joeys)
- Relevant basic workshop (for the species that you wish to care for)

Wildcare offers basic training workshops in all species and these must be completed prior to obtaining a Permit Authorisation for that species. For example, if you wish to care for adult birds, you must complete the Native Birds (Basic) workshop. If you wish to care for orphaned possums, you must complete the Caring for Orphaned Mammal workshop, as well as the Possum (Basic) workshop.

Wildcare has produced an Easy Reference Training Table which sets out in more detail which workshops you need to complete for each species. This Table is also included at the back of the Wildcare Education Calendar.

Once you have completed the necessary training, you can apply for a Wildcare Permit Authorisation (further information on Permits follows).

### **Ongoing Training Requirements**

Practices within the wildlife rehabilitation sector are continually evolving so it is important that all wildlife carers keep up to date with the latest information and standards for the species they are caring for.

Once you are a registered carer with Wildcare, you need to complete an appropriate Wildcare training workshop each year for the species you are caring for. Wildcare offers a variety of advanced training workshops to enable you to further your knowledge and skills. You are not expected to attend the basic training workshops each year, although you are certainly welcome to.



For example, if you are caring for birds, the first year you would complete the Birds (Basic) and Birds (Babies) workshops. The following year, you might elect to attend the Advanced Bird workshop or the Advanced First Aid workshop, both of which would meet your ongoing training requirements.

Attending regular training workshops not only allows you to further your knowledge base, but also provides an opportunity to network with other wildlife carers.

### **Other training options**

You can apply for recognition for attending other events such as wildlife conferences, accredited courses or some training workshops offered by other accredited wildlife rehabilitation organisations. Whether these workshops are recognised is solely at the discretion of the Wildcare Education Coordinator.

If you have any questions about training requirements, please email the Wildcare Education Team at [education@wildcare.org.au](mailto:education@wildcare.org.au).

### **Permit Requirements**

In order to rehabilitate wildlife in Queensland, you must hold a Rehabilitation Permit.

Rehabilitation Permits are issued by the Department of Environment and Science (DES) to incorporated wildlife care groups, such as Wildcare. The President of the group is then able to endorse the group permit to individual members who meet certain criteria as set out in the Code of Practice. This endorsement is called a **Permit Authorisation**.

### **Applying for a Wildcare Permit Authorisation**

Permit Authorisations are not automatically issued to members, as some members do not rescue or care for wildlife.

It is your obligation to apply for a Permit Authorisation once you have completed the relevant training and you are ready to start rescuing and/or caring for wildlife. Once you are issued with a Permit Authorisation, we would be expecting you to be nearly ready to start caring for wildlife, so we ask that you do not apply for a Permit Authorisation until you are ready to make that commitment.

To apply for a Permit Authorisation, complete the Request for Permit Authorisation application form which is available to download on the Wildcare website under the Carers Resources tab. There are 2 application forms available – one for general species and one for specialised species. New members need to submit the application form for general species. Specialised species covers animals such as koalas, echidnas, some glider species, raptors, venomous snakes and bats and are only issued to experienced carers. A copy of this application form is also provided to you at the Wildcare Orientation/Rescue workshop.

A Wildcare Permit Authorisation includes a full copy of the Rehabilitation Permit issued by DES to Wildcare as well as a Permit Authorisation signed by the Wildcare President. The Permit Authorisation includes your full name, membership number, residential address where you are permitted to hold wildlife as well as the species Wildcare has authorised you to rescue and/or care for. In some circumstances, the Permit Authorisation may include some special conditions.

Permit Authorisations expire on the 30<sup>th</sup> June each year in line with the Wildcare membership year. An invitation is emailed to all members in May of each year to submit a new application. You must remain a financial member of Wildcare to be eligible to hold a Permit Authorisation.

As from July 2021, Permit Authorisations are emailed to members and no physical copy is posted. You should save your Permit Authorisation on your computer and we suggest keeping a copy of it saved on your phone as well. **This Permit Authorisation is your evidence that you are licensed to hold sick, injured and orphaned wildlife under the *Nature Conservation (Wildlife) Regulation 2006*.**

You may be asked to provide a copy of your Rehabilitation Permit Endorsement to wildlife facilities or veterinary clinics when collecting wildlife to ensure you are appropriately licensed.

Permit Authorisations can only be issued to members who are 18 years of age and older.

Wildcare regularly provides a list of all Wildcare registered carers to the wildlife facilities in South-east Queensland including the Currumbin Wildlife Hospital, Australia Zoo Wildlife Hospital and RSPCA (Queensland) so that they can easily identify registered carers.

For more information on wildlife permits in Queensland, we have developed an Easy Reference Sheet – *Wildlife Permits in Queensland*, which explains the differences between the most commonly issued permits in the wildlife sector. This ERS is available to download on our website under the Carers Resources tab.

## **Record Keeping Requirements**

Once you are issued with a Permit Authorisation from Wildcare, your obligation to maintain and lodge Rescue/Carers Records commences. Maintaining accurate records of all wildlife you rescue and care for is an integral part of Wildcare's operations.

If you do not lodge your Records, the renewal of your Permit Authorisation may be denied.

This Manual includes a section "Record Keeping Requirements" and provides details of your obligations in this regard.

