

Volunteer Manual

Wildcare Australia Inc.

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Volunteer Manual – v14.1 (February 2023)

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Welcome to Wildcare Australia Inc.

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

Emergency Hotline: 07 5527 2444

Website: 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?

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?

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

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

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.

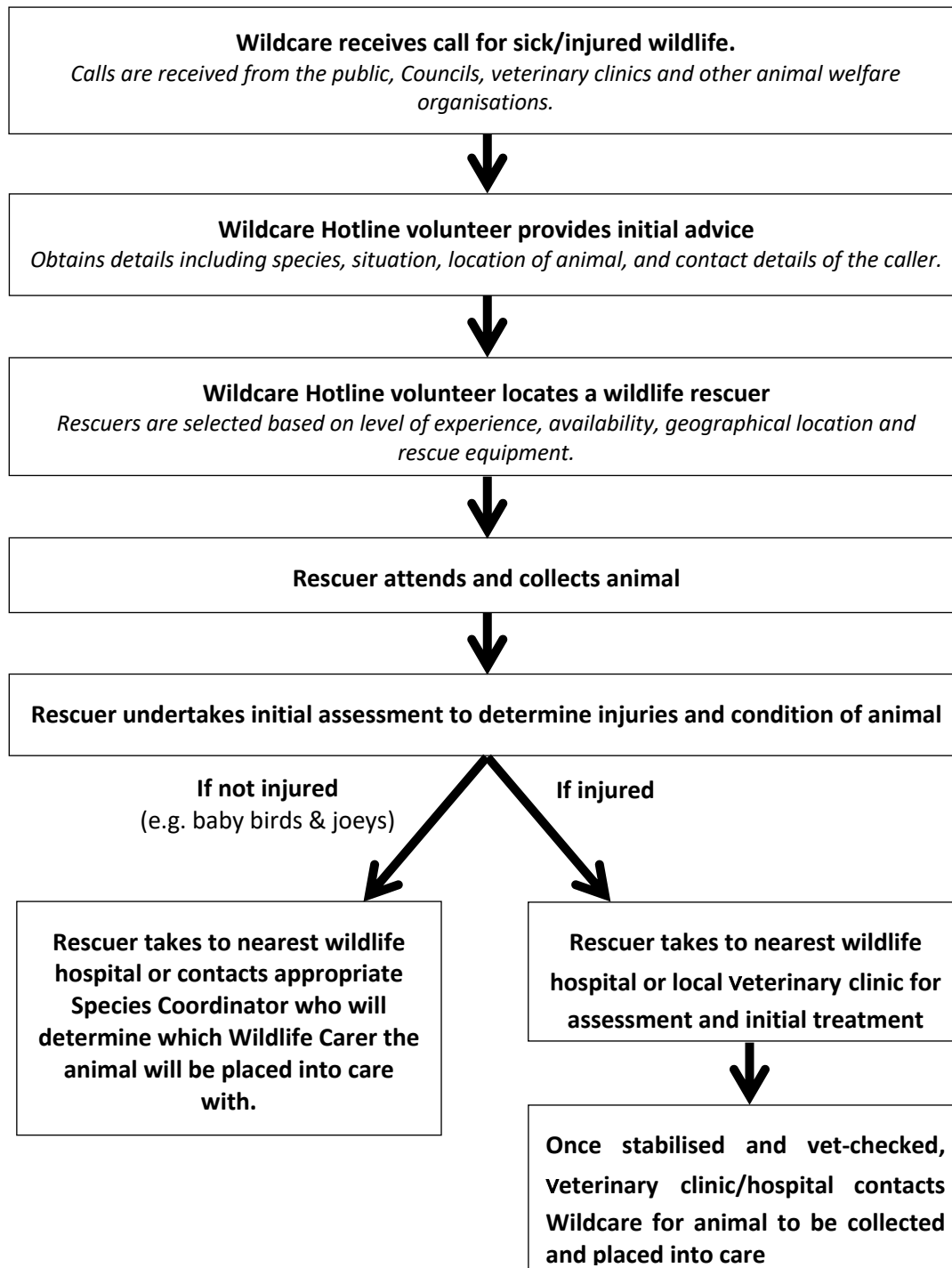
Summary

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

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



4 - About Wildcare Australia Inc.

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 Team

The Social Media Team oversees Wildcare's social media presence on various platforms. They 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

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

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/

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

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.

Website

The Wildcare website contains a lot of useful information about native wildlife and can be found at 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".

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.

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.

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.

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 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.

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.

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

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.

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 30th 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

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

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

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

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 15th July
- Records for the period July to December are due by the 15th 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, under Carer Resources tab. When due, please email the Excel records file as an attachment to the Record Keeper at 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.
- **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. 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

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.

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 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.

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.

Frequently Asked Questions

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

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

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

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

Federal government department.

Currumbin Wildlife Hospital Foundation

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

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

RSPCA Queensland

www.rspcaql.org.au

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

Australian Wildlife Rehabilitation Conference

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

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

International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council (IWRC)

<https://theiwrc.org/>

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

Australian Museum

www.australianmuseum.net.au

Queensland Museum

www.qm.qld.gov.au

BirdLife Australia

www.birdlife.org.au

Australian Wildlife Conservancy

www.australianwildlife.org

Australian Marine Conservation Society

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

Appendices

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

Easy Reference Sheets

Get started!

Become a Volunteer Wildlife TRANSPORTER

What is a Wildlife Transporter?

- Transporters are an essential part of the wildlife volunteer network – they help get rescued sick, injured and orphaned wildlife **FROM** a rescuer, carer or vet clinic **TO** a wildlife hospital or a wildlife carer.
- It is a great first step to get involved in the wildlife rescue and rehabilitation area, particularly if you're not feeling confident to start doing wildlife rescues just yet.
- All wildlife will be securely contained for safe transport, so no handling experience is required.

What equipment do I need?

- **A reliable vehicle** with air-conditioning and sufficient room to place transport carriers (such as cardboard boxes, pet carriers). A standard hatchback, sedan or SUV is sufficient. Animals may not be transported in the enclosed boot of a sedan or in the tray or canopy of a ute; they must be transported in the cab, so they don't overheat. Noise must be kept to a minimum (no radio or loud talking) and do not allow pet dogs in the vehicle whilst transporting wildlife.
- **Basic rescue supplies** – you don't need much to get started:
 - Cardboard boxes of various sizes – A4 photocopying paper boxes are a great size for most birds
 - Plastic rescue baskets are great for transporting birds and orphaned joeys
 - Pet carriers – available cheap through Facebook Marketplace, Gumtree or donated from other wildlife volunteers, friends, associates
- **Miscellaneous supplies:**
 - Second-hand linen such as towels, pillowcases, handtowels, bathmats – for lining and covering transport carriers (items donated to Wildcare are often available at workshops or from the Wildcare storage shed)
 - Notebook and pen/pencil for marking boxes and completing paperwork
 - Packing/sticky tape to secure cardboard boxes and to affix paperwork to the animal's carrier
 - Wildcare Rescue Record Book (optional)
- **Specialised transport carriers** - some wildlife (such as koalas, possums, reptiles) will already be contained in a more specialised transport carrier by the rescuer and the animal will remain in that carrier for transport. *You do not need to have these specialised carriers.*

How do I get started?

- **Become a Wildcare member** – join online at <https://wildcare.org.au/help-us/join/>
- **Register for and attend an Orientation / Rescue and First Aid for Wildlife workshop** (all training workshops are free for Wildcare members) – current Education Calendar is available at <https://wildcare.org.au/education-training/>. Attending this introductory workshop is compulsory to ensure you are covered by Wildcare's insurance
- **Get your basic supplies ready** as listed above
- **Submit a Rescue/Transport List Application Form** – complete the online [Rescue List Application Form](#). You can specify the days/times that you are available.
- Join the Wildcare members-only Facebook groups:
 - [Wildcare Wildlife Transport Facebook group](#)
 - [Wildcare Community Facebook group](#)

Then what?

- Wildcare's Hotline operators may then call you to help with the transporting of contained wildlife. Keep your mobile handy so you don't miss calls for help.
- Turn on notifications for the Wildcare Wildlife Transport FB group – keep an eye out for posts from wildlife rescuers and carers asking for assistance with transporting.
- Keep us up to date with your contact details so we can get in touch quickly and easily.

Not ready to commit?

Even if you aren't able to commit to being included on Wildcare's Rescue List, keep a close eye on the requests for help in the Transport and Community FB groups. Wildcare and our volunteers often ask for help for both wildlife and non-wildlife tasks and any help you can provide will be greatly appreciated.

Get started!

Become a Volunteer Wildlife RESCUER

What is a Wildlife Rescuer?

- Wildlife rescuers respond to calls for sick, injured and orphaned wildlife as well as wildlife in immediate danger.
- You should be confident and comfortable in handling the animal, retrieving it if it is trapped and securing it in a suitable container.
- Once the animal is contained, the rescuer assesses its condition and then transports it to a vet clinic, wildlife hospital or another wildlife carer, either directly themselves or with the assistance of a wildlife transporter.
- 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 vital in ensuring this happens.**

What do you need?

- **A reliable vehicle** with air-conditioning and room to store a basic rescue kit (including transport carriers and cardboard boxes). A standard hatchback, sedan or SUV is sufficient. Animals may not be transported in the enclosed boot of a sedan or in the tray or canopy of a ute; they must be transported in the cab, so they don't overheat. Noise must be kept to a minimum (no radio or loud talking) and do not allow pet dogs in the vehicle whilst transporting wildlife.
- **Basic rescue supplies:** the Rescue and First Aid for Wildlife manual (available at the Orientation / Rescue and First Aid for Wildlife workshop) includes a detailed list of helpful rescue equipment. Basic equipment needed to get started includes:
 - Cardboard boxes of various sizes – A4 photocopying paper boxes are a great size for most birds
 - Plastic rescue baskets are great for transporting birds and orphaned joeys
 - Pet carriers – available cheap through Facebook Marketplace, Gumtree or donated from other wildlife carers.
- **Miscellaneous supplies:**
 - Second-hand linen such as bath mats, pillowcases, for lining and covering transport carriers and several thick towels of various sizes for handling animals. (items donated to Wildcare are often available at workshops and at the Wildcare storage shed)
 - Gloves, safety glasses, and covered shoes, long sleeved shirt and pants and a personal first aid is recommended.
 - A fishing landing net (optional but very handy), for partially flighted birds and mobile small mammals
 - Notebook and pen/pencil for marking boxes and completing paperwork
 - Packing/sticky tape to secure cardboard boxes and to affix paperwork to the animal's carrier
 - Wildcare Rescue Record Book (optional)
 - Current Wildcare Contact Lists (Wildlife Emergency Contacts and Species Coordinators)
- **Specialised transport carriers:** sturdier, more expensive transport carriers are used for transporting some species such as koalas, possums and reptiles. You won't need these initially, but they are something you can add to your rescue kit as you go. Wildcare has some specialised equipment which we loan to members.

How do I get started?

- **Become a Wildcare member** – join online at <https://wildcare.org.au/help-us/join/>
- **Register for and attend an Orientation / Rescue and First Aid for Wildlife workshop** (all training workshops are free for Wildcare members) – current Education Calendar is available at <https://wildcare.org.au/education-training/>. Attending this introductory workshop is compulsory to ensure you are covered by Wildcare's insurance
- **Get your basic supplies ready** – see above, or refer to your Rescue and First Aid for Wildlife training manual
- **Submit a Rescue/Transport List Application Form** – complete the online [Rescue List Application Form](#). You can specify the days/times that you are available.
- Join the Wildcare members-only Facebook groups: [Wildcare Wildlife Transport Facebook group](#)
[Wildcare Community Facebook group](#)
- **Don't panic!** You will never be asked to attend a rescue you aren't confident with, or one for which you do not have the correct equipment. Our Hotline operators will only refer easy rescues to you to start with. In fact, most rescues are pretty easy – sick and injured wildlife are generally fairly easy to capture and contain.

Then what?

- The Wildcare Hotline will call you to rescue wildlife in your local area – keep your phone handy.
- Turn the notifications on in the Wildcare Wildlife Transport FB group and keep an eye out for opportunities to help.
- Keep us up to date with your contact details so we can get in touch quickly and easily.
- Continue to attend training workshops so you become familiar with rescue techniques for a wide variety of species.

Get started!

Become a Volunteer Wildlife CARER

What is a Wildlife Rehabilitator/Carer?

- Wildlife carers care for sick, injured and orphaned wildlife in their own home.
- Most wildlife in South-east Queensland are fostered out to wildlife carers once they have undergone a thorough veterinary assessment at a wildlife hospital. Some animals, such as orphans, may be placed directly with a wildlife carer following their rescue by a Wildlife Rescuer.
- The aim of being a wildlife carer is to care for, and then release, healthy rehabilitated wildlife back to the wild.

What do you need?

- **A reliable vehicle** is a necessity when caring for wildlife in order to:
 - collect wildlife from a vet clinic or wildlife hospital, and transport them to a vet for ongoing veterinary treatment
 - collect fresh, native vegetation (browse, native flowers and fruit) to feed animals in care and provide enrichment
 - organise the release of wildlife back to their rescue location
- **Rehabilitation facilities and enclosures** – the facilities required vary significantly depending upon the species you are caring for, as well as the stage of development of the individual animals in your care. An overview of the facilities required is included in the Wildcare Species Fact Sheets which can be found on our website at <https://wildcare.org.au/carers-resources/>
- **Miscellaneous equipment and supplies:**
 - Second-hand linen such as towels, pillowcases, handtowels, bathmats etc
 - Feeding equipment – formula, food and water bowls, syringes, teats etc (depending upon the species)
 - Laundry and cleaning facilities – for washing linen and cleaning/sterilising equipment and food/water containers
 - Wildcare training manuals and resources – provided free to Wildcare members at the respective workshops

How do I get started?

- **Become a Wildcare member** – join online at <https://wildcare.org.au/help-us/join/>
- **Register and attend an Orientation / Rescue and First Aid for Wildlife training workshop** (all training workshops are free for Wildcare members) – current Education Calendar is available at <https://wildcare.org.au/education-training/>. Attending this introductory workshop is compulsory to ensure you are covered by Wildcare's insurance.
- **Get your basic supplies ready** – refer to your manuals from the Rescue and First Aid for Wildlife workshop, and the workshop(s) of the specific species you wish to care for
- **Become a Wildlife Rescuer** – this is a great way to get experience while you undertake your training and get your equipment and facilities together. Remember: there are no animals to care for at home if they are not rescued in the first instance.
- **Attend training workshops** – these are free to attend for all Wildcare members. Refer to the last page of the Education Calendar for a chart showing requisite workshops for each species. The workshops will provide specific information on what's involved with caring for various species and will allow you to meet and network with the Species Coordinators and experienced wildlife carers.

Then what?

- When you are ready to start caring for wildlife at home, submit the online form for [Permit Application \(General Species\)](#). When submitting the form, please make sure that you have:
 - Completed the necessary training for the species you wish to care for (refer to the last page of the Education Calendar for a chart showing requisite workshops for each species).
 - Already have (or are getting) the necessary equipment/facilities together for that species – you must specify these fully on the form.
- When your permit authorisation has been approved, make contact with the relevant Species Coordinator in your region and discuss with them your individual circumstances (e.g. work, family, home) so they can work with you to place species or individual animals which will best suit your individual circumstances. Wildlife are placed into care through the Species Coordinators so keep in close contact with them – they are there to help you get started on your wildlife caring journey.
- Continue to attend training workshops so you keep up to date with current best practices.
- Get involved and network with other Wildcare members – join the Wildcare members-only Facebook groups:
[Wildcare Community Facebook Group](#)
[Wildcare Wildlife Transport Facebook Group](#)
- Make sure you ask for help if you have any questions or aren't sure about anything.

Get started!

Become a Volunteer Hotline Operator

What is a Hotline Operator?

- Hotline operators are responsible for manning the Wildcare 24/7 emergency hotline which responds to calls for sick, injured and orphaned wildlife. They provide advice on a wide variety of wildlife-related queries as well as organise the rescue and transport of injured wildlife.
- Calls are received from the general public, vet clinics, local Councils, other animal welfare organisations and wildlife hospitals. The Hotline works closely with other wildlife rescue groups to ensure wildlife in need are responded to as quickly as possible.
- Hotline operators coordinate the rescue and/or transport of wildlife when needed. This may involve liaising with Wildcare Rescuers/Transporters, wildlife carers and other wildlife rescue group. A full list of resources is provided at training.
- Sick, injured and orphaned wildlife require appropriate care and treatment as soon as possible to ensure they have the best possible chance of survival – **hotline operators are the essential first step in this process.**

What do you need?

- A reliable phone and internet.
- A commitment of 2-4 hours per week or fortnight. Hotline shifts are generally 2 to 2.5 hours with additional time sometimes required at the end of the shift to finalise calls. Shifts can be the same day or time each week or fortnight, or flexible to accommodate other commitments.
- Operators need to be resilient and able to cope with pressure. Call volumes vary depending on the time of year but can be very busy during spring and summer. Good problem-solving skills as well as the ability to remain calm are important attributes for this role.

How do I get started?

- **Become a Wildcare member** – join online at <https://wildcare.org.au/help-us/join/>
- **Register for and attend an Orientation / Rescue and First Aid for Wildlife workshop** (all training workshops are free for Wildcare members) – current Education Calendar is available at <https://wildcare.org.au/education-training/>. Attending this introductory workshop is compulsory to ensure you have a good understanding of how Wildcare operates.
- **Contact the Hotline Coordinator** to organise one-on-one training. Training takes ~3 hours and is organised with the Hotline Coordinator directly.
- **Join** the Wildcare members-only Facebook groups: [Wildcare Wildlife Transport Facebook group](#)
[Wildcare Community Facebook group](#)
- All Hotline operators receive ongoing mentoring and support. Regular Zoom training sessions are conducted for continuing education. You are encouraged to attend other Wildcare workshops to increase your knowledge base.

Interested or have further questions

- Please contact the Wildcare Hotline Coordinator via email to hotline@wildcare.org.au.

Get started!

Become a Wildlife Release Site

What is a Wildlife Release Site?

- A release site is a location where rehabilitated wildlife can be safely released back to the wild.
- Many wildlife volunteers who care for wildlife at home are not able to release them from their own properties. We need the help of community members who live in suitable areas to provide a safe home for birds, possums and gliders.

What do I need?

- **A suitable property** is vital when acting as a release site. Such a property would have:
 - good quality and a good variety of native vegetation and food sources to suit the species being released.
 - a secure and accessible location to place a mobile release aviary. The aviary is mounted on a large box trailer and would need to be on site for 5-14 days.
 - no wild or domestic animal issues (e.g. roaming pet dogs or cats, foxes and wild dogs).

How do I get started?

- Register as a Release Site by completing the online form at [Release Site Program](https://form.jotform.com/211427562407048) and provide information regarding your property, access and the species which are endemic to your area.
Direct link to online form: <https://form.jotform.com/211427562407048>
- The Wildcare Release Coordinator will enter your details into our database so that our Wildcare Coordinators and key carers can then match release sites to animals in care.
- A wildlife carer will be responsible for coordinating with you about the placement of the aviary and provide details of the animals requiring release.
- The wildlife carer is responsible for the ongoing care of the animal during the release stage and they will liaise with you about assisting in some of the general care (if required).
- If you are not already a Wildcare member, we encourage you to join to assist our local wildlife in other ways such as becoming a Wildlife Transporter, Rescuer or Carer. You can join online at <https://wildcare.org.au/help-us/join/>.
- If you are acting solely as a Release Site, there is no requirement to be a financial Wildcare member. Being a member though does allow you to attend the Wildcare training workshops for free. Our current Education Calendar is available at <https://wildcare.org.au/education-training/>. You may like to consider getting more involved in the future.



Rehab Fact Sheets

Easy Reference Sheet

Caring for Birds

Version: January 2021

There are over 750 species of birds native to Australia. Native birds can be found in all types of habitats in South-east Queensland. We have a variety of both nocturnal and diurnal birds, sea and water birds and migratory species. Native birds account for approximately two-thirds of the wildlife that require rescue and care.

Do I need a Permit to care for birds?

Yes. You will need a REHABILITATION PERMIT to care for birds.

A Rehabilitation Permit can be obtained from a licensed wildlife care group such as Wildcare.

Remember all Australian native wildlife is protected in Queensland. You cannot keep them without an appropriate Permit.

Do I have to do any training to care for birds?

Yes. Birds have specialised dietary and housing needs. They often come into care due to illness, injury or as a result of being orphaned. You must have a good understanding of their anatomy and biology, be able to learn to recognise signs of injury and illness, as well as gain confidence in providing emergency care for them.

In Wildcare, you will need to complete the following training workshops in order to care for birds:-

- Orientation – compulsory for all members
- Rescue and First Aid for Wildlife (Basic) – compulsory for all members
- Native Birds (Basic)
- Native Birds (Babies)

Is caring for birds difficult?

Caring for common species of native birds is an excellent place to start as a wildlife rehabilitator. Most common species are relatively hardy and suitable for new carers. Adult birds require minimal commitment (other than feeding, cleaning and medicating) however like all of our native wildlife, they do have specialised requirements.

Remember:-

- Native birds are either **nocturnal** or **diurnal** so there is sure to be a particular species that will best fit in with your lifestyle.
- Native birds have a **varied diet** – you must be able to obtain and provide their natural diet every day.
- One of their greatest **predators** is domestic pets – they must be housed away from your pets to not only reduce stress but to ensure that their natural fear of these animals is not diminished. Remember their survival in the wild is dependent on it!
- Baby diurnal birds need to be fed regularly throughout the day and we need to imitate this feeding schedule when hand-raising them. However, they do sleep all night, unlike baby marsupials!
- Older juveniles, sub-adults and recuperating adult birds are a great place to start for new wildlife rehabilitators.

Once you have cared for a variety of the more common species of native birds, then you may decide that you want to move on to caring for more specialised species or younger baby birds.

Remember, we raise to RELEASE!

We must care for wildlife in a way that ensures their survival once returned to the wild.

What equipment do I need to care for birds?

Birds need to be housed and cared for during rehabilitation to prevent further injury, prevent escape, minimise stress and to allow them to display their natural behaviour.

A few things we must consider when housing birds include:

- Many birds require only short-term care to enable them to recuperate from minor injuries. These birds require smaller cages and enclosures to minimise flight and allow them to heal.
- During the final stages of rehabilitation, birds will often require access to a large flight aviary to enable them to develop their muscle tone and flight skills. Some wildlife volunteers specialise in this final stage of rehabilitation.
- All enclosures must be suitable to the species of bird being housed and must include suitable natural branches and other fixtures (such as ponds for water birds) to imitate as closely as possible their natural habitat.
- Enclosures must be snake and rodent proof.
- A variety of feeding bowls will be required including stainless steel coop cups for holding food and water.

Below is a brief overview of some of the equipment that birds require. The Wildcare bird training workshop and manual covers their requirements in more detail.

| | |
|---|---|
| Rescue Equipment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A variety of cardboard boxes, pet carriers and cages in a variety of sizes suitable for different species • Clean, plastic buckets for reuniting baby birds with parents • Clean, second-hand towels to line transport carrier/boxes |
| Orphaned Birds | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeding equipment (syringes, tweezers, small feeding bowls) • Artificial bird nests (such as ice-cream containers, small cane baskets) • Small pet carry cage • Verandah-style small aviary/cage • Branches for perching and water containers for holding fresh vegetation • Specialised heating equipment (if caring for baby birds) |
| Adult Birds <i>Critical Care Stage</i> <i>Intermediate Care Stage</i> <i>Pre-Release and Final Rehabilitation Stage</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solid wire mesh enclosures with sturdy branches lined with shade cloth to prevent wing damage • Coop cups for water and food • Small water containers for holding fresh vegetation • Size of enclosures will depend on the species of bird but will range from 0.5m L x 0.5m W x 0.5m H to 0.8m L x 0.8m W x 0.8m H <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As above • Size of enclosures will depend on the species of bird but will range from 1.5m L x 1.0m W x 1.0m H to 2.0m L x 2.0m W x 2.0m H • Fittings will depend upon the species and are outlined in the Wildcare bird training course and manual <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large outdoor aviary that must include adequate amount of shade with some areas where access to sun is possible • Size will vary depending upon species but will range from 4.0m L x 2.0m W x 2.0m H to 6.0m L x 3.0m W x 2.0m H • Enclosure must include a variety of natural branches and adequate space for flight practice • Coop cups for water and food • Large water containers for holding fresh vegetation |

Critical Care Stage – designed to reduce an animal's level of physical activity for a short period of time and to provide easy access for monitoring, treatment and feeding.

Intermediate Care Stage – allows sufficient space for some physical activity while enabling the animal to be readily caught for monitoring and treatment.

Pre-Release/Final Rehabilitation Stage – allows an animal to regain better physical condition, display natural behaviour, acclimatise to normal weather conditions and reduce human contact.

The measurements for enclosures listed above are sourced from the *Code of Practice – Care of Sick, Injured and Orphaned Protected Animals in Queensland* (EHP). In some circumstances, Wildcare's housing requirements exceed the CoP suggestions.

Easy Reference Sheet

Caring for Possums

Version: January 2021

There are 26 species of possums in Australia. Nine species, five of which are gliding possums, are found in South-east Queensland. All Australian possums are nocturnal and have a specialised diet which, depending on the species, include native vegetation, leaves, buds, flowers, seeds and native fruit, exudates and insects.

Do I need a Permit to care for possums?

Yes. You will need a REHABILITATION PERMIT to care for possums.

A Rehabilitation Permit can be obtained from a licensed wildlife care group such as Wildcare.

Remember all Australian native wildlife is protected in Queensland. You cannot keep them without an appropriate Permit.

Do I have to do any training to care for possums?

Yes. Possums have specialised dietary and housing requirements. They often come into care due to loss of habitat, illness, injury or as a result of being orphaned. You must have a good understanding of their biology, be able to recognise signs of illness and injury and be able to provide emergency care to them.

In Wildcare, you will need to complete the following training workshops in order to care for possums:

- Orientation – compulsory for all members
- Rescue and First Aid for Wildlife (Basic) – compulsory for all members
- Caring for Orphaned Mammals
- Possums (Basic)

Is caring for possums difficult?

Caring for common species of possums is a good place to start as a wildlife rehabilitator if you wish to care for mammals. Most common species of possums are fairly hardy and suitable for new carers provided that you implement good management skills. However, like all of our native wildlife, they do have specialised requirements.

Remember:

- Possums are **nocturnal** – they require feeding, cleaning and monitoring at night.
- Possums are **herbivores** – you must be able to provide a large variety of fresh vegetation for them EVERY DAY.
- Their greatest **predators** are domestic pets, such as dogs and cats – they cannot be housed near domestic animals.
- Young joeys need to be fed **every 4 to 5 hours** (including through the night).
- Older joeys and adults must be housed in a **large outdoor aviary** so that they can gain the strength required to climb large trees.

Once you have cared for common species of possums, then you may be ready to move onto caring for other possum species that have more specialised requirements.

Remember, we raise to RELEASE!

We must care for wildlife in a way that ensures their survival once returned to the wild.

What equipment do I need to care for possums?

Possums need to be housed and cared for during rehabilitation to prevent further injury, prevent escape, minimise stress and to allow them to display their natural behaviour.

A few things we must consider when housing possums include:

- All species are arboreal and therefore require enclosures that are wide and tall enough to accommodate branches of a variety of sizes.
- Enclosures must be made snake and rodent proof.
- Injured and sick animals must be housed indoors.
- Enclosures will require large water containers for holding fresh vegetation.
- A variety of feeding bowls will be required including stainless steel coop cups for holding food and water.

Below is a brief overview of some of the equipment that possums require. The Wildcare possum training workshop and manual covers their requirements in more detail.

| | |
|---|--|
| Rescue Equipment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong, wire transport cage for rescuing adults • Clean, second-hand towels to line container • Medium sized plastic pet carriers for rescuing infants and juveniles • Pouches for orphaned possums |
| Orphaned Possums | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeding equipment (syringes, specially made latex teats, cannulas, sterilising equipment, small feeding bowls) • Lots of cotton pouches (30+ each animal) • Small baby blankets and towels. • Small pet carry cage • Verandah-style small aviary/cage • Branches for climbing and water containers for holding fresh vegetation • Specialised heating equipment (if caring for unfurred joeys) |
| Adult Possums <i>Critical Care Stage</i> <i>Intermediate Care Stage</i> <i>Pre-Release and Final Rehabilitation Stage</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solid wire mesh enclosure with sturdy branches (0.8m L x 0.8m W x 1.0m H) • Coop cups for water and food • Large quantity of clean towels or blankets for lining enclosure • Small water containers for holding fresh vegetation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solid wire mesh enclosure with sturdy branches (1.0m L x 1.0m W x 1.5m H) • Coop cups for water and food • Large quantity of clean towels or blankets for lining enclosure • Large water containers for holding fresh vegetation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large outdoor enclosure (minimum size 3.0m L x 2.0m W x 2.0m H) • Enclosure must have adequate amount of shade with some areas where access to sun is possible • Large branches and ropes to allow for climbing experience • All species will require an artificial nest box suitable to the species • Coop cups for water and food • Large water containers for holding fresh vegetation |

Critical Care Stage – designed to reduce an animal's level of physical activity for a short period of time and to provide easy access for monitoring, treatment and feeding.

Intermediate Care Stage – allows sufficient space for some physical activity while enabling the animal to be readily caught for monitoring and treatment.

Pre-Release/Final Rehabilitation Stage – allows an animal to regain better physical condition, display natural behaviour, acclimatise to normal weather conditions and reduce human contact.

The measurements for enclosures listed above are sourced from the *Code of Practice – Care of Sick, Injured and Orphaned Protected Animals in Queensland* (EHP). In some circumstances, Wildcare's housing requirements exceed the CoP suggestions.

Easy Reference Sheet

Caring for Gliders

Version: January 2021

There are six species of gliders in Australia, five of which can be found in South-east Queensland. Australian gliders range in size (head and body) from 6.5 - 8cm long (Feathertail Gliders) to 35 - 45cm (Greater Glider). All Australian gliders are nocturnal. Most species have a highly specialised diet, comprising some or all of the following: nectar, pollen, insects, the sap of certain eucalypts and the gum from acacias. However the Greater Glider has a diet similar to the koala, eating only the foliage of certain species of eucalypt.

Do I need a Permit to care for gliders?

Yes. You will need a REHABILITATION PERMIT to care for gliders.

A Rehabilitation Permit can be obtained from a licensed wildlife care group such as Wildcare.

Remember all Australian native wildlife is protected in Queensland. You cannot keep them without an appropriate Permit.

Do I have to do any training to care for gliders?

Yes. Gliders have highly specialised dietary and housing requirements. They often come into care due to loss of habitat, injury or as a result of being orphaned. You must have a good understanding of their biology, be able to recognise signs of illness and injury and be able to provide emergency care to them.

In Wildcare, you will need to complete the following training workshops in order to care for gliders:-

- Orientation – compulsory for all members
- Rescue and First Aid for Wildlife (Basic) – compulsory for all members
- Caring for Orphaned Mammals
- Gliders

Is caring for gliders difficult?

