



FAWNA INC. NEWS

February 2011

Volume 28

No 1

FAWNA 2011 - and you.

Wildlife care is our focus and making the FAWNA group as proactive and responsive as possible, our goal

As we move into the New Year it is timely to look forward to see where FAWNA will go - and where you can help. The first thing for members to do is to re-new subscriptions for 2011. A renewal form accompanies this newsletter and your early action will ensure that FAWNA continues to thrive financially.

If you are currently a non-member then consider joining us by completing a membership form and paying the \$10 annual subscription. Every dollar will be used in our ongoing efforts with the 'three Rs' - Rescue, Rehabilitation and Release of wildlife needing aid.

Members of FAWNA can participate in a number of activities that will assist in carrying out the 'three Rs'.

The AGM is scheduled for Saturday 19th March at 2 pm.

This is an opportunity for every member to step up and offer to assist with one of the jobs.

Why not look at the things that you could do to help?

Why not offer to do one of the jobs?

Why not ask how you can help?

Call **Jeff** on 9754 8256
or **Beverley** on 9754 1906

Dates for your Diary

Date	Time	Venue	Event & Contact
Sat 19 Mar	2 pm start	BDEC	FAWNA Annual General Meeting
Sun 27 Mar	All day	Capel	Capelfest Environment Tent
Sat & Sun 18/19 June	All day - two days	To be advised	DEC 'Basic Wildlife Carers Course' - details at http://www.dec.wa.gov.au/content/view/285/1559

President's Message

What a busy year. So much has happened. Wildlife needs have risen as the urban sprawl continues to take its inevitable toll, but also there is much action to improve things across the board as well as within our organisation.

As your President I have worked as hard as I can directly on FAWNA matters, but I also became more widely involved in many areas outside of FAWNA (that can help our organisation). This includes my membership of the Geocatch committee and under that banner have already been involved in the New Hospital site discussions with their relevance to Possum habitats, and am going to shire meetings with Gene Hardy from GEOCATCH regarding the ongoing 'Peppies for Possums' push. I have most recently been involved with WAWRC (Dianne Hunter who is a tireless crusader and Nancy Tang likewise) to try to get a better deal for members in the basic training area with D.E.C. Peter and Ian also have been equally busy in this area and we hope that some improvement in costs for attendance at the DEC workshops will come from this.

FAWNA Membership has grown and Carol and Peter continue to do a great job. The training sub committee (with Peter at its head) is powering on to provide a basic introduction to FAWNA "induction course" and fleshing out the follow-up carer program. Hopefully the D.E.C. 'Basic Wildlife Carers Course' scheduled for June 2011 in the south west will be well patronised by our members. I encourage everyone to register. This course uses very experienced and qualified presenters, who provide both the background skills and knowledge needed for wildlife rehabilitation. It will also lead

to your certification when the DEC accreditation process is fully operational. The course also is useful in refreshing and updating skills of our experienced carers.

Fundraising has been fantastic this year both through grant applications (thanks to Jodie) and through other means such as the Animal Nursery at the Busselton Show (this year led by the ever creative Beverly) and sponsorship (Bunnings, TinderBox, Rotary)

The collection tin idea that Ian has put firmly on the map for FAWNA not only gives our message and contact details, but has been invaluable in raising funds both in Kirup through Peter's efforts and in Stratham through Ian. Anyone who has a contact in a retail area can talk to Ian and get a tin and poster to locate there.

Currently we are designing promotional display material that will be financed by a recently approved LotteryWest Grant; banners, posters and mobile screens. These will add new colour and dimension to our promotion and information processes.

Our assets have grown considerably and our finances are strong. Donna has worked hard on this over the years but due to her expanded carer and work commitments has now passed it on to Bev (Finance) and Linda (Assets). Many new cages have been obtained as well as heat pads, hotboxes and an inflatable rubber ducky for swan/seabird rescues (see over).

Work with vets across the district has reinforced our ongoing and very positive relationships there.



This coming year, thanks to Bev, we have a great opportunity with the Ironman event (in December) as FAWNA will be the sole local community charity. This should really take us into the new age. Not only will our work be noticed in very positive terms but also there is the opportunity for considerable donations flowing in.