## **Registering wildlife with a Wildcare Species Coordinator**

One of the conditions of a Permit Authorisation from Wildcare, is that you must register all animals, including those which have come into your care from a source outside of Wildcare, to the relevant Species Coordinator for your region. This enables animals to be grouped together where required to ensure the best outcomes for the animals.

Being endorsed under the Wildcare Group Rehabilitation Permit, means that Wildcare is ultimately responsible for your actions as a wildlife volunteer as well as the welfare of any animals in your care.

Where animals are rescued and taken immediately to a wildlife hospital or veterinary clinic and left there for treatment, there is no requirement to advise the Species Coordinator. However, if you are intending to take the animal home to provide emergency care, or have the equipment, training and relevant Permit Authorisation and wish to care for that animal, you must contact your Species Coordinator. Failure to register animals to relevant Coordinator may result in your Permit Authorisation being cancelled.

A Contact List for the Wildcare Species Coordinators is provided at the Orientation/Rescue workshop and the link to the current list is included at the bottom of all email blasts from our membership database. We suggest that you save the contact details for your local area in your phone so you have ready access to them.

## **Restrictions on Using Wildlife during Rehabilitation**

There are restrictions placed on all wildlife carers in Queensland as to how you can treat or use wildlife whilst in your care. Some of these restrictions are listed in the DES Guideline "*Rehabilitation sick, injured and orphaned protected animals – Conditions and restrictions – Taking and keeping protected animals*". A copy of this Guideline is included in the Appendices.

In summary, you should note the following restrictions:

- Wildlife is not permitted to be used for any media purposes (i.e. newspaper, television etc) without approval from both the Wildcare President and DES. This is classified as "using" or "displaying" wildlife. See Section 213 of the *Nature Conservation (Wildlife Management) Regulation 2006*.
- Wildlife is not permitted to be "displayed" in any manner without written permission from both the Wildcare President and DES. The term "displaying" includes taking an animal to a school, community group, expo or exhibition for the purpose of showing the animal to any person. See Section 213 of the *Nature Conservation (Wildlife Management) Regulation 2006*.
- Wildlife is only permitted to be held at the permanent residential address of the wildlife carer as noted on their Permit Authorisation. There are restrictions on when wildlife can be moved from the residential address and these are listed in the Guideline in the Appendices.
- Wildlife being rehabilitated in Queensland are not permitted to be moved interstate for any reason

without the express permission of the Wildcare President, DES and the appropriate governing authority for the State/Territory which they are being moved into. This includes the temporary movement such as going interstate for a holiday.

Wildcare has produced several Easy Reference Sheets on the use of wildlife for media purposes which can be downloaded from the Wildcare website and these include:

- **Using Wildlife for Media Purposes** – this outlines the procedure to be adopted if you wish to use wildlife in your care for educational media purposes; and
- **Use of Injured Wildlife Images on Social Media** – this outlines Wildcare’s policy on the use of images on social media platforms.

If you require any clarification on any of these issues, please contact the Wildcare President or Media Coordinator.

### **Additional Information for Associate Carers**

Wildcare has many members who are classified as “Associate Carers”. Generally, these members are experienced wildlife carers who join Wildcare to network with other wildlife volunteers and to further their knowledge through attending our training workshops.

Associate Carers:

- Do not hold a Permit Authorisation issued by Wildcare but may have a Permit issued directly by DES or by another wildlife rehabilitation organisation.
- May be requested to provide a copy of their Rehabilitation Permit to Wildcare in the event that wildlife is transferred to them from a Wildcare Registered Carer. This is to ensure that they are appropriately licensed.
- May request to be included on the Wildcare Rescue List.
- Have no obligation to lodge Rescue/Carers Records with Wildcare as it would be assumed that they are lodging records with another wildlife rehabilitation organisation.
- Are welcome to attend the Wildcare training workshops free of charge whilst a current financial member.
- Contribute to Wildcare by sharing their experience and knowledge and by assisting Wildcare Species Coordinators with networking between rehabilitators to ensure the best placement of wildlife.
- Are expected to comply with the Policies and Procedures of Wildcare Australia Inc.
- Are expected to comply with the Privacy and Confidentiality Policy of Wildcare Australia Inc.

### **In Summary**

Becoming involved with wildlife rehabilitation is both challenging and immensely rewarding.

To help you on your way, remember:

- Learn as much as you can about wildlife rehabilitation by reading, attending training workshops, and talking with other wildlife carers.
- Volunteer to help a local wildlife carer, or at a wildlife hospital or rehabilitation facility.
- Discuss with your family the degree to which you want to be involved and what that might mean for them.
- When you are ready, start small - doing one animal extremely well makes you a good wildlife carer. Never take on too many animals or too many different species.
- Begin to gather the required supplies and acquire or build cages and enclosures.
- Remember that native animals must have no contact with domestic animals, as familiarity with pets, especially dogs and cats, will seriously jeopardise their survival once released.

## 8 - FAQ's for new carers

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We have listed below some of the most commonly asked questions received from new members.

### ***How old do I have to be to become a wildlife carer?***

You do need to be 18 years of age to hold a Wildcare Permit Authorisation.

Members 14-16 can attend training workshops when accompanied by an adult Wildcare member.

Members 16-18 can attend training workshops without being accompanied by an adult.