Caring for gliders is generally undertaken by experienced possum carers. They can be difficult to care for due to their highly specialised diet. They are great escape-artists and need specially adapted enclosures to prevent escape and to prevent predation by snakes. Some species of gliders (such as the Yellow-bellied Glider and Greater Glider) are considered vulnerable in South-east Queensland.

Remember:-

- Gliders are **nocturnal** – you need to be available to care for them at night.
- They have a **specialised diet** – you must be able to provide fresh blossoms and insects for them every day.
- One of their greatest **predators** is the domestic pet – they cannot be housed near domestic dogs, cats or reptiles.
- Young joeys need to be fed **every 3 to 4 hours** (including through the night).
- Older joeys/adults must be housed in an **outdoor aviary** large enough to allow development of their gliding skills.

You would generally not be permitted to care for gliders until you have gained some experience in caring for possums.

Remember, we raise to RELEASE!

We must care for wildlife in a way that ensures their survival once returned to the wild.

What equipment do I need to care for gliders?

Gliders need to be housed and cared for during rehabilitation to prevent further injury, prevent escape, minimise stress and to allow them to display their natural behaviour.

A few things we must consider when housing gliders include:-

- All species are arboreal and therefore require enclosures that are wide and high enough to accommodate branches of a variety of sizes and to provide necessary space that they require to glide.
- Enclosures must be snake and rodent proof.
- To prevent escape, enclosures must be made from 1cm square gauge wire and for the smallest species, lined with shade cloth.
- Injured and sick animals must be housed indoors.
- Enclosures will require large water containers for holding fresh vegetation.
- A variety of feeding bowls will be required including stainless steel coop cups for holding food and water.

Below is a brief overview of some of the equipment that gliders require. The Wildcare glider training workshop and manual covers their requirements in more detail.

| | |
|---|--|
| Rescue Equipment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure, small plastic pet carriers for rescuing adults and juveniles • Clean, second-hand towels to line container • Pouches for both orphaned and adult gliders |
| Orphaned Gliders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeding equipment (syringes, specially made latex teats, cannulas, sterilising equipment, small feeding bowls) • Lots of cotton pouches (30+ each animal) • Small baby blankets and towels. • Small pet carry cage • Verandah-style small aviary/cage lined with shade cloth • Branches for climbing and water containers for holding fresh vegetation • Specialised heating equipment (if caring for unfurred and just-furred joeys) |
| Adult Gliders <i>Critical Care Stage</i> <i>Intermediate Care Stage</i> <i>Pre-Release and Final Rehabilitation Stage</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solid wire mesh enclosure with sturdy branches (0.5m L x 0.5m W x 1.0m H) • Small coop cups and ceramic bowls for water and food • Large quantity of clean towels or blankets for lining enclosure • Small water containers for holding fresh vegetation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solid wire mesh enclosure with sturdy branches (1.0m L x 1.0m W x 1.0m H) • Small coop cups and ceramic bowls for water and food • Large quantity of clean towels or blankets for lining enclosure • Small to medium sized water containers for holding fresh vegetation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large outdoor enclosure (minimum size 3.0m L x 3.0m W x 2.0m H ranging to 6.0m L x 3.0m W x 3.0m H) • Enclosure must have adequate amount of shade with some areas where access to sun is possible • Large branches and ropes to allow for climbing experience • All species will require an artificial nest box suitable to the species • Coop cups for water and food • Large water containers for holding fresh vegetation |

Critical Care Stage - designed to reduce an animal's level of physical activity for a short period of time and to provide easy access for monitoring, treatment and feeding.

Intermediate Care Stage – allows sufficient space for some physical activity while enabling the animal to be readily caught for monitoring and treatment.

Pre-Release/Final Rehabilitation Stage – allows an animal to regain better physical condition, display natural behaviour, acclimatise to normal weather conditions and reduce human contact.

The measurements for enclosures listed above are sourced from the *Code of Practice – Care of Sick, Injured and Orphaned Protected Animals in Queensland* (EHP). In some circumstances, Wildcare's housing requirements exceed the CoP suggestions.

Easy Reference Sheet

Caring for Macropods

Version: January 2021

The term 'macropod' refers to the diverse range of marsupials more commonly known as kangaroos, wallabies, pademelons, bettongs etc. There are over 50 species of macropods in Australia, 10 of which are found in South-east Queensland. Macropods are mostly nocturnal. The diet of local species consists of grasses and vegetation.

Do I need a Permit to care for macropods?

Yes. You will need a REHABILITATION PERMIT to care for macropods.

A Rehabilitation Permit can be obtained from a licensed wildlife care group such as Wildcare.

Remember all Australian native wildlife is protected in Queensland. You cannot keep them without an appropriate Permit.

Do I have to do any training to care for macropods?

Yes. Macropods have specialised dietary and housing requirements. They often come into care due to illness, injury, trauma or as a result of being orphaned. You must have a good understanding of their biology, be able to recognise signs of illness and injury and be able to provide emergency care to them.

In Wildcare, you will need to complete the following training workshops in order to care for macropods:

- Orientation – compulsory for all members
- Rescue and First Aid for Wildlife (Basic) – compulsory for all members
- Caring for Orphaned Mammals
- Macropods (Basic)

Is caring for macropods difficult?

Caring for macropods is more demanding than caring for other mammal species. They suffer tremendously from stress and therefore do not do well in households with young children or indoor domestic pets. They develop more slowly than other mammal species with most being in care for between 8-18 months (depending upon the species).

Remember:

- Macropods are mostly **nocturnal** – you need to be available to care for them at night.
- Most species are **herbivores** – you must be able to provide fresh grass and vegetation to them every day.
- One of their greatest **predator** is domestic pets – they cannot be housed near or have contact with domestic animals.
- Young joeys need to be fed **every 3 to 4 hours** (including through the night).
- They **need a lot of room** to develop their muscles. They must be allowed room to hop and you must have a **secure yard**.

Macropods are not suitable for everyone due to their housing requirements and their slow rate of development. They are generally a species that you would advance to once you had gained some experience with caring for other mammal species such as possums.

Remember, we raise to RELEASE!

We must care for wildlife in a way that ensures their survival once returned to the wild.

What equipment do I need to care for macropods?

Macropods need to be housed and cared for during rehabilitation to prevent further injury, prevent escape, minimise stress and to allow them to display their natural behaviour.

A few things we must consider when housing macropods include:

- All species require a very secure yard area free from domestic animals. Some small species (such as pademelons), will require a snake and raptor proof outdoor enclosure.
- Yards must be kept clean and provide natural shelter and including access to fresh grass and native vegetation.
- Caring for adult macropods is a highly specialised area and one that is restricted to experienced macropod carers who hold appropriate training and veterinary support.

Below is a brief overview of some of the equipment that macropods require. The Wildcare macropod training workshop and manual covers their requirements in more detail.

| | |
|---|---|
| Rescue Equipment | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Large, strong fabric pouches and bags• Hanging bags to secure pouches/bags• Small to medium pouches for orphaned macropods |
| Orphaned Macropods | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Feeding equipment (syringes, specially made latex teats, cannulas, sterilising equipment, small feeding bowls)• Lots of cotton pouches (30+ each animal)• Small baby blankets and towels• Hanging macropod bags and frame• Specialised heating equipment (if caring for unfurred joeys) |
| Adult Macropods <i>Critical Care Stage</i> <i>Intermediate Care Stage</i> <i>Pre-Release and Final Rehabilitation Stage</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Small, secure, quiet room• Large quantity of blankets and towels• Secure macropod yard constructed with chain wire fencing• Fencing must be 1.8m to 2.0m in height• Yard must include access to native grass and vegetation and provide adequate shade• Sheltered area for housing bag• Secure yard (as above) (minimum size 40.0m L x 40.0m W x 2.0m H) with sheltered area for housing bag• Enclosure must have adequate amount of shade with some areas where access to sun is possible• Access to native grasses and vegetation• Adequate shelter by way of shed or similar• Large bowls/buckets for water and food |

Critical Care Stage – designed to reduce an animal’s level of physical activity for a short period of time and to provide easy access for monitoring, treatment and feeding.

Intermediate Care Stage – allows sufficient space for some physical activity while enabling the animal to be readily caught for monitoring and treatment.

Pre-Release/Final Rehabilitation Stage – allows an animal to regain better physical condition, display natural behaviour, acclimatise to normal weather conditions and reduce human contact.

The measurements for enclosures listed above are sourced from the *Code of Practice – Care of Sick, Injured and Orphaned Protected Animals in Queensland* (EHP). In some circumstances, Wildcare’s housing requirements exceed the CoP suggestions.

Easy Reference Sheet

Caring for Bandicoots & Small Mammals

Version: January 2021

Small Mammals is a term generally used in wildlife rehabilitation to refer to small terrestrial carnivorous marsupial and eutherian mammals. This includes species such as bandicoots, antechinus, phascogales and native rodents. There are over 12 common species of 'small mammals' found in South-east Queensland. They are all mostly nocturnal and have specialised diets dependent upon the species.

Do I need a Permit to care for small mammals?

Yes. You will need a REHABILITATION PERMIT to care for small mammals.

A Rehabilitation Permit can be obtained from a licensed wildlife care group such as Wildcare.

Remember all Australian native wildlife is protected in Queensland. You cannot keep them without an appropriate Permit.

Do I have to do any training to care for small mammals?

Yes. Small mammals have specialised dietary and housing requirements. They often come into care due to illness, injury or as a result of being orphaned. You must have a good understanding of their biology, be able to recognise signs of illness and injury and be able to provide emergency care to them.

In Wildcare, you will need to complete the following training workshops in order to care for small mammals:-

- Orientation – compulsory for all members
- Rescue and First Aid for Wildlife (Basic) – compulsory for all members
- Caring for Orphaned Mammals
- Bandicoots, Small Carnivorous Marsupials and Native Rodents

Is caring for small mammals difficult?

Caring for common species of small mammals is a relatively good place to start as a wildlife rehabilitator if you wish to care for mammals. Like all of our native wildlife, they do have specialised requirements.

Remember:-

- Small mammals are **nocturnal** – they require feeding and monitoring at night.
- They are largely **carnivorous** – you must be able to provide a large variety of fresh food such as insects, grubs, and worms every day.
- Their greatest **predators** are domestic pets, such as dogs and cats – they cannot be housed near domestic animals.
- Orphans need to be fed **every 3 to 4 hours** (including through the night).
- They are very good escape-artists so you need to have **secure enclosures** to house them in however they cannot be housed in wire cages.
- They are **fast growing** so generally only require care for a relatively short period of time. For example, orphaned bandicoots and antechinus are generally ready for released within 6-8 weeks of coming into care.
- We do not get many small mammals into care so most wildlife rehabilitators will care for small mammals in conjunction with other species.

Remember, we raise to RELEASE!

We must care for wildlife in a way that ensures their survival once returned to the wild.

What equipment do I need to care for small mammals?

Small mammals need to be housed and cared for during rehabilitation to prevent further injury, prevent escape, minimise stress and to allow them to display their natural behaviour.

A few things we must consider when housing small mammals include:-

- Some species are arboreal and therefore require enclosures that are tall and wide to accommodate large branches.
- Terrestrial species require deep, large enclosures with smooth sides and a substrate of soil and leaf litter.
- Enclosures must be made from thin mesh (not wire mesh) to prevent small species and live insects from escaping.
- Injured and sick animals must be housed indoors.
- They are highly prone to stress and require a quiet environment.

Below is a brief overview of some of the equipment that small mammals require. The Wildcare small mammal training workshop and manual covers their requirements in more detail.

| | |
|---|---|
| Rescue Equipment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium plastic storage container with well-ventilated secure lid • Clean, second-hand towels to line container • Small pouches for orphaned joeys |
| Orphaned Small Mammals | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeding equipment (syringes, specially made latex teats, cannulas, sterilising equipment, small feeding bowls) • Lots of cotton pouches (20+ each animal) • Small baby blankets and towels. • Large plastic container (250+ litre) with secure screened lid • Logs and branches for enclosure • Specialised heating equipment (if caring for unfurred and just-furred joeys) • Insect farms or access to a large variety and quantity of live insects such as crickets, wood cockroaches, worms, larvae, stick insects. |
| Adult Small Mammals <i>Critical Care Stage</i> <i>Intermediate Care Stage</i> <i>Pre-Release and Final Rehabilitation Stage</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deep, solid plastic container (0.5m L x 0.5m W x 0.5m H) • Small ceramic bowls for water and food • Large quantity of clean towels or small blankets for lining enclosure • Clean, suitable substrate (such as soil and leaf litter) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deep, solid plastic container (1.0m L x 1.0m W x 1.0m H) • Small ceramic bowls for water and food • Large quantity of clean towels and small blankets for lining enclosure • Clean, suitable substrate (such as soil and leaf litter) • Small logs and branches (dependent upon the species) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large outdoor enclosure (minimum size 4.0m L x 3.0m W x 2.0m H) • Sides must be constructed from tin/colourbond to prevent escape and be dug into ground at least 60cm to prevent digging underneath (for bandicoots) • Enclosure must allow for access to both shade and sun • Substrate must include large amounts of natural leaf litter and soil to encourage foraging and low shrubs/vegetation to provide cover • Large logs and branches to allow for climbing and places to build a nest • Arboreal species will require an artificial nest box suitable to the species • Small to medium ceramic bowls for water and food |

Critical Care Stage – designed to reduce an animal's level of physical activity for a short period of time and to provide easy access for monitoring, treatment and feeding.

Intermediate Care Stage – allows sufficient space for some physical activity while enabling the animal to be readily caught for monitoring and treatment.

Pre-Release/Final Rehabilitation Stage – allows an animal to regain better physical condition, display natural behaviour, acclimatise to normal weather conditions and reduce human contact.

The measurements for enclosures listed above are sourced from the *Code of Practice – Care of Sick, Injured and Orphaned Protected Animals in Queensland* (EHP). In some circumstances, Wildcare's housing requirements exceed the CoP suggestions.

Easy Reference Sheet

Caring for Koalas

Version: January 2021

In South-east Queensland, the koala population is declining due to their habitat being significantly degraded. The koala is nocturnal and has a highly specialised diet consisting of a relatively small number of eucalypt species.

Do I need a Permit to care for koalas?

Yes. You will need a REHABILITATION PERMIT to care for koalas. Koalas are considered a 'specialised species' in Queensland and are excluded from a General Rehabilitation Permit. A Rehabilitation Permit can be obtained from a licensed wildlife care group such as WILDCARE AUSTRALIA INC. There is a higher assessment criterion required and permits for koalas will only be issued to wildlife volunteers that have gained extensive experience with rescuing koalas and volunteering with them through either a wildlife facility or experienced koala carer. You must also be able to display a good understanding of their anatomy and biology.

Remember all Australian native wildlife is protected in Queensland. You cannot keep them without an appropriate Permit.

Do I have to do any training to care for koalas?

Yes. Koalas have highly specialised dietary and housing requirements. They often come into care due to loss of habitat, injury, disease or as a result of being orphaned. You must have a good understanding of their biology, be able to recognise signs of illness and injury and be able to provide emergency care to them.

In Wildcare, you will need to complete the following training workshops in order to care for koalas:

- Orientation – compulsory for all members
- Rescue and First Aid for Wildlife (Basic) – compulsory for all members
- Caring for Orphaned Mammals
- Wildlife Rescue (Advanced)
- Advanced Koala Rehabilitation

Is caring for koalas difficult?

Caring for koalas is a highly specialised area of wildlife rehabilitation. They have a poor immune system and succumb to stress-related disease easily. They are difficult animals to handle and require a large purpose-built outdoor enclosure. They have very specialised dietary requirements and finding sufficient quantities of their favoured eucalypt species in South-east Queensland is very time-consuming. They are not suitable for new wildlife carers.

Remember:

- Koalas are **nocturnal** - you need to be available to care for them at night.
- They have a **specialised diet** – you must be able to identify koala food tree species and be able to obtain a large amount of fresh eucalypt every day.
- One of their **predators** is domestic dogs – they cannot be housed near or have contact with your pets.
- A large part of their rehabilitation requires a **large purpose-built outdoor enclosure**.

Koala rehabilitation is an area that you may be interested in once you have been caring for wildlife for a few years and have gained some experience with rescuing them.

Remember, we raise to RELEASE!

We must care for wildlife in a way that ensures their survival once returned to the wild.

What equipment do I need to care for koalas?

Koalas need to be housed and cared for during rehabilitation to prevent further injury, prevent escape, minimise stress and to allow them to display their natural behaviour.

A few things we must consider when housing koalas include:

- Enclosures must contain a large number of study tree forks and horizontal branches to imitate a tree-like environment.
- Enclosures must be made snake proof.
- Enclosures need to be made from strong square gauge wire and include adequate ventilation to prevent overheating.
- Orphaned and very sick animals must be housed indoors.
- Enclosures will require large water containers for holding fresh vegetation.

Below is a brief overview of some of the equipment that koalas require. The Wildcare koala training workshop and manual covers their requirements in more detail.

| | |
|--|--|
| Rescue Equipment | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Large, wire rescue cage with top-opening lid• Clean towels and blankets to line cage• Pouches for orphaned koalas |
| Orphaned Koalas | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Feeding equipment (syringes, specially made latex teats, cannulas, sterilising equipment, small feeding bowls, specialised glass syringes)• Lots of cotton pouches (30+ each animal)• Small baby blankets and towels.• Large, solid cane basket• Tree forks with stands suitable for indoor use• Water containers for holding fresh vegetation• Specialised heating equipment (if caring for unfurred joeys) |
| Adult Koalas <i>Critical Care Stage</i> <i>Intermediate Care Stage</i> <i>Pre-Release and Final Rehabilitation Stage</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Solid wire mesh enclosure with sturdy branches (1.0m L x 1.0m W x 1.0m H)• Soft bedding including doonas, blankets, towels.• Medium sized water containers for holding fresh vegetation• Solid wire mesh enclosure with tree forks and sturdy branches (2.0m L x 1.0m W x 2.0m H)• Large water containers for holding fresh vegetation• Large outdoor enclosure (minimum size 4.0m L x 3.0m W x 3.0m H)• Enclosure must have adequate amount of shade with some areas where access to sun is possible• Large tree forks and branches for climbing• Large water containers for holding fresh vegetation |

Critical Care Stage – designed to reduce an animal’s level of physical activity for a short period of time and to provide easy access for monitoring, treatment and feeding.

Intermediate Care Stage – allows sufficient space for some physical activity while enabling the animal to be readily caught for monitoring and treatment.

Pre-Release/Final Rehabilitation Stage – allows an animal to regain better physical condition, display natural behaviour, acclimatise to normal weather conditions and reduce human contact.

The measurements for enclosures listed above are sourced from the *Code of Practice – Care of Sick, Injured and Orphaned Protected Animals in Queensland* (EHP). In some circumstances, Wildcare’s housing requirements exceed the CoP suggestions.

Easy Reference Sheet

Caring for Echidnas

Version: January 2021

There are only two species of echidna with only one being found on the Australian mainland, the Short-beaked Echidna. In South-east Queensland, the echidna is mostly nocturnal but during the colder months it is more active during the day. It has a highly specialised diet consisting of termites, ants, worms and larvae.

Do I need a Permit to care for echidnas?

Yes. You will need a REHABILITATION PERMIT to care for echidnas. Echidnas are considered a 'specialised species' in Queensland and are excluded from a General Rehabilitation Permit. A Rehabilitation Permit can be obtained from a licensed wildlife care group such as Wildcare. There is a higher assessment criterion required and permits for echidnas will only be issued to wildlife volunteers that have had extensive experience with caring for at least 2-3 other wildlife species over several years and who display a good understanding of their anatomy and biology.

Remember all Australian native wildlife is protected in Queensland. You cannot keep them without an appropriate Permit.

Do I have to do any training to care for echidnas?

Yes. Echidnas have very specialised dietary, housing and handling requirements. They often come into care due to injury, loss of habitat, illness, or as a result of being orphaned. You must have a good understanding of their biology, be able to recognise signs of illness and injury and be able to provide emergency care to them.

In Wildcare you will need to complete the following training workshops in order to care for echidnas:

- Orientation – compulsory for all members
- Rescue and First Aid for Wildlife (Basic) – compulsory for all members
- Caring for Orphaned Mammals
- Echidnas

Is caring for echidnas difficult?

Caring for echidnas is a highly specialised area of wildlife rehabilitation. They are difficult animals to house adequately and require a large purpose-built outdoor enclosure for their final stages of rehabilitation. They can be difficult to handle and are very secretive, making assessment and monitoring difficult. They are not suitable for new wildlife carers.

Remember:

- Echidnas are **nocturnal** – they require feeding, cleaning and monitoring at night.
- They have a **highly specialised diet** – you must be able to source live termites for them regularly.
- Their **predators** are domestic dogs – they cannot be housed in close contact to pets.
- Echidnas are classified as a **specialised species** – you would be appointed a mentor to assist you with getting started with echidnas and you would need to stay in close contact with them.
- Orphaned echidnas rarely come into care and are cared by echidna carers that have at least several years' experience.
- The final stages of their rehabilitation require a **large purpose-built outdoor enclosure** (see requirements overleaf).

Echidna rehabilitation is an area that you may like to consider once you have been caring for a variety of species for a few years.

Remember, we raise to RELEASE!

We must care for wildlife in a way that ensures their survival once returned to the wild.

What equipment do I need to care for echidnas?

Echidnas need to be housed and cared for during rehabilitation to prevent further injury, prevent escape, minimise stress and to allow them to display their natural behaviour.

A few things we must consider when housing echidnas include:

- They are very strong and can easily break through standard types of animal enclosures
- They can climb extremely well and therefore require solid, deep enclosures
- They must never be housed in wire cages/enclosures
- Injured and sick echidnas are housed indoors and require a large number of clean towels which are changed 1-2 times a day
- They have a particularly strong smell which at times can be quite offensive
- Their final stages of rehabilitation require a large purpose-built outdoor enclosure

Below is a brief overview of some of the equipment that echidnas require. The Wildcare echidna training workshop and manual covers their requirements in more detail.

| | |
|--|--|
| Rescue Equipment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deep plastic rubbish bin with secured lid with holes drilled in the lid and around top of bin for ventilation • Clean, second-hand towels to line bin |
| Orphaned Echidnas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeding equipment (specialised feeding tubes, sterilising equipment, syringes, disposable pipettes, small feeding bowls) • Small blankets/bunny rugs and sheets • Solid, deep plastic containers of various sizes to accommodate the baby as it grows |
| Adult Echidnas <i>Critical Care Stage</i> <i>Intermediate Care Stage</i> <i>Pre-Release and Final Rehabilitation Stage</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deep, solid plastic container (1.2m L x 0.8m W x 0.8m H) • Solid, heavy ceramic bowls for water and food • Large quantity of clean, second-hand towels for lining enclosure • Thermometer to monitor ambient temperature • Ice/cool packs (for hot weather) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deep, solid plastic container (1.5m L x 1.5m W x 1.0m H) • Solid, heavy ceramic bowls for water and food • Large quantity of clean, second-hand towels for lining enclosure • Thermometer to monitor ambient temperature • Ice/cool packs (for hot weather) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large outdoor enclosure (minimum size 5.0m L x 5.0m W x 1.0m H) • Sides must be constructed from tin/colourbond to prevent escape and be dug into ground at least 60cm to prevent digging underneath • Enclosure must have substantial amounts of shade with some areas where access to sun is possible • Substrate must include large amounts of natural leaf litter and dirt to encourage foraging and low shrubs/vegetation to provide cover • Large logs to provide areas to sleep and hide • Solid, heavy ceramic bowls for water and food |

Critical Care Stage – designed to reduce an animal's level of physical activity for a short period of time and to provide easy access for monitoring, treatment and feeding.

Intermediate Care Stage – allows sufficient space for some physical activity while enabling the animal to be readily caught for monitoring and treatment.

Pre-Release/Final Rehabilitation Stage – allows an animal to regain better physical condition, display natural behaviour, acclimatise to normal weather conditions and reduce human contact.

The measurements for enclosures listed above are sourced from the *Code of Practice – Care of Sick, Injured and Orphaned Protected Animals in Queensland* (EHP). In some circumstances, Wildcare's housing requirements exceed the CoP suggestions.

Easy Reference Sheet

Caring for Bats

Version: January 2021

There are 77 species of bats in Australia. In South-east Queensland, the most common bats coming into care are three species of flying foxes and a number of species of insectivorous bats. All Australian bats are nocturnal and have specialised diets.

Do I need a Permit to care for bats?

Yes. You will need a REHABILITATION PERMIT to care for bats.

A Rehabilitation Permit can be obtained from a licensed wildlife care group such as Wildcare. You must also be vaccinated against Australian Bat Lyssavirus. For information on ABL and handling requirements, visit www.health.qld.gov.au and www.des.qld.gov.au.

Remember all Australian native wildlife is protected in Queensland. You cannot keep them without an appropriate Permit.

Do I have to do any training to care for bats?

Yes. All species of bats have specialised dietary and housing requirements. They often come into care due to habitat loss, injury or as a result of being orphaned. You must have a good understanding of their biology, be able to recognise signs of illness and injury and be able to provide emergency care to them.

Wildcare recommends that if you wish to rescue and/or care for bats, that you join a dedicated bat group. There are several groups in South-east Queensland including:

Bats Qld (Flying Foxes and Microbats Inc).

www.batsqld.org.au

Bat Conservation and Rescue Qld Inc

www.bats.org.au

Bat Rescue Inc. (Australia)

www.batrescue.org.au

Wildcare currently offers training in the rescue and care of microbats each year.

Is caring for bats difficult?

Caring for common species of megabats (flying foxes) is suitable for new carers under the supervision of an experienced bat carer. Microbats (insectivorous bats) are more specialised and would be more suited to wildlife carers with a little more experience.

Remember:

- Bats are **nocturnal** – you need to be available to care for them at night.
- Bats are very **social animals** – they must be raised with others of their own species.
- They have specialised diets – you must be able to source their natural diet for them every day.
- One of their **predators** is the domestic pet – they cannot be housed near domestic animals.
- Orphaned bats need to be fed **every 4 to 5 hours** (including through the night).
- Older bats must be housed in a **large outdoor flight aviary** so that they can gain the strength to fly long distances.
- You must be vaccinated against ABL to rescue or care for any species of bat.

Once you have cared for common species of bats, then you may be ready to move onto caring for more specialised species.

Remember, we raise to RELEASE!

We must care for wildlife in a way that ensures their survival once returned to the wild.

What equipment do I need to care for bats?

Bats need to be housed and cared for during rehabilitation to prevent further injury, prevent escape, minimise stress and to allow them to display their natural behaviour.

A few things we must consider when housing bats include:

- All species have the potential to carry Australian Bat Lyssavirus and therefore all enclosures must be well secured and locked to prevent any unvaccinated person accidentally coming into contact with them.
- All species require large enclosures to allow them adequate room to fly.
- Microbats have highly specialised requirements and large flight enclosures.

Below is a brief overview of some of the equipment that bats require. The Wildcare bat training workshop and manual covers their requirements in more detail.

| | |
|--|--|
| Rescue Equipment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium sized plastic or wire cages for housing adults or juveniles • Towels and small blankets for lining enclosure and for handling bats • Strong, leather gloves for handling all species • Long-sleeved shirt and protective gauntlets for handling large species |
| Orphaned Bats | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeding equipment (syringes, specially made latex teats, cannulas, sterilising equipment, small feeding bowls) • Lots of cotton bat wraps (30+ each animal) • Lots of facecloths (for use as a mummy-roll) • Small baby blankets and towels • Tree forks and/or hanging clothes airer • Specialised heating equipment (if caring for very young babies) |
| Adult Bats <i>Critical Care Stage</i> <i>Intermediate Care Stage</i> <i>Pre-Release and Final Rehabilitation Stage</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure, quiet room • Large wire cage with branches (0.8m L x 0.6m W x 0.6m H) • Towels and small blankets • Stainless steel coop cups for holding food and water <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure, quiet room • Large wire cage with branches (1.0m L x 1.0m W x 1.0m H) • Towels and small blankets • Stainless steel coop cups for holding food and water • Small water containers for holding fresh vegetation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure outdoor aviary/enclosure (minimum 10.0m L x 4.0m W x 2.0m H) • Enclosure must have adequate amount of shade with some areas where access to sun is possible • Water containers for holding native vegetation • Stainless steel coop cups for holding food and water • Hanging implements for holding fresh fruit |

Critical Care Stage – designed to reduce an animal's level of physical activity for a short period of time and to provide easy access for monitoring, treatment and feeding.

Intermediate Care Stage – allows sufficient space for some physical activity while enabling the animal to be readily caught for monitoring and treatment.

Pre-Release/Final Rehabilitation Stage – allows an animal to regain better physical condition, display natural behaviour, acclimatise to normal weather conditions and reduce human contact.

The measurements for enclosures listed above are sourced from the *Code of Practice – Care of Sick, Injured and Orphaned Protected Animals in Queensland* (EHP). In some circumstances, Wildcare's housing requirements exceed the CoP suggestions.

Easy Reference Sheet

Caring for Lizards

Version: January 2021

There are over 400 species of reptiles found in Queensland. South-east Queensland is home to many species of skinks, dragons, geckos and monitors.

Do I need a Permit to care for lizards?

Yes. You will need a REHABILITATION PERMIT to care for lizards.

A Rehabilitation Permit can be obtained from a licensed wildlife care group such as Wildcare.

Remember all Australian native wildlife is protected in Queensland. You cannot keep them without an appropriate Permit.

Do I have to do any training to care for lizards?

Yes. Lizards have specialised dietary and housing needs. They come into care due to illness and injury. You must have a good understanding of their anatomy and biology, be able to learn to recognise signs of injury and illness, as well as gain confidence in providing emergency care for them.

In Wildcare, you will need to complete the following training workshops in order to care for lizards:

- Orientation – compulsory for all members
- Rescue and First Aid for Wildlife (Basic) – compulsory for all members
- Lizards (Basic)

Is caring for lizards difficult?

Caring for common species of lizards, such as skinks and dragons, is a good place to start as a wildlife rehabilitator if you are interested in reptiles. Most common species are fairly hardy and suitable for new carers. However, like all of our native wildlife, they do have specialised requirements.

Remember:

- Lizards are ectothermic so they have **specific heating and lighting requirements** – you need to be able to provide this.
- They are **quiet** – they are suitable for people in units or high-density residential areas where noise needs to be kept to a minimum.
- One of their greatest **predators** is domestic pets – they cannot be housed near domestic dogs or cats but because they are housed in specially-built reptile enclosures, they can easily be kept in a separate room away from domestic animals.
- Lizards require **feeding every 1 to 2 days** so are suitable if you cannot take animals to work and do not wish to feed animals through the night.
- Lizards are generally **slow to heal** so may require longer time in care than mammals or birds with similar injuries.
- If you have captive/pet reptiles, you need to ensure that they are kept separate from any wild reptiles in order to eliminate the spread of disease to wild populations and also to protect your own pets.