We will need to forge a very accessible and encouraging information platform to do this; just one of our challenges this year.

We have had a very positive proactive and cohesive team this year on your management committee and this augers well for the future. Our newsletter editor and secretary Ian has been fantastic and we could not have made the progress we have without him. He is the very necessary backbone for the organisation and the open days (Wonnerup House and Metricup Park) were driven largely by him and have been most valuable. Our end of year Christmas function was also wonderful and we look forward to some social as well as Informative/Network functions in the coming year.

I trust all the committee members who have given so much will re-nominate, as so much is still to be done and their experience and knowledge and skills will ensure the organisation continues to grow. Our carers' existence and work is what FAWNA is all about. We hope all carers can give us more feedback so that we can assist them even better in the future.

Thank you for the honour you have given me in being President this year, I hope I have met the challenge and your expectations.

I would like to thank all our carers and especially the hardworking depots for their very tireless work. It is appreciated far more than anyone knows not only by me and the committee, but also by the wider public. A case in point is the support we have gained from the wider community for the swan rescue work done. Bev now has a number of donations that have made her work far less of a struggle. The articles in the local paper have had very positive feedback and so Helen and her team are going to spearhead some regular snippets to keep all aspects of our work in the forefront of people's minds. I also thank all those people who may not be as active as they have been in the past, but who have given to wildlife and / or the organisation so much over time.

I hope 2011 is an even better year and I hope as many members as possible will attend our AGM and support the people who can do the best for FAWNA in our role of caring for orphaned or injured wildlife.

Jeff

Gunn St Depot -The Year That Was

Phew! Where did the year go? 2010 has been the busiest year that I can recall, with 213 animals through my doors and countless phone calls. I can only hope this is because we are educating the public so well that they are more aware of wildlife needing help and who to contact. I hope it is not because habitat is declining and weather patterns are all over the place.

I have had some 'lows' like the animals that I have lost, the angry members of public who still prefer their roses to our Ringies and the lady who asked if I would trap the beautiful red cap parrots that eat her sunflowers.



When will they realise our planet needs the wildlife, especially the birds

I have had some "did that really just happen rescues".

When a lady rung to say she had a kangaroo in her lounge room. How did that happen I ask, wondering if it was a friend having a joke? "I opened the side door that leads into my double carport to take my dog for a walk and this roo hopped straight past me and my dog into the house, please come get it out".

Still not convinced but thinking I may need help and Pete being out of town, I pick up Paul a friend on the way over.

"So," says Paul, "How do we do this?"

"I don't know," I say, "This is the first roo in a house for me," still hoping it was a friend having a joke. I arrive to a lady on her front lawn with her 45kg Rottweiler 'Hamish' tied to the letterbox and a much stressed but uninjured roo in the corner of her lounge next to a rather large flat screen TV.

Right! Make a plan, move furniture, open doors and position people. We make a move to shepherd it back through the door, but once the roo starts to move big blokes are jumping out the way instead of guiding it and one is flapping a picture canvas at the roo while jumping over the kitchen island. Then the roo bangs into the only door that wasn't open that leads straight past Hamish the Rottweiler, and slips on the tiles. Seeing the roo is getting too stressed, I open the door, grab him by the tail and gently pull him backwards out the door where he takes off down the street. The lady is yelling her thanks as Paul and I take off in the car after the roo to make sure he gets back to bush and not into more trouble.

Then I had some "wish I was more fit rescues"

Once again it begins with a phone call at 3pm on a 35 degree day and a lady saying she has rung 5 other people and can't get any one to help and this poor wedge tail eagle has been in her side paddock for 3 hours being swooped by magpies and unable to fly.

Head out of town with my probably too small but largest carry cage, net and towel and arrive to the news that he has walked out of her paddock into her neighbour's. Then she says that she doesn't really get along the neighbour and he isn't home from work yet, but she thinks it will be OK to go over and get the eagle. I've just got to the back of the neighbour's house when he comes home and asks me what I'm doing on his property, and thankfully the eagle walks into his eye sight as I'm saying looking for a wedge tail eagle.