We have a lot of members with children. There are some aspects of wildlife rehabilitation which they can assist with, but there are others which they cannot. For example, they cannot rescue or handle sick, injured and orphaned wildlife. They can however assist with some rehab activities, such as helping to collect food, cleaning, in-direct feeding.

### ***What happens to animals that can't be released?***

Our native wildlife suffers significantly from stress when in captivity. It would not be fair to keep unreleasable animals in cages for the rest of their lives, nor would it be humane to release them if they had very little chance of survival.

Under Queensland legislation, wildlife which would not be releasable are generally humanely euthanised by vet. There are some exceptional circumstances though where unreleasable animals may be placed into zoos and parks and this is facilitated through the Queensland Species Management Plan (QSMP) but this is generally limited to species of conservational and educational value (e.g. raptors, koalas).

### ***I work, can I still rescue or care for wildlife?***

Yes! In fact, the majority of wildlife volunteers do work either part or full time in industries unrelated to wildlife. There are so many different facets to wildlife volunteering so there is always some way which you can help.

### ***I have pet dog/cat, can I still care for wildlife?***

Yes! Wildlife volunteers are all animal lovers so most have pet dogs, cats, birds, chickens and whatever else! We just have to make sure that domestic animals are not allowed to interact with wildlife in care. Even though your pet may be harmless, we have to make sure that all wildlife maintains their natural instinct to fear domestic pets because so many other pet owners are not as responsible as you may be.

### ***I have kids, can I still care for wildlife?***

Yes, you can. Many wildlife volunteers have children and for most, helping our wildlife is a family activity. You just have to make sure that children and wildlife are kept safe and that children understand that they are not pets and they do not handle them.

***I don't have much money; how much is this going to cost?***

Unfortunately, there are some costs involved with being a wildlife volunteer. But there are many aspects of helping which don't cost much at all. Starting out as a transporter or rescuer will cost a little in fuel but we don't expect you to be travelling long distances to do this and we have a great network of volunteers to make sure that we operate as efficiently as possible.

Wildcare is able to assist with some expenses and we often have items donated to distribute or loan to volunteers. You will learn more about the costs involved at the training workshops.

***I only have a small house, or live in a unit, can I still care for wildlife?***

Yes, you can. Some species, or stages of development, do take up a bit more room but there are others which don't take up much room at all. Just a small area at home where you can keep wildlife quiet works well for most species (e.g. spare bedroom or bathroom, section in the garage etc). Some animals in care will only require a bit of room inside, whilst others may only require room outside.

If you don't feel that you have the space at home to care for wildlife, you can still contribute by being a wildlife transporter or rescuer.

***I like to go on holidays sometimes, how long do wildlife stay in care?***

Wildlife are in care for varying periods of time. Some only require care for a few days or weeks, whilst others require care for 12+ months. Again, there are so many variables when caring for wildlife, that there would be sure to be individual animals that only require short-term care.

***I don't have a car, is there any way that I can still help?***

Many of the volunteer roles do require a reliable vehicle, such as transporting or rescuing. Rehabilitating some wildlife species will require the use of a car for collecting natural food (browse/leaf) as well as veterinary visits and releases. If you don't have access to a vehicle at all, there may be other ways which you can assist such as volunteering on the Hotline.

***I don't want to do wildlife rescues, I just want to care for wildlife, can I do this?***

We encourage all active carers to participate in wildlife rescues where they can, after all, there wouldn't be any wildlife to care for if we didn't have volunteer rescuers. However, if you have a genuine reason for not being able to do rescues, then we're more than happy to discuss your individual circumstances.

## 9 - Occupational Health and Safety

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The majority of wildlife rescues are fairly simple and do not pose any significant safety risk. However, it is still important to understand that the rescue and rehabilitation of wildlife may place in you in potentially dangerous situations (such as working near roads, attending rescues at night).

At no time are you to put your own life, or the lives of others, at risk in performing your Wildcare volunteer work. Wildcare accepts no liability for injury or death caused in the course of any volunteer work undertaken for or on behalf of the organisation.

### Safety Management Manual

Wildcare has developed and implemented a Safety Management Manual to ensure the health and safety of its volunteers, members and the community.

All members must read this Safety Management Manual and adhere to the provisions contained therein. A breach of any of the provisions of the Safety Management Manual is grounds for termination of membership.

A copy of the Safety Management Manual is included in the Appendices and is available to download on the Wildcare website under the Carers Resources tab.

### Training Workshop - Rescue and First Aid for Wildlife

One of the first workshops you should complete is the Rescue and First Aid for Wildlife workshop which covers in more detail appropriate safety requirements when attending rescues. The training manual for that workshop includes comprehensive information on personal protective equipment (PPE) as well as safety procedures.

Listed below is a very brief overview of some relevant safety points.

### General Rescue Safety - Proper Attire

When attending rescues, it is essential that you are prepared. Some items of clothing and equipment that you should keep handy includes:

- Sturdy shoes or walking boots
- Long trousers (denim or thick cotton)
- Long sleeved shirt (thick cotton)
- Large-brimmed hat (for protection from attacking birds)
- Sunglasses or safety glasses (for eye protection from large birds and falling debris)
- Sun protection (sunscreen, hat and clothing)
- Wet weather protection

### First Aid Kit

We recommend that you keep a basic first aid kit in your car as well as a snake-bite kit. These are readily available at chemists and first aid suppliers.