Once you have been caring for common species of lizards for a while, you may want to progress to caring for more specialised species such as snakes or lace monitors.

Remember, we raise to RELEASE!

We must care for wildlife in a way that ensures their survival once returned to the wild.

What equipment do I need to care for lizards?

Lizards need to be housed and cared for during rehabilitation to prevent further injury, prevent escape, minimise stress and to allow them to display their natural behaviour.

A few things we must consider when housing lizards include:

- Providing an appropriate heat source and access to UVB light is paramount in the successful rehabilitation of all reptile species.
- Most commercially made reptile enclosures are suitable for housing most common species of lizards.
- Lizards have a varied natural diet and depending the species, will include food such as snails and insects as well as a good variety of vegetables and fruit.
- During the final stages of rehabilitation, long-term patients will require access to an outdoor enclosure to enable them to re-develop their muscle tone. Some wildlife volunteers specialise in this final stage of rehabilitation.
- All enclosures must be suitable to the species of lizard being housed and must include suitable natural branches and other fixtures (such as water dishes for water dragons) to imitate as closely as possible their natural habitat.

Below is a brief overview of some of the equipment that lizards require. The Wildcare reptile training workshop and manual covers their requirements in more detail.

| | |
|--|---|
| Rescue Equipment | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Good quality deep plastic storage tub with a secure clip-on lid in a variety of sizes.• Clean, second-hand towels to line transport carrier.• Quantity of clean pillowcases for transporting. |
| Adult Lizards <i>Critical Care Stage</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Purpose-built reptile enclosure with UVB light and appropriate heat lamp• Shallow ceramic bowls for water and food• Size of enclosures will depend on the species of lizard but will range from 0.6m L x 0.4m W x 0.5m H to 1.2m L x 1.0m W x 0.6m H |
| <i>Intermediate Care Stage</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• As above• Size of enclosures will depend on the species of lizard but will range from 0.9m L x 0.4m W x 0.5m H to 1.8m L x 1.0m W x 0.6m H• Fittings will depend upon the species and are outlined in the Wildcare reptile training course and manual |
| <i>Pre-Release and Final Rehabilitation Stage</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Large outdoor enclosure that must include adequate amount of direct sun along with some areas where access to shade is possible• Size will vary depending upon species but will range in size up to 4.0m L x 3.0m W x 2.0m H• Enclosure must include a variety of natural branches and substrate to allow for display of natural behavior.• Large water container suitable to species. |

Critical Care Stage – designed to reduce an animal's level of physical activity for a short period of time and to provide easy access for monitoring, treatment and feeding.

Intermediate Care Stage – allows sufficient space for some physical activity while enabling the animal to be easily caught for monitoring and treatment.

Pre-Release/Final Rehabilitation Stage – allows an animal to regain better physical condition, display natural behaviour, acclimatise to normal weather conditions and reduce human contact.

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Easy Reference Sheet

Caring for Snakes

Version: January 2021

South-east Queensland is home to many species of snakes, including several of the most venomous snakes in the world. Wildlife carers must be able to accurately identify snakes in order to be able to confidently rescue and care for them.

Do I need a Permit to care for snakes?

Yes. You will need a REHABILITATION PERMIT to care for non-venomous snakes. A Rehabilitation Permit can be obtained from a licensed wildlife care group such as Wildcare. In order to care for venomous species, you need to undertake specialised training with an accredited snake handler/trainer. You may then be eligible to apply to Wildcare for a permit for venomous snakes.

Remember all Australian native wildlife is protected in Queensland. You cannot keep them without an appropriate Permit.

Do I have to do any training to care for snakes?

Yes. Snakes have specialised dietary and housing needs. You must be competent in your identification and handling skills. You must also have a good understanding of their biology, be able to recognise signs of illness and be able to provide emergency care to them.

In Wildcare, you will need to complete the following training workshops in order to care for snakes:

- Orientation – compulsory for all members
- Rescue and First Aid for Wildlife (Basic) – compulsory for all members
- Snakes

Is caring for snakes difficult?

Caring for common species of non-venomous snakes is a specialised area of reptile rehabilitation. Generally, you will care for common lizard species before progressing to care for non-venomous snakes. Like all of our native wildlife, they do have specialised requirements.

Remember:

- Snakes are ectothermic so they have **specific heating and lighting requirements** – you need to be able to provide this.
- They are **quiet** – they are suitable for people in units or high-density residential areas where noise needs to be kept to a minimum.
- One of their greatest **predators** is domestic pets – they cannot be housed near domestic dogs or cats but because they are housed in specially-built reptile enclosures, they can easily be kept in a separate room away from domestic animals.
- Snakes require **feeding once or twice a week**.
- Snakes are generally **slow to heal** so may require longer time in care than mammals or birds with similar injuries.
- If you have captive/pet reptiles, you need to ensure that they are kept separate from any wild reptiles in order to eliminate the spread of disease to wild populations and also to protect your own pets.

Snakes can be difficult to handle and there is a risk of being bitten – good handling skills are essential!

Remember, we raise to RELEASE!

We must care for wildlife in a way that ensures their survival once returned to the wild.

What equipment do I need to care for snakes?

Snakes need to be housed and cared for during rehabilitation to prevent further injury, prevent escape, minimise stress and to allow them to display their natural behaviour.

A few things we must consider when housing snakes include:

- Providing an appropriate heat source and access to UVB light is paramount in the successful rehabilitation of all reptile species.
- Most commercially made reptile enclosures are suitable for housing most common species of snakes.
- Most common species of non-venomous snakes, such as pythons, will eat commercially bred native rodents (sourced frozen) however some species, such as tree snakes, have a more specialised diet.
- During the final stages of rehabilitation, long-term patients will require access to an outdoor enclosure to enable them to re-develop their muscle tone. Some wildlife volunteers specialise in this final stage of rehabilitation.
- All enclosures must be suitable to the species of snake being housed and must include suitable natural branches and other fixtures (particularly for arboreal species) to imitate as closely as possible their natural habitat.

Below is a brief overview of some of the equipment that snakes require. The Wildcare reptile training workshop and manual covers their requirements in more detail.

| | |
|---|---|
| Rescue Equipment | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Good quality deep plastic storage tub with a secure clip-on lid in a variety of sizes• Clean, second-hand towels to line transport carrier• Quantity of clean pillowcases for transporting• Snake handling hook and bag. |
| Adult Snakes <i>Critical Care Stage</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Purpose-built reptile enclosure with UVB light and appropriate heat lamp• Shallow ceramic bowl for water• Size of enclosures will depend on the species of snake but will range from 0.6m L x 0.3m W x 0.5m H to 1.2m L x 0.5m W x 0.5m H |
| <i>Intermediate Care Stage</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• As above• Size of enclosures will depend on the species of snake but will range from 0.9m L x 0.6m W x 0.5m H to 1.8m L x 1.5m W x 1.7m H• Fittings will depend upon the species and are outlined in the Wildcare reptile training course and manual |
| <i>Pre-Release and Final Rehabilitation Stage</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Large outdoor enclosure that must include adequate amount of direct sun along with some areas where access to shade is possible• Size will vary depending upon species but will range in size up to 2.0m L x 2.0m W x 2.0m H• Enclosure must include a variety of natural branches and substrate to allow for display of natural behavior.• Large water container suitable to species. |

Critical Care Stage – designed to reduce an animal's level of physical activity for a short period of time and to provide easy access for monitoring, treatment and feeding.

Intermediate Care Stage – allows sufficient space for some physical activity while enabling the animal to be readily caught for monitoring and treatment.

Pre-Release/Final Rehabilitation Stage – allows an animal to regain better physical condition, display natural behaviour, acclimatise to normal weather conditions and reduce human contact.

The measurements for enclosures listed above are sourced from the *Code of Practice – Care of Sick, Injured and Orphaned Protected Animals in Queensland* (EHP). In some circumstances, Wildcare's housing requirements exceed the CoP suggestions.

Easy Reference Sheet

Caring for Turtles

Version: January 2021

Queensland is home to 14 species of freshwater turtles, 4 of which are found in the South-east Queensland region. Freshwater turtles require very specialised housing requirements and for this reason, larger individuals usually undergo rehabilitation in wildlife facilities/hospitals.

Do I need a Permit to care for turtles?

Yes. You will need a REHABILITATION PERMIT to care for turtles. A Rehabilitation Permit can be obtained from a licensed wildlife care group such as Wildcare.

Remember all Australian native wildlife is protected in Queensland. You cannot keep them without an appropriate Permit.

Do I have to do any training to care for turtles?

Yes. Turtles have specialised dietary and housing needs. You must have a good understanding of their biology, be able to recognise signs of illness and be able to provide emergency care to them.

In Wildcare, you will need to complete the following training workshops in order to care for turtles:

- Orientation – compulsory for all members
- Rescue and First Aid for Wildlife (Basic) – compulsory for all members
- Freshwater Turtles (Basic)

Is caring for turtles difficult?

In order to care for freshwater turtles, you need to have very specific housing to prevent management issues. They can often be difficult to feed in captivity. Like all of our native wildlife, they do have specialised requirements.

Remember:

- Turtles have **specific heating and lighting requirements** – you need to be able to provide this.
- They are **quiet** – they are suitable for people in high-density residential areas where noise needs to be kept to a minimum.
- They should not be housed near domestic pets.
- Turtles require **feeding once a day** in warmer weather.
- Turtles are generally in care as a result of shell fractures – these are very **slow to heal** and they may need to be in care for up to 12 months.

If you have captive/pet reptiles, you need to ensure that they are kept separate from any wild reptiles in order to eliminate the spread of disease to wild populations and also to protect your own pets.

Remember, we raise to RELEASE!

We must care for wildlife in a way that ensures their survival once returned to the wild.

What equipment do I need to care for turtles?

Turtles need to be housed and cared for during rehabilitation to prevent further injury, prevent escape, minimise stress and to allow them to display their natural behaviour.

A few things we must consider when housing turtles include:

- Providing an appropriate heat source and access to UVB light is paramount in the successful rehabilitation of all reptile species.
- Most commercially available large fish tanks are able to be adapted for smaller species of freshwater turtles.
- Water must be able to be warmed with an appropriate aquarium heater.
- During some periods of rehabilitation, freshwater turtles will require specialised housing to allow them to be 'dry docked' which enables any wounds to be kept clean and dry.
- Most common species of freshwater turtles will eat commercially bred insects along with vegetables.
- During the final stages of rehabilitation, most turtles will require access to an outdoor enclosure and heated pond to enable them to re-develop their muscle tone. Some wildlife volunteers specialise in this final stage of rehabilitation.

Below is a brief overview of some of the equipment that turtles require. The Wildcare reptile training workshop and manual covers their requirements in more detail.

| | |
|--|--|
| Rescue Equipment | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Good quality deep plastic storage tub with a secure clip-on lid in a variety of sizes.• Clean, second-hand towels to line transport carrier.• Quantity of clean pillowcases for transporting. |
| Adult Turtles <i>Critical Care Stage</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Large tank with UVB light and appropriate heat source• Size of enclosures will depend on the species and size of turtle but will range from 0.6m L x 0.4m W x 0.4m H to 1.0m L x .5m W x .4m H. Fifty percent of the enclosure should be pond. |
| <i>Intermediate Care Stage</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• As above• Size of enclosures will depend on the species and size of turtle but will range from 1.8m L x 0.6m W x 0.4m H to 2.0m L x 1.2m W x 0.9m H. Fifty percent of the enclosure should be pond.• Fittings will depend upon the species and are outlined in the Wildcare reptile training course and manual |
| <i>Pre-Release and Final Rehabilitation Stage</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• As above |

Critical Care Stage – designed to reduce an animal's level of physical activity for a short period of time and to provide easy access for monitoring, treatment and feeding.

Intermediate Care Stage – allows sufficient space for some physical activity while enabling the animal to be readily caught for monitoring and treatment.

Pre-Release/Final Rehabilitation Stage – allows an animal to regain better physical condition, display natural behaviour, acclimatise to normal weather conditions and reduce human contact.

The measurements for enclosures listed above are sourced from the *Code of Practice – Care of Sick, Injured and Orphaned Protected Animals in Queensland* (EHP). In some circumstances, Wildcare's housing requirements exceed the CoP suggestions.

Guidline – Wildlife Management

Rehabilitating sick, injured and orphaned protected animals

Guideline

Wildlife management

Rehabilitating sick, injured and orphaned protected animals – Conditions and restrictions – Taking and keeping protected animals

Background

This guideline contains information that is relevant only to a person who takes and keeps a protected animal from the wild for the purpose of rehabilitation and release of the animal, including people who hold rehabilitation permits and wildlife exhibitor licences under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992*.

This guideline should be read in conjunction with the *Code of Practice — Care and rehabilitation of orphaned, sick or injured protected animals by wildlife care volunteers*.

Membership of the industry body the Queensland Wildlife Rehabilitation Council (QWRC) is highly recommended. For further information on what skills or equipment are needed when caring for wildlife contact QWRC at <http://www.qwrc.org.au>

This guideline does not deal with the keeping or use of protected animals as pets, in the pet industry or in scientific research. Also this guideline does not deal with the endorsement of a rehabilitation permit for the purpose of rescuing a protected animal whose habitat is about to be destroyed by human intervention.

Definitions

Prescribed natural habitat for an animal means:

if a conservation plan includes a definition of a 'prescribed natural habitat' for the animal—a habitat within the meaning of the definition; or

if paragraph (a) does not apply—an appropriate natural habitat for the animal.

Note — for koalas, see the Koala Conservation Plan, schedule 2.

Wildlife may be taken for rehabilitation

The *Nature Conservation (Wildlife Management) Regulation 2006* allows a person who holds a particular licence or permit, especially a rehabilitation permit, to take and keep a sick, injured or orphaned protected native animal. A rehabilitation permit may be given to an individual who is least 13 years old or a corporation.

Licensed person

A person who holds an individual rehabilitation permit may take and keep a sick, injured or orphaned protected native animal that is identified on the permit from the wild for the purpose of rehabilitating and releasing the animal back into a prescribed natural habitat. The animal can only be released once it is again able to live in the wild.

If you receive an animal and the species is not identified on your rehabilitation permit, you are considered to not hold a permit for the animal and you will have to deal with the animal as if you were an unlicensed person (see the 'Unlicensed person section' below).

Rehabilitating sick, injured or orphaned protected animals – Conditions and restrictions – Taking and keeping protected animals for rehabilitation and release

Individuals wishing to care for sick, injured or orphaned protected native animals must apply for a rehabilitation permit and must also be able to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and experience to carry out the activities under the authority. The application must be accompanied by reports from two referees of professional standing attesting to their own and the applicant's experience as outlined in Question 7 of the rehabilitation permit application form.

The chief executive can refuse to grant a rehabilitation permit if the applicant does not satisfy the chief executive that they can carry out the activities under the authority in a competent and ethical way.

If the applicant does not have previous experience with protected native animal then it is recommended they take up membership with a local wildlife care organisation who will provide the appropriate training.

Also, the chief executive can not grant a rehabilitation permit for a protected animal to a person unless the chief executive is satisfied that the person intends to rehabilitate the animal and return it to a prescribed natural habitat for the animal.

The holder of a rehabilitation permit is not entitled to enter land for the purpose of rescuing wildlife without the landholder's consent.

Unlicensed person

In emergency circumstances an unlicensed person may also take and keep a sick, injured or orphaned protected native animal but must comply with certain conditions.

If the animal is a marine mammal or marine turtle, an unlicensed person must make all reasonable attempts to immediately do the following (for another protected animal, you must comply within 72 hours of acquiring the animal):

- release the animal; or
- give the animal to another person who holds a rehabilitation permit for the animal; or
- notify a conservation officer who is an officer of the Department of Environment and Resource Management (DERM) that you have taken possession of the animal.

If you notify a conservation officer that you have taken possession of the animal, and the officer gives you a direction concerning the animal, you must comply with the direction, for example, an officer may direct you to release the animal to an appropriate natural habitat or give the animal to the officer or another person, or make application for a rehabilitation permit if satisfied that you have the ability to carry out the activities under the authority in a competent and ethical way and release the animal to the wild.

A person who does not hold a rehabilitation permit may move an animal from the place where it was taken to:

- the premises where the person intends to care for the animal; or
- the premises of another person who holds a rehabilitation permit within Queensland for the animal, or
- to any other place if a conservation officer directs the person to move the animal to that place.

Corporations and volunteer wildlife care associations

If a rehabilitation permit is granted to a corporation or a volunteer wildlife care association, the holder of the permit may authorise other people ('relevant persons') to operate under the permit.

The holder of the permit must give each relevant person a copy of the permit that:

- states the person's name and residential address; and

Rehabilitating sick, injured or orphaned protected animals – Conditions and restrictions – Taking and keeping protected animals for rehabilitation and release

- is signed by the permit holder.

The holder of the permit may also limit the range of species that the relevant person may take and keep under the permit by striking out the name of the species identified on the copy of the permit and initialling the change on the copy. The holder of the permit cannot add new or additional species to the permit.

How do you keep sick, injured or orphaned protected animals?

A person who keeps a sick, injured or orphaned protected native animal under a rehabilitation permit must keep the animal in a way that is conducive to rehabilitating the animal for release to a prescribed natural habitat once the animal is again able to live in the habitat.

The document *Code of practice - Care of orphaned, sick or injured protected animals by wildlife care volunteers* provides information for people who care for orphaned, sick or injured protected native animals.

Of particular importance are the following:

- Carers should undertake regular assessment of animals in care to ensure that they are making progress in rehabilitation for eventual release to the wild. If animals are not making progress, carers should either refer the animal to another licensed carer to continue rehabilitation or take the animal to a veterinary surgeon to ascertain if there is a medical reason for the animal's failure to improve.
- Carers should not allow native animals in care to associate with other domestic animals, especially cats or dogs, as these associations may make them lose their natural fear of these animals in the wild. This is an impediment to their survival once released.
- Carers should not become attached to animals in care as this makes releasing the animal to the wild more challenging for the carer.
- Carers should acknowledge the cost of rehabilitating protected animals and make sure that they don't become financially overcommitted. Carers who become overcommitted by keeping more animals than they can reasonably look after generally provide a lower standard of care for wildlife and may also place themselves in a difficult situation.

What are specialist species?

Some species may have needs outside the normal capacity of most carers. Additional requirements are placed upon carers who intend to keep these species to improve the likelihood of successful rehabilitation and their return to the wild.

Permits may only be granted to persons assessed as having the appropriate experience, skills and facilities to house and care for the following wildlife:

- cassowary;
- echidna;
- emu;
- koala;
- raptors;
- reptiles;
- marine turtles;

Rehabilitating sick, injured or orphaned protected animals – Conditions and restrictions – Taking and keeping protected animals for rehabilitation and release

- platypus;
- seabirds; and
- flying-fox and micro-bats

Note: All persons caring for flying foxes and insectivorous bats must be vaccinated against Australian Bat Lyssavirus (ABL) and must regularly consult their General Practitioner or Public Health Unit to maintain vaccinations. The permit holder must restrict access to flying foxes or micro-bats in care by unvaccinated family members and friends.

Can you use wildlife held under a rehabilitation permit for displays?

A person who keeps an orphaned, sick or injured animal in care is not permitted to display the animal. However, where a rehabilitation permit is granted to a volunteer wildlife care association, the chief executive may give the association written approval to display an animal kept under the permit, provided:

- the animal does not have any visible signs of illness or injury; and
- the purpose of the display is to raise funds to assist in providing care and treatment for animals kept under the permit and is:
 - to promote an understanding of the ecology and conservation of the animal;
 - to promote education about, and conservation of, the animal; or
 - to give public information about the ecological role of the animal; and
- the displaying of the animal does not compromise its successful rehabilitation.

Can you move sick, injured or orphaned protected animals under a rehabilitation permit?

A person who holds a rehabilitation permit may move an animal kept under the permit:

1. from the place of taking in the State to the place where the animal will be kept under the permit; and
2. from the place where the animal is kept under the permit to:
 - i. a place, within the State, where the holder of another rehabilitation permit is to care for the animal; or
 - ii. prescribed natural habitat when the animal has been rehabilitated and is ready for release to the wild; or
 - iii. another place if the chief executive has asked the holder to give the animal to another person who will keep the animal.
3. to or from a display, but only if the holder of the rehabilitation permit is a volunteer wildlife care association and the holder has the written approval of the chief executive to display an animal kept under the permit.

Other circumstances where sick, injured or orphaned animals being held under a rehabilitation permit may be moved is with the permit holder only if it is necessary in the circumstances to ensure it is provided an appropriate level of care, for example:

- to a veterinarian for treatment,

Rehabilitating sick, injured or orphaned protected animals – Conditions and restrictions – Taking and keeping protected animals for rehabilitation and release

- for a health assessment by your species co-ordinator or mentor,
- taken to a workplace by the permit holder if the animal requires regular feeding, this can only be done with the workplace's approval with not breaching any other local laws or health regulations, or
- attending a wildlife rehabilitators workshop or training course provided the animal is placed in a quiet room during the course and fed away from course participants.

However, no animal should be taken into a shopping centre unless the animal needs constant warmth and is small enough to be hidden from public view. Under no circumstances is it permissible to display animals in public unless authorised to do so e.g. voluntary wildlife care group authorised to do displays.

In some situations, the chief executive may write on a rehabilitation permit that the holder of the permit may move an orphaned, sick or injured protected animal into the State for the purpose of caring for the animal under the permit. If your rehabilitation permit contains this statement, you may move the animal into Queensland for the purpose of caring for the animal under your rehabilitation permit.

Can you use dead wildlife 'road kill' for feeding of raptors?

This section only applies to a person who holds a rehabilitation permit that has a species of raptor (families Falconidae, Accipitridae or Strigidae) identified on the permit.

If this section applies to you, you are allowed to take a dead protected animal that is classified as a least concern animal, other than an echidna (*Tachyglossus aculeatus*), platypus (*Ornithorhynchus anatinus*), koala (*Phascolarctos cinereus*) or wombat (Family Vombatidae), for the purpose of feeding the bird of prey kept under the permit. The handling and feeding of dead flying foxes to raptors in care is not recommended.

You still need the permission of the landholder or land manager to take any dead animals for food. You must not take any animal from a protected area.

When do you release rehabilitated animals to the wild?

A person who holds a rehabilitation permit must release an animal kept under the permit to prescribed natural habitat once the animal is again able to live in the habitat. However, if the chief executive has specified on the permit a particular day on which the animal must be released, the holder must release the animal on that particular day.

The only time where a permit holder is not obliged to release an animal kept under the permit to the wild is if:

- the animal dies or escapes; or
- the chief executive has given the holder a written notice stating that the animal should not be returned to the wild.

The release of rehabilitated animals must follow the procedures for release outlined in the Code of Practice — *Care and rehabilitation of orphaned, sick or injured protected animals by wildlife care volunteers*.

The release of rehabilitated koalas must be carried out by DERM staff or volunteers affiliated with the Moggill Koala Hospital or by staff or volunteers of other private koala hospitals.

How do you dispose of animals kept under this permit?

The holder of a rehabilitation permit is not permitted to sell or give away wildlife kept under the permit to another person, except where the other person is also the holder of a rehabilitation permit and intends to rehabilitate and release the animal.

Rehabilitating sick, injured or orphaned protected animals – Conditions and restrictions – Taking and keeping protected animals for rehabilitation and release

What do you do with animals that cannot be released?

The main objective of wildlife care is to rehabilitate and release wildlife taken and kept under the permit. However, the Department is aware that from time to time, and despite the best intentions and efforts of carers, some animals never recover to the extent that they may be released into the wild. A rehabilitation permit does not permit the keeping of an animal where there is no intention to release the animal.

If the chief executive gives the holder of the permit a direction that the animal is not to be released, the person may:

- make application for a permit to keep protected wildlife for the animal; or
- otherwise deal with the animal in the way directed by the officer (e.g. going through the Queensland Species Management Plan process for placement within a zoological institution).

A permit to keep protected wildlife can only be granted in limited circumstances and will not be granted to keep a collection of animals that would not normally be kept under a recreational wildlife licence. Applicants for a permit to keep a protected animal of a species that is not listed in schedule 3 of the *Nature Conservation (Wildlife Management) Regulation 2006*, which are those native animals that may be kept privately in Queensland, will need to demonstrate that the animal will contribute to the rehabilitation of other animals of the same species or closely related species.

Disclaimer:

While this document has been prepared with care, it contains general information and does not profess to offer legal, professional or commercial advice. The Queensland Government accepts no liability for any external decisions or actions taken on the basis of this document. Persons external to the Department of Environment and Resource Management should satisfy themselves independently and by consulting their own professional advisors before embarking on any proposed course of action.

Code of Practice

Care of Sick, Injured or Orphaned Protected
Animals in Queensland

Nature Conservation Act 1992

Prepared by: Nature Conservation Services Branch, Department of Environment and Heritage Protection

Approved in accordance with section 174A of the *Nature Conservation Act 1992*

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March 2013

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1. Purpose of this code

- 1 This code of practice (the code) has been prepared by the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection (EHP) in consultation with the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF), RSPCA Queensland (RSPCA Qld), the Queensland Wildlife Rehabilitation Council (QWRC) and the wildlife care community. This code will ensure that the activities of all parties involved in the care and rehabilitation of native animals in Queensland result in the best possible conservation and animal welfare outcomes for rehabilitated animals and the wild populations they are returned to.

This code is made under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* (the Act), and in consideration of the Nature Conservation (Wildlife Management) Regulation 2006 (the Wildlife Management Regulation), Nature Conservation (Administration) Regulation 2006 (the Administration Regulation), Nature Conservation (Wildlife) Regulation 2006 (the Wildlife Regulation), *Animal Care and Protection Act 2001*, *Veterinary Surgeons Act 1936* and *Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995*.

- 1.1 The purpose of this code is to provide information, recommendations, minimum standards and guidelines to ensure that all parties involved in the care and rehabilitation of protected animals in Queensland do so in an appropriate manner.
- 1.2 The code emphasises the responsibility of all persons and organisations involved in the care, rehabilitation and release of sick, injured or orphaned protected animals to ensure that:
- 1.2.1 animal welfare meets acceptable standards
 - 1.2.2 conservation benefits are maximised
 - 1.2.3 adverse ecological outcomes are avoided
 - 1.2.4 risks to human health and safety are minimised.
- 1.3 The code gives due regard to the many factors that determine what is appropriate in the circumstances, including:
- 1.3.1 current community values and expectations regarding the management and rehabilitation of sick, injured or orphaned animals
 - 1.3.2 the values and opinions of wildlife rehabilitators and others with expertise
 - 1.3.3 the importance of minimising the suffering of sick, injured or orphaned animals, and in particular the role of timely euthanasia in appropriate cases
 - 1.3.4 the responsibility of EHP to protect and conserve the environment, ecosystems and wildlife
 - 1.3.5 the risks to human health and safety associated with the rescue, care and rehabilitation of protected animals in Queensland
 - 1.3.6 the relevant legislation as stated in section 1 under 'Purpose of this code'
 - 1.3.7 the availability of resources, such as access to veterinary facilities or expertise.
- 1.4 There are other Acts and legislative instruments that may make provisions about, or affect certain aspects of wildlife care and rehabilitation, such as local laws regarding the keeping of animals, or laws about trespassing on private property. It is **not** the intent of this code to deal with all of these provisions.

2. General information

- 2.1 All native birds, mammals (except the dingo outside protected areas), reptiles and amphibians and, some native fish and invertebrates in Queensland are protected under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992*.
- 2.2 EHP is the agency responsible for the assessment and licensing of individuals and organisations for the purposes of wildlife rehabilitation. Licensed individuals or entities are referred to herein as 'permit holders'.
- 2.3 DAFF is the agency responsible for administering the *Animal Care and Protection Act 2001*.
- 2.4 QWRC is the peak representative body for the wildlife rehabilitation community in Queensland. The council's focus is to ensure excellent welfare for native animals during and after rehabilitation to achieve, complement and advance conservation benefits and outcomes.
- 2.5 This code applies to all individuals, organisations and members of organisations operating under a rehabilitation permit.
- 2.6 A person who rescues a protected animal, but is not a licensed rehabilitator, must surrender it to a licensed rehabilitator or conservation officer within 72 hours of taking the animal into care as stated in section 59 (4) of the Nature Conservation (Wildlife Management) Regulation 2006.
- 2.7 A person or organisation engaging in wildlife rehabilitation must be licensed. It is the responsibility of the permit holder to ensure compliance with the provisions of this code.
 - 2.7.1 EHP is responsible for administration of this code.
 - 2.7.2 This code does **not** exempt a person or other entity from compliance with any Act, regulation or other statutory instrument.
 - 2.7.3 This code is current at the time of publication and may be subject to periodic review.
 - 2.7.4 A wildlife rehabilitator may only rehabilitate an animal of a species for which they hold a relevant permit. If the rehabilitator is a member of a rehabilitation organisation, they will require the approval of the organisation to rehabilitate that particular species.
 - 2.7.5 EHP may approve the development and distribution of species-specific standards for native wildlife rehabilitation. Meeting any such standards that may be in place is a requirement in order to comply with the code.
 - 2.7.6 To ensure compliance with local government laws, rehabilitators may also require local government approval to conduct the activity at the specified location.
- 2.8 This code (sections 1–18) will have immediate effect from the date of gazettal. Appendix A (Minimum enclosure size) will have immediate effect from the date of gazettal of the code for any new enclosures being built or purchased. Existing enclosure facilities must be upgraded to meet the minimum enclosure size requirements within 24 months of the gazettal date of the code.

Note: All persons intending to become licensed, or become a member of an organisation that is licensed, to care for sick, injured or orphaned protected animals should become familiar with the *Animal Care and Protection Act 2001*.

3. Principles underpinning this code

- 3.1 The fundamental principles underpinning this code that should guide wildlife rehabilitators at all times in the conduct of their activities are:
- 3.1.1 **Duty of care:** under section 17 of the *Animal Care and Protection Act 2001*, a person in charge of an animal during its rescue, care, rehabilitation or release has a statutory duty of care to appropriately provide for the animal's welfare.
 - 3.1.2 **Avoid harm:** in rescuing, caring for, and returning native animals to the wild, there is a risk of adverse animal welfare and ecological outcomes. Even well intentioned care or treatments may prolong or worsen an animal's suffering, and inappropriate release of animals may have significant detrimental effects on local ecosystems and wildlife communities. At all stages of the rehabilitation process the potential for adverse animal welfare and ecological outcomes must be considered and avoided.
 - 3.1.3 **Avoid risks to human health and safety:** in rescuing, caring for, and returning native animals to the wild, there are generic, situation-specific and species-specific risks to persons involved that must be considered and minimised.