So off I run for the next two and half hours after an eagle that can't fly but can run fast, very fast. About to give up and not able to reach any local raptor carers for advice I ring one in Perth who says I have to catch it or it is fox bait after dark. So I run some more then Pete comes to help me and catches it in 10 minutes. Not happy but glad the eagle was finally caught. The eagle which was a starving juvenile that didn't have the muscle tone or strength to fly, is now at Eagle's Heritage Raptor Park being well looked after.



I would like to thank everyone who puts their time and effort into helping our wildlife in whatever role you play not just the hands on side of it and a big thank you to the people who helped me last year weather it was taking an animal, giving advice or just being there for me and a massive thanks to Vicki and Nancy for your help with all the baby birds.

Donna

Swan Lake Report January 2011

The number of cygnet guests at Swan Lake has been steadily rising since we started taking in these wonderful creatures. In 2008 we took a total of 21 into our care in a make shift enclosure down at the river. It was this experience that introduced us to the delights of cygnets. Their little calls, their different personalities and their vulnerabilities.

We are now working out of a purpose built enclosure that allows for the cygnets to

move down onto our small dam during the day and play like big swans. Our numbers are rapidly growing, however, and already construction is underway for two more enclosures, two more pools and a larger grazing area.

In past years the first three months of the year have been our most popular months with guests arriving in dribs and drabs. Well this year has been entirely different!

A combination of wonderful coverage by the Mail newspaper courtesy of Rob Bennett and a growing awareness in our community had led to 95 cygnets coming into care at the time of writing this report. At one point during the month we had over 50 squeaking mouths to feed. A huge drain on the feed bill and a lot of pressure on the living space - with that much feed going in - it all has to come out!

We have had a number of very successful roundups with FAWNA members, neighbours and family all pitching in. We have also had some singlehanded rescues made by non FAWNA members who have been taken by the plight of these orphaned babies.

Looking after the cygnets is a delight! Very little bossing or scrapping goes on and in no time at all they settle into their new environment and greet us when feeding time comes around.

But it is the release that gladdens the heart! It is hard to believe we have undertaken 64 releases in four different locations and each one is a thrill. This year's babies are now located in Nannup, Bunker Bay, Jindong and Peppy Beach wetlands. People have been very generous in encouraging us to release on their private property into fresh water dams, continuing to feed and oversee their wellbeing. As for the ones at Peppy Beach - they are surrounded by adult swans who we hope will show them the ropes.

As you can imagine the feed bill for these cuties is high. So how do we pay for all this? We have been receiving donations of cash, pellets and greens from a range of community members seeking to assist us with our program. In past years FAWNA has covered the bill for pellets and this is made possible through the fundraising efforts of our organisation. We are currently exploring opportunities for the program to become self funded through ongoing sponsorship - so wish us luck with that one!

One of our wishes has already come true! We received a phone call from Brad of Archipelago Concrete responding to our newspaper article and he and his partner have generously donated a small inflatable dingy to assist us with water rescues. All we need now is an electric motor to complete the picture. Soon you will see our little craft, 'Archipelago', skimming across the water in hot pursuit of orphaned cygnets destined for long and happy lives.

(See a picture of the new craft on page 3)

I could write pages of the generosity of heart, time and energy that I am encountering each day. Our community consistently demonstrates their affection for our Black Swans by supporting this valuable FAWNA program. Just the smallest amount of time given for a phone call can mean a continued life for a single cygnet - every effort is worthwhile.

Our warmest thanks to all who assist us

Beverley and Phillip

Wambengers or Brush-tailed Phascogales

This past year has seen a significant increase in the number of Wambengers or Brush-tailed Phascogale (*Phascogale tapoatafa tapoatafa*) sightings and an increase in the number of immatures coming into care. The Wambenger is, as an adult, a rat sized nocturnal and carnivorous marsupial that spends the majority of its life in trees. Wambengers are currently a threatened species classified as vulnerable to extinction.