### Zoonotic Diseases *(Diseases which can be passed from animal to man)*

There are risks associated with handling wild animals including zoonotic diseases.

It is important that you are aware of the risks in order to minimise them. If you maintain a high standard of hygiene when dealing with wildlife, the risk will be negligible. Those people who are at a higher risk include the elderly, children and those with a poor immune system.

Detailed information on zoonotic diseases is included in the Rescue and First Aid for Wildlife training manual.

## **Vaccinations**

We recommend that you speak with your GP about updating your tetanus vaccination, if it is due. If you are planning on rescuing or caring for bats, you must be vaccinated against the Australian Bat Lyssavirus. Most wildlife volunteers obtain these vaccinations through The Travel Doctor who hold the vaccines in stock and has a good understanding of these zoonotic diseases and the risks to wildlife rehabilitators. Otherwise, speak with your GP.

## **Mental Health and Well-being**

Just as we take the physical safety of our volunteers' seriously, we consider the mental health and well-being of our volunteers to be equally as important.

Rescuing and caring for wildlife can be exhausting, both physically and psychologically. Being exposed to wildlife who are distressed and in pain and coming to terms with wildlife which need to be humanely euthanised, can take its toll on the emotional state of our volunteers.

Wildcare has recently introduced well-being sessions into our training programs and continues to share resources to help wildlife volunteers. We have listed below some information which we hope volunteers will find useful.

We encourage our volunteers, that if you are struggling with the psychological aspects of your volunteer wildlife role, to please speak with one of the Committee members or Species Coordinators.

### **Two Green Threads**

<https://twogreenthreads.org/>

Not-for-profit organisation established specifically to support wildlife volunteers.

Includes a variety of webinars, podcasts and other resources to support and wildlife rescuers and carers which are all provided free of charge.

### **WildTalk – Caring for the Wildlife Carers**

<https://wildtalk.org.au/>

Phone: 1300 307 111

A network of counselling professionals available 24/7 to provide mental health assistance to wildlife volunteers. This service is provided free of charge.

### **Lifeline**

<https://www.lifeline.org.au/>

Phone: 13 11 44

Available to all Australians experiencing emotional distress. Provides a 24/7 crisis support and suicide prevention services.

### **Head to Health**

<https://headtohealth.gov.au/>

An initiative of the Australian Government Department of Health provides digital mental health resources.

### **Your Mental Wellbeing**

<https://mentalwellbeing.initiatives.qld.gov.au/>

An initiative of the Queensland Government, includes resources and improve mental health.

### **Your Doctor / GP**

Speak with your doctor about a mental health care plan and get a referral to a mental health professional.

<https://www.health.qld.gov.au/news-events/news/what-is-mental-health-care-plan-how-to-access-Queensland-Australia>



## 10 - Financial Assistance for Carers

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Unfortunately, being a wildlife volunteer will involve out-of-pocket costs to you. In South-east Queensland, we are fortunate to have the support of external organisations and authorities that provide wildlife volunteers with an opportunity to assist in minimising these expenses and we have listed below some information to assist you.

### Wildlife Hospitals

There are 3 dedicated wildlife hospitals in South-east Queensland, all of which offer free veterinary treatment for sick, injured and orphaned wildlife.

The Currumbin Wildlife Hospital, Australia Zoo Wildlife Hospital and RSPCA (Qld) Wildlife Hospital at Wacol provide essential veterinary treatment free of charge including procedures (such as X-rays, blood tests, faecal tests and provision of medications). In return for the generous support provided to volunteers, we encourage all members to support these organisations in their endeavours to raise funds and awareness. More information on how we work with the wildlife facilities is included in the Rescue and First Aid for Wildlife training manual and workshop.

### Local Council funding opportunities

Several Local Councils in South-east Queensland provide funding opportunities directly to wildlife volunteers to assist with expenses directly incurred in the rescue and rehabilitation of local wildlife.

Councils which provide direct funding include:

- Logan City Council - [Logan Envirogrants](#)
- Brisbane City Council - [Native Wildlife Carers Grants](#)
- Redland City Council - [Community Grants](#)

Wildcare will forward an email to members when these funding opportunities become available. To be eligible to apply, you must be able to provide copies of your Rescue/Carer records and hold a Permit Authorisation from an accredited wildlife group or DES.

Where Councils do not allow funding submissions directly from wildlife volunteers, Wildcare applies for funding as an organisation to purchase equipment and supplies which are then loaned to members in that Council region.

### Donations and Sponsorship to Wildcare

Wildcare aims to allocate specific donations and sponsorship funds towards helping with the costs of some food and supplements for carers who hold a Wildcare Permit Authorisation. Food supplies are purchased in bulk where possible and distributed to carers via the Species Coordinators.

We are fortunate that in the past we have also received donations which have been allocated to purchasing fuel cards for volunteers who undertake a large amount of rescues and transporting. Although it does not in any way fully reimburse volunteers for their out-of-pocket expenses, it is always greatly appreciated.

### Other tips to save money

Wildcare has developed an Easy Reference Sheet – Wildlife Supplies, which is available to download from the Wildcare website under the Carers Resources tab.