Note: Anyone involved in the rescue, care and handling of wildlife should contact their general practitioner or local immunisation provider for more information on appropriate disease prevention measures including any recommended or required vaccinations.
 - 3.1.4 **Relieve suffering:** a main objective of wildlife rescue and rehabilitation is to relieve suffering in sick, injured or orphaned wildlife; it is **not** to protect and preserve life at all costs. In this way, the objectives of wildlife rehabilitation are fundamentally different from those of human medicine. The rehabilitation and release of wildlife to the wild is the primary objective, but it must **not** be pursued to preserve the life of an animal at all costs or to achieve broader conservation outcomes where the animal is subject to unjustifiable and unreasonable suffering.
 - 3.1.5 **Fair, reasonable and appropriate measures:** in deciding what is fair, reasonable and appropriate, regard must be had to:
 - the environment and circumstances of the animal
 - the steps a reasonable person would reasonably be expected to have taken under the circumstances.
- 3.2 These fundamental and guiding principles should be applied to all aspects of the rescue, care, rehabilitation and release of rescued animals, and appropriate application of these principles will assist wildlife rehabilitators and organisations in complying with the code.

4. General provisions for the care of **sick, injured or orphaned** protected animals

- 4.1 The broad objectives of the rescue and rehabilitation of sick, injured or orphaned protected animals are to:
- 4.1.1 relieve suffering in sick, injured or orphaned protected animals by providing appropriate husbandry and care, pain relief, veterinary treatment when required, and timely euthanasia in cases with a poor prognosis

- 4.1.2 contribute to the conservation of nature by promptly returning suitably rehabilitated animals to their native habitats.
- 4.2 Additional outcomes of the rescue and rehabilitation of sick, injured or orphaned protected animals include:
 - 4.2.1 contribution to the body of knowledge on the ecology, conservation, management, veterinary care, husbandry and behaviour of native animal species
 - 4.2.2 contribution to the education of the general public, business and industry professions on issues related to the conservation and welfare of native animals.
- 4.3 Meeting the 'capacity to care' concept:
 - 4.3.1 The concept of 'capacity to care' relates to the capacity of a rehabilitator or rehabilitation organisation to provide for the essential needs of rescued animals as well as have the resources necessary to appropriately prepare wildlife for release back into the wild.
 - 4.3.2 When a person's or organisation's capacity to care is exceeded, unacceptable standards of animal care or welfare may result. This is likely to occur when the need for rescue and rehabilitation services exceeds the ability of rehabilitators and organisations to provide appropriate care. This is particularly so when major environmental or other events result in significantly increased wildlife casualties.
 - 4.3.3 Rehabilitators and rehabilitation organisations should be mindful of their respective capacities to care, particularly when there is an influx of wildlife requiring care due to major incidents like bushfire, significant weather events and other natural disasters.
 - 4.3.4 When the capacity to care is exceeded and animal welfare standards are likely to be compromised, there are three acceptable management options, which are, in order of preference:
 - 4.3.4.1 Referral of animals to another licensed individual or organisation with a current capacity to care for that species
 - 4.3.4.2 Increase the capacity to care by increasing or pooling resources
 - 4.3.4.3 Lower the euthanasia threshold in combination with early triage of newly rescued wildlife and proper veterinary assessment and prognosis of animals in care.
 - 4.3.5 Wildlife rescue and rehabilitation organisations should develop protocols and procedures that clearly define appropriate actions and responses in the event of catastrophic events or other circumstances in which the defined capacity to care may be exceeded.

For example: Policies and procedures relating to the establishment of good communication, collaboration and pooling of resources between organisations during major wildlife events.
 - 4.3.6 The lowering of animal welfare standards such that they are **not** consistent with this code is **not** an acceptable response to exceeding the capacity to care.
 - 4.3.7 In circumstances that involve major or catastrophic events and where the capacity to care is exceeded, lowering the threshold for euthanasia is a more appropriate response than **not** rescuing animals in distress.

5. Restrictions on caring for specialist protected animals

- 5.1 The species listed below may have requirements outside the normal capacity of most rehabilitators. Additional requirements are placed upon rehabilitators who intend to keep these species to improve the likelihood of their successful rehabilitation and return to the wild.
- 5.2 Permits may only be granted to persons assessed as having the appropriate skills and facilities to house and care for the following wildlife:
- 5.2.1 Cassowary:
Contact EHP.
 - 5.2.2 Echidna:
Contact EHP or a person who holds a permit that specifically provides for the rehabilitation of this species.
 - 5.2.3 Emu:
Contact EHP. This species may only be rehabilitated on rural-residential and rural land.
 - 5.2.4 Koala:
Contact EHP or a person who holds a permit that specifically provides for the rehabilitation of this species.
 - 5.2.5 Raptors:
Contact EHP or a person who holds a permit that specifically provides for the rehabilitation of the relevant species. Only carers who are affiliated with a Raptor Association or those with a proven record and suitable facilities in raptor rehabilitation may keep raptors.
 - 5.2.6 Reptiles:
Contact EHP or a person who holds a permit that specifically provides for the rehabilitation of the relevant species.
 - 5.2.7 Marine turtles:
Contact EHP.
 - 5.2.8 Platypus:
Contact EHP.
 - 5.2.9 Flying-foxes and insectivorous bats:
All persons caring for flying-foxes and insectivorous bats must be vaccinated against Australian Bat Lyssavirus (ABL) and must regularly consult their General Practitioner or Public Health Unit to maintain up-to-date vaccinations.

Note: In certain, prescribed circumstances, the use of lethal measures (shooting) is permitted for controlling flying-foxes damaging crops, in accordance with the 'Code of Practice – Ecologically sustainable lethal take of flying-foxes for crop protection'. Where this occurs, live, orphaned young may be given to a wildlife rehabilitator for the purpose of rehabilitation or humanely euthanased.

5.2.10 Seabirds:

Contact EHP or a person who holds a permit that specifically provides for the rehabilitation of the relevant species.

6. Interpretations

6.1 Objectives

6.1.1 Objectives are the intended outcome(s) for each section of this code.

6.2 Standards

6.2.1 Standards describe the mandatory specific actions required to achieve acceptable levels of animal welfare and successful wildlife rehabilitation. These are the minimum standards that must be met. They can be identified in the text by the heading 'Standards' and the use of the word 'must'.

6.3 Guidelines

6.3.1 Guidelines describe agreed best practice based on scientific information, accumulated experience and consultation. A guideline is usually a higher standard of care than minimum standards, except where the standard is best practice. Guidelines are identified in the text by the heading 'Guidelines' and the use of the word 'should'.

7. Provision of veterinary care

7.1 Objective

7.1.1 To rapidly assess the veterinary requirements of sick, injured or orphaned protected animals and provide an appropriate level of relief from distress, pain and suffering as well as appropriate veterinary care.

7.2 Standards

7.2.1 A sick or injured animal must receive a standard of care appropriate for its injuries or illness as soon as possible.

7.2.2 An animal that is affected by a critical (see section 18 for definition) injury or illness must be provided with appropriate veterinary care. This includes the provision of appropriate and ongoing pain relief and monitoring by a suitably experienced and qualified person; or prompt referral to a person or organisation able to provide that care; or euthanasia as soon as possible using an approved method. For an approved euthanasia method refer to section 12 of this code.

7.2.3 An animal that is affected by a serious (see section 18 for definition) injury or illness, or that is likely to be suffering from moderate pain, must be provided with appropriate pain relief and veterinary care as soon as is practicable.

7.2.4 An animal that is affected by a mild (see section 18 for definition) injury or illness, or that is likely to be suffering only mild discomfort or pain, must be provided with appropriate veterinary care as soon as is practicable.

7.2.5 A person must **not** hold a critically or seriously ill or injured animal without providing appropriate veterinary care, when such veterinary care is reasonably accessible.

- 7.2.6 Unless authority has first been received from a conservation officer, a wildlife rehabilitator must **not** request a veterinarian to perform the following surgical procedures:
- 7.2.6.1 amputation of a limb, or part of a limb, other than a single digit
 - 7.2.6.2 removal of an eye
 - 7.2.6.3 amputation of more than one third of the tail of a mammal, bird or reptile, other than a skink, gecko or legless lizard
 - 7.2.6.4 perform a procedure that results in the animal being unable to reproduce (sterilisation)
 - 7.2.6.5 any other procedure that might reasonably be expected to reduce an animal's fitness or ability to survive upon release back into the wild.
- 7.2.7 Notwithstanding section 7.2.6, a surgical procedure must not be withheld if gaining authority from a conservation officer will result in an unacceptable delay that may contribute to unnecessary suffering.
- 7.2.8 Wildlife rehabilitators must take all reasonable steps to avoid or minimise stress on animals in care and must **not** deliberately or negligently expose an animal to unnecessary stress.

7.3 Guidelines

- 7.3.1 A wildlife rehabilitator or wildlife rehabilitation organisation should establish a working relationship with a veterinarian, veterinary practice or facility able to provide veterinary care for rescued native animals.
- Note: For the purposes of this code an animal's injuries or illness may be described as:
- Critical (see section 18 for definition);
- For example: an animal that has been struck by a car and has a serious head injury.
- Serious (see section 18 for definition);
- For example: an animal with a closed fracture of a long bone, but no other apparent injuries, and that is bright, alert and responsive; a koala with severe cystitis.
- Mild (see section 18 for definition);
- For example: an animal that has sustained superficial cuts or bruising as a result of inter-species or intra-species fighting or an orphaned marsupial suffering from mild dehydration.
- 7.3.2 The determination of what is 'appropriate veterinary care' should take into account the circumstances and availability of veterinary facilities and expertise, and the nature and severity of the injuries and/or illness of the animal.
- For example: 'appropriate veterinary care' has **not** been provided to a critically or seriously injured or ill animal if it has received only a single treatment, without ongoing veterinary care and/or monitoring.

Note: a person must **not** hold a seriously injured or ill animal overnight without appropriate veterinary treatment, when access to 24-hour veterinary care is available.

- 7.3.3 The most appropriate facility in the circumstances should be used for the provision of veterinary care to seriously sick or injured protected animals.

For example: when specialised wildlife veterinary facilities are readily available and accessible. These should be used in preference to a private veterinary surgeon.

8. Rescue and handling

8.1 Objective

- 8.1.1 To eliminate additional stress and further injury to wildlife during rescue and in care and to maximise the safety of rescuers and the general public.

8.2 Guidelines

- 8.2.1 A wildlife rehabilitator should not conduct a rescue when doing so would put themselves or other persons at risk of serious injury.
- 8.2.2 Wildlife rehabilitators should ensure that they utilise correct personal protective equipment (PPE) relevant to the species that they are rescuing.
- For example: eye protection when handling waterbirds, gloves when handling bats, towels/blankets for handling most species, and covered footwear should be worn at all times. For rescues in bushland or long grass, rescuers should also wear long sleeved shirts and long trousers.
- 8.2.3 Prior to undertaking a wildlife rescue the rescuer should assess the associated risks and put in place measures to ensure the safety of themselves, others and the wildlife to be rescued.
- 8.2.4 Wildlife rescues should be carried out in a way that avoids significant disturbance to unaffected wildlife that is likely to cause injury or abandonment of young.
- 8.2.5 The rescue and handling of wildlife should **avoid** causing unnecessary pain, suffering or exacerbation of injuries.
- 8.2.6 The rescue and handling of wildlife should be done in a manner that will not cause or spread disease.
- 8.2.7 Only the appropriate equipment and techniques for the species and size of the animal concerned should be used. Equipment and techniques that should **not** be used include:
- 8.2.7.1 the noosing of a koala
 - 8.2.7.2 the use of a projectile, other than a net-gun or tranquiliser dart by an appropriately trained and licensed person
 - 8.2.7.3 the use of unpadded snake tongs
 - 8.2.7.4 the use of a leg-hold trap with unpadded jaws or an unattended snare or automatically activated snare

- 8.2.7.5 the felling of a tree containing an animal, when the tree has a diameter at chest height (DBH) exceeding 5 centimetres (cm), or when injury to the animal being rescued or any other animal is a likely consequence, or when the tree is in a protected area.
- 8.2.8 Where the difficulty of a wildlife rescue is compounded by the presence of other persons or dangers such as heavy traffic, a rescuer should opt for the assistance of local authorities (i.e. local council or police) to mitigate these factors.
- 8.2.9 Where the rescue of animals in warm or hot ambient conditions (>24°C) cannot be avoided, or when the animal has been subject to exertion or physical restraint, rescuers should monitor the body temperature of the animal and/or seek appropriate veterinary assistance.
- 8.2.10 Rescuers should monitor healthy nestling and fledgling birds for abandonment rather than attempt to bring the bird into care. Nestlings can be returned to the nest or placed in an artificial nest. Fledglings can be returned to a tree where they were found or in some cases a tree nearby, if determined to be free of injuries or disease by a suitably qualified or experienced person.
- 8.2.11 Where possible, handling and restraint should be minimised and chemical restraint methods such as sedation and anaesthesia used whenever possible by those appropriately qualified and/or licensed to do so.
- Note: Sedatives and anaesthetics must be administered by a veterinary surgeon or authorised person.
- 8.2.12 The use of padded snake tongs should be limited to situations in which there is no other alternative, and in which there is significant risk to human life. Snake tongs, even when padded, may cause significant internal injury, particularly to gravid (pregnant) snakes. Such injuries may **not** be immediately apparent and may result in the death of the snake weeks or months later.
- 8.2.13 Only persons who are vaccinated against rabies should handle any bat species.

9. Transportation

9.1 Objective

- 9.1.1 To transport wildlife in such a way that minimises further stress and injury and prevents escape. This section applies to the movement of all sick, injured or orphaned wildlife (e.g. from the point of rescue to a veterinary surgery and between rehabilitation facilities and to the release site).

9.2 Standards

- 9.2.1 Transport must not cause unnecessary pain or distress to the animal.
- 9.2.2 Sick, injured or orphaned wildlife must only be transported when and where necessary.
- 9.2.3 Transport containers must be appropriate for the species (i.e. the size, strength and behaviour of the wildlife being moved).
- 9.2.4 Transport containers must be designed and maintained in such a way as to:
- 9.2.4.1 prevent injury

- 9.2.4.2 prevent escape
- 9.2.4.3 prevent rolling or tipping during transit
- 9.2.4.4 prevent damage to plumage
- 9.2.4.5 be hygienic
- 9.2.4.6 minimise stress
- 9.2.4.7 be suitably ventilated.
- 9.2.5 Transport containers that hold species that are dangerous, venomous or capable of transmitting potentially fatal zoonoses must be clearly marked with a warning label such as 'Caution—venomous snake' or 'Caution—live bat', and must be locked and secured.
- 9.2.6 Wildlife must not be transported in a vehicle's boot that is separate from the main cabin without ventilation.
- 9.2.7 Non-compatible species, such as predator and prey combinations must not be transported in a manner that allows physical or visual contact.
- 9.2.8 Transport containers for wildlife must:
 - 9.2.8.1 be secured to prevent movement during transport causing stress or injury to the animal
 - 9.2.8.2 provide protection from direct sunlight
 - 9.2.8.3 provide protection from wind and rain.

9.3 Guidelines

- 9.3.1 Transport containers that are **not** of a fully enclosed design should be covered to minimise light, visual stimulation and stress.
- 9.3.2 The use of medication during transport should be considered and approved by a veterinary surgeon.
- 9.3.3 The provision of water and food for adult animals is generally **not** required for short trips (2–3 hours). Food and water should be considered when transporting dependent young and adult animals during longer trips.
- 9.3.4 Wildlife should **not** be transported in the back of an uncovered utility vehicle unless the transport container is securely fastened.
- 9.3.5 Transport containers should be maintained within an appropriate temperature range for the species. Unfurred joeys and bird and monotreme hatchlings should be within the 31–34°C range. 25–27°C is appropriate in most other cases.
- 9.3.6 An experienced rehabilitator or veterinary surgeon should be consulted if it is uncertain what an appropriate temperature range is for a specialised species.

10. Housing

10.1 Objective

- 10.1.1 To ensure that wildlife undergoing rehabilitation are housed in a way that prevents injury or escape, minimises stress, maintains safe levels of hygiene and allows natural behaviours.

10.2 Standards

- 10.2.1 Enclosures must be constructed and maintained in such a way to prevent injury and escape and exclude predators and pests.
- 10.2.2 Enclosures must be appropriate for the species, and the types of injuries, stage of development and/or stage of rehabilitation of the animal being housed.
- 10.2.3 Enclosures must maintain habitat elements appropriate to the species and the condition of the animal (e.g. perching, nest boxes, resting forks, wading pools, suitable substrate).
- 10.2.4 Enclosures housing wildlife **not** subject to critical care must allow for the display of natural behaviour and support rehabilitation for survival in the wild.
- 10.2.5 All enclosures must meet the dimensions (relevant to the species in care) described in Appendix A of the code. These dimensions are regarded as the minimum standards that must be met.
- 10.2.6 All housing, including enclosures, nest boxes, bedding, substrate, perching, food and water bowls must be kept in a clean and hygienic condition.
- 10.2.7 Cleaning and disinfection regimes must be appropriate for the species and excreta must **not** be allowed to accumulate excessively in any enclosure, substrate or bedding.
- 10.2.8 Species that are dangerous to humans, venomous or those known to carry life threatening zoonoses must be securely contained to prevent unauthorised human contact and exposure to domestic animals.
- 10.2.9 Animals showing signs of infection or disease must be quarantined from other wildlife in care. Animals subject to quarantine must be housed in such a way as to prevent transmission of disease or infection to other animals.
- 10.2.10 Wildlife in care must **not** be exposed to other native or domestic animals where the exposure is likely to result in unnecessary familiarisation or stress.

For example: native wildlife and a domestic dog, cat or recognised predator sharing the same space or having contact.
- 10.2.11 Wildlife in care must **not** be exposed to odours or noises that are likely to result in unnecessary familiarisation, stress or illness. Use of certain aerosols and insect repellents can be toxic to animals in care and should be avoided.

For example: cigarette smoke in an enclosed area or loud music.
- 10.2.12 Incompatible species or individuals must not be housed in the same enclosure, or within sight of each other.

10.3 Guidelines

- 10.3.1 Enclosures should be designed to allow easy cleaning, easy access and minimise handling of wildlife.
- 10.3.2 Faeces and uneaten food should be removed daily (more frequently if needed) and disposed of in such a way as to limit access by other animals and the potential spread of disease.
- 10.3.3 Food and water containers should be cleaned with a suitable (non-toxic to wildlife) disinfectant daily.

- 10.3.4 Household and animal-related cleaning implements and products should be kept separate to avoid cross contamination.
- 10.3.5 Wildlife husbandry items should be cleaned in areas separate to those used to wash domestic or household items.
- 10.3.6 Rehabilitators should avoid mixed-species housing whenever possible and, when mixed-species housing is necessary (such as in pre-release bird aviaries), ensure that only compatible species are housed together. Any new additions to an existing aviary, colony or mob should be monitored closely for the first few days to ensure their safety and the safety of other individuals.
- 10.3.7 Animals that naturally form social groups in the wild should be housed with animals of an appropriate age and gender of the same species where possible. When animals are housed collectively, they should be individually identifiable.
- 10.3.8 Potential stressors that could have a detrimental health effect on an animal should be identified and removed from an enclosure. Ongoing or prolonged stress can result in reduced growth rates, weight loss, abnormal behaviour (e.g. self-mutilation), inhibited recovery and increased mortalities. More subtle and psychological signs of stress could be repetitive stress-related behaviour (stereotypical behaviour) such as pacing.

Note: If carers are in any doubt of an animal's capacity to deal with the unavoidable stresses of coming into care, or there are unknown causes for unusual behaviour, they should consult experienced carers for that species. Unmanaged issues relating to ongoing or prolonged stress while in care will compound the original health problems, making a full recovery less likely. Similarly, communication and cooperation between wildlife rehabilitators and rehabilitation organisations are encouraged to maximise the use of available appropriate housing and facilitate the housing of social species into groups at an appropriate stage and/or age prior to release, where possible.

11. Food and water

11.1 Objective

- 11.1.1 To ensure that sick, injured or orphaned wildlife receive a diet that supports their healthy recovery and development, and their effective rehabilitation and release.

11.2 Standards

- 11.2.1 Rehabilitators must be aware of the appropriate food and water requirements for the particular species in the wild and in care. Advice must be sought from a person experienced in rehabilitating a species where a rehabilitator is unfamiliar with its care.
- 11.2.2 Food and water of suitable quality and quantity for the species must be provided at an appropriate frequency and must not be accessible to other wild or domestic animals.
- 11.2.3 The feeding of live non-native vertebrate animals to an animal under rehabilitation must not occur unless the feeding of live food is essential for the rehabilitated animal's survival.
- 11.2.4 Live protected animals must not be used for the purpose of feeding an animal under rehabilitation. It is permissible to collect a dead least concern animal (e.g. fresh road kill), other than a special native animal (echidna, koala, platypus, wombat), if the dead animal is taken to feed the bird of prey kept under a rehabilitation permit.

- 11.2.5 Food quantities must be adjusted to reflect an animal's stage of development and to maintain a weight that is within an appropriate range. Guidance on this can be obtained from wildlife rehabilitation organisations and facilities.
- 11.2.6 Prior to release food must be offered in a way that encourages natural feeding behaviour such as foraging.
- 11.2.7 An animal that is unable or unwilling to feed sufficiently (other than nursing young) must be assessed by a veterinarian or a suitably experienced person to diagnose the cause of the inability to feed.
- 11.2.8 Prior to undertaking the force feeding of an animal, a rehabilitator must have received training from a suitably experienced person (i.e. experienced wildlife rehabilitator or veterinarian) for that particular species.
- 11.2.9 Food and water for wildlife must not be allowed to become contaminated by wild or domestic animals.
- 11.2.10 Food must be provided in a manner that minimises food contamination and spoilage and the transfer of disease.

11.3 Guidelines

- 11.3.1 To the greatest extent possible, captive diets should be similar to the natural diet for the species to minimise diet-related health issues, to teach food recognition for release back into the wild and promote normal digestive function.
- 11.3.2 Animals should be weighed at least weekly to determine overall health and to mitigate weight loss through dietary changes.
- 11.3.3 Vitamin and mineral deficiency is a disorder associated with prolonged captivity in a wide range of species, and should be anticipated and prevented by provision of a proper diet with vitamin and mineral supplementation. Care should be taken when adding supplements to an animal's diet as incorrect quantity can also cause dietary problems.
- 11.3.4 Whenever practicable, prior to release, animals should have foods included in their diet that would be available to them in the area where they are to be released.
- 11.3.5 To avoid contamination and disease transfer, wildlife and human food preparation areas and implements should be kept separate.

12. Euthanasia

12.1 Objective

- 12.1.1 To support the timely euthanasia of sick, injured or orphaned wildlife through identifying when euthanasia is appropriate.

Note: Euthanasia is a large part of wildlife rehabilitation and an important welfare tool. It should not be seen as a failure on the rehabilitator's behalf, nor should it be avoided at **all** costs.

12.2 Standards

- 12.2.1 All wildlife rehabilitators, whether individually licensed or operating under a group licence, must be able to provide for the euthanasia of wildlife when required.

- 12.2.2 Wildlife must be euthanased without exception when:
- 12.2.2.1 it is necessary to alleviate significant pain or suffering when such pain and suffering is not able to be managed by a veterinarian
 - 12.2.2.2 further treatment is **not** practical or recovery is **not** expected such that the animal can be successfully rehabilitated to the wild
 - 12.2.2.3 resources are **not** available to provide appropriate care or an acceptable quality of life throughout the likely rehabilitation period.
- 12.2.3 Animals with a poor prognosis for survival and that are suffering must be euthanased rather than left to die from the injury or illness. Failure to take appropriate steps to arrange the prompt euthanasia of these animals is a breach of the *Animal Care and Protection Act 2001*.
- 12.2.4 Unless EHP has granted permission for the animal to enter the Queensland Species Management Plan (QSMP) or unless otherwise advised by the EHP Director Wildlife Management, an animal must be euthanased when:
- 12.2.4.1 an orphaned animal is not viable or is unlikely to be rehabilitated
 - 12.2.4.2 there is no suitable release location (refer to sections 14.2.4 and 14.2.7 regarding release/alternative release locations)
 - 12.2.4.3 the ability to reproduce is lost due to an injury, disease or surgical procedure
 - 12.2.4.4 the ability to move freely or normally (i.e. run, climb, crawl, hop, fly or swim) is permanently impaired due to, for example, a missing or impaired limb, wing, foot or tail, such that it will significantly impair the animal's ability to survive in the wild
 - 12.2.4.5 the ability to sense environment (i.e. see, hear, smell, taste or feel) is permanently impaired due to a missing or injured organ such as an eye, ear or nose, such that it will significantly impair the animal's ability to survive in the wild
 - 12.2.4.6 the ability to catch, find or handle food is permanently impaired
 - 12.2.4.7 its advanced age renders it unlikely to survive in the wild.
- 12.2.5 The carcasses of euthanased animals must be discarded in accordance with the local regulations. Carcasses of animals euthanased using anaesthesia and/or veterinary euthanasia solutions may present a significant risk to scavengers, including native animals, and must be disposed of by deep burial or incineration.
- 12.2.6 Carcasses of animals euthanased by way of barbiturate overdose must not be fed to other animals.

12.3 Guidelines

- 12.3.1 Wildlife should be euthanased when suffering from injuries or illness that require a long and complicated rehabilitation process and when such wildlife provide little contribution to the conservation of the species.
- 12.3.2 Non-releasable wildlife should be euthanased (as per section 12) or referred for placement through the QSMP. For further information on non-releasable wildlife or the QSMP, contact your local EHP office.

13. How to euthanase

13.1 Objective

- 13.1.1 To support the timely euthanasia of sick, injured or orphaned wildlife by identifying who may perform euthanasia and what methods may be applied.

13.2 Standards

- 13.2.1 Methods of euthanasia, including methods of restraint for euthanasia, must not cause significant pain, suffering or distress.
- 13.2.2 Death must be confirmed prior to the disposal of the carcass.
- 13.2.3 Euthanasia by barbiturate overdose must only be performed by a veterinary surgeon or a competent and appropriately trained person authorised by the chief executive of Queensland Health to possess and use restricted drugs for veterinary purposes.
- 13.2.4 If euthanasia via intracardiac or intrathoracic (as opposed to intravenous) barbiturate overdose is performed then the animal must be fully anaesthetised prior to performing the procedure.
- 13.2.5 The following euthanasia methods must **not** be used on wildlife:
 - 13.2.5.1 suffocating via drowning, strangulation or chest compression
 - 13.2.5.2 freezing
 - 13.2.5.3 burning
 - 13.2.5.4 poisoning with household products
 - 13.2.5.5 air embolism
 - 13.2.5.6 exsanguination or decapitation without stunning
 - 13.2.5.7 electrocution or microwave irradiation
 - 13.2.5.8 poisoning with any domestic or agricultural pest control agent, chemical or noxious agent not currently approved for the veterinary euthanasia of domestic animals.

13.3 Guidelines

- 13.3.1 Animals should be euthanased by barbiturate overdose while under general anaesthesia administered by a veterinary surgeon or an appropriately trained person authorised by the chief executive of Queensland Health to possess and use restricted drugs for veterinary purposes.
- 13.3.2 When it is **not** practicable to perform euthanasia using barbiturate overdose a method appropriate for the species that causes minimal pain and suffering should be used. This may include the following methods:
 - 13.3.2.1 Large animals shot with a rifle of a calibre sufficient to achieve instantaneous insensibility followed by the rapid death of the animal without first regaining sensation or consciousness. In effect, the technique must destroy the brain.

Note: The use of a firearm for the euthanasia of wildlife must comply with the *Weapons Act 1990*.

- 13.3.2.2 Cranial trauma sufficient to cause instantaneous insensibility followed by the rapid death of the animal without first regaining sensation or consciousness. In effect, the technique must destroy the brain

Note: The brain of reptiles is very small in comparison with their head size, and well protected by the bones and soft tissues of the head. Cranial trauma techniques used on reptiles must cause instantaneous and complete destruction of the brain.

14. Release of rehabilitated protected animals

14.1 Objective

- 14.1.1 To ensure that only wildlife that possess an appropriate level of physical, cognitive and behavioural fitness are released to the wild.

14.2 Standards

- 14.2.1 Rehabilitated wildlife must be assessed as physically and behaviourally fit by a wildlife veterinarian or a rehabilitator experienced in that species prior to its release.
- 14.2.2 An animal must only be deemed physically fit for release if:
- 14.2.2.1 it has fully recovered from any pre-existing injury
 - 14.2.2.2 reasonable steps have been taken to determine the animal is free of disease
 - 14.2.2.3 its weight and body condition are within the normal range for the animal's age, sex and species
 - 14.2.2.4 it has adapted to prevailing climatic conditions
 - 14.2.2.5 it is not known to be sterile/unable to reproduce.
- 14.2.3 The following process must be followed regarding amphibians:
- 14.2.3.1 An amphibian must only be released in suitable habitat as close as practicable to the same location from which it was originally taken to minimise the potential spread of parasites and disease and impacts on genetic integrity.
 - 14.2.3.2 It is **not** permissible to release an amphibian at a location that is only similar to or near the original location, or at a location that is only assumed to be the original location.
 - 14.2.3.3 If the original location of the amphibian is not known, the animal may be suitable to enter into the QSMP. Contact your local EHP office to arrange for the animal to be assessed.
 - 14.2.3.4 If the amphibian is not suitable to enter the QSMP, it must be euthanased.
- 14.2.4 An animal must only be deemed behaviourally fit for release if it:
- 14.2.4.1 can recognise, catch and consume naturally available food
 - 14.2.4.2 has not been allowed to associate with domestic animals and predator species during the rehabilitation period so as to ensure that its natural instinct to recognise and avoid predators, including domestic animals, remains intact

14.2.4.3 is **not** attracted to humans or to sights, sounds or smells that are specific to captivity (i.e. it is **not** imprinted or humanised)

14.2.4.4 can navigate effectively through its natural environment

14.2.4.5 can recognise and interact appropriately with members of the same species.

14.3 Guidelines

14.3.1 Species that are required to construct shelters for survival (e.g. dig burrows or construct dreys) should exhibit this behaviour prior to release.

15. Release timing and site selection

15.1 Objective

15.1.1 To ensure that the release timing and site chosen for rehabilitated wildlife maximises the chances of survival in the wild and has minimal negative impact on wild populations.

15.2 Standards

15.2.1 Wildlife must not be released in weather conditions that are likely to cause significant hardship or reduced chances of survival.

15.2.2 To allow wildlife to immediately investigate its environment and avoid predation, release must take place during the species' normal period of activity (e.g. diurnal, nocturnal, crepuscular).

15.2.3 Migratory species must be released one month prior to their typical departure period or at a time when other members of the species are present if the location is within a migratory path. Due to time in care, the animal may need to be kept in care until the following migratory season.

15.2.4 If the location where the wildlife was found is known and is suitable for the release then the wildlife must be released there. A suitable environment for release is one that:

15.2.4.1 Contains appropriate habitat, shelter, water and food resources

15.2.4.2 Is free of immediate hazards or risks (i.e. not a roadside)

15.2.4.3 Is known **not** to be subject to imminent land-clearing or development.

15.2.5 The release of koalas to the wild must be conducted in accordance with the relevant provisions outlined in the Nature Conservation (Koala) Conservation Plan 2006.