Wambenger young are born around July/August, in a litter of up to eight. The male of the species lives a very short life, approximately 11 - 12 months, mates as many times as he can and dies. The female is reported to live for 2 - 3 years and may have one or two litters in her lifetime. Wambengers utilise nests in tree hollows to sleep by day and to have their young. Like many of our native animals Wambengers are suffering from the destruction of their habitat for housing and the reduction of the number of mature trees that provide hollows for them. They now appear to be adapting to this loss of habitat by occupying roof spaces in buildings, which may be part of the reason for the increase in sightings.

Young Wambengers are very active and inquisitive from an early age and often wander from their nest site, to the point that their mother is unable to locate them.

If left they will die from dehydration or be predated on by birds, foxes, or domestic dogs or cats. Of course the best measure is to try and locate their nest and put them back there, but if there is no sign of the mother or the position of the nest is unknown it is best to pass them as quickly as possible to a wildlife rehabilitator who has some experience in caring for Wambengers, as they have very specialised dietary requirements.

With such a high metabolic rate, with rapid growth and weight increases Wambengers require a diet high in protein and lipids and daily quantities that far exceed most other marsupials.



To identify these immature Wambengers there are some key physical features. When furless, baby Wambengers have a flat face which make them look like a baby rat, but they have a very flat posture (spreading themselves out on the surface) a large hind foot that is capable of being rotated by 180 degrees and the beginnings of the brushy tail - still looking like a five o'clock shadow - rather than a rat's scaly tail.

As they develop and start to become furred a black line appears in the fur on the forehead, the face becomes more pointed, the carnivorous teeth, particularly the canines, start appearing and the brushy tail starts to develop.



Uta Wicke received the first Wambenger into care, a tiny furless animal that was difficult to identify as a Wambenger - it really looked like a baby rat (see page 7).

Following this Peter and Carol Vickridge then started receiving a number of Wambenger babies, fortunately all furred, from both the Margaret River and Busselton areas. These varied in age and weight, from a 19gm furred female who had not yet opened her eyes, to some 25gm + more mature animals.

In the near future FAWNA intend conducting a training workshop in the care, husbandry, diet and rehabilitation of Wambengers, so if you are interested in rehabilitating speedy, bitey, escapologist marsupials and don't mind sleepless nights and very early mornings, cleaning up smelly carnivore faeces (think of a cat or dog!), and feeding live prey then watch this space for a date for the training!

Peter and Carol Vickridge

Yallingup Steiner School Spring Fair

FAWNA was at the Yallingup Steiner School in November 2010. Our display was appreciated by the many members of the public who visited us.



The kangaroos and joeys that Adele brought along (above) were very popular.



We were also able to display some very active kangaroos that John brought all



the way over from Ludlow. There were also ringtail possums thanks to Amanda and Linda. Peter and Jerre showed two juvenile roos that they had in care at the time and Beverley brought her cygnets.



Thanks to all the members who made this day a success for FAWNA.

Cygnets Rescue - Cloisters Cove

Yet another call from a community member who had noticed cygnets in trouble and now knows that there is a FAWNA number to call for assistance!

It would seem that a pair of swans nest around the Cloisters Cove area in Peppermint Park and take their babes onto the diversion drain every year.

Keith, who takes his dogs for a walk along the drain every morning, has noticed cygnets in trouble in past years and here is another group of orphaned juvenile cygnets huddled together for comfort.

When we arrive to check out the situation there are six babies wading through algae at least 200mm thick and covering 90% of the water area. It is enough to make you cry.

The banks are too steep for them to climb out and it would seem they were surviving on clumps of rushes and patches of couch along the edges of the drain.

We hatch our plan of attack!

Jeff and Beverley don long waders up to our armpits - very becoming - and Linda is to transport the cages along the edge ready for the captured cygnets.

We don't know who had the biggest work out - the cygnets attempting to swim through porridge - Jeff and Beverley trying to do the same thing in hot pursuit - or Linda climbing up and down the banks like a mountain goat.

Once again Cygnet Rescue strikes with a 100% recovery rate - we went for six and within half an hour sprinkled with lots of laughter and a spattering of swear words they were in the bag (well - the carry cages).

All six had well-developed flight feathers and surprisingly were carrying a reasonable amount of weight so it was decided to take them straight out to Peppermint Beach wetlands for release.