This ERS includes the contact details of various businesses which supply foods and supplements at below retail cost. It also includes links and information on other ways to help wildlife volunteers to minimise their expenses.

Donations of equipment, aviaries and enclosures can also be sourced from family, friends, colleagues or through advertisements in online marketplaces such as Gumtree, eBay or Facebook Marketplace.



# 11 - Record Keeping Requirements

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## Why Records are Important

A condition of your Permit Authorisation with Wildcare is that accurate records be kept of all animals that you rescue or keep in care. These records must be submitted to Wildcare's Record Keeper.

Our records provide valuable information on figures and trends about our native wildlife and why they come into care. This assists authorities, such as DES, Department of Transport and Main Roads and local governments, to plan strategies to reduce hazards that impact our wildlife. It also assists Wildcare in increasing community awareness of the need to conserve and protect our unique biodiversity. Our records data is also used to support funding applications.

## When to Submit Your Rescue/Carer Records

These records must be submitted every 6 months to the Wildcare Record Keeper as follows:

- Records for the period January to June are due by the 15<sup>th</sup> July
- Records for the period July to December are due by the 15<sup>th</sup> January

We will forward a reminder via email to all members when records are due to be submitted.

We strongly recommend that rescuers and carers update their records every few days to prevent information from being forgotten or mislaid. We also highly recommend that you either keep the records file in a cloud-based storage, or keep a backup copy, in the event that your computer crashes.

## Keeping Rescue/Carer Records

There are two ways to complete your monthly Rescue/Carer Records:

### 1) Excel Spreadsheet (*Preferred method*)

The record template is included on Wildcare's website [www.wildcare.org.au](http://www.wildcare.org.au), under Carer Resources tab. When due, please email the Excel records file as an attachment to the Record Keeper at [records@wildcare.org.au](mailto:records@wildcare.org.au). The Record Keeping Team will then process your records and email the spreadsheet back to you, so that you can continue to add subsequent records. Please allow a few weeks for these to be processed.

### 2) Handwritten Rescue/Carer Records Form

If you don't have the Excel program or are not too computer-savvy, you have the option of handwriting your records and posting them to the Record Keeper. The template for the handwritten record is available in both PDF and Word format for download on the Wildcare website under the Carers Resources tab.

Regardless of what method of record keeping you use, the guidelines for completing the records are the same.

Note: Please do not post in your Rescue Record forms, vet admission forms or progress charts. You will need the information from them to complete your Excel spreadsheet, but they are not complete records.

**Comprehensive guidelines on the completion of your Rescue/Carer Records can be found on the Wildcare website.**

## How to Contact the Record Keeper

- **By email** - Please send the Excel file as an attachment to [records@wildcare.org.au](mailto:records@wildcare.org.au).
- **By post** - Handwritten records should be sent on the Records Form, by post, to Wildcare Record Keeper, PO Box 2379, Nerang Qld 4211 or via email to [records@wildcare.org.au](mailto:records@wildcare.org.au). Please ensure these records forms are filled in completely and correctly.

## **FAQs about Rescue/Carers Records**

***If I am not endorsed under Wildcare's Rehabilitation Permit, and am not actively rescuing or caring for wildlife, do I have to respond to the reminder emails about records submissions?***

No. The requirement to keep records is only for members who are endorsed under Wildcare's permit, or have recently applied for endorsement. If you are applying for a Permit Authorisation for the first time, it is advisable to email the Record Keeper, even if to say you've had nil rescues to date. If you have been submitting records and are taking a break, please advise the Record Keeper so that they are aware.

***Do I need to keep records if I only rescue and do not rehabilitate animals?***

Yes. This data is just as important as rehabilitation data and is a means of identifying the impacts of land clearing, roads and domestic animals on our wildlife. Even if you didn't receive the call from Wildcare, you are still attending the rescue as a Wildcare member and so should record all rescues. Roadkill sightings are also good to include in your Records as these are forwarded to the Department of Transport and Main Roads and local councils.

***Do I need to keep records if I am not caring for wildlife under the Wildcare Rehabilitation Permit?***

No. If you are operating under a Rehabilitation Permit through another wildlife organisation, you should be submitting your records to them.

***Do I need to keep records of animals that I transfer to another carer?***

Yes. Both carers should include the record of an animal that is transferred between them. This ensures the details are received. Duplicate records will be merged by the Record Keeper at the time of collation.

***If I have had a 'break' from rescues/caring, with no rescues or animals in care since my last records were submitted, do I still have to submit my records form?***

Yes, however if there were no animals listed as still in care at the end of the last submission, then a simple email will be fine to advise 'Nil' for the last 6 months instead of sending through your records form. Your records form will still be processed and re-emailed to you once you have emailed the Record Keeper.

## 12 - Wildcare Education Program

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Wildcare is committed to offering its members the best training possible. Through training, we believe, our volunteers can provide wildlife a high standard of care and successfully prepare them for a successful release.

Wildcare's Education Program is highly regarded by many people within the wildlife rehabilitation industry.

We offer a comprehensive training program relevant to many levels of experience. Basic workshops are designed for those members new to the wildlife industry. Advanced workshops are tailored towards more experienced wildlife volunteers and those working in the sector in other capacities such as vet students, vet nurses/technicians and wildlife contractors.