15.2.6 If the original site of capture is **not** appropriate for release (refer to section 15.2.4), then the animal must be released as close to the original site as possible. The rehabilitator needs to be aware of that particular species natural home range in order to provide the best alternative release location.

15.2.7 Wildlife must **not** be released into a national park unless the animal originated from the national park and prior approval has been obtained from EHP.

15.2.8 If a release is unsuccessful, despite repeated attempts to rehabilitate the animal for release to the wild, the animal must be euthanased (see section 12). If the animal is potentially suitable to enter into QSMP, the local EHP office must be contacted to arrange for the animal to be assessed.

- 15.2.9 Progeny of wildlife held on a rehabilitation permit must be released to the wild when self-sufficient. The progeny should be released at the location from where the mother originated, consistent with section 15.2.4 of the code.
- 15.2.10 Tagging, banding, or other marking, including microchip or PIT implanting, may only be performed by a person who is authorised by EHP to tag wildlife or by a registered veterinary surgeon, and must only be performed as part of an EHP approved program.

15.3 Guidelines

- 15.3.1 An animal should be released as soon as it is deemed ready and the conditions are suitable.
- 15.3.2 Environmental conditions should be suitable for the release, taking into account the weather and time of year which will help facilitate the animal's reintroduction to the wild and its survival. For example:
 - 15.3.2.1 reptiles should be released during the warmer months such as spring and summer
 - 15.3.2.2 juvenile animals should be released during natural dispersal periods
 - 15.3.2.3 insectivorous species should be released during periods of insect abundance.
- 15.3.3 The release of rehabilitated animals into habitat other than that from which they originated, should be carefully considered as it increases the risk of undesirable ecological impacts, such as:
 - 15.3.3.1 spread of diseases and parasites into native wildlife populations
 - 15.3.3.2 genetic contamination of genetically distinct wildlife populations, or other deleterious genetic effects
 - 15.3.3.3 impacts on stable social structures of wildlife populations residing in recipient habitat.
- 15.3.4 Gradual or 'soft' release is preferred for most species whenever practicable. Abrupt or 'hard' release is not advised for animals subject to long term care, orphans or those animals requiring social groups.
- 15.3.5 If social species are to be managed and released as a group, then all individuals within the group should originate from the same or neighbouring location, or be within the range of normal movement from their place of origin based on the species capacity to travel.

Example: A kangaroo can be released within 100 kilometres of its origin, based on its (the species) capacity to travel long distances.
- 15.3.6 Regarding migratory species that have been in care for extended periods, the rehabilitator should ensure that an appropriate level of physical fitness is achieved prior to release, allowing the animal enough time to establish itself in the wild in advance of the forthcoming migration.
- 15.3.7 Inexperienced rehabilitators should contact an experienced rehabilitator, rehabilitation group or EHP for advice on 'soft' release of animals with a close social structure such as bats (including flying-foxes), gliders and macropods.
- 15.3.8 Highly social species, excepting those individuals in critical care, should be held in appropriate groups as early as possible to enable a social unit to develop before release.

16. Records

16.1 Objective

- 16.1.1 To maintain comprehensive records of sick, injured or orphaned wildlife admissions, disposals and management while in care. These records can be used to track and review individual case histories and identify trends and represent a useful resource for rehabilitators, regulators, veterinarians, educators and research organisations.

16.2 Standards

- 16.2.1 A register must be kept by each wildlife rehabilitator for all protected animals rescued or cared for including:
- 16.2.1.1 date of admission or rescue
 - 16.2.1.2 identifying number or name
 - 16.2.1.3 reason for rescue
 - 16.2.1.4 species
 - 16.2.1.5 approximate age or age class (neonate, juvenile, sub-adult, adult, aged)
 - 16.2.1.6 sex (M, F, Unknown)
 - 16.2.1.7 exact location of rescue
 - 16.2.1.8 brief description of health or injuries
 - 16.2.1.9 treatments
 - 16.2.1.10 relevant observations (behaviour, diet, general progress)
 - 16.2.1.11 regular weights
 - 16.2.1.12 final outcome (released, died, euthanased, permanent care, transferred to another person/organisation)
 - 16.2.1.13 date of final outcome
 - 16.2.1.14 if transferred to another person or organisation, to whom.
- 16.2.2 If an animal is transferred to another rehabilitator, copies of relevant records must accompany the animal.
- 16.2.3 All records must be maintained in a form that can be readily examined, analysed and clearly understood, and be made available to a conservation officer upon request.

16.3 Guidelines

- 16.3.1 Copies or backups of records should be kept to avoid information being lost.
- 16.3.2 To gauge the effectiveness of various rehabilitation and release techniques, post-release sightings of known rehabilitated wildlife should be recorded and kept.

17. Wildlife rehabilitation organisations

17.1 Objective

- 17.1.1 To identify the roles and responsibilities of wildlife rehabilitation organisations when operating under a group rehabilitation permit.

17.2 Standards

- 17.2.1 An organisation conducting wildlife rescue and rehabilitation activities in Queensland must be a legal entity (incorporated association or Australian company) and hold a valid rehabilitation permit issued under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* by EHP.
- 17.2.2 A licensed wildlife rehabilitation organisation must ensure that:
 - 17.2.2.1 all members engaged in wildlife rehabilitation activities comply with this code
 - 17.2.2.2 the organisation and its members comply with the conditions of their rehabilitation permit
 - 17.2.2.3 the organisation provides a current copy of the rehabilitation permit to members stating the period of membership and what species the member is endorsed to care for, together with the total number of animals that the member is entitled to hold, under the group rehabilitation permit
 - 17.2.2.4 the organisation provides new and inexperienced members with appropriate and ongoing training and mentoring for species that the individual rehabilitator wishes to care for
 - 17.2.2.5 membership lists are updated and forwarded annually within 20 business days at the close of each financial year to Permit and Licence Management, EHP, palm@ehp.qld.gov.au or GPO Box 2454, Brisbane QLD 4001
 - 17.2.2.6 a process is established for handling alleged breaches of this code, or non-compliance with other relevant rules of the organisation
 - 17.2.2.7 a procedure is established for responding to complaints against members either from external or internal parties (all new members must be given copies of this procedure)
 - 17.2.2.8 all members are given timely, clear and detailed directions by the organisation concerning the activities that the member may carry out under the rehabilitation permit.
- 17.2.3 The organisation must advise EHP in writing within 20 business days of any person who is no longer a member and that they are no longer permitted to operate under the permit.
- 17.2.4 If the organisation becomes aware that a member operating under the permit does **not** comply with this code, the organisation must:
 - 17.2.4.1 identify the actions or steps needed to be taken by the member to comply with this code and time frames associated, and
 - 17.2.4.2 take responsibility for the individuals' actions under the group permit, and either
 - 17.2.4.3 limit the authority of the member to operate under the permit, or
 - 17.2.4.4 instruct the person in writing that they are no longer permitted to operate under the permit.

17.3 Guidelines

- 17.3.1 Organisations should inform prospective new members of relevant matters such as the financial costs and time commitment required by the individual.

- 17.3.2 All wildlife rehabilitators operating under a group wildlife permit should conduct themselves according to that group's membership requirements to the extent the law permits.
- 17.3.3 Wildlife rehabilitation organisations should endeavour to familiarise themselves with recently updated information about diseases in wildlife. This can be done by contacting the Australian Wildlife Health Network, the Wildlife Disease Association or Biosecurity Queensland.

Note: Wildlife rehabilitation organisations are permitted to undertake fundraising activities to support member training and assist with the acquisition of resources such as husbandry items, veterinary support and food.

18. Definitions

Act—the *Nature Conservation Act 1992*.

Administration Regulation—the *Nature Conservation (Administration) Regulation 2006*.

Animal—any member of the animal kingdom (other than humans) as defined in the Act.

Conservation officer—a person who is appointed as such by the responsible Minister under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992*.

Crepuscular—pertaining to early in the morning and late in the afternoon.

Critical—when the animal is affected by: major traumatic injuries, difficult breathing, major bleeding, serious head injury, or disembowelment; or is showing any signs of severe pain or discomfort; or has obvious injuries or illness that might cause the death of the animal; or is rescued or found in circumstances which might reasonably be expected to have caused such injuries or illness, even if they are **not** apparent (for example: dog attack); or the animal is moribund.

Critical care—a level of care provided to wildlife suffering from life threatening injuries or illness. Generally, wildlife in critical care will require short-term housing that reduces activity and facilitates easy observation, feeding, treatment and rehydration as required.

Diurnal—pertaining to day time.

Euthanasia—to achieve humane destruction of an animal. The method must achieve instant insensibility followed by rapid death of the animal without it first regaining sensation or consciousness.

Experienced rehabilitator/person—a person with a minimum of two (2) years, ongoing demonstrated wildlife rehabilitation experience specific to that species or a similar species of sick, injured or orphaned wildlife.

Exsanguination—death caused through loss of blood.

Hard release—where an animal is released directly to the wild without further support, feeding or environmental conditioning. It should only be used in the case of short-term rehabilitation and is not advised for animals in long-term care, orphans or social animals.

Mild—when the animal's injuries or illness appear to cause little discomfort, pain or loss of function, and are not life-threatening or likely to become life-threatening without immediate treatment.

Nocturnal—pertaining to the night.

Permit—a rehabilitation permit issued under the Act.

Protected wildlife—an animal that is prescribed as such in the Act.

Qualified person—a person who has completed a training course approved by the chief executive of Queensland Health and is issued with an authority under the provisions of the Health (Drugs and Poisons) Regulation 1996 or a person registered by the Veterinary Surgeons Board as a Veterinary Surgeon.

Quarantine—where an animal is kept isolated for a period to ensure it does not transmit or contract disease or parasites. Rehabilitators should take precautions when entering and leaving such isolated areas, utilising disinfectant footbaths, overalls etc. The same practice should apply to all husbandry equipment used for managing an animal in quarantine.

QSMP—the Queensland Species Management Plan. This is the process for placing zoologically required species or specimens into zoo collections for conservation/education purposes in lieu of being released successfully.

QWRC—the Queensland Wildlife Rehabilitation Council.

Rehabilitation organisation—a corporation or association holding a valid rehabilitation permit whose members engage in the rehabilitation of sick, injured or orphaned wildlife.

Rehabilitator—a person who is engaged in the rehabilitation of sick, injured or orphaned wildlife and is operating under a valid rehabilitation permit either as an individual or as member of a rehabilitation organisation.

Serious—when the animal is affected by serious injuries or illness that might reasonably be expected to cause moderate pain, but are **not** immediately life-threatening; and the animal is **not** showing obvious signs of distress or pain, or significantly reduced mental activity.

Soft release—where an animal is released with the provision of supplementary food, shelter and water at the site of release, preferably with a period of confinement during which time the animal(s) become familiar with the surrounding habitat, wildlife population and supplementary resources.

Veterinary surgeon—a person registered as a veterinary surgeon under the *Veterinary Surgeons Act 1936*.

Veterinary treatment—the conduct and application of veterinary surgery and veterinary medicine when applied to sick, injured or orphaned animals by a veterinary surgeon.

Wildlife—a protected animal as defined in the Act.

Wildlife Management Regulation—the Nature Conservation (Wildlife Management) Regulation 2006.

Wildlife Regulation—the Nature Conservation (Wildlife) Regulation 2006.

Zoonosis (plural zoonoses)—any infectious disease that can be transmitted from both wild and domestic animals to humans.

19 Appendix A: Minimum enclosure size

19.1 Objective

19.1.1 To identify appropriate enclosure sizes for rehabilitation purposes for each animal group.

19.2 Standards

19.2.1 **Critical care housing** must be housing that is designed to reduce an animal's level of physical activity for a short period of time and that facilitates frequent monitoring, treatment, feeding or rehydration. Once an animal no longer requires critical care it must be transitioned to an 'intermediate care' or 'pre-release' enclosure.

- 19.2.2 **Intermediate care housing** must be housing that is designed to allow sufficient space for some physical activity while enabling the animal to be readily caught for monitoring or treatment.
- 19.2.3 **Pre-release housing** must be housing that allows an animal to regain better physical condition, display natural behaviour and acclimatise to normal weather conditions. While in pre-release housing, interactions between wildlife and humans must be greatly reduced. The pre-release enclosure sizes listed in the tables below are regarded as the minimum standards that must be applied. Rehabilitators are encouraged to exceed these sizes if possible.
- 19.2.4 The maximum number of individuals listed in column four of the table below can be applied to both intermediate care and pre-release housing sizes. Critical care housing sizes are for individuals. For each additional animal the floor area of all enclosures must be increased by 50%. However this does not apply to clutch mates or siblings of the same age where individual territorial boundaries are minimal.
- 19.2.5 While in intermediate care and pre-release housing a waterbird must be provided with a pond that contains soft substrate and meets the area specified for the animal in the table below. This area must be increased by 50% for each additional waterbird. However this does not apply to clutch mates or siblings of the same age where individual territorial boundaries are minimal.
- 19.2.6 The requirement for pond size to be a percentage of the total floor area does not apply if the pond size exceeds 100 square metres (i.e. 10m x 10m).

Note: The tables below are standards which **must** be followed however where enclosure dimensions fall short by a small amount e.g. 0.23 instead of 0.25 leeway may be granted.

These standards are in place as a **minimum** requirement.

For the purpose of achieving best practice for protected animals in care, rehabilitators should seek to exceed the below dimensions whenever possible for better animal welfare and management.

All rehabilitators should take care to identify individual animals that may require additional space or demonstrate the need for specific requirements to achieve a positive conservation outcome. When the capacity to care for such individual animals is limited, rehabilitators should seek advice from experienced individuals or rehabilitation organisations and make arrangements that are more appropriate (e.g. alternative placement of such individual animals).

Birds

| Type of bird (examples) | Critical care L x W x H (m) | Intermediate care L x W x H (m) | Pre-release L x W x H (m) | Maximum number of individuals | Pond size (as % of total floor area) |
|--|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Small passerines (finches and wrens) | 0.2 x 0.2 x 0.2 | 1 x 0.7 x 0.7 | 1.5 x 1.3 x 2 | 6 | N/A |
| Medium passerines (parrots and pigeons) | 0.4 x 0.4 x 0.4 | 1.5 x 1 x 1 | 2.9 x 1.5 x 1.8 | 4 | N/A |
| Large passerines (parrots, pigeons, magpies and cockatoos) | 0.5 x 0.5 x 0.5 | 1.2 x 0.8 x 0.8 | 4 x 2 x 2 | 4 | N/A |
| Small waterbirds (ducks and grebes) | 0.5 x 0.5 x 0.5 | 2 x 1.5 x 1 | 4 x 2 x 2 | 4 | 50% |
| Large waterbirds (swans and herons) | 1 x 1 x 1 | 2 x 2 x 1.2 | 6 x 3 x 2 | 2 | 50% |
| Small aquatic/sea birds (gulls, cormorants and terns) | 0.5 x 0.5 x 0.5 | 1 x 0.6 x 0.6 | 4 x 2 x 2 | 2 | 50% |
| Large aquatic/sea birds (albatrosses and pelicans) | 1 x 1 x 1 | 4 x 2.5 x 1.5 | 6 x 3 x 2 | 2 | 50% |
| Small raptors (kestrels and hobbies) | 0.5 x 0.5 x 0.5 | 2 x 2 x 2 | 5 x 3 x 3 | 2 | N/A |
| Medium and Large raptors (kites, large falcons, goshawks, eagles and buzzards) | 0.8 x 0.8 x 0.8 | 4 x 3 x 3 | 15 x 4 x 4 | 2 | N/A |
| Emu chicks and adult brush-turkeys | 0.7 x 0.7 x 0.7 | 2 x 2 x 2 | 5 x 3 x 2 | 2 | N/A |
| Emus (other than chicks) and cassowaries | 1.5x1 x 1 | 3 x 3 x 2 | 10 x 10 x 2 | 2 | N/A |

Reptiles

| Type of reptile (examples) | Critical care L x W x H (m) | Intermediate care and pre- release L x W x H (m) | Maximum number of individuals | Pond size (as % of total floor area) |
|--|--------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|--|
| Geckos and small skinks (garden skinks) | 0.1 x 0.1 x 0.1 | 0.6 x 0.6 x 0.6 | 2 | N/A |
| Large skinks (blue-tongue lizards) | 0.6 x 0.4 x 0.2 | 1 x 0.4 x 0.2 | 2 | N/A |
| Small dragons (bearded dragons) | 0.3 x 0.2 x 0.2 | 0.8 x 0.3 x 0.3 | 2 | N/A |
| Monitors and large dragons (lace monitors) | 1.2 x 1 x 0.6 | 4 x 3 x 2 | 2 | N/A |
| Small venomous snakes (death adders) up to 80cm | 0.5 x 0.3 x 0.2 | 0.7 x 0.6 x 0.5 | 2 | N/A |
| Large venomous snakes (eastern brown snakes) over 80cm | 0.6 x 0.4 x 0.4 | 1.20 x 1 x 0.6 | 2 | N/A |
| Small pythons (spotted pythons) | 0.4 x 0.3 x 0.2 | 1 x 0.6 x 0.5 | 2 | N/A |
| Large pythons (carpet pythons) | 1.2 x 0.5 x 0.5 | 2 x 1.5 x 1.5 | 2 | N/A |
| Small freshwater turtles (eastern snake-necked turtles) up to 15cm shell | 0.6 x 0.4 x 0.4 | 1.8 x 0.6 x 0.4 | 2 | 50% |
| Large freshwater turtles (broad-shelled turtles) over 15cm shell | 1 x 0.5 x 0.4 | 2 x 1.2 x 0.9 | 2 | 50% |

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Mammals

| Type of mammal (examples) | Critical care L x W x H (m) | Intermediate care L x W x H (m) | Pre-release L x W x H (m) | Maximum number of individuals |
|---|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Small bats (microbats) | 0.3 x 0.2 x 0.3 | 0.5 x 0.5 x 0.5 | 5 x 3 x 2 | 10 |
| Large bats (megabats) | 0.8 x 0.6 x 0.6 | 1 x 1 x 1 (for single animals) | 10 x 4 x 2 | 30 |
| Small dasyurids and rodents (antechinus and mice) | 0.3 x 0.2 x 0.2 | 0.5 x 0.5 x 0.3 | 1 x 1 x 0.3 | 4 |
| Large dasyurids and rodents (quolls, phascogales and water rats) | 0.5 x 0.3 x 0.5 | 1 x 1 x 1 | 3 x 2 x 2 | 4 |
| Bandicoots, potoroos and bettongs | 0.5 x 0.5 x 0.5 | 1 x 1 x 1 | 4 x 3 x 2 | 4 |
| Small macropods (pademelons) | 0.7 x 0.7 x 0.5 | 3 x 2 x 1.5 | 10 x 10 x 2 | 4 |
| Medium macropods (wallabies and rock-wallabies) | 1.5 x 0.8 x 1 | 4 x 3 x 1.5 | 20 x 20 x 2 | 4 |
| Large macropods (grey kangaroos) | 1.5 x 0.7 x 1.5 | 5 x 5 x 2 | 40 x 20 x 2 | 4 |
| Small possums and gliders (pygmy-possums and feathertail gliders) | 0.3 x 0.2 x 0.5 | 0.6 x 0.3 x 1 | 2 x 1 x 2 | 10 |
| Large possums (ringtail and brushtail possums) | 0.5 x 0.5 x 0.8 | 1 x 1 x 1 | 3 x 2 x 2 | 2 |
| Large gliders (greater gliders and sugar gilders) | 0.4 x 0.3 x 1 | 1 x 1 x 1 | 6 x 3 x 3 | 6 |
| Koalas | 0.7 x 0.7 x 0.7 | 2 x 1 x 2 | 4 x 3 x 3 | 2 |
| Echidnas | 0.5 x 0.5 x 0.5 | 1.5 x 1.5 x 1 | 5 x 4 x 1 | 2 |

Note: Persons and organisations are reminded to refer to **Section 10—Housing standards and guidelines** in the code to ensure wildlife undergoing rehabilitation is housed in a way that prevents injury or escape, minimises stress, maintains safe levels of hygiene and allows natural behaviours.

Safety Management Manual

Safety Management Manual

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1. Occupational Health and Safety Policy

WILDCARE (Wildcare Australia Inc) was formed in 1993 to provide a rescue and rehabilitation service to local wildlife, to provide training to wildlife volunteers and to promote the protection of wildlife within the community.

WILDCARE volunteers rescue over 6,000 animals each year in the South-east Queensland region and as such, provide an important service to our wildlife and the community.

With over 1700 members, WILDCARE has identified that it needs to have a WILDCARE plan of safety management for our valued volunteers and the community we serve. WILDCARE as an organisation is committed to upholding a high standard of safety in all areas of our operations through this – our new **Safety Management Manual**. This Manual will operate in conjunction with the WILDCARE Volunteer Manual and Rescue and First Aid for Wildlife training manual.

The goal of WILDCARE's Safety Management Manual is to protect the health and safety of its volunteers and the community whilst conducting our activities. Health and Safety is the responsibility of all volunteers.

We will do this by:

- Providing and maintaining healthy and safe work areas.
- Providing information about the safety equipment and personal protective equipment (PPE) required.
- Providing information, instruction, training and supervision to ensure the safety of all volunteers.
- Requiring all volunteers to adhere strictly to all safety policies, regulations, codes of practices and procedures.
- Developing and maintaining emergency procedures, which, in the event of an incident, minimise harmful effects.
- Requiring all WILDCARE volunteers to report hazards (or hazardous practices) to the Management Committee. This information will be passed to the Safety Officer.
- Requiring all volunteers to accept that safe work practice is the responsibility of every person taking part in WILDCARE's activities.
- Communicating safety information and encouraging participation of volunteers in safety matters.

The cornerstone of effective safety management is the commitment of all volunteers to achieving safety goals – it is a team effort. We invite all volunteers to make their own commitment to the achievement of our goals by becoming involved in safety management.

Remember, YOU are responsible for your safety and the safety of those potentially affected by your actions.

Wildcare Australia Inc.
Management Committee



2. General Safety Management

The Safety Management document is to be used to supplement the information provided to volunteers in the following:

- WILDCARE Volunteer Manual
- WILDCARE Rescue and First Aid for Wildlife training manual
- WILDCARE website – www.wildcare.org.au
- WILDCARE species-specific training workshops and manuals
- WILDCARE communications (e.g. emails and newsletters)
- WILDCARE Policies and Guidelines
- *Code of Practice – Care of Sick, Injured or Orphaned Protected Animals in Queensland* under the Nature Conservation Act 1992 as issued by the Department of Environment and Science (DES).

Information about conducting rescues, animal handling and all other resources have been designed to maximise the safety of our volunteers, members of the public and the welfare of the animals.

In particular volunteers should note the Section “Wildlife Rescue” as contained in the WILDCARE Rescue and First Aid for Wildlife manual.

The WILDCARE Safety Management Manual is based on the guidelines provided by the ‘*In Safe Hands Toolkit*’ (3rd Edition) published by Conservation Volunteers Australia.

WILDCARE commits to preventing workplace accidents, eliminating dangerous occurrences and will strive to achieve a zero-accident rate.

2.1 QUALIFICATIONS AND COMPETENCE

2.1.1 Qualifications

The Management Committee members and Team Leaders will have attained the following qualifications/training:

- Training safety covering WILDCARE Safety Management Manual policies and procedures; and
- Risk Assessment - training conducted by the Safety Officer or someone with equivalent safety qualifications.

The Management Committee positions are outlined in the current Rules of Association (Constitution).

The Safety Officer preferably has experience in work, health and safety such as a recognised qualification in Safety Management or Work, Health and Safety to at least a Certificate 2 standard, or recognised qualification in safety management. (Note: Although preferable an appointment of a Safety Officer is not mandatory under WHS (Workplace Health and Safety) law for volunteer organisations.)

2.1.2 Technical Skills and Competence

The Management Committee and Team Leaders must maintain a sound understanding of the practical tasks completed by the organisation, the associated risks and how these are managed.

The technical skills and competence required for volunteers are outlined in the WILDCARE Rescue and First Aid for Wildlife training manual along with training courses provided by WILDCARE.

It is critical that all volunteers adhere to the guidance material and training provided by WILDCARE to ensure tasks are completed safely.

2.2 SAFETY MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

2.2.1 Definitions

Activity – any task where the volunteer represents WILDCARE, e.g. a rescue, transporting wildlife, an education event, public display, etc.

Team Leader – a person who has been elected to act in a particular role to assist WILDCARE to achieve its aims and objectives or assist the Management Committee to complete tasks. This includes Trauma Carers, Species Coordinators, Community Liaison Coordinators, Media Coordinator, Workshop Trainers and other positions as appointed by the WILDCARE Management Committee from time to time.

2.2.2 Responsibilities

Every WILDCARE volunteer has a responsibility for the creation and maintenance of a safe working environment.

The Management Committee – has the responsibility of setting safety policy and procedure to provide a 'duty of care' of all participants of any activity conducted by WILDCARE. The Management Committee will monitor the activities of Team Leaders to ensure they are competent at implementing and monitoring the safety of activities.

It is the responsibility of Management Committee Members and Team Leaders to ensure that:

- They notify the Management Committee and Safety Officer of all dangerous occurrences;
- They are aware and understand the principles of incident and accident reporting and investigation;
- All incidents and accidents that result in, or have the potential to result in, injury or damage are investigated and where necessary, corrective or preventative action is taken;
- All matters relating to volunteer welfare are dealt with in the most appropriate and timely manner.

Team Leaders – may be responsible for the planning and delivery of practical activities, associated safety processes and the onsite supervision of all volunteers.

Note: Each Management Committee member and Team Leader has the authority over their roles and responsibilities. No other member may interfere with their roles in such a manner that will negatively affect the safety of their activities.

Safety Officer: It is the responsibility of the Safety Officer to:

- Assist or conduct risk assessments;
- Assist at sites in identifying the causes, or potential causes, of dangerous occurrences and accidents and develop corrective action;
- Ensure state authorities are appropriately notified of all reportable occurrences or events;
- Updating the risk register; and
- Distributing safety information and advice.

Organisation volunteers must:

- Declare pre-existing injuries or medical conditions that may affect their participation in an activity they have nominated for;
- Declare if they have any illness or fatigue that may affect their safe performance of any activity; including rescues;
- Notify the Team Leader should they become unwell or fatigued during an activity;
- Co-operate with any reasonable policy or procedure relating to health or safety and to animal welfare that has been notified to volunteers, including adherence to instructions and procedures in WILDCARE documents;
- Report any unsafe situation or practice to their Team Leader, Safety Officer or a member of the Management Committee;

- Report any injury or accident as soon as possible and before leaving a project or activity site to the Team Leader, or a Management Committee Member if a Team Leader is not present;
- Take reasonable care and precautions for his or her own health and safety;
- Take reasonable care that his or her acts or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of other persons;
- Comply, so far as the volunteer is reasonably able, with any reasonable instruction that is given by the Team Leader to allow the person to comply with this safety management process;
- Vaccinated volunteers involved with direct handling of bats are responsible for keeping their vaccinations and titre results up to date; and
- Ensure their emergency contact details are notified to the WILDCARE Secretary and kept up to date.

2.3 WILDCARE WORK SYSTEMS AND PERSONAL PROTECTIVE CLOTHING

WILDCARE has a duty of care to protect volunteers from workplace hazards including injuries while handling wildlife, harmful UV radiation, insect, spider and snakebites, chemical contamination and tool use injuries.

Work Health and Safety legislation also requires that volunteers must cooperate with WILDCARE.

All volunteers will be encouraged to provide and wear their own Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) including appropriate clothing based on the task being undertaken. Details of the required clothing and PPE are provided in the WILDCARE Rescue and First Aid for Wildlife training manual and other species-specific training manuals.

All items of PPE utilised must be in good working condition, be maintained by the volunteer and the user must follow the instructions provided (if any) on its use.

2.4 HAZARD IDENTIFICATION, RISK ASSESSMENT & MANAGEMENT

2.4.1 Overview

WILDCARE as an organisation has a commitment to health and safety to our volunteers and the community in all areas in which we operate. To maximise safety for WILDCARE volunteers and the community, a Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment and Management Process (RAMP) will be undertaken on all activities. Identifying hazards and risks is an important first step to adopting a risk management approach.

Hazard: *Hazard - an object, situation or activity that has the potential to cause harm.*

Risk: *The possible harmful effects from interacting with the hazard.*

WILDCARE uses standard techniques for identifying hazards. Hazard identification utilises both pro-active and re-active techniques from a variety of sources, these include but are not limited to:

- Reports from WILDCARE volunteers; the investigation and follow-up of reported hazards and incidents;
- Safety meetings and safety audits; and
- Information exchange with other industry groups.

It is important that the Management Committee, Team Leaders and volunteers remain vigilant for new or emerging hazards.

The current WILDCARE Safety Officer is aiming to complete a risk assessment for all current WILDCARE activities. Based on this and input from the Management Committee, Team Leaders and eventually all volunteers, a Hazard and Risk Register will be developed and kept up to date with any changes or new hazards.

The goal is for a RAMP to be provided for each activity so that the hazards will be identified to all WILDCARE volunteers and all risk control measures documented and explained.

For example, a rescue activity may include the following hazards and associated risks:

- Working with high-risk species of wildlife including bats, snakes, large reptiles, adult macropods and koalas, risk of Australian Bat Lyssavirus (ABLV), bites, scratches and injuries;
- Falls;
- Traffic;
- Power lines;
- Working alone;
- Driving;
- Snake bite when in the field;
- Use of rescue equipment; and
- Injury to members of the public.

A RAMP will be used to identify and minimise the risk associated with these hazards.

In addition to existing activities, a RAMP will be triggered by:

- Changing work practices, procedures and the work environment;
- Introducing new equipment;
- New information about the risks become available;
- Responding to workplace incidents even if they have not caused an injury;
- Responding to the concerns of volunteers and others in the workplace; and
- Requirement by WHS regulations for specific hazards.

For jobs where a risk matrix has been completed, there is no need to repeat the assessment unless there has been a change in circumstances.

2.4.2 Hazard and Risk Register

WILDCARE will maintain a Hazard and Risk Register as part of the Risk Management process. This will be maintained initially in an Excel Database format for different activities and can be printed for use or review. It will ensure that hazards are tracked and treated as part of a formal process of prioritisation, documentation and assessment.

It will be maintained by the Safety Officer position and a copy will be available to the WILDCARE Management Committee and Team Leaders.

Printed copies will be provided as required for each individual or group activity.

2.4.3 Risk Assessment and Management Process (RAMP)

Risk Assessment and Management Process is a formal process that is used to:

- identify hazards associated with an organisation's operations;
- analyse and assess the risks associated with those hazards;
- implement controls, to militate against future accidents or incidents; and
- the hazards and risk are continuously updated to reflect learning from incidents and change.

The main elements of the risk management process, based upon AS/NZS 4360 (2004), are detailed at ANNEX 1 – RISK ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT PROCESS.

2.4.4 Unacceptable Risk

Where the risk assessment process leaves the Management Committee or Team Leaders in any doubt that the activity/rescue can proceed safely, they should suspend work on the project, or that component, which is the source of concern, until such time as the risk can be satisfactorily controlled. At no time should the achievement of work outcomes be allowed to compromise safety.