What a surprise it must have been when they were bundled out of the carry cages into fresh clean cool water surrounded by clumps of luscious green couch!

Just another day at the office.

Linda, Jeff and Beverley

Please take care with your plastic waste

Reproduced from 'Australian Wildlife' Spring Vol: 4 / 2010 - by kind permission

Australians consumes more than one and a half million tonnes of plastic each year. With around one third of this plastic being used for packaging, it is no surprise that the environmental consequences of plastic packaging waste are a major concern for industry and the community.



This turtle has been horribly deformed as it has grown after getting this ring caught around its middle.

It is a well known fact that plastic can be lethal to our native wildlife. There is one 'plastic' problem that seems to have a simple solution, yet it remains largely ignored - plastic rings on bottles.

Jars and bottles with plastic lids often now come with a plastic ring that snaps apart from the lid upon opening. If this ring is not cut open prior to disposal by a particularly environmentally aware person (of which there are very few that would even think of this), then it enters our waste system as a whole ring that has the potential to cause a slow and painful death to any one of a variety of our native fauna through strangulation, starvation, deformation, or infection.

The simple solution for responsible, environmentally aware manufacturers is to change the design of such rings that snap free from the lid upon opening, and to also snap open the ring left on the body of the bottle, so that they no longer form a complete ring. A similar design could also be implemented for the plastic rings that hold six-packs together, so that there is no way for any of these rings to stay intact when the bottles are removed. Such a slight modification would not be too much of a burden upon manufacturers for the sake of saving the agonising deaths of thousands of innocent native wildlife.



This platypus entangled in a plastic ring of unknown origin was carrying the item bandolier-fashion, from in front of the right shoulder to behind the left foreleg.

Some native wildlife species are more prone than others due to their particular habits. For example, the satin bower bird is particularly vulnerable to the blue plastic rings commonly from milk or juice bottles, as their habit of collecting blue items to attract females means that this rubbish is quite commonly seen as desirable decoration for their bowers.

If the ring happens to flip over its head when the bird is holding it in its beak, it can get stuck as shown in the pictures of the magpies below. This prevents the bird from eating or drinking until it either starves to death, or is lucky enough to be rescued by someone.



These magpies were lucky, rescued before starving to death.

The Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia Limited has been writing to drink and milk manufacturers for quite some years asking them to consider changing the lids of drink and water bottles to prevent this needless suffering of our precious native wildlife. A change-over to a clever design to enable the rings to snap open upon opening of plastic lids or removal of bottles from a six-pack would be ideal.

The Society is also lobbying state and federal environmental ministers to introduce legislation to ensure that products with plastic rings that remain intact after opening can no longer be sold in this country.

All packaging should not be made of closed, unbreakable loops of plastic. If we cannot persuade manufactures of the danger to wildlife of this particular type of packaging, perhaps we can educate people of the problem and urge them to cut the loops before disposing.



This quoll was found caught up in a plastic six-pack holder. The quoll weighed half the normal weight, so it had been suffering a long time with the plastic tightly wrapped around its body behind the front legs and another loop twisted around one of the front legs, making it impossible to free itself.

FAWNA and the WPSA ask members to write to drink manufacturers asking them to change the design of their packaging. We can send you a form letter with photographs - a picture tells of the danger a lot more graphically than words.

Christmas at Wonnerup

A relatively small group of FAWNA members enjoyed some Christmas festivities at Wonnerup House in mid December. We had an excellent talk from Pia Courtis, Regional Wildlife Officer, DEC. It was reassuring that we should be able to work cooperatively with our own local officer on matters that are of concern to us all.



Vicki and Pia

Mabel and Peter were our special guests - and Mabel brought her 'young friend' along



Mabel's young friend

It was a festive occasion and we all enjoyed a delicious afternoon tea with Christmas Cake.



Helen and Carol

Jeff could not resist the opportunity to wear his Christmas hat, which had Nancy smiling.



We were also delighted to have Dianne Hunter (WAWRC) and Marg Larner (Mandurah Seabird Rescue) join our celebrations.

FAWNA's 2010 Audit Completed

Thank you to Mark and his staff at STA Accountants for their generous effort in conducting our financial audit for the 2010 year. You will be pleased to hear all is in order!