We offer more than 40 workshops each year with most developed and delivered by our own experienced rehabilitators. Some of our advanced training workshops are delivered by experienced and well-respected wildlife veterinarians. Wildcare has always held the firm belief that training should be provided to volunteers free of charge and we are thankful that we can continue to offer free training to current financial members.

Wildcare has been invited to deliver our training workshops to other wildlife rehabilitation groups throughout Queensland and northern New South Wales.

### Workshops

Current financial members of Wildcare are welcome to attend the training workshops free of charge. Periodically, we may offer fee-based workshops however these will be clearly marked as such in the Education Calendar.

Non-members are welcome to attend for a small fee however members with a Wildcare Permit Authorisation will be given preference.

The Education Calendar is produced several times a year and can be found on the Wildcare website and is emailed to all members.

### Workshop Notes

Most training workshops include a comprehensive training manual for that species and are an invaluable resource for you in your role as a wildlife volunteer.

Training resources are made available to workshop participants after the workshop in PDF format by way of a Dropbox link. We recommend that you download the manual and resources to your hard drive or cloud storage, so they are easily accessible. The link to the resources remains valid for only a few weeks and will then expire. The link to the resources will be emailed upon receipt of the completed attendance list from the workshop trainer, so please allow up to a week for this.

We offer hard copies of the training manuals at most workshops for a small fee to cover the cost of printing and binding.

Training manuals and resources are provided to you for your own personal use. They cannot be provided to other wildlife rehabilitators/organisations. All workshop notes should be considered copyright to Wildcare Australia Inc. and cannot be copied or provided to any other person without written permission of the organisation and/or the relevant author of the notes. If you or another wildlife volunteer would like a copy of specific workshop notes, please contact the Education Coordinator.

## Registering for Workshops

Workshops require a lot of preparation on the part of the trainer and the Education Team. In order to ensure the room is set up correctly, ample workshop notes are available and catering arrangements are made, we ask that you register for workshops at least 7 days prior to the workshop being held. Since the introduction of COVID-19 restrictions at venues, most workshops are filling very quickly, so it is best to book in as soon as possible to avoid missing out.

To register for a workshop, please email [education@wildcare.org.au](mailto:education@wildcare.org.au).

When registering, please include your full name, your mobile contact number and your preferred email address (please ensure that your email address is one that is checked regularly).

Once your registration has been received, you will receive an email confirmation within 48 hours confirming receipt of your registration. You will receive an email reminder 14 days prior to the scheduled date. The week of the scheduled workshop you will receive a final email outlining details of the training workshop including venue address, time, trainer details, what to bring and any other requirements specific to that workshop.

Please ensure that the email address [education@wildcare.org.au](mailto:education@wildcare.org.au) is included in your safe address option with your email provider to make sure that emails aren't diverted to your junk/spam folder.

If you are unable to attend a registered training workshop, please notify the Education Team as soon as possible. We often have a waiting list for most training workshops and your place can be offered to another volunteer. Cancellations can be emailed to [education@wildcare.org.au](mailto:education@wildcare.org.au).

## Children – Age Restrictions

Unfortunately, we do need to place some restrictions on young members attending the training workshops. COVID-19 restrictions have sadly forced us to place further restrictions in this regard however we are reviewing these requirements frequently and are doing our best to try to accommodate younger members where we can.

Please note the following in relation to children who wish to attend the training workshops:

- Children under the age of 14 are not permitted to attend training workshops.
- Children between the ages of 14 and 16 must be accompanied by an adult or guardian at all times.
- Young adults between the ages of 17 and 18 can attend training workshops unsupervised.
- Children between 14 and 16 are welcome to attend the training workshops (subject to COVID-19 restrictions) however, we ask that careful consideration be given by the accompanying adult to the suitability of the workshop content for children attending given that:
  - many workshop presentations include graphic photos of deceased animals and necropsy procedures;
  - most workshops are full day workshops and children will often become bored and tired;
  - and some workshops may include the use of cadavers that have sustained trauma related injuries.

## The use of Animals at Workshops

Wildcare does not use live animals for display or demonstration purposes at training workshops. The animals we have in care are sick, injured and/or orphaned, and subjecting them to display to a room full of people is extremely stressful and could easily result in their death.

Instead, workshops may include the use of deceased specimens, photographs and videos.

## **Arrival Times**

As a courtesy to your trainer and fellow volunteers, please plan to arrive at least 15 minutes prior to the workshop's advised commencement time.

If you have not attended the workshop venue before, please allow adequate time for travelling, parking, and location of the room.

## **Kitchen Facilities and Refreshments**

As a result of COVID-19, we are currently unable to offer any tea, coffee or refreshments, and there are no lunch facilities at most workshop venues.

When attending training workshops, we strongly recommend that you are well prepared and bring the following:

- Insulated lunch box (there is no access to a refrigerator)
- Lunch (there is no access to a microwave)
- Cutlery (if required)
- Water bottle (the kitchen and water bubblers are not accessible)
- Snacks (for morning and afternoon tea)
- Thermos of hot water and tea/coffee supplies (if you wish to have tea/coffee).
- Napkin/serviette etc.

While there are generally cafes nearby, the morning/afternoon tea and lunch breaks are not very long (to enable us to finish on time/early). You may not have time to drive and wait for coffee during the workshop breaks.