2.4.5 Documentation

Once a risk assessment is completed, it must be signed-off by the Safety Officer, Team Leader or Management Committee member in the case of projects, indicating that they are satisfied that the assessment has been properly performed and the risk has been treated and/or mitigated.

The risk assessment process will be documented by the Safety Officer in the WILDCARE Risk Register and the documentation must be retained as long as the risk assessment remains valid.

2.5 CONSULTATIVE ARRANGEMENTS

2.5.1 Health and Safety Representatives

WILDCARE has a volunteer Safety Officer position (as per 2.1.1) for the purpose of reviewing safety performance, disseminating safety information, assisting in addressing and representing volunteers on safety issues raised by volunteers.

2.5.2 Safety Meetings

Safety meetings will be held as part of the WILDCARE General Meetings which are scheduled periodically and/or the WILDCARE Annual General Meeting which is scheduled every year. It will provide a forum for discussion on how safety is managed and address any issues raised.

It will be a standing agenda item at General Meetings and AGM to discuss safety management, audit results, risk assessments and incidents.

Other relevant safety information and communications will be distributed by the Safety Officer or Management Committee with the approval of at least two Management Committee members, via email, newsletters, website or training days as applicable.

2.6 PROJECTS REQUIRING HIGHER LEVEL RISK MANAGEMENT

2.6.1 Justification for Higher Risk Projects

If WILDCARE is to voluntarily undertake an activity that involves a higher than normal level of risk, there should be sound reason for doing so, and only then, if the extra risk can be satisfactorily managed.

Factors that would cause a project to fall into this category include:

- Remote location and/or travel;
- Reasonable possibility of extreme climatic and associated conditions e.g. blizzard, cyclone, flood, extreme heat, bush fire;
- Use of firearms;
- Use of drugs to sedate and euthanize wildlife;
- Proximity of heavy vehicles or machinery;
- Possibility of exposure to dangerous substances such as herbicides, lead based paint or asbestos; and
- Any risk that requires the use of PPE that would not normally be available on project sites, or other specialised safety equipment e.g. fall arrest harnesses or scaffolding, respirators, disposable overalls.

All activities undertaken on High Risk Projects need to be approved by the Management Committee prior to commencement in conjunction with the Safety Officer (if there is a position holder).

2.7 EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLANNING

2.7.1 Group Activities

For a group activity the Team Leader leading the activity will brief the participants, as part of the on-site activity, an emergency response and evacuation plan that is communicated to all persons working at that site. Consideration must be given to reasonably foreseeable emergencies so that appropriate response plans are developed. The plan needs to identify strategies for both getting assistance to the team and evacuating the team to a safer location.

2.7.2 Project Sites

A good Emergency Response includes:

- Reasonable access to two forms of communication (so far as is practicable);
- The position where the communication signal is strongest should be determined and then marked;
- The vehicle should be parked in a position where it is immediately available for evacuation and should have sufficient fuel to reach the nearest hospital or point of emergency assistance;
- The Team Leader must identify a suitable emergency signal such as a whistle or vehicle horn blast;
- Alternative escape routes need to be identified in recognition that the preferred route might not be safe or available e.g. bushfire, flood, storm;
- Concise unambiguous directions to the site (including where appropriate, map references or references to readily identifiable landmarks) must be recorded and in a location where they are accessible to all participants;
- Any participants with first aid qualifications or experience should be identified so they can assist with the treatment of injuries, or in the communication with emergency services; and
- Consideration must also be given to the possibility that the Team Leader may be incapacitated and unable to initiate or lead the emergency response.

At the first practicable opportunity, after participants have been made safe and emergency services alerted, the Team Leader should advise the President or Vice-President who will take appropriate action.

2.7.3 Emergency Communication Protocols

The purpose of communications should be to arrange assistance for volunteers as quickly and effectively as possible so as to minimise harmful effects to individuals. It is essential that Team Leaders have all necessary emergency contact details.

Emergency contact details for volunteers are recorded by the WILDCARE Secretary in the membership database. In the event of an emergency involving a volunteer, the Team Leader may obtain their relevant Emergency Contact details by calling a WILDCARE Management Committee member. The Management Committee members are able to access the membership records and contact details.

NOTE: The national '000' emergency number should be backed up with local emergency service numbers and the '112' emergency number for mobile phones.

No volunteer should offer, or be drawn into, any media comment in respect of an emergency, unless specifically authorised by the WILDCARE President or Vice-President.

A polite "No comment" is all that should be offered, and the enquiry directed to the President, Vice-President or Media Coordinator.

2.7.4 Emergency Information

Team Leaders and all volunteers involved in activities should review emergency services and the weather bureau websites and applications as applicable to obtain useful information in planning and monitoring activities.

2.8 DISCLOSURE OF PRE-EXISTING INJURIES OR MEDICAL CONDITIONS

2.8.1 Consideration for activities

The safety of a work site or work practice cannot be assessed without consideration of the capacity of the persons involved. All volunteers must declare pre-existing injuries, medical conditions or concerns that may affect their participation (as per 2.2.2).

An activity that is safe for one person may be unsafe, even dangerous, for another person who has a pre-existing injury or medical condition. Consequently, volunteers must have their foreseeable tasks and work sites clearly explained to them so they are able to make a properly informed and considered decision about whether or not they are capable of conducting the task.

It is important that volunteers consider their own injuries, illness, fatigue, personal limitations or medical conditions before undertaking activities and advise if they feel they may not be able to complete an activity safely. Another more suitable activity may be assigned if applicable.

Any personal information disclosed to WILDCARE, must be treated in strict confidence and used only for the purpose of safely and discreetly managing the condition disclosed. Information regarding medical conditions will not be recorded or maintained by WILDCARE and it is important that volunteers take responsibility for their own restrictions.

2.9 BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

Everyone is entitled to a positive workplace free from intimidation, ridicule and harassment. Every person has a responsibility to maintain that environment in WILDCARE. Bullying behaviour is based on the misuse of power in human relationships and negates the dignity and autonomy of its victims. There are bound to be occasional differences of opinion, conflicts and problems in every organisation. Only when the treatment of another person is unreasonable, offensive or harmful does organisational bullying exist. Bullying and harassment will not be tolerated.

WILDCARE will have in place the following procedure:

- A contact person to receive complaints - this will be the Safety Officer or another representative that has been elected by the WILDCARE Management Committee;
- A process to resolve complaints respectfully, confidentially and fairly will be decided by the Management Committee in consultation with Safety Officer position holder (if the position is filled). This may require a formal mediation process; and
- Measures to provide everyone with information on what constitutes workplace bullying and harassment.

The Committee may revoke a membership should bullying or harassment behaviour continue if a volunteer has been counselled about their behaviour and does not cease the behaviour. If this occurs, the volunteer will not be able to regain membership.

2.9.1 Definitions of Bullying and Harassment

The following definition is based on information provided by Workplace Health and Safety Queensland (17 March 2014)

Workplace harassment/bullying: is where a person is subjected to behaviour that:

- is repeated, unwelcome and unsolicited;
- the person considers to be offensive, intimidating, humiliating or threatening; and/or
- a reasonable person would consider to be offensive, humiliating, intimidating or threatening.

Workplace harassment/bullying covers a wide range of behaviours ranging from subtle intimidation to more obvious aggressive tactics, including:

- abusing a person loudly, usually when others are present;
- constant ridicule and being put down;
- sending/leaving offensive messages on email or the telephone;
- sabotaging a person's activities, for example, by deliberately withholding or supplying incorrect information, hiding documents or equipment or not passing on messages;
- humiliating a person through gestures, sarcasm, criticism and insults, often in front of other WILDCARE members, other organisations, or members of the public; and/or
- spreading gossip or false, malicious rumours about a person with an intent to cause the person harm.

What is not workplace harassment?

- a single incident of harassing type behaviour;
- reasonable management action taken in a reasonable way; and/or
- acts of unlawful discrimination, vilification or sexual harassment.

Acts of unlawful discrimination, vilification or sexual harassment are addressed under the 'Queensland Anti-Discrimination Act 1991'.

2.10 LONE WORKERS

Working alone, particularly in field-based situations or on rescue call outs, increases the potential consequences of hazards due to the difficulty in obtaining emergency assistance and the potential for injury, illness or breakdown to go unnoticed for some time.

The consequences can be potentially fatal, so it is essential that the following protocols are in place and are followed in the management of risk and communication with the lone worker.

2.10.1 General Principles

A person is deemed to be working alone when they cannot be seen or heard by another person, and when they cannot expect a visit from another volunteer or member of the public for some time. *(This includes going out to meet unknown members of the public in isolated locations, to isolated locations for rescues where there is no mobile phone coverage or releasing wildlife in a remote location).* All volunteers will be required to provide emergency contact details. These will be recorded in the membership database.

Lone worker principles:

- No worker should engage in isolated work if they have a medical condition that is deemed to be potentially life threatening.
- High-risk activities must not be undertaken by lone workers.
- It is recommended that the lone worker have a first aid qualification or experience.
- Emergency contact numbers must be held for the lone worker.
- Lone workers must be reminded of the need for compliance with the organisation's safety policy at all times e.g. avoidance of risk, the wearing of PPE.
- Lone workers should know where they are at all times so that they can accurately relay their position to emergency services if the need arose.
- A lone worker MUST:
 - a. Inform a family member, friend (if practical) or WILDCARE Hotline volunteer that they are attending a rescue, giving detailed location details (including the address they are attending, directions where they will be headed if walking a distance from their vehicle/initial rescue address, contact details for the person that they are to meet).

- b. Telephone the family member, friend or WILDCARE Hotline volunteer on arrival at a remote or lone rescue, or the closest point where mobile coverage is available.
 - c. Telephone the family member, friend or WILDCARE Hotline volunteer at completion of lone rescue.
 - d. If the WILDCARE Hotline is not manned, then contact should be made with a Team Leader or other responsible member/friend.
 - e. Ensure that they have a good quality and charged torch with them if they are to be working alone at night. It is recommended that a backup torch also be carried if requiring light for more than 10 minutes.
- **If the Hotline volunteer does not hear from the volunteer within one hour of the rescue commencing, they will firstly attempt to telephone the volunteer, then the rescue caller. If there is no contact from either, the Hotline volunteer will contact the police and inform the President, Vice-President and/or Safety Officer.**

2.10.2 Preparation

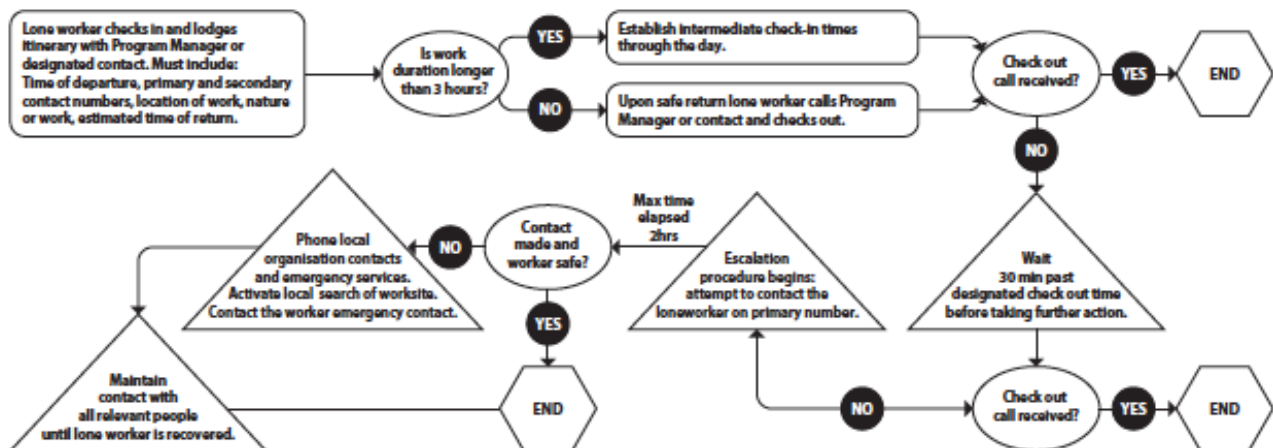
Where reasonably practicable, WILDCARE will avoid requiring people to work alone. This cannot be avoided however in many instances, particularly for rescue calls.

For rescue calls, the following should be considered and noted where possible by the volunteer and/or Hotline volunteer:

- The length of time a person will be working alone;
- The location of the work site;
- The specific nature of the work being undertaken, including whether any high-risk work is planned;
- Expected or likely weather conditions;
- Communication, including implementation of the communication and escalation process detailed above and in the flow diagram below; and
- The competencies and experience of the person who will be working alone.

2.10.3 Communication and Escalation Process

A reliable method of communication (i.e. mobile telephone with a suitable amount of battery life) must be carried at all times. Communication protocols and escalation process in the event a lone worker does not check in



must be in place as shown in the diagram below.

3. Work Site Safety

Remember, YOU are responsible for your safety and the safety of those potentially affected by your actions.

3.1 WILDCARE RESCUE AND HANDLING

The correct method to maximise safety and minimise risk when handling wildlife is outlined in the following:

- WILDCARE Rescue and First Aid for Wildlife training manual
- WILDCARE species-specific training manuals
- WILDCARE website
- WILDCARE training workshops
- *Code of Practice – Care of Sick, Injured or Orphaned Protected Animals in Queensland* under the Nature Conservation Act 1992 as issued by the Department of Environment and Science (DES).

It is essential that volunteers refer to these for safe practices for wildlife rescue and handling.

3.2 WORK SITE SAFETY

3.2.1 Smoking, Illegal Drugs and Alcohol

Smoking of tobacco or the use or storage of alcohol or illegal drugs is not permitted within the confines of any WILDCARE project/event sites, offices or locations. At outdoor project/event sites, smoking may only occur during designated breaks and only where other persons will not be exposed to the risks of passive smoking. (Smoking may not be permitted at all if the Team Leader deems the fire and health risk unacceptable.)

Provision and consumption of alcohol for specific social functions may be sanctioned by the prior approved of the Management Committee.

3.2.2 Team Leader Responsibility

The general safety and welfare of group volunteer activities is the Team Leader's responsibility for the entire activity duration (if present). If, for any reason, the Team Leader must leave or divide the group, careful thought must be given to the most appropriate arrangement to ensure that supervision is maintained.

3.2.3 Volunteer Mobile Phones, iPods, MP3 Players etc

While undertaking activities where safety instructions are being issued or whenever voice contact with the Team Leader or other volunteers, volunteers are not to use mobile phones or other electronic devices that might distract their attention.

However, volunteers should carry a charged and working mobile phone for contact, particular when working alone.

3.2.4 Project Site Briefing

In addition to the general induction that is completed as part of the volunteer registration process, a site and project briefing must be completed at the commencement of each new project or volunteer. The Project Briefing Guide (see section 5 – Induction) should be used with at a minimum the following communicated:

- Context and aims of the activity;
- Tasks and duties;
- Risk assessment and worksite safety;
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE);
- Emergency procedures, first aid, communications and reporting; and
- Toilets and hygiene requirements and facilities.

Where an activity is a continuation of a previous activity, a site and project briefing is only required the first time a volunteer attends the project or where there has been a significant change of circumstances requiring communication to previous attendees.

3.2.5 Positive Work Site Behaviours

Notwithstanding responsibilities detailed elsewhere in this policy, it is expected that Management Committee members and Team Leaders will demonstrate the following positive safety behaviours:

- On arrival, and regularly throughout the project/event, inspect the site for hazards;
- Ensure that a vehicle is on site and parked with an unobstructed exit;
- Have escape routes planned;
- Ensure that the vehicle has sufficient fuel to reach the nearest hospital or doctor;
- Provide a tool demonstration that is adequate to stress safety and efficiency. (This should include emphasis on safe tool use, carrying and storage);
- Keep work sites tidy;
- Ensure that a first aid kit is accessible at all times;
- Intervene immediately when any dangerous practice is observed;
- Constantly reinforce the importance of safety and hygiene by personally modelling safe and healthy practices;
- Record any accidents, incidents or recommendations;
- Record any injuries sustained and first aid treatment administered in the Register of Injuries. More serious accidents must be reported on the Accident-Incident Investigation Report Form; and
- Wear a high visibility vest if appropriate, to allow for ease of identification in the event of an emergency.

3.2.6 Safety Around Power Lines

Volunteer safety around power lines is imperative. No attempt should ever be made to retrieve animals from power lines no matter the circumstance. Power line rescues are at the discretion of the relevant power utility company managing the utility. Extreme caution must be observed wherever live power lines are down and emergency assistance urgently sought through the 000 or 112 (mobile phones) emergency service agency.

3.3 SUITABLE ATTIRE

3.3.1 Clothing and other protection

When attending rescues, it is essential that volunteers are prepared. Clothing and other protection items are detailed in the WILDCARE training manual, Rescue and First Aid for Wildlife and include:

- Long pants (such as denim jeans or cotton drill)
- Long-sleeved shirt
- High visibility clothing
- Appropriate sturdy and fully-enclosed footwear (preferably boots which cover the ankle)
- Appropriate headwear (such as a hat/cap or hard-hat depending upon the circumstance)

3.3.2 Hard Hats

Hard hats must be worn where required by the Owner/Operator of a site e.g. a 'black walk' following a bushfire or a rescue at a construction site and when a Risk Assessment indicates there is a potential for head injury to be sustained.

Among the circumstances where the use of hard hats would be indicated, are work situations where:

- Overhead objects may fall;
- Rocks may dislodge from steep track sections or embankments;

- Tools or timber may be carried, swung or lifted at, or above, head height;
- In a confined space (e.g. under a building or in a drainage pipe);
- There is a risk of falling trees following a bushfire;
- If working in very windy conditions under or near trees or any other location where there is sizeable flying debris blowing around;
- Wherever a sign advises that they must be worn;
- One worker is working above another.

If a potential for head injury is recognised, efforts must be made to eliminate or reduce the risk, before workers with hard hats are permitted to work on site.

3.4 ROSS RIVER FEVER AND OTHER VECTOR-BOURNE DISEASES

All volunteers must be frequently reminded of the need to take precautions to minimise the chance of infection. Among the steps to be taken by the Management Committee, Team Leaders and volunteers are:

- Be aware of the risk, particularly in relation to mosquito and tick bites;
- Ensure compliance with protective clothing policy (i.e. long trousers, long sleeves);
- Encourage volunteers to carry their own insect repellent; and
- Modify work practices to avoid locations or times of day when insects or arachnids (spiders, ticks) are more prevalent or active (if possible).

Refer to the publication '*Ticks and Tick-borne Diseases – Protecting Yourself*' published by Australian Association of Bush Regenerators (AABR) found at:

<https://www.aabr.org.au/learn/publications-presentations/ticks-and-tick-borne-diseases-protecting-yourself-2/>

3.5 BUSHFIRE SAFETY

3.5.1 GENERAL PRINCIPLES

No volunteers will be placed at risk, or allowed to remain at risk, during a bushfire or when there is a severe, extreme or catastrophic fire danger. Completing an activity is never a higher priority than the safety of our volunteers.

WILDCARE volunteers do not receive training to fight bushfires and procedures are therefore aimed at removing volunteers from areas potentially affected by bushfires. Volunteers are not to be in any areas made a bushfire risk and must evacuate from any site made at risk.

It is important that any vehicle used for a WILDCARE activity has sufficient fuel to enable the evacuation to a safe location.

3.5.2 Periods of High Fire Danger

A National Bushfire Danger Rating system was adopted in 2009. Based on the recommended actions associated with the ratings, the following apply to WILDCARE activities:

- Stand down or cancel activities on days of Catastrophic (code red) Fire Danger in at risk areas;
- Do not work, or walk, in forest, bushland, grassland or other high fire danger areas on days of Severe or Extreme Fire danger. Work in urban or residential areas may be acceptable based on the normal risk assessment process;
- Limit distances worked or walked from the vehicle in high fire danger areas (e.g. bushland) on days of Very High, or greater Fire Danger; and
- Identify and record the 'place of last resort' for each worksite.

Team Leaders and volunteers are to be aware that finishing the rescue/project is never a higher priority than the safety of people. The Management Committee and Team Leaders must be prepared to withdraw people (or not send them) from the rescue site when the appropriate Fire Danger Rating thresholds are reached.

Volunteers and Team Leaders should be familiar with the Rural Fire Service Queensland's website which contains information on current bushfires and Fire Danger Ratings.

<https://www.ruralfire.qld.gov.au/Pages/Home.aspx>

3.6 HANDLING NEEDLES, SYRINGES AND OTHER SHARP OBJECTS

All volunteers that use sharps/needles for the treatment of native wildlife (i.e. fluid therapy, anaesthesia, sedation, euthanasia), must have completed training to do so under veterinary supervision through the Australia Zoo Wildlife Hospital, Currumbin Wildlife Hospital, RSPCA Wildlife Hospital Wacol, their local veterinarian or a Trauma Carer who has been endorsed by the WILDCARE Management Committee to provide such training. Completion of a Certificate IV in Veterinary Nursing will also satisfy this requirement.

Needles/syringes used in the course of duties should be placed in an impervious sharps container. If needle caps are present no attempt should be made to re-cap the needles, as this action has significant risk of needle stick injury. Sharps containers should be crush resistant and able to be sealed effectively and transported in a safe and secure manner. Safe disposal of sharps containers may be arranged through a wildlife hospital/facility or the local health authority should be contacted for advice regarding the proper disposal of needles/syringes in your area.

3.7 FOOD PREPARATION AND FOOD SAFETY

In some cases, WILDCARE will have a social activity or fund-raising activity which involves the preparation and supply of food. Whenever the organisation or its volunteers is managing, preparing and supplying food it is important to adhere to correct food handling techniques to avoid food poisoning or gastric illnesses. Any volunteer who has a food handling qualification will be an asset to lead and manage food preparation.

Where WILDCARE is supplying food, it is our responsibility to ensure safe selection, storage and preparation. This policy also applies to the provision of 'bush tucker' to participants.

Volunteers involved in social activities around the preparation and supply of food must advise WILDCARE if they have any food allergies.

If WILDCARE conducts fund-raising with the cooking and supplying of food to the general public e.g. BBQ at local hardware store, it is a requirement to have available a list of all ingredients in the food. This is required for a cake stall as well as a BBQ. People purchasing food can review the list and determine if it is suitable for their consumption.

3.7.1 Food Purchasing

Prior to purchasing foods, the Activity Leader (or their representative) must check if any participant has a food allergy. Severe allergies (e.g. nuts, shellfish, hormones etc) could require complete exclusion of some products or necessitate separate catering requirements. Food purchases should cater to meet adequate nutrition for participants with specific dietary requirements, e.g. vegetarian, gluten intolerance, etc.

Minimise storage times and waste by avoiding over-buying of food. Be aware that 'specials' are often offered for food approaching its 'use-by' date.

3.7.2 Food Storage

Adequate facilities must be provided for the correct storage of food in transport and on site (e.g. identify a shady location to store a cooler). Refrigeration must be provided for food to be kept for long periods, ensuring that suitable storage containers are provided.

Key points for food storage:

- Activity leader must check for any spoilt food. Food handling and storage details are of great importance as the most dangerous contaminations are largely undetectable;
- Check use-by dates and dispose of any suspicious produce;

- Keep chilled foods at 5°C or colder, and hot foods at 60°C or hotter;
- Avoid cross-contamination by direct contact or via tools and utensils and dispose of any food affected by other products;
- Store raw meat below cooked meat;
- Partially used canned foods should be transferred to glass or plastic containers to avoid reaction with tin-plated metals;
- Thoroughly rinse all fruit and vegetables in clean water to remove soil, bacteria, insects and chemicals;
- Protect all foods (particularly raw meats) from flies and other pests; and
- Chemicals, e.g. pesticides, herbicides, rooting hormones, etc must not be stored in food storage and preparation areas.

3.7.3 Food Preparation Hygiene and Safety

Personal hygiene is the responsibility of individual participants. The Activity Leader should provide soap and washing water and encourage their usage prior to eating or preparing food.

Key points for food preparation:

- Check food including use-by dates and dispose of any produce that is unfit for consumption;
- Exclude from food preparation participants showing symptoms of contagious diseases;
- Exclude animals from food preparation areas;
- Provide non-latex rubber gloves for food preparation;
- Separate cutting boards are used for meat and other food; and
- Avoid combining cooked and raw ingredients. The Activity Leader (or their representative) must check the function of cooking equipment, e.g. gas bottles, hoses, etc.

A risk assessment needs to be completed for all food handling and preparation, including the use of equipment e.g. gas BBQs. When cooking with a flame or electricity, a fire blanket is mandatory. A First Aid kit is required in case of an emergency incident.

3.7.4 Food safety training

It is recommended that any WILDCARE member who is involved with an activity involving the preparation, cooking or use of food, ensure that they are familiar with food safety procedures. The Queensland Health website has information available at the following link:

<https://www.health.qld.gov.au/public-health/industry-environment/food-safety/training>

Before participating in such an activity, all appropriate WILDCARE members must complete the free, non-accredited online learning program 'DoFoodSafely' at the following link:

<http://dofoodsafely.health.vic.gov.au/index.php/en/>

3.8 WORK SITE HYGIENE

The provision of access to adequate work site hygiene facilities is critical in preserving the health and dignity of all volunteers/participants. Such provision must also account for environmental impact issues.

It is the responsibility of WILDCARE, when negotiating projects with partner agencies and landholders, to determine the strategies to be used in ensuring that the rights of participants in this regard are protected.

Conditions such as influenza, Covid-19 and meningococcal disease may be transmitted through saliva or air borne particles resulting from coughing or sneezing. The sharing of drink bottles or cups must be avoided unless they have been properly washed between users, and all volunteers should have ready access to soap and water for frequent hand washing. Volunteers suffering from colds or flu should be discouraged from travelling in vehicles, with other people, where there is an increased risk of spreading viruses or bacteria.

3.8.1 Zoonotic Disease and other Diseases Control

There are risks associated with handling animals including both domestic and wild species. There are numerous zoonotic diseases that a person may be susceptible to contracting.

Zoonotic diseases can be spread by:

- Direct contact through touching or handling animals or their carcasses;
- Animal bites and/or scratches;
- Indirect contact with animal faeces, blood and bodily fluids, aerosols, birth products or contact with contaminated objects, such as enclosures, rescue equipment and linen, animal environments, food and water.

Zoonotic diseases can be contracted through handling both dead and live animals.

Some animals present a higher risk of zoonoses because of increased shedding of harmful micro-organisms through their faeces and urine. These include birthing and pregnant animals, some reptiles and amphibians and animals which are stressed or unwell. (Source: Qld Government publication *Animal contact guidelines – reducing the risk to human health 2014*).

https://www.health.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0023/444371/zoo-guidelines.pdf

It is important that volunteers are aware of the risks in order to minimise them. If volunteers maintain a high standard of hygiene when dealing with these animals the risk will be negligible.

Those people who are at a higher risk of contracting zoonoses and who may suffer more severe symptoms include:

- young children
- pregnant women
- the elderly; and
- immune-compromised adults or children.

It is essential that all volunteers utilise appropriate preventative measures to mitigate the risks including:

- hand washing before putting anything into the mouth or touching the mouth;
- cover cuts and abrasions with a suitable bandage/dressing;
- screen rehabilitation animals regularly and implement appropriate control programs or treatments for worms and other gastro-enteric parasites, skin parasites or conditions;
- avoid contact with faeces, urine, soiled animal bedding or other potentially contaminated material;
- minimise close facial contact with animals (such as kissing on the nose or muzzle);
- avoid the generation of dust and aerosols when cleaning enclosures and bird cages. Use appropriate PPE to prevent inhaling harmful particles; and
- all animal waste should be managed, stored and disposed of in a manner which will prevent exposure to dust from contaminated materials.

Handwashing is considered the most important practice in preventing the spread of disease. Infectious diseases may spread from either animal or their environment to people via contaminated hands. Good hygiene practices, such as the correct hand washing technique and washing hands at appropriate times, will significantly decrease the risk of disease.

Hand Hygiene

- Always wash hands immediately after contact with faeces, body fluids/discharge, vomit or articles contaminated by these substances.

- Wash hands before eating, drinking or smoking, after using the toilet, after cleaning animal cages or animal-care areas and whenever hands are visibly soiled.
- Keep fingernails short. Do not wear artificial nails or hand-jewellery when handling animals.
- Keep hand washing supplies stocked at all times.
- Alcohol-based rubs may be used as an interim measure in situations where soap and running water are not immediately available.

The following steps should be taken to wash hands correctly:

- Remove all jewellery, even rings, so you can reach all surfaces on your hands.
- Wet hands with running water (preferably warm).
- Apply soap or liquid soap.
- Rub your hands together for at least 20 seconds.
- Make sure you cover all surfaces, including the backs of your hands and in between your fingers.
- Rinse hands, making sure you remove all soap, and turn off the tap using the towel or paper towel.
- Dry your hands thoroughly with a paper towel, a clean hand towel or an air dryer.

Source: <https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/hand-washing>

Use of waterless hand rub (alcohol hand sanitisers)

An alcohol-based hand rub (hand sanitiser) is a good way to clean your hands if you don't have access to soap and water. Hand sanitiser is only effective if your hands have no visible dirt on them.

To use hand sanitiser correctly:

- Put about half a teaspoon of the product in the palm of your hand, rub your fingers together, covering all surfaces of your hand, including between your fingers.
- Keep rubbing until your hands are dry (about 20 to 30 seconds).

Source: <https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/hand-washing>

Use of gloves

- Disposable/protective gloves are generally not necessary when handling healthy animals if you have intact skin.
- Use gloves when handling animal faeces/waste or cleaning cages, enclosures and environmental surfaces.
- Gloves reduce the risk of pathogen transmission by providing barrier protection. They should be worn for contact with an animal's blood, body substances, mucous membranes or where you have any non-intact skin (e.g. cuts, abrasions, open wounds).
- Gloves should be removed promptly after use, avoiding contact between skin and the outer glove surface.
- Hands should be washed thoroughly after gloves are removed.
- In particular, change gloves and perform hand hygiene:
 - After contact with faeces, body fluids, blood etc
 - Between individual animals
 - If gloves become torn or damaged.

Many chemicals will cause latex gloves to perish and this will affect their usefulness. When cleaning and disinfecting cages, disposal nitrile gloves or heavier reusable rubber gloves (e.g. dishwashing gloves) can be used.

Protective Outerwear

Wear a protective outer garment, such as coveralls, when attending animals and when cleaning. Outerwear should be changed and laundered daily.

These should also be changed whenever grossly soiled and immediately after handling an animal with a known or suspected infectious disease.

Shoes or boots should be fully enclosed, have thick soles, be impermeable to water and be easily cleaned.

Use of wildlife for training purpose

Any wildlife being used for training purposes (dead or alive) is subject to the provisions of the Wildcare Training Guidelines and Standards document.