A detailed report on the financial year's activities will be presented at our AGM on Saturday 19th March.

Annual General Meeting 2011

The Annual General Meeting of FAWNA Inc will be held on Saturday 19th March 2011 at Busselton Dunsborough Environment Centre in Mitchell Park, Prince Street, Busselton.

At the AGM all positions will be open for nominations. Our Constitution calls for the positions of President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and not less than 2 other persons.

To spread the workload and to encourage members to be involved we have added a number of smaller jobs under the titles of Membership Secretary, Newsletter Editor, Webmaster, Grants Officer, Community Group Liaison Officer and Training Coordinator.

Role outlines are given below.

Please note that all nominees, nominators and seconders must be current financial members of FAWNA (2011).

This is a good time to complete your membership renewal form and send in your membership fees

(See Membership Renewal form for full details.)

Office Bearers

President - the formal 'voice' of the association.

Treasurer - manages the finances and banking of the association.

Secretary - carries out day-to-day administrative tasks.

Membership Secretary - receives applications, and maintains the register of members.

Webmaster - develops, updates and maintains the web presence.

Grants officer - writes applications and acquits grants.

There are several other tasks that need action at various times during the year and you may wish to consider being on the committee if you feel able to assist in any way.

Nominations for Positions

To speed up the process of nominations at the AGM we are asking members to nominate in advance. This will give us some indications of who is available to do what job. Please make sure your nominations are returned on time and seconded by a financial member. You do not need to be at the meeting to nominate for a position; you will be notified of the outcome after the meeting if you can't attend.

Nomination Form – AGM 2011

Please complete the form and return to

The Secretary, FAWNA Inc, PO Box 551,
Busselton WA 6280

Nominations must be received by
Wednesday 16th March 2011.

The AGM is scheduled for Saturday 19th
March 2011 @ 2 pm.

Nomination - FAWNA Office Bearer - AGM Saturday 19th March 2011 @ 2 pm

I (name in full)

Signature of Nominee..... date...../...../2011

wish to nominate for the positions of 1.

2.

3.

Please put your nominations in order of preference. If not elected to your first preference then you are automatically nominated for your second preference & so on.

Select from the following list:

President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Secretary,
Newsletter Editor, Web Master, Grants Officer, Training Coordinator, Community
Group Liaison Officer, Rehabilitators Reference Group rep, Committee Member

Nominated by * (name in full)

Signature of Nominator * date...../...../2011

Seconded by ♠..... (name in full)

Signature of Seconder date...../...../2011

Nominations must be received by Wednesday 16th March 2011

* Self nomination for positions is allowed in the FAWNA constitution. In the event of self nomination there is no need to repeat your name and signature here.

♠A seconder is required for every nomination. If you are unable to find a seconder, please contact Jeff (9754 8256) or Ian (9752 1853) who will assist you.

Please note that all nominees, nominators and seconders must be current financial members of FAWNA (2011). This is a good time to complete your membership renewal form and send in your membership fees (see Membership Renewal form for full details.)

Meal Worms Available

I met a Busselton local the other day who breeds domestic birds. He was telling me how he also breeds meal worms for feed for them. We talked about how expensive they are to purchase from the pet shops and he has



kindly offered to supply them to FAWNA carers for FREE (subject to availability of course).

He is also very happy to show any of us how to establish a breeding colony - he tells me it is dead easy.

Well my little guests are not interested in meal worms but if you would like to take up this offer please give me a call and I will arrange an introduction.

Beverley

Phone: 9754 1906 Mob: 0458 541 906

FAWNA INC. NEWS

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Fostering and Assistance for Wildlife Needing Aid

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Mail address
FAWNA INC.
The Secretary
P.O Box 551
Busselton
WA 6280

ABN 99 857 239 632

Your contributions, comments and suggestions for articles in the newsletter are always welcome.

Email: dwatson@netserv.net.au

Or write to the address shown.

FAWNA is a public fund listed on the Register of Environmental Organisations under item 6.1.1 of subsection 30-55(1) of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997. Donations of \$2.00 or more are Tax Deductible.