## **Certificate of Attendance**

Certificates of Attendance in PDF format are emailed to workshop participants as a record of their attendance. Please note though that attendees who leave before the end of a workshop will not be eligible for a Certificate of Attendance; you must attend the full workshop to be considered as having completed it. Please allow two (2) weeks for the Certificate to be emailed to you before contacting the Education Team.

## **Enquiries**

If you have any questions regarding training workshops or the education calendar, please contact the Education Team at [education@wildcare.org.au](mailto:education@wildcare.org.au).

## Frequently Asked Questions

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The following questions are often asked by members and should assist with providing more information.

***Do I have to do the workshops in order?***

We do appreciate that sometimes workshops are not offered in the order in which it would be ideal for you to complete them. In this instance, you are welcome to attend training workshops out of order. Where a workshop has pre-requisites noted, it is preferred that you complete those pre-requisites first, however we can provide flexibility in this regard. It is important to note however, that until you have completed the introductory workshops, some aspects of the training may not be fully understood. For example, the Caring for Orphaned Mammals workshop covers in detail basic information which, in the basic mammal workshops, it will be assumed you know.

***What if I am really keen to get started with a species but there isn't a workshop coming up for quite some time?***

Don't despair! If you are really keen, you are welcome to contact the relevant Species Coordinator to discuss alternative options such as one-on-one training. You may be able to assist a busy carer in the meantime to gain some experience.

***If we have joined as 'family', does everyone in the family have to do the training?***

No. If you have a family membership, you need to nominate a 'primary carer'. This person will be responsible for any wildlife in care and must undertake the training. It is beneficial however for someone else in the family to undertake the training as well.

***Do I have to do Wildcare's training workshops if I have belonged to another wildlife rehabilitation group?***

We would prefer that you complete Wildcare's training workshops, however you can discuss this with the Education Coordinator. Unfortunately, we often don't know the content of other training workshops so it's difficult for us to determine if the training meets our standards.

***What if I can't complete a workshop each year but wish to maintain my Permit Authorisation with Wildcare?***

You can discuss your individual circumstances with the Education Coordinator, and we can work with you to provide some leeway where possible.

## Workshops Offered

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Below is a summary of the most commonly offered workshops by Wildcare.

For information on pre-requisites for each workshop, please refer to the current Education Calendar.

Other workshops may be offered from time to time on more specific topics and these will be advertised in the Education Calendar.

### **Orientation / Rescue and First Aid for Wildlife (Basic)**

- Compulsory for all new members wishing to be a rescuer, transport or carer
- Covers basic rescue equipment, rescue techniques, safety, assessment, basic first aid and common injuries and conditions.

### **Wildlife Rescue (Advanced)**

- Suitable for wildlife volunteers with some rescue experience.
- Focuses on advanced rescue techniques covering major incidents, koalas and adult macropods (trauma calls).

### **First Aid for Wildlife (Advanced)**

- Suitable for experienced wildlife rescuers and carers.
- Focuses on advanced first aid techniques including assessment, wound management, fluid therapy, injuries and diseases.

### **Wildlife Habitat and Native Plant Identification**

- Suitable for all wildlife carers involved in the rehabilitation of native wildlife.
- No experience required.
- Provides wildlife carers with the knowledge required to correctly identify native food and appropriate release sites for a wide variety of species.
- Includes ecosystems of South-east Queensland, flora and fauna associations, local wildlife food species and native plant ID.

### **Caring for Orphaned Mammals**

- Suitable for all wildlife rescuers and transporters.
- Wildlife carers must complete this workshop if you wish to obtain a Permit Authorisation to care for any orphaned joey species.
- Content includes identification, stress, release, emergency care, housing, equipment, feeding and injuries and diseases.

### **Native Birds (Basic)**

- Suitable for all wildlife volunteers including rescuers, transporters and carers.
- Content includes ID, injuries/diseases, feeding, housing, handling and equipment.

### **Native Birds (Baby)**

- Suitable for all wildlife volunteers involved in the rescue and rehabilitation of orphaned birds.
- Content includes ID, feeding, housing, handling, equipment and hand-raising.

### **Advanced Birds (Advanced)**

- Workshop delivered by an experienced wildlife veterinarian.
- Content includes anatomy and physiology, injuries, diseases, fluid therapy and specialised feeding.

### **Caring for Reptiles / Lizards (Basic)**

- Suitable for all wildlife volunteers involved in the rescue and rehabilitation of reptiles.
- Content includes rescue, injuries, disease, feeding, housing and lighting, handling and equipment.

### **Caring for Snakes (Basic)**

- Suitable for all wildlife volunteers involved in the rescue and rehabilitation of snakes.
- Content includes rescue, injuries, disease, feeding, housing and lighting, handling and equipment.
- Please note that this workshop **does not** include rescue and handling of venomous snakes or relocation of snakes (which requires a Damage Mitigation Permit).

### **Possums (Basic)**

- Members must have completed the Caring for Orphaned Mammals workshop prior to attending this workshop.
- Suitable for all wildlife volunteers involved in the rescue and rehabilitation of orphaned and adult possums.
- Workshop covers the requirements for rehabilitating some of the possum species of South-East Queensland, including the Common Brushtail Possum, Short-Eared Possum and Common Ringtail Possum.
- Course content includes ID, injuries and disease, housing, handling, equipment and feeding.