More information on zoonotic diseases is provided in the WILDCARE Rescue and First Aid for Wildlife training manual, other WILDCARE species-specific training manuals and training workshops. Additional information on zoonotic diseases can be found at:

- Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) website - <http://www.daff.qld.gov.au/animal-industries/animal-health-and-diseases/zoonoses>
- Queensland Health - <http://www.health.qld.gov.au/>

3.8.2 Vaccinations

It is recommended that volunteers get vaccinated against Tetanus. Many wildlife volunteers in South-east Queensland obtain these vaccinations through The Travel Doctor who hold the vaccines in stock and have a good understanding of these zoonotic diseases and the risks to wildlife volunteers.

3.8.3 Bat Specific Information

A volunteer wishing to rescue or care for bats, must agree to be vaccinated against Australian Bat Lyssavirus (ABLV) and provide a copy of vaccination details and titre test results to the WILDCARE Secretary if requested.

Further information regarding handling bats and ABLV is provided in:

- WILDCARE training manuals

The following resources are also available from WILDCARE for its members and volunteers:

- The WILDCARE website - www.wildcare.org.au
- *Code of Practice – Care of Sick, Injured or Orphaned Protected Animals in Queensland* <https://www.ehp.qld.gov.au/wildlife/caring-for-wildlife/pdfs/cp-wl-rehab.pdf> (NOTE: includes definitions related animal workers and activities)
- WorkCover Queensland Short Solutions film on safe bat handling – <https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/resources/videos/films/safe-bat-handling>
- WorkCover Queensland ABLV and handling bats fact sheet – https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0003/82902/lyssavirus-handling-bats.pdf
- Department of Agriculture and Fisheries website – information on Hendra Virus - <https://www.business.qld.gov.au/industries/farms-fishing-forestry/agriculture/livestock/horses/hendra-virus/what-is>

3.8.4 Access to Toilets

All work sites must have access to toilet facilities on site or nearby that allow for the privacy and hygiene of participants.

If toilets are not available at a particular activity site, Team Leaders should identify the nearest public toilet facility and advise volunteers accordingly. It may necessary to provide a morning, midday and afternoon trip for the group to toilet facilities.

All toilet facilities must have the accompanying requirements necessary for participants to adhere to hygienic toilet use practices in relation to washing and the appropriate disposal of waste products.

Project Managers have the responsibility to ensure that these provisions are managed in a sensitive manner that will not cause embarrassment to participants. In particular the need to account for the dignity and rights of female participants during menstruation is critical.

The provision of personal hygiene items is the responsibility of the individual however the Team Leader should consider providing soap or hand cleaner should it not be available.

3.8.5 Involvement of Children

Whilst WILDCARE recognises 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 his or her own;
- Should not physically handle any sick, injured or orphaned wildlife; and/or
- Should not feed any sick, injured or orphaned wildlife.

WILDCARE encourages children under the age of 18 years of age to be involved in the following aspects provided that it is safe for them to do so, they have their parent/guardians permission and they are supervised by an adult:

- Attend and observe rescues with an adult provided 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; and
- 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 humans to prevent humanization whilst in care;
- Reduce the level of stress that sick, injured and orphaned native animals are exposed to whilst in care; and
- Prevent undue injury to children.

3.9 MANUAL HANDLING

Manual handling refers to a wide range of activities including lifting, pushing, pulling, lowering, holding, carrying or restraining any object, animal or person. These activities commonly give rise to such injuries and conditions as:

- muscle strains and sprains;
- tendon and ligament injuries to wrists, arms, shoulders, neck and legs;
- injuries to vertebral discs and other structures of the back;
- abdominal hernias; and
- chronic pain.

3.9.1 Pre-Project Planning and Preparation

As far as possible, prior to the commencement of a group activity, the Team Leader should plan and negotiate the control of manual handling risks by arranging the strategic pick-up or delivery of project materials and tools so as to minimise the amount of lifting and carrying required.

3.9.2 On-Site Risk Assessment

At an activity site (such as a display/expo) risk assessment stage, deliberate strategies should be developed to eliminate or minimise:

- the lifting and lowering of loads;
- the need for bending, twisting and reaching movements; and
- pushing, pulling, carrying and holding.

Tasks requiring participants to lift, lower, carry, hold, pull or push while they are bending, twisting or reaching should be avoided. Consideration must also be given to the duration of the activities and the physical capacity (including pre-existing conditions) of those proposed to undertake them.

Only after the tasks have been modified to minimise the above risks should consideration be given to task rotation and the demonstration of individual or team lifting techniques. Loads (weights) should be 'tested' before any lifting is attempted.

Smart solutions ('brain power' instead of 'brawn power') should always be sought in the first instance.

The potential for finger or foot crush injuries must also be considered if heavy lifting is to be undertaken.

Mechanical devices (e.g. trolleys, wheelbarrows) are valuable in eliminating or reducing the likelihood of a manual handling injury.

Equipment deemed a risk to the volunteer would have warning notification of the risk involved in its use.

3.9.3 Repetitive Actions

Repetitive actions, even when the load is minimal (e.g. raking sand/mulch), present manual handling risks, especially for those who are not conditioned to the activity. These activities require careful and deliberate self-assessment risk management.

3.10 EXTREME WEATHER CONDITIONS

Extreme weather conditions refer to situations where conditions have the reasonable potential to cause stress or extreme discomfort to volunteers. It is reasonable to assume that volunteers will expect to experience some measure of discomfort attributable to climatic conditions.

However, the standard risk assessment process must be enacted in order to ensure that risks are kept within the range of acceptability. The risk assessment process must take into account considerations such as:

- the expected duration of the extreme conditions;
- the quality of shelter and protective clothing available;
- the proximity of accommodation relief;
- the degree to which volunteers are acclimatised to the conditions; and
- the physical demands of the tasks being undertaken.

Pre-existing injuries or medical conditions must also be taken into account. Because there are so many variables, there are no set arbitrary temperatures as a determinant of when work should cease.

Both extreme heat and extreme cold can progressively affect outdoor workers, and create risks related to changes in core body temperature and impaired coordination and judgement.

It is recognised that individuals may react very differently to extreme conditions, and therefore each volunteer must monitor and manage their own well-being to ensure their comfort and health are not compromised.

Volunteers and Team Leaders must give consideration to associated risks such as bushfire, sunburn, heat stress, flooding, high wind and more hazardous road conditions.

3.10.1 Lightning – Electrical Storms

Risk of a lightning strike is managed in accordance with the ‘**30:30 rule**’; when the sound of thunder follows less than **30 seconds** after a visible lightning flash, volunteers outdoors should seek immediate shelter inside a building or vehicle and remain there for at least **30 minutes** after the last lightning flash is seen. Research indicates that more than half of lightning deaths occur after the thunderstorm has passed.

No structure is completely safe during a severe electrical storm, but some are safer than others. A large building, with electrical or telephone wiring and plumbing, is the safest shelter option.

If there is no suitable building, a car or vehicle should be used.

During electrical activity the highest risk locations are open paddocks, beaches or open high ground, close proximity to the tallest structure in the area (e.g. tree, light pole), small structures such as picnic shelters and swimming pools.

Landline telephones should not be used during a thunderstorm, and umbrellas should not be used for shelter.

3.10.2 Flooding

No wildlife rescue or transport should be attempted in or around floodwater due to the risk of injury. Safety issues to be considered include:

- Never attempt a rescue in swift water by entering the water. Rescuing an animal caught in swift water should only be attempted from a safe land position using nets, ropes, poles and only when it is safe to do so.
- Do not attempt to drive through flooded roads. Remember “If it’s flooded – forget it”.

Wildlife volunteers must keep up-to-date with local conditions where severe weather warnings have been issued. Wildlife rescues, or transporting wildlife to a vet or other rescuer/carer, will need to be delayed during periods of severe weather.

3.11 TRAVEL BY BOAT – USE OF BOATS

The use of boats carries a higher degree of risk and their use must be carefully planned and managed.

3.11.1 Boats owned and operated by a Third Party

Where a third party (e.g. Water Police, Volunteer Marine Rescue, commercial operators or rescuers with boats) will operate the boat, safe operation of the boat will be their responsibility. However, the following should be checked:

- The operator is appropriately qualified and licensed;
- The boat is properly licensed and sea-worthy and the number of passengers will not exceed the licensed capacity of the boat;
- Personal Flotation Devices (life jackets) are available for all passengers; and
- A strategy is in place to monitor weather conditions and an evacuation plan has been developed.

3.11.2 Other Watercraft

Small boats or canoes may occasionally be appropriate for some rescues. Safety issues to be considered prior to the use of these should include:

- stability of the craft;
- water conditions (depth, currents, clarity, chopiness etc) and exposure to sun and wind;
- experience of the volunteer or Team Leader;
- training for all volunteers and their swimming ability;
- availability of personal floating devices;
- maximum distance from shore; and
- emergency response / rescue plan.

3.12 FATIGUE

Fatigue can be a factor in all workplaces and it is important to be able to recognise the symptoms, contributing factors and how to take action. The following are common factors which can contribute to the risk:

- Tasks that are outdoors (hot or cold) and physically demanding;
- Volunteers completing the work in their spare time on top of their normal work demands;
- Volunteers that are suffering from an illness (such as influenza);
- Older volunteers can be more easily fatigued in physical work; and
- The diverse nature of volunteers means that there will be individuals unaccustomed to physical tasks.

Some of the common symptoms and effects of fatigue are:

- Excessive yawning or falling asleep at breaks;
- Short-term memory problems and inability to concentrate;
- Noticeably reduced capacity to engage in effective communication; and
- Impaired decision-making and judgement, reduced hand-eye coordination or slow reflexes.

Fatigue can affect risk management particularly if activities include machinery use but also for common tasks such as swinging tool use where coordination is decreased that raises the risk of manual handling injury. Team Leaders should consider the effect of fatigue when planning work including:

- The fitness for work of all volunteers on arrival;
- Adequate task rotation (considering physical and concentration demands);
- Specific risk assessment if required; and
- volunteer abilities and demographic.

4. Motor Vehicle and Road Safety

4.1 GENERAL DRIVER RESPONSIBILITY

4.1.1 Standard Requirements

Transporting people to and from activities is not normally the responsibility of WILDCARE as an organisation. Volunteers are generally responsible for their own transport.

It is important to note that the highest standards of safety and responsibility are expected when volunteers are transporting themselves or other people as part of an activity:

- All drivers of vehicles must hold a current drivers licence for the class of vehicle being operated, the vehicle is currently registered and it is a legal load;
- The vehicle being utilised must be suitable for the task (e.g. using a four-wheel drive vehicle in off-road terrain);
- Drivers must comply with relevant state/territory road laws; and
- A 'zero drug and blood alcohol' requirement applies to drivers who transport other participants during a group activity;
- A 'zero drug and blood alcohol' requirement applies to all Wildcare volunteers undertaking rescues and/or transporting wildlife.

4.1.2 Group Activity Emergency Circumstances

Team Leaders are advised to identify an appropriately licensed participant who can drive a vehicle in an **emergency** that renders the activity Team Leader incapable of driving safely.

In this circumstance, the designated emergency driver should be instructed to transport the team to the nearest safe point of communication. In some circumstances, it may be preferable that the emergency driver transports the Team Leader to medical aid without exposing the rest of the group to the danger of travelling with a driver who is not accustomed to the vehicle being driven.

4.2 ROAD SAFETY AND VEHICLE MAINTENANCE

WILDCARE rarely transports volunteers to and from activity sites. If this activity does occur the following must occur to maintain high safety standards:

- Vehicles must be driven in a manner that ensures all occupants are safe and feel safe;
- Seat belts, where fitted, must be worn by all occupants whenever a vehicle is in motion;
- Vehicles and trailers must be maintained in a safe and roadworthy condition, and have a current registration;
- Chemicals or unsecured tools/equipment etc should not be carried inside passenger carrying vehicles. (Vehicle occupants should limit 'in vehicle' luggage to a small daypack);
- Drivers should have 'zero drug and blood alcohol' when transporting participants;
- The Team Leader should undertake a pre-departure vehicle check prior to departing to, and returning from, each activity;
- Drivers should maintain sufficient fuel to reach the nearest hospital/medical centre;
- Trailers should only be used in accordance with vehicle manufacturers' recommendations. (Ref. Vehicle Owner's Manual) and operators must be competent in their use;
- Whenever a vehicle with trailer attached is being reversed, at least one participant should be delegated to stand in a safe place outside the vehicle, and provide direction to the driver;
- When driving at events with expected pedestrian traffic, hazard lights must be activated, speed restriction zones and all instructions by site management must be adhered to at all times;
- Trailers should be serviced at least annually or more frequently if subjected to heavy usage;

- When attaching a trailer to a vehicle, turn off the engine to ensure no one is exposed to exhaust fumes (carbon monoxide), ensure a safety chain is attached from the trailer to the tow hitch and that the trailer coupling has a tongue latch clip fitted so it cannot jump off the towball during transit;
- When disengaging a trailer, ensure that the jockey wheel is clipped in properly before winding the wheel up and popping the coupling off the towball so it will not slip and cause the trailers A-frame to drop to the ground and possibly fall on someone's foot;
- Drivers must be appropriately licensed and competent to operate the vehicle being used;
- Passengers must not be transported in the open areas of the vehicle e.g. trailers, utilities, tray trucks etc.

4.3 USE OF MOBILE PHONES IN VEHICLES

There is evidence that even 'hands free' talking on the phone while driving can significantly increase the risk of accident.

Phones should be turned off or not answered whilst vehicles are being driven in circumstances that demand the full attention of the driver, e.g. traffic, slippery conditions, etc. Handheld mobile phones must not be used while driving.

If it is necessary to make contact via telephone whilst travelling (e.g. driving to a rescue site), it is essential that the risks are mitigated by either:

- Having another person drive the vehicle whilst the second person makes the telephone calls; or
- Utilising an appropriate hands-free device (such as a Bluetooth connection to the car's inbuilt audio system or separate ear-phones) however such device should only be utilised when it is safe to do so.

5. First Aid

5.1 FIRST AID

5.1.1 First Aid Kits

It is recommended that all volunteers maintain a fully stocked First Aid Kit in their home and car.

Example of basic Kit Contents:

- 1 x Bandage crepe (5cm x 1.5m)
- 1 x Bandage crepe (7.5cm x 1.5m)
- 1 x roll of hypo-allergenic tape(1.25cm x 9.1m)
- 2 x triangular bandages (110cm x 110cm)
- 1 x Pack (3) Sterile gauze swab(7.5cm x 7.5cm)
- 2 x Combine pads (10cm x 10cm)
- 2 x Non-adherent dressing pads (7.5cm x 10cm)
- 1 x Pad eye (Large)
- 1 x Box (50) of strip adhesives
- 5 x Pack of alcohol swabs
- 1 x Pair stainless steel scissors - sharp/blunt (12.5cm)
- 1 x Pair stainless steel forceps -sharp (12.5cm)
- 1 x Emergency shock blanket
- 1 x Bag (12) Safety Pins
- 1 x Zip-lock (waterproof) bag containing a notepad and pen/pencil
- 1 x Resus-O-Mask®
- 2 x Saline steritube (15ml)
- 1 x Pack (1) Antiseptic swabs
- 1 x Burnaid® gel sachet (3.5g)
- 5 x Itch relief cream (1g)
- 2 x Pairs large non-latex gloves (Ansell Dermaprene®, Baxter Duraprene®, J & J Allergard® or equivalent) in zip-lock bag
- 1 x Emergency First Aid Booklet

5.1.2 Emergency Contacts

Members are encouraged to have ready access to contact details for emergency departments and organisations on their mobile phone.

The following contacts/links should be kept:-

- Police Link - 13 14 44
- Poisons Information – 13 11 26
- Queensland Transport & Main Roads – 13 19 40
- MyHospitals - <http://www.myhospitals.gov.au/browse-hospitals>
- Emergency Plus App - <https://emergencyapp.triplezero.gov.au/>
- Emergency AUS App - <https://itunes.apple.com/au/app/emergency-aus/id567636545?mt=8>

5.1.3 Management of First Aid Kits

The St John 'Outdoors' Kit, or equivalent, is recommended for regular group activities numbering four to ten. These kits should be supplemented by the addition of an approved resuscitation mask and any additional items deemed necessary after consideration of risks associated with the tasks to be undertaken.

The holders of WILDCARE first aid kits are responsible for managing these, including:

- Checking contents of first aid kits, before departure;
- Ensuring that kits are loaded and accessible;
- Checking emergency contact numbers are included;
- Checking hospital and phone locations are known;
- Identifying any volunteers with first aid qualifications;
- Ensuring that participants know the whereabouts of first aid kits;
- Ensuring the adequacy of first aid kits in relation to any known pre-existing medical conditions or injuries (notwithstanding the personal responsibility of participants to provide their own medications in accordance with their personal risk management plan.)
- Maintaining a Register of Injuries; and
- Restocking the kits after returning from projects.

5.2 FIRST AID: MEDICATIONS

WILDCARE first aid kits must not include any medications, which are labelled as:

- Pharmacy medicine;
- Pharmacist only medicine;
- Prescription only medicine;
- Controlled drug; or
- Any other scheduled medications for example:
 - Analgesics – paracetamol, aspirin, panadeine, disprin, codeine – based products
 - Eye treatments – Albalon®, Antistine-Privine®, Visine®, Murine® or similar products;
 - Burn Creams – Mediderm®, Derm-aid®, Medi-crème®, Flamazine® or similar products;
 - Cold, flu or hayfever/allergy products – Benadryl®, Codral®, Demazin®, Difflam®, Duro-Tuss®, Sudafed® or similar products.

Medications should not be included in first aid kits because of their potential to cause adverse health effects in some people including people with asthma, pregnant women and people with medical conditions. The supply of these medications may also be controlled by drugs and poisons laws.¹ **Volunteers requiring prescribed and over-the-counter medications should carry their own medication for their personal use as necessary.**

5.2.1 Background

Workplace Level 2 or senior qualified first aiders are not authorised to administer or supply scheduled medications.

First Aid courses at this level do not give training in the use of medications. 'First aid' is defined as the provision of emergency treatment and life support for people suffering injury or illness, the dispensing of medication would generally not fall within this definition. First aid training is basically directed towards maintenance of the airway

¹ Reference: Safe Work Australia, First Aid in the Workplace Code of Practice, July 2012

and circulation, control of bleeding and management of fractures and burns. The contents of the first aid kit should reflect these priorities.

First aiders cannot reasonably be expected to have knowledge of all medications, such as correct dosage, indications for use, precautions associated with use, drug interactions and contra-indications. Concerns with medications are that the recipient may suffer an allergic reaction; this is possible even with common medications such as paracetamol.

It is preferable to actively manage the cause of headaches (e.g. excessive noise, dehydration etc) for example, rather than being reactive by volunteers or staff requiring medication through pain relief tablets.

5.3 FIRST AID: INFECTION CONTROL

5.3.1 Universal Precautions

Strict adherence to universal hygiene precautions is the most effective way of managing potential workplace infectious diseases that may range from measles and common cold through to Covid-19, hepatitis and HIV. All first aiders must treat the blood or body fluids of all persons and animals as potential sources of infection, independent of diagnosis or perceived risk. This is essential for the protection of the first aider and any other workers with whom they have contact.

5.3.2 Infection Control Strategies

- A. Create a barrier between the first aider and any blood or body fluids by using disposable non-latex* gloves. Goggles, face masks or shields and other protective clothing may have to be considered in some circumstances.
- B. Immediately and thoroughly wash, with soap and water, any part of the body that comes into contact with blood or body fluids. Flush eyes and mouth with clean water.
- C. Carefully clean up blood spills and clean surfaces with disinfectant.
- D. Appropriately launder or dispose of any items that have been soiled with blood or body fluids.

** Non-latex gloves include Ansell Dermaprene®, Baxter Duraprene® and J & J Allergard®.*

5.3.3 Scratches or Bites from bats:

A bat is classified as a Category 3 (C3) bat if it bites or scratches a person, regardless if the person has been vaccinated against the Australian Bat Lyssavirus (ABLV).

If a vaccinated volunteer is bitten or scratched by a bat, the incident should be immediately reported to the Wildcare President or Vice-President.

All incidents where a volunteer is bitten or scratched by a bat must be reported to Queensland Health.

Members of the public should never be encouraged or requested to touch a bat. Advise the member of public to directly contact Queensland Health immediately, if they may have been scratched or bitten by a bat.

Further information regarding Bat Incident Management is provided in the:

- WILDCARE bat training manuals;
- Rescue and Management of C3 Bats Policy;
- Easy Reference Sheet – Protocol for Transporting Bats.

5.3.4 Covid-19 precautions

All wildlife volunteers must be vigilant in protecting themselves when attending wildlife rescues since the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic. Equally as important, any wildlife volunteer with Covid-19 symptoms should

ensure that they are self-isolating according to current health advice, and not be putting other volunteers and the community at risk of possible exposure to the virus.

When attending wildlife rescues, volunteers should take additional precautions to protect themselves, which should include:

- Volunteers should minimise interaction with the public as much as possible. Encourage members of the public to transport wildlife themselves directly to a wildlife hospital, provided it is safe for them to do so and they are not sick or in forced self-isolation.
- When attending a private residence to collect/rescue an animal, check the status of the caller beforehand. Ask the resident/caller if they or anyone in their home is unwell, particularly if they have tested positive to Covid-19, awaiting test results or have recently returned from overseas.
- Wherever possible, avoid entering private residences. If the animal can be suitably and safely contained, ask the resident to bring the animal outside.
- When visiting private residences, vet clinics or other places to collect wildlife, avoid contact with possible contaminants by avoiding touching any unnecessary surfaces (e.g. door handles, railings, countertops, fences). Leave linen etc with the caller when collecting the animal.
- Be aware of protocols implemented by veterinary clinics and wildlife hospitals as a result to the health crisis. Volunteers must abide by such protocols when admitting patients to wildlife hospitals to protect the staff and volunteers at those facilities. Have all paperwork prepared and ready before arrival and wherever possible, use disposal transport carriers (such as cardboard boxes) to admit wildlife.

All wildlife volunteers must stand down from their volunteer rescue and transporting roles if they are unwell with potential Covid-19 symptoms. They must also not attend training workshops or other Wildcare events if they are unwell. Volunteers should remain at home if they have been unwell or been in contact with someone infected with Covid-19.

All carers should not accept any new wildlife into care if they are unwell with potential Covid-19 symptoms or are serving out a quarantine notice.

Volunteers should keep themselves apprised of the current health advice and warnings issues by the Australian and Queensland Government. The Australian Health website contains up-to-date information on current health situation as well as medical advice and information.

<https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert>

Note:

As the Covid-19 health crisis is continually evolving, it is imperative that volunteers keep abreast of the current health situation and the Government restrictions. The extent to which precautions are required to be taken will vary greatly depending upon the number of active cases in the community and the rate of community transmissions.

Volunteers should adapt the safety precautions required in line with the current health advice.

WILDCARE will issue directives to volunteers as and when required in line with the Government recommendations.

6. Activity Records and Reporting

6.1 INJURY/INCIDENT REPORTING PROCEDURES

6.1.1 General

WILDCARE will:

- provide a mechanism for reporting accidents, incidents, work-related illness and dangerous occurrences;
- investigate accidents to determine the root cause with the objective of preventing any future recurrence;
- obtain and record statistical information about the accident or incidents; and
- meet state legislative requirements for reporting accidents and incidents.

Incident - an event which causes or could have caused injury, illness, damage to plant, equipment, vehicles, property, material, or the environment or public alarm. It also includes losses of containment, fire, explosion, non-compliance with environmental regulatory requirements, vehicle incidents and off-site incidents.

6.1.2 Procedure

This procedure is outlined in detail on the Injury Register & Incident Report (Form 03).

In summary:

- All incident or accidents that result in an injury or work-related illness during the course of WILDCARE activities must immediately be reported to the Safety Officer and President or Vice-President.
- Any dangerous occurrence that has the potential to result in injury or damage to property (e.g. a near-miss) must be reported in the same manner as an accident.
- In the event of a dangerous occurrence or accident, WILDCARE must ensure that the relevant State Authority is notified and that a full investigation is undertaken to determine the Contributing Factors.
- The most appropriate corrective actions will be taken to ensure the incident does not recur.

6.2 PROJECT ACTIVITY RECORDS AND REPORTS

If a particular specific project is to be conducted by WILDCARE, Project Reports are the official records of projects. As such, each form is a legal document that could be presented in court in the event of legal action that follows a project-related accident. Properly completed reports are important records of the work undertaken by the group, the people involved and any issues that arose.

6.2.1 Project Manager Responsibility

Appointed Project Managers should complete these reports accurately with sufficient detail. The Project Manager is to ensure the following are completed and onsite at the project:

- Form 01 – Project Management: Contains administration and safety checklists, volunteer register and emergency plan; and
- Form 02 - Project Risk Assessment or copy of WILDCARE Risk Register relevant for the project. (Must be completed and reviewed prior to commencement of activities.)

In the event of any injuries, the Project Manager must ensure that all injuries are recorded as per:

- Form 03 – Injury Register and Incident Report.

6.3 INJURY/INCIDENT REPORTING PROCEDURES

This information is important to the process of reviewing and improving safety. The Project Manager must ensure all participants have access to and understand the purpose of the injury register. All injuries, no matter how small, must be recorded.

6.3.1 Management Committee Responsibility

The Management Committee should review the Reports with the Safety Officer to ensure that they are completed accurately and note any issues that require follow-up. Any action taken in relation to issues arising from the Report should be noted.

Form 04 – Work Site Safety Audit may be used by the Safety Officer or a member of the Management Committee to conduct audits on project sites to maintain and develop WILDCARE safety procedures.

6.3.2 Accident – Incident Investigation Report

An investigation must be completed when any of the following occur:

- A work injury/illness requires professional medical attention; and/or renders the volunteer incapable of working on the next workday after the injury;
- Causes property loss or damages; or
- Where a 'near miss' has the potential to cause any of the above.

An investigation will be completed by the Safety Officer. If there is no position holder, a member of the Management Committee not involved in the project may complete the investigation.

Form 05 - Serious Incident Investigation Report will be used to complete an investigation.

7. Tools and Appliances

7.1 SAFETY WITH HAND TOOLS

7.1.1 Tool Talks

In the event that the use of hand tools is required for an activity, all new volunteers must ensure they are familiar with the tool and attend a demonstration conducted by the Team Leader showing its safe and efficient use. In general terms, tool demonstrations should include:

- the name of the tool;
- what it will be used for;
- how to check that it is safe to use;
- how to use it safely;
- how to carry it; and
- how to leave and store the tool when not in use.

Tool demonstrations are only applicable to those tools that WILDCARE owns and which are provided for use to volunteers.

7.1.2 General Tool Safety

- It should not be assumed that a single demonstration is adequate. Frequent revision is required, and diligent monitoring is essential.
- Team Leaders must intervene immediately if any unsafe or inappropriate work practice is observed.
- Where swinging type tools (e.g. pick, mattock, axe) are being used, a safe working distance of 3 metres should be maintained.
- Program participants who are of slight build may be at greater risk of injury while using some tools. Task allocation and duration should be monitored closely to safeguard against over-use or repetitive strain injuries.
- Team Leaders should be alert for signs of fatigue, as participants who are unfamiliar with using certain tools may tire quickly and become more at risk of accidental injury, not only to themselves, but also to other program participants.
- Additional care must be taken when using or carrying tools when the ground under foot is slippery or uneven.
- Team Leaders should ensure that tools are properly maintained; blunt or broken tools may increase risks associated with their use.
- Volunteers should not use any tool if they are under the influence of alcohol, drugs or any medication that may affect their coordination and/or reflexes.

8. Specific Activities

8.1 GENERAL

Every volunteer has a duty to comply with the mandatory standards and procedures relevant to their role that indicate how particular processes should be carried out in accordance with the Safety Management System. No volunteer is expected to carry out any task where the risk to themselves or any other person is considered to be unacceptable.

8.2 WILDCARE RESCUES

WILDCARE volunteers are responsible for attending a large variety of wildlife rescues for all species of terrestrial wildlife. Volunteers must always ensure that they only attend rescues that they have been appropriately trained to undertake, are within their medical and physical capacity to be carried out safely and where they have the appropriate equipment and resources to do the task correctly and safely.

WILDCARE volunteers should not attend rescues if they are under the influence of alcohol, drugs or any medication that may affect their coordination and/or reflexes.

WILDCARE has implemented procedures to ensure that only those volunteers that meet certain criteria are permitted to actively participate in wildlife rescues, including:

- Only those volunteers that have attended the Orientation Program and Rescue and First Aid for Wildlife (Basic course) are permitted to be included on the WILDCARE Rescue List.
- Only volunteers that are financial members of the organisation are included on the WILDCARE Rescue List. Volunteers that fail to renew their membership as at 30 June each year are not permitted to attend rescues on behalf of the organisation as they will not be covered by its insurance cover.
- Only those volunteers that are endorsed to undertake specialised rescues (e.g. adult macropods, koalas, large reptiles, bats) are included on the WILDCARE Specialised Rescue List. Endorsement is only provided once the volunteer has completed relevant training for that species and have been endorsed by the appropriate Coordinator, Trauma Carer or WILDCARE President and/or Vice-President as being confident to undertake those rescues. The volunteer must also hold appropriate specialised equipment for that particular species (where appropriate).
- Safety of our volunteers is paramount. Volunteers that take unnecessary risks and/or fail to abide by this Safety Management Manual, will be removed from the Rescue List and may face disciplinary action.
- Volunteers must not ask members of the public to participate in rescues where doing so places them at risk (such as directing traffic on a busy road or physically handling wildlife).

8.3 VEGETATION COLLECTION

Common causes of injuries reported from vegetation (browse) collection include:

- postural compromise (usually associated with reaching overhead for extended periods and/or carrying heavy loads);
- injury from walking on uneven ground (causing sprains and strains);
- injury from the use of hand tools such as secateurs and tree loppers (causing cuts, grazes etc);
- eye injury from branches; and
- bites from insects and ticks (causing a reaction ranging from mild to severe) and snake bites (which could potentially be fatal).

Volunteers must monitor these risks carefully and ensure that they take appropriate steps to mitigate the risks associated.

Volunteers should be familiar and comply with the Wildcare protocol 'Cutting Browse for Wildlife'.