### **Gliders (Basic)**

- Members must have completed the Caring for Orphaned Mammals workshop prior to attending this workshop.
- Suitable for all wildlife volunteers involved in the rescue and rehabilitation of orphaned and adult gliders.
- Workshop covers the requirements for rehabilitating some of the glider species of South-East Queensland, including the Sugar Glider, Squirrel Glider, Greater Glider and Feathertail Glider.
- Course content includes ID, injuries and disease, housing, handling, equipment and feeding.

### **Bandicoots, Small Carnivorous Marsupials and Native Rodents**

- Members must have completed the Caring for Orphaned Mammals workshop prior to attending this workshop.
- Suitable for all wildlife volunteers involved in the rescue and rehabilitation of orphaned and adult small mammals.
- Workshop covers the requirements for rehabilitating species such as bandicoots, antechinus and native rodents found in South-East Queensland.
- Course content includes ID, injuries and disease, housing, handling, equipment and feeding.

### **Macropods (Basic)**

- Members must have completed the Caring for Orphaned Mammals workshop prior to attending this workshop.
- Suitable for all wildlife volunteers involved in the rescue and rehabilitation of orphaned macropods.
- Course content includes ID, stress, injuries and disease, housing, handling, equipment, feeding and release.
- Note – this workshop does not cover adult macropods – refer to the Wildlife Rescue (Advanced) workshop.

### **Echidnas**

- Suitable for all wildlife volunteers involved in the rescue and rehabilitation of echidnas.
- Course content includes rescue, housing, handling, equipment, feeding, hand-rearing and injuries and disease.



## 13 - Recommended Websites

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There are a lot of great resources available online, however there are also many which are ill-informed and may contain incorrect advice which may be detrimental to the wildlife in your care.

Please be mindful when you are looking for information online that there is a lot of information relating to the care of wildlife held in zoos and sanctuaries, and captive bred wildlife for the pet trade. The requirements and standards suggested for captive wildlife are often very different from those required for orphaned, injured or diseased native animals which are in temporary care until they are ready for release to the wild.

The following website links are reputable sites which contain sound advice and information to assist you.

### **Department of Environment and Science (DES)**

[www.des.qld.gov.au](http://www.des.qld.gov.au)

Contains information on wildlife management, rehabilitation permits, etc. DES is the Queensland government body responsible for native fauna and flora.

### **Department of the Agriculture, Water and the Environment**

[www.environment.gov.au](http://www.environment.gov.au)

Federal government department.

### **Currumbin Wildlife Hospital Foundation**

[www.cwhf.org.au](http://www.cwhf.org.au)

The Currumbin Wildlife Hospital Foundation is a not-for-profit organisation that supports and funds the wildlife hospital.

### **Australia Zoo Wildlife Warriors Worldwide**

[www.wildlifewarriors.org.au](http://www.wildlifewarriors.org.au)

A not-for-profit organisation founded by Steve Irwin which runs several conservation projects, including the Australia Zoo Wildlife Hospital.

### **RSPCA Queensland**

[www.rspcaqld.org.au](http://www.rspcaqld.org.au)

Information on a wide variety of animal-welfare issues. Includes a section on wildlife.

### **Australian Wildlife Rehabilitation Conference**

[www.awrc.org.au](http://www.awrc.org.au)

Website of the AWRC which is generally held bi-annually. This is a fantastic conference for all wildlife carers to attend.

### **Wildlife Friendly Fencing**

[www.wildlifefriendlyfencing.com](http://www.wildlifefriendlyfencing.com)

An informative website about the various types of fencing and the impacts upon our wildlife.

**International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council (IWRC)**

<https://thewrc.org/>

International site on wildlife rehabilitation. Contains useful articles and information.

**Australian Museum**

[www.australianmuseum.net.au](http://www.australianmuseum.net.au)

**Queensland Museum**

[www.qm.qld.gov.au](http://www.qm.qld.gov.au)

**BirdLife Australia**

[www.birdlife.org.au](http://www.birdlife.org.au)

**Australian Wildlife Conservancy**

[www.australianwildlife.org](http://www.australianwildlife.org)

**Australian Marine Conservation Society**

[www.marineconservation.org.au](http://www.marineconservation.org.au)

**Wildlife Health Australia** (formerly Australian Wildlife Health Network)

<https://www.wildlifehealthaustralia.com.au/>

**GECKO (Gold Coast and Hinterland Environment Council)**

[www.gecko.org.au](http://www.gecko.org.au)

# Appendices

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1. Easy Reference Sheet – Becoming a Wildlife Transporter
2. Easy Reference Sheet – Becoming a Wildlife Rescuer
3. Easy Reference Sheet – Becoming a Wildlife Carer
4. Easy Reference Sheet – Becoming a Release Site
5. Rehab Fact sheets for: -
  - Birds
  - Possums
  - Gliders
  - Lizards
  - Snakes
  - Turtles
  - Kangaroos and wallabies
  - Bandicoots and Carnivorous Marsupials
  - Echidnas
  - Koalas
  - Bats
6. Guideline – Rehabilitating sick, injured and orphaned protected animals
7. Code of Practice – Care and Rehabilitation of orphaned, sick and injured protected animals by wildlife carer volunteers
8. Safety Management Manual