[http://wildcareaustraliainc.camp9.org/resources/Documents/Collecting%20Browse%20for%20Wildlife%20\(No v%202020\).pdf](http://wildcareaustraliainc.camp9.org/resources/Documents/Collecting%20Browse%20for%20Wildlife%20(No%20v%202020).pdf)

Steps that may be taken to ensure the safety of volunteers whilst collecting vegetation/browse include:

- Liaison with the landholder to determine the safety of the work site (wherever practical);
- Checking that equipment is in good working order and ensure that faulty/broken equipment is repaired or replaced;
- Wear PPE (e.g. safety glasses, sun glasses, hat, long-sleeve shirt, long pants and sturdy enclosed footwear);
- Not working beneath damaged trees or trees with unsecured branches;
- Not climbing along slippery or elevated logs, embankments or retaining walls;
- Consideration of load weight and distance to vehicle when carrying branches. Use PPE equipment when cutting large quantities such as a garden trolley or carry smaller loads.
- Wearing appropriate gloves when using secateurs or extendable tree loppers;
- Wearing a safety vest at all times when picking along roadsides or in areas of motor traffic movement. (Permits to collect vegetation from road reserves and public areas must be sought from local government authorities or offenders maybe prosecuted).
- Use of equipment designed to be easier to operate (e.g. ratchet mechanism hand tools).
- Not using power tools such as chainsaws or electric pole saws unless you hold an appropriate certification.
- When cutting from fodder plantations, ensure that any safety requirements of the Council/landowner are adhered to.
- Use of insect repellent if working in and around vegetation to avoid exposure to biting insects as well as ticks and spiders. Ensure however that repellent does not come into contact with the browse as it may be detrimental to the health of wildlife.
- Ensuring that an appropriate first aid kit (including a snake bite kit) is within easy access.
- Before cutting, checking browse carefully for arboreal snakes, which may be hiding in the branches.
- If working in a tick-prone area, check carefully for ticks as soon as possible.
- Always keep a mobile phone on you in case of emergency.
- Being conscious of evidence of recent weed spraying/poisons in the area and do not cut vegetation from those areas.
- If collecting vegetable/browse at night, use a head-torch to enable both hands to be free and wear a high visibility vest/clothing;
- Follow the principles outlined in the section on Lone Workers when collecting in areas out of sight of others; if possible, take another person with you.
- If you have any known medication conditions (such as asthma, allergic reactions etc), ensure that you carry any required medications with you (e.g. puffer, antihistamine).

8.4 USE OF LADDERS

Whenever a rescue or task requires work to be done from a ladder, a comprehensive risk assessment must be undertaken to ensure adequate risk controls are put in place. The following minimum standards will apply to any such work.

- An approved fall arrest device or guard rails must be used whenever the fall height exceeds 2 metres and people will be within 2 metres of an unguarded edge – the 2 x 2 rule;
- A person should always have two hands free to ascend and descend a ladder;
- Ladders should be secured against movement and be supported from a firm, level, non-slip surface;
- All work from a ladder should be performed while facing the ladder;
- A person's feet should not be higher than 900 mm from the top of the ladder;
- No task should require overreaching (i.e. the belt buckle should always be within the stiles of the ladder);
- No person on a ladder should work directly above another person;
- Only one person should be on the ladder at any one time;
- Ladders should not be used in access areas or within the arc of swinging doors;
- Work involving restricted vision should not be performed from a ladder;
- Small, light loads of tools or materials, easily handled by one person, may be raised or lowered with a handline;
- Ladders must not be handled or used where it is possible for the ladder or the user to come into contact with electrical power lines;
- The use of power tools while working on a ladder should be avoided; and must be restricted to those that are easily operated one handed;
- Single and extension ladders should be placed at a slope of 4 to 1 and be footed or secured top and bottom;
- The person working from a single or extension ladder should be able to brace themselves at all times;
- Step ladders should only be used in the fully opened position; and
- A step ladder must not be used near the edge of an open floor or penetration where, if the ladder toppled, a person could fall over that edge.

8.5 WORKING AT HEIGHTS

Whenever a rescue or task requires the volunteer to work at heights (e.g. on a roof), a comprehensive risk assessment must be undertaken to ensure adequate risk controls are put in place. The following minimum standards will apply to any such work.

- No person shall work at an elevated position (e.g. roof, tree) that is more than 3 metres from your feet to ground level.
- No person shall climb or work on an unstable structure (e.g. tree with small diameter branches that could possibly break resulting in a fall) or a roof of a structure (e.g. house, car port, shed) that is not able to adequately hold the weight of the volunteer.
- It should be noted that WILDCARE's insurance cover for volunteers is limited in circumstances where the volunteer is working at heights. WILDCARE takes no responsibility for volunteers working at heights and considers this to be outside the scope of work expected of volunteers performing wildlife rescues.

8.6 ENTANGLEMENT – NETTING AND BARBED WIRE

Rescuing wildlife from entanglement may involve handling sharp tools and barbed wire. It is important that the procedures outlined in the training manuals are adhered to in order to minimise injury and maximise safety for both human and animals. Volunteers must be aware of their own limitations and undertake tasks that they feel competent and safe to do so. If the rescue is deemed unsafe to proceed, advice should be sought from a Team

Leader. Further assistance from trained and qualified professionals should be sought rather than risk volunteer safety or prolong animal suffering. Appropriate PPE must be worn at all times.

8.7 CHEMICALS AND DANGEROUS SUBSTANCES

The use of chemicals and dangerous substances are limited to vet approved Trauma Carers and trainee Trauma Carers.

All WILDCARE volunteers authorised to use drugs for the purpose of sedating and euthanizing wildlife must abide by the provisions of:

- *Health (Drugs and Poisons) Regulation 1996*
- Queensland Health publication *Approvals for Animal Management and/or Welfare Purposes in Queensland*
- WILDCARE Policy and Procedure *Drug Approvals for Trauma Carers*; and
- Australia Zoo Wildlife Warriors training manual *Introduction to the Use of Restricted Drugs for Animal Sedation and Euthanasia*
- Conditions as listed in Queensland Health Approval provided to individual Wildcare Trauma Carers.

Licensed Trauma Carers must monitor the risks associated with the use of dangerous substances and ensure that they take appropriate steps to mitigate the risks associated.

Steps that may be taken to ensure the safety of volunteers whilst using dangerous substances include:

- Wearing PPE (e.g. safety glasses, disposable gloves, long-sleeve shirt, long pants and sturdy footwear);
- Always aim to have another volunteer with you using dangerous substances. This second volunteer should hold a current first aid certification and be confident in the risks associated with the use of dangerous substances.
- Ensure that the *Hazardous Substances Information Sheets* for each dangerous substance (as provided by WILDCARE) are kept in the Trauma Carers kit where emergency personnel can easily locate them if needed.
- The Trauma Carer should be aware of their limitations and the advice or assistance of a more experienced licensed Trauma Carer sought if required.
- Trauma kits containing dangerous substances should be secured by a padlock at all times and the key to such kit should only ever be in the possession of the Trauma Carer. The kit should only be unlocked immediately prior to use and be re-locked immediately afterwards.
- The storage conditions as set out in the Approval issued by Queensland Health must be adhered to at all times to ensure the risk of theft of the dangerous substances are reduced as much as possible.
- When utilising dangerous substances, the Trauma Carer should be as discrete as possible so as to reduce the unwanted attention from members of the public.
- Trauma Carers must maintain a full first aid kit in their vehicle at all times.
- Trauma Carers should not attend rescues if they are under the influence of alcohol, drugs or any medication that may affect their coordination and/or reflexes.

8.8 HANDLING DECEASED ANIMALS (CARCASSES)

Wildlife rescuers and carers will have frequent cause to handle deceased animals.

Refer to Section 3.8.1 Zoonotic Disease and other Diseases Control for information on zoonotic diseases and hygiene protocols to be adopted when handling any animal, dead or alive.

Handling deceased animals may pose an increased risk of contamination as a result of:

- Increase in time between death and handling thereby increasing the risk of harmful micro-organisms being present;
- The presence of any infectious disease affecting the animal;

- The leaking of animal body fluids during or post death (e.g. urine, faeces, blood).

Contamination can be mitigated by utilising the following guidelines:

- Deceased animals should be placed into a high-quality plastic garbage bag as soon as possible. A veterinary-grade body bag is the most suitable type of bag for storing deceased animals. If using a plastic tub, ensure that it is washed and disinfected thoroughly after use and mark it clearly that it should not be used for storage of food, water or be used as an animal enclosure/container.
- Place the bagged carcass into a plastic tub to prevent accidental leakage. This can easily occur from sharp nails/claws (for most species) and spikes (echidnas). Alternatively, place the bagged carcass on top of a protective plastic sheet. This will prevent any leaking body fluids contaminating your vehicle.
- Use appropriate PPE as appropriate, particularly disposable gloves ensuring that they are also disposed of correctly.

Disposing of deceased wildlife

The disposal of dead animals is subject to regulations as set down by your Local Council. You should check carefully with your specific Council in this regard.

Ensure that carcasses are disposed of promptly to prevent contamination and further decomposition.

Storing deceased animals

There may be circumstances where a dead animal is required to be stored temporarily (e.g. for submission to a wildlife hospital for a necropsy or inability to dispose of promptly).

Deceased animals are authorised to be stored temporarily under a Wildlife Rehabilitation Permit.

The most appropriate method of storage is by placing into a secure container or bag (e.g. veterinary-grade body bag, disposable plastic container) and then placing it into a fridge or freezer. If using a fridge or freezer, do not use one that contains human food.

8.9 FIREARMS

The use of firearms may be necessary for the safe and efficient sedation and/or euthanasia of critically injured large animals (particularly adult macropods). The use of firearms is limited to those Trauma Carers authorised by the Management Committee and WILDCARE Firearms Nominee.

All WILDCARE members authorised to use firearms for the sedating and euthanasia of wildlife must abide by the provisions of:

- WILDCARE Firearms and Weapons Procedures and Protocols;
- *Weapons Act 1990*;
- *Weapons Regulation 1996*;
- Individual Licence Conditions issued with the Firearms Licence;
- Endeavour Veterinary Ecology Pty Ltd training manual *Training in the use of projectile anaesthesia (darting)*.

Volunteers utilising firearms during the course of their volunteer work must monitor this risk carefully and ensure that they take appropriate steps to mitigate the risks associated.

Steps that may be taken to ensure the safety of volunteers whilst using firearms include:

- Contact telephone details for all emergency service departments are saved to the volunteer's mobile phone for easy use (e.g. Police, Traffic Management, Queensland Fire Service, Energex etc);
- If the rescue site is in a public area (e.g. beach, park, side of busy motorway), the Police should be requested to attend the site to provide support;
- Liaison with the landholder to determine the safety of the work site;
- Ensuring that firearms are in good working order and well maintained;
- Wear PPE (e.g. high visibility vest, safety glasses, long-sleeve shirt, long pants and sturdy footwear);
- Wearing a safety vest at all times when using a firearm. However, it is noted that the presence of a fluorescent safety vest can make macropods nervous and it is often appropriate for the vest to be removed whilst approaching/stalking an injured macropod. In this instance, the vest should be removed but then replaced as soon as possible once the animal is darted.
- Always aim to have another experienced volunteer with you using a firearm to help mitigate risks. This second volunteer must be trained as a first responder/assistant Trauma Carer and be confident in the risks associated with the use of firearms.
- The use of a firearm should be reported to Queensland Police (including location firearm to be discharged, firearm to be used, rescue details and contact name and mobile number of Trauma Carer). This is imperative when utilising a firearm in the presence of the public (e.g. roadside, park etc).
- The Trauma Carer should be aware of their limitations and the advice or assistance of a more experienced licensed Trauma Carer sought if required.
- No Wildcare members should use a firearm if they are under the influence of alcohol, drugs or any medication that may affect their coordination and/or reflexes.

8.10 TRANSPORTING WILDLIFE

An essential component of undertaking wildlife rescues is to ensure the safe transport of wildlife to an appropriate location (e.g. your home, a wildlife facility/hospital, local vet). An essential aspect of transporting is to ensure that the transportation of the animal does not pose a safety risk to the volunteer, any other passenger in the vehicle or other motorists.

The risks associated with transporting wildlife include:

- Accidental escape of the animal from the transport carrier/cage;
- Gaining consciousness of large sedated animals (e.g. macropods).

Steps that may be taken to ensure the safety of those in a vehicle whilst transporting wildlife include:

- Ensure that the transport carrier/cage is appropriate to the species being contained. It should not be too small and all latches should be well secured. If in doubt, use additional precautions such as strong zip ties to secure all openings.
- When transporting a high-risk species (such as bat or snake), a sign should be affixed to the opening of the carrier identifying the species contained. For example: LIVE BAT – DO NOT TOUCH or VENOMOUS SNAKE – DO NOT TOUCH. The sign should also include details of the species contained and an alternative contact number in the event the driver has an accident.
- Place the transport carrier on the floor of the car behind the passenger or driver's side if possible. Alternatively, place it in such a way that the container is secure and unlikely to move around the vehicle which may cause the carrier to open.
- Do not open the carrier during transport as this may result in the animal escaping and causing the driver to have an accident.

- An unconscious (but un-sedated) animal should never be placed unsecured in a vehicle. It must be sedated or secured in a suitable transport carrier before transporting. This is to ensure the safety of the vehicle's occupants in the event that the animal gains consciousness.
- If you are unsure whether the animal is deceased or unconscious, treat as if it were unconscious and secure accordingly until such time that you can accurately determine whether it is deceased.
- When transporting small, quick species (such as feathertail gliders, microbats, small reptiles) they should be contained in a pillowslip or pouch, secured with a tie and then placed into a suitable transport carrier.

When transporting sedated macropods, the following additional steps should be utilised:

- When transporting smaller species such as pademelons, wallabies or small kangaroos, they should be placed in a large cotton macropod bag, which should be secured with a zip tie or similar.
- If not placed in a bag (medium to large kangaroos), their head should be covered to reduce stimulation and the risk of them gaining consciousness.
- Avoid transporting macropods for prolonged period of time.
- Wherever possible, a second person should be in the vehicle to monitor the animal's level of consciousness so that the driver can maintain a high level of concentration and not be concerned with the condition of the animal.
- An unconscious (but un-sedated) animal should never be placed unsecured in a vehicle. It must be sedated or secured in a macropod bag before transporting. This is to ensure the safety of the vehicle's occupants in the event that the animal gains consciousness.

8.11 ATTENDING RESCUES AT NIGHT

As many of our wildlife are nocturnal, it is not uncommon for wildlife rescues to occur at night.

Undertaking rescues at night leaves volunteers open to additional risks including:

- The likelihood of encountering members of the public that are under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs;
- The likelihood of becoming stranded alone due to vehicle breakdown; and
- The likelihood of prank calls;

In addition to the precautions outlined in the section on Lone Workers, additional steps should be taken to ensure your safety including:

- Ensure that you always have a good quality, charged torch in your vehicle. A good quality metal torch can double as a self-defence weapon and can be carried with you when entering someone's house.
- If you anticipate requiring light for more than 10 minutes, it is recommended that you carry a backup torch (or replacement batteries) sufficient to enable you to return to a safe, well-lit area. A good quality, long-lasting torch or headlamp should be considered a necessary piece of equipment for a rescue kit.
- Always take your mobile phone with you when entering someone's house.
- It is preferable to take another person with you when attending a rescue at night.
- Do not attend a rescue if the person you are meeting sounds intoxicated, aggressive or vague. Trust your gut instinct.
- Ask the resident to bring the animal to you at the front door or driveway (where practical) to reduce the need to enter a person's house at night.
- Ask the caller to meet you with the animal at a well-lit public place (such as a service centre, McDonald's restaurant etc).
- Be extra vigilant when attending a rescue at night in a non-suburban area (e.g. semi-rural or rural area).

8.12 WORKING ON OR NEAR ROADS

Wildlife are often struck by vehicles and wildlife volunteers are often called upon to rescue wildlife that is on or near roads.

Working on or near roads exposes wildlife rescuers to potentially fatal injuries. Rescues on major roads (such as motorways or highways) pose a much higher risk than lower-speed suburban streets however most of the same precautions should be adopted when working on any road. Never assume that other motorists will display safe driving practices as many have little regard to reducing their speed when they identify a potential hazard (e.g. vehicles with hazard lights on, people wearing high-visibility safety clothing, police presence).

When working on or near roads, the following safety precautions must be undertaken:

- No rescue should be undertaken on a major road (e.g. motorway or highway) that is the responsibility of the Queensland Transport and Main Roads Department (TMR) without first notifying TMR that you are attending.
- The instructions of TMR personnel must be adhered to at all times. If you are instructed not to stop on a major road, exit a vehicle or desist from an activity, you must adhere to those instructions.
- Where TMR sends a Traffic Response Unit to the rescue location, you must remain in a safe location until their arrival. You will then need to discuss the strategy to rescue the animal with the TMR personnel and they will provide you with authorisation and instruction to enable you to attend to the animal. If the TMR personnel instruct you that it is unsafe to rescue the animal, then you must not attempt the rescue under any circumstances. It may be necessary for additional emergency personnel (e.g. Qld Police) to be called to the rescue site to provide assistance.
- High visibility safety clothing must be worn at all times by all rescuers on site. The only exception to this is in the case of a licenced Trauma Carer who may need to use a firearm or where a macropod is likely to be spooked by the presence of high visibility colours.
- You must always stand well off the shoulder of the road to prevent being struck by passing vehicles.
- When parking on the side of a road, ensure that there is sufficient room to enable your open car door to remain behind the white line.
- Never stand or treat an animal directly in front of a parked vehicle on the side of the road, in case the vehicle is struck from behind. Always park a safe distance from the animal, either in front, or behind the animal.
- When walking along a roadway, walk behind a traffic barrier wherever one exists.
- You must always be aware that inattention by drivers looking at emergency vehicles to assess the situation is often the cause of accidents. Never assume that motorists are paying attention to your safety.
- The safety of all volunteers, emergency personnel and motorists is of the utmost importance. The safety of the animal should be the least concern in high-risk rescue scenarios.
- The aim of a wildlife rescue on or near a road is to rescue animal safely and in a timely manner. As soon as the animal is secured, it should be removed from the area and the rescue site vacated. Do not spend time assessing or stabilising the animal; this should be undertaken in a safe location nearby.
- Working near traffic for extended periods can cause you to become complacent to the danger around you from moving traffic. Continually remind yourself and your fellow volunteers of the dangers to which they are exposed.
- When walking near traffic always have the oncoming traffic facing you, do not walk with your back to the traffic.
- Do not attempt to talk on the phone when you are working near or around traffic, remove yourself to a safe place away from all traffic if you need to talk on the phone (if possible).
- Do not stand on a roadway to complete a task if you do not require to do so. Complete as many tasks as possible in a safe area and only enter a roadway to move an animal promptly to a safe location.

8.13 WORKING IN CONFINED SPACES

Wildlife volunteers may be called upon to rescue wildlife that has become trapped in a confined space. The most common confined spaces that wildlife rescuers may be faced with include excavations or trenches on construction sites, drainage or sewerage pipes and crawl spaces in roofs.

A confined space includes any enclosed or partially enclosed space that:

- Is not designed or intended primarily to be occupied by a person;
- Is, or is designed or intended to be, at normal atmospheric pressure while a person is in the space;
- Is or is likely to be a risk because of the atmosphere, contaminants or engulfment.

When working in or around confined spaces, the following precautions and/or actions should be undertaken:

- All reasonable attempts should be made to eliminate the need for a volunteer to enter a confined space. This may include the use of equipment such as telescopic nets to retrieve the animal without the need to enter the space.
- Power should be turned off before entry into a roof cavity.
- No one should enter a confined space that is not easily entered and exited. For example, there should be an appropriate and secure ladder to enable safe entry and exit.
- Volunteers entering a confined space should ideally hold a confined space entry permit/ticket.
- No volunteer should enter a confined space without another competent volunteer being present to monitor the risks and call for help if needed.
- All appropriate PPE should be worn if the confined space includes contaminants (such as a drainage or sewerage pipes).
- A confined space should not be entered under any circumstances if ventilation is not sufficient or if any toxic substances are or may be present.

8.14 WORKING IN WATER BODIES

Wildlife rescuers may have cause to enter water bodies to retrieve sick or injured wildlife. Water bodies could include a dam, pond, lake, canal or beach.

The following safety precautions should be taken when entering water:

- A personal floating device (PFD) should be worn if entering water more than hip height regardless of whether the volunteer is a competent swimmer or not.
- Do not enter a water body without a second person being in attendance on land.

For rescues involving 'swift water' refer to **3.10.2 Flooding**.

8.15 WORKING WITH SNAKES

Snakes are a common species of wildlife requiring rescue and one that poses a potentially fatal risk (in the case of venomous snakes).

The highest risk associated with rescuing snakes is the risk of being bitten by a venomous species, many of which have the capacity to be fatal.

When rescuing snakes, the following steps must be undertaken by all volunteers:

- Only those members who have been endorsed by the WILDCARE President and/or Vice-President are to be placed on the Rescue List for python rescues. This endorsement may be made in conjunction with a WILDCARE Reptile Coordinator and is subject to the member satisfying the following criteria:
 - The member must have completed a WILDCARE snake training workshop;

- The member must be able to display competency at identifying the most common non-venomous and venomous snake species (e.g. pythons, common tree snake, yellow-faced whip snake, eastern brown snake);
- They must hold appropriate snake handling equipment (e.g. snake hook, hoop and bag, gloves, snake bite first aid kit, gaiters and snake identification guide) and preferably humane snake tongs.
- A wildlife volunteer should never attempt a snake rescue unless they are 100% confident of the identification of the species and are endorsed to rescue that particular species. If unsure, the rescuer should not attempt the rescue and call a venomous snake rescuer.
- The rescue of large pythons (over 1.5m length) should only be undertaken by an experienced snake rescuer and in the presence of a second rescuer. This is to ensure that the risk of accidental strangulation is mitigated.
- Wildlife volunteers should always wear appropriate PPE when handling snakes. The PPE utilised will be dependent upon the species, its condition/injuries and level of experience of the rescuer.
- Volunteers should not undertake snake rescues if they are under the influence of alcohol, drugs or any medication that may affect their judgement, coordination and/or reflexes.

The rescue of venomous snakes poses a significantly high risk to wildlife rescuers.

When rescuing/handling venomous snakes the steps listed above must be taken into account as well as the following:

- The wildlife volunteer must be approved by the Wildcare President and Wildcare Venomous Snake Coordinator to rescue venomous snakes.
- In some instances, wildlife volunteers may be approved to rescue mildly venomous snakes only. A list of mildly venomous snakes can be found in the WILDCARE Venomous Snake Policy.
- The wildlife volunteer must use additional PPE including ankle high boots, long pants or gaiters and equipment such as humane snake tongs and secure (lockable) transport carriers, displaying an approved warning sign reading "DANGER – VENOMOUS SNAKE".
- The warning sign must have the species written on it. When not in use, 'EMPTY' should be written on the sign, to avoid confusion in the event of an accident.
- A second rescuer (a 'spotter') must be present when rescuing venomous snakes. The spotter should have access to a snake bite first aid kit and a working, charged mobile phone. The spotter should also be familiar with modern first aid techniques for snake bites.

Rehabilitation permits for venomous snakes can be issued to reptile carers under limited circumstances. Endorsements must be approved by the WILDCARE President and Venomous Snake Coordinator, who will take into account the following:

- The WILDCARE President has endorsed the volunteer to rehabilitate venomous species. This endorsement will be subject to the volunteer providing sufficient evidence that they are confident in the handling of such species. The endorsement may be limited to venomous colubrids, all mildly venomous snakes, or all venomous snakes.
- The volunteer must have additional equipment including lockable, top-opening enclosures, humane snake tongs, humane snake pinners, and snake tubes. The volunteer must ensure all equipment is in good working order at all times.
- The volunteer must ensure that any enclosure housing a venomous snake must be clearly signed with an approved warning sign reading "DANGER – VENOMOUS SNAKE"
- The warning sign must have the species written on it. When not in use, 'EMPTY' should be written on the sign, to avoid confusion in the event of an emergency.
- A second person (a 'spotter') must be present when handling venomous snakes. The spotter should have access to a snake bite first aid kit and a working, charged mobile phone. The spotter should also be familiar with modern first aid techniques for snake bites. The spotter should preferably also be competent with the handling of venomous snakes.

- The volunteer should ensure enclosures are placed at ground level, to reduce the risk of an above-knee bite.
- Venomous snakes should be housed in a room with a secure door which prevents a loose snake escaping underneath. The room should also be lockable to prevent unlicensed persons from accessing the room. For carers who live alone, or with a trusted adult, this requirement is at the carer's discretion.
- The volunteer must transport rehabilitation venomous snakes in the same manner as a rescued venomous snake. This includes to and from the volunteer's residence, a veterinary surgery, and the rescue/release site.

Refer to the WILDCARE Venomous Snake Policy and Specialised Permits Policy for all other matters relating to the rescue and rehabilitation of venomous snakes.

9. Attachments

ANNEX 1: RISK ASSESSMENT MANAGEMENT PROCESS (RAMP)

FORMS:

- Form 01 – Project Management
- Form 02 - Project Risk Assessment
- Form 03 – Injury Register and Incident Report
- Form 04 – Work Site Safety Audit
- Form 05 - Serious Incident Investigation Report

ANNEX 1 - Risk Assessment and Management Process (RAMP)

The following can be used for the purpose of WILDCARE Risk Assessments and Management:

- **Form 02 – Project Risk Assessment**

This includes a summary of the RAMP however the Risk Rating will be completed using the controls that are in place at the activity; or

- **Print out copy of WILDCARE Risk Register** for a particular project or activity

This will include all steps and will show the risk rating before and after controls are added. It is important to ensure the listed controls are actually in place at the project site and to review the RAMP.

As a Management Committee member or Team Leader of an activity, in which you encourage other people to participate, you owe a 'duty of care.' The expectation is that you will take **reasonably practicable** steps to protect them against **reasonably foreseeable** accident or injury. In simple terms, this means to look ahead, to foresee how people could be harmed, then put in place measures to prevent that from happening.

THE FOLLOWING SUMMARISES A SIMPLE RISK ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT PROCESS:

STEP 1: COMMUNICATE AND CONSULT

When conducting the RAMP, consider the views of new volunteers as well as those who may have more experience throughout the process. This will provide a range of the perceived hazards and risks.

STEP 2: HAZARD IDENTIFICATION

Hazard: *Hazard – an object, situation or activity that has the potential to cause harm. It is a situation or condition which, if unchecked, could lead to a negative outcome.*

Example: powerlines would be the Hazard; electrocution injury would be the negative outcome.

Some Considerations for Hazard Identification:

1) Consider the Site: Is it rough, steep, rocky, slippery, dusty, exposed to sun or wind? Is it thickly vegetated? Are there overhanging dead branches? Are there likely to be snakes, bees, wasps, bull ants or spiders? How far are you from emergency assistance if required? Will members of the public interfere?

2) Consider the Tasks: Do people have to carry heavy or awkward objects? Will they be swinging tools? Will they be handling chemicals? Will they be working near machinery or cliffs or roads or dangerous water?

3) Consider the People: Are they skilled and experienced in the work to be done? Are there children who require close supervision? Are there older people who are less agile? Do any of the people have pre-existing injuries or medical conditions that could be aggravated by doing the planned tasks?

4) How could a person be injured? Think about 'these people doing these jobs at this site'. Consider trips and falls, bites and stings, sunburn and dehydration, back or shoulder strains arising from heavy lifting or from overuse or misuse of tools, or eye injuries caused by twigs or spikes.

(The questions are examples and not an exhaustive list.)

STEP 3: ANALYSE & EVALUATE THE RISKS

Risk: *The possible harmful effects from interacting with the hazard.*

It is the assessed likelihood and severity (consequence) of the hazard resulting in adverse consequences/ harm e.g. injury, accident.

Example: The activity of climbing up a heavily vegetated slope to rescue an animal and the risk to the member. The risk associated with the activity are falling and slipping, tripping over hidden unseen fallen

branches and holes, insect and snake bites and an understanding of the types of injuries that may take place with these risks may allow us to formulate specific controls to manage these risk pathways.

You need to determine if the risks are acceptable and if the activity can proceed. The assessment of level of risk can also be used to prioritise those risks that require closer management than others. This is done using a standard risk matrix to provide a 'Risk Rating'.

The risk matrix uses two measures to determine the level of risk:

Consequence – If an injury occurs what would the likely consequences be?

Likelihood – how likely is it that a person will be injured, i.e. how likely is the consequence?

CONSEQUENCE

| | Worst probable (realistic) injury/illness |
|------------------------|---|
| I Insignificant | No injuries |
| II Minor | On-site First aid needed |
| III Moderate | Medical treatment needed & loss of time |
| IV Major | Serious injury, hospitalisation |
| V Catastrophic | Death or permanent disability |

LIKELIHOOD

| | How likely could the consequence happen? |
|-----------------------|--|
| Rare | Remote (less than once every 5+ yrs) |
| Unlikely | Not expected to occur (1-5 yrs) |
| Possible | Occurs occasionally (monthly-yearly) |
| Likely | Occurs regularly (weekly –monthly) |
| Almost Certain | Expected to occur (daily – weekly) |

The level of risk is then obtained by using the following table.

Cross reference the likelihood and consequence that has been determined for each risk.

Example: A hazard with a Moderate Consequence and Rare Likelihood = L (Low Risk)

RISK MATRIX

| Likelihood | | Consequence | | | | |
|------------|----------------|---------------|-------|----------|-------|--------------|
| | | Insignificant | Minor | Moderate | Major | Catastrophic |
| | Rare | L | L | L | M | M |
| | Unlikely | L | L | M | M | H |
| | Possible | L | M | M | H | H |
| | Likely | M | M | H | H | E |
| | Almost Certain | M | H | H | E | E |

From the matrix work out the level of risk to determine the level of response as shown below.

| ASSESSED RISK | | LEVEL OF RESPONSE |
|---------------|----------------|---|
| E | Extreme | Do not proceed – further controls required to reduce risk |
| H | High | Requires consultation with the Safety Officer, or if unavailable, a member of the Executive |
| M | Medium | Team leaders/activity co-ordinator to brief all new volunteers involved in activity about the hazard and safe procedures/risk controls used |
| L | Low | Standard onsite risk management |

STEP 4: TREAT / MITIGATE RISKS

Identify risk control strategies: What will people do, or not do, in order to minimise the chance of harm? Involve everyone in the process; utilise all the eyes and experience the group can offer. Record the agreed strategies on the Risk Assessment Form. Make sure everyone understands what is expected of them.

WILDCARE recognises the “as low as reasonably practicable” (ALARP) principal of risk management (i.e. that risk must be balanced against the time, cost and difficulty of taking measures to reduce or eliminate the risk). It is important to ensure that for each risk control, the residual or substitute risk needs to be analysed before implementation (e.g. adding a larger mirror to improve vehicle reversing visibility, but may have the residual risk of reduced forward visibility).

In general the level of risk can be lowered by:

1. Reducing the severity of the potential consequences;
2. Reducing the likelihood of occurrence; or
3. Reducing exposure to that risk.

Control Measures to lower risk (in order of more effective to less effective)

1. **Eliminate** - the hazard altogether. E.g. get rid of the dangerous machine.
2. **Substitute** - the hazard with a safer alternative. E.g. replace the machine with a safer one.
3. **Isolate** the hazard - from anyone who could be harmed. E.g. keep machine in a closed room and operate it remotely.
4. Use **engineering** - controls to reduce the risk. E.g. attach guards to the machine to protect users.
5. Use **administrative** - controls to reduce the risk. E.g. train workers how to use the machine safely.
6. Use **personal protective equipment** - (PPE) E.g. wear gloves and goggles.

STEP 5: MONITOR & REVIEW

Supervise and monitor to make sure everyone is sticking to the ‘rules’: Some tasks or people might require closer supervision than others. Be prepared to change any strategies that don’t seem to be working.