

WILD TIMES



Journal of the
*Native Animal
Network Association*

By and for the members of NANA

APRIL 2010

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Spotlight on Potoroo Palace

NANA Volunteer's
Australia Day Award

Large Turtle "Rescue"

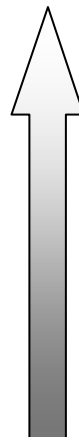
Albino Echidna
In the News



● Remember to renew your membership before June 30
(see back pages for renewal forms)

Welcome!

Welcome to the new-look newsletter for the Native Animal Network, designed to be shorter and easier to read. We hope you enjoy the new layout and take the time to read through the journal of your association. Please note that the contacts page is now at the rear of the newsletter



Main Photo: Black-Shouldered Kite
Elanus axillaris

This elegant raptor is found throughout Australia and related kites are found overseas. The adult birds are notoriously hard to care for in captivity. In the wild, these birds swoop with deadly precision on their prey including rodents, reptiles, amphibians and insects.

From the President

The end of summer and the beginning of cooler weather mark a slow-down in what has been a very busy season for NANA volunteers - although even that slowdown is late coming. This summer has seen frantic activity in a number of areas.



It has been a very long season of activity for Gerardine and bat carers with an unexpected return of vast numbers of flying foxes from their northerly migration after heavy rains appear to have washed away pollen and nectar in the trees.

They have not yet left the district and carers have been busy with massive numbers of rescues from barbed wire and netting

There have been record numbers of orphaned possums this year. Have the possums had an extra breeding season with uncharacteristic weather?

On a positive note, the summer has seen a gratifying number of new members come on board. Welcome to all of them. Each brings their own skills and prior experience, from administrative and coordinating skills to rescue and caring: all have their place.

The quieter season brings us the opportunity to catch up on the needs of members and we would encourage all members to attend meetings and express their views on what courses and guidance they need.

Speakers are often provided at the meetings. We try to keep the meetings fairly short and to the point so that the evening is an opportunity to network and share information.

Thank you to all NANA members for your effort through this long and hot summer.

Jo Evans - President.

Australia Day

This year, the Shoalhaven community recognised the work of volunteers on Australia Day at the recently opened Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre in Nowra. Our own Joy Weatherall (pictured here as she received her certificate from Mayor Paul Green) was nominated for her work with NANA and Rotary.



Early Membership Renewal

Last year we had many problems getting renewals in on time. This created a lot of extra work for the committee, and problems for people who forgot and had to re-apply for membership. Please remember to get your renewals in no later than June 15 – or earlier!

Cheap Deals!

From time to time, we need additional resources such as cages, heaters etc. Some members have recently found bargains via the internet on "Deals Direct" including good size cages for less than \$40 including postage.

Another worthwhile resource is the Herp shop online. They have sales and own-brand products at reasonable prices. These can be found at:

www.dealsdirect.com.au

www.herpsshop.com.au

If you know of any other places where members can get good deals, let us know so we can publish details in the next newsletter.

News from Potoroo Palace

In addition to her wildlife rehabilitation efforts, NANA member Alexandra Seddon owns and runs Potoroo Palace – A Native Animal Sanctuary just outside Merimbula. Alexandra is shown here with a Greater Glider she saved last year.

Who are the Wild visitors to Potoroo Palace? Brushtail Possums, Sugar Gliders and Powerful Owls are some of the night timed ones. Eastern Whipbirds, King Parrots, Red-browed Finches, Wood Duck's and Swallows are a few of the ones active by day.

On New Years Eve in extreme heat some staff members sitting having morning tea noticed adult Swallows hovering overhead. A fledgling had fallen on to the grass and seemed unable to fly. One of the Garden Skinks was trying to eat it.

Casey picked it up, She got a ladder and put it back in its nest. When she was half way down the ladder the baby flew out (once fledglings have left the nest they are usually very reluctant to return). He landed on the ground. He tried to fly but kept crashing and could only manage half a metre off the ground. Casey kept watch for half the day. The fledgling was friendly and hopped on to her hand, Casey fed it a mealworm with insectivore powder (a supplement).

Normally the parent birds would feed the nestlings and fledglings every fifteen minutes with flying insects. Casey fed the fledgling every fifteen to thirty minutes with mealworms. He just seemed to want to cling.

She kept him overnight.

In the morning Casey put his cage on the verandah. The parents came immediately. She opened the cage. The fledgling flew strongly up and up with the other Swallows and then over the old crocodile pens.

Casey found the fledgling beside the old crocodile pond. He jumped on to her hand, then flew straight up to the sky again.



Later she found him on the ground again, with a damaged foot and unable to fly properly.

At this point Karen took over feeding him. The fledgling ate well: in fact constantly. All staff passing his cage were instructed to respond to his begging.

At home Karen allowed him to fly around the house. His damaged foot got better. Sometimes he flew round Karen's head like a halo - He was very demanding.

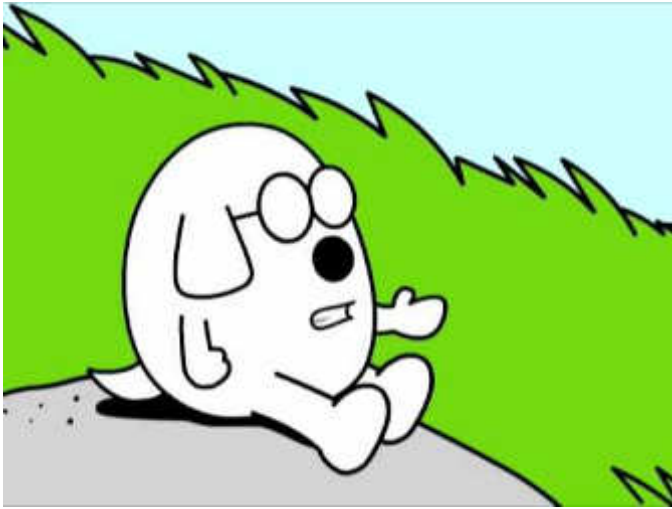
After a few days even feeding did not stop his tweeting. He seemed to be ready for release.

Karen brought him back to Potoroo and put his cage up on some crates with the door open. His family returned and encouraged him to join them.

He flew out and they formed a circle around him. They flew up and up. He was easily recognizable being smaller than the others. His wings seemed to flap twice as fast. Staff watched him for some time. He flew strongly and kept up with the others who surrounded him.

To nurse a wild animal is a privilege: To release a healthy animal is a joy

STATISTICS



As the great philosopher Dogbert* once said “63% of all statistics are made up... including this one”

That is certainly the case when the statistics are incomplete or inaccurate. But when used well, statistics can provide valuable information to support our case when requesting funding, highlighting black spots and providing quantitative data to verify trends. And of course, we can't forget the fact that we are obliged to keep these records under the terms of the licence issued by NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS) and this is reflected in the NANA Constitution as part of the responsibilities of members who do rescue (including shooters) or caring.

What can we learn from statistics? Here's a few questions - do you know:

1. What animal was top of the rescue list for 08/09
2. What was the suburb that topped the rescue list?
3. What was the quietest month?
4. Using the recorded information, how likely is it that an animal will end up being released?

NPWS requires that NANA's annual statistics be submitted by July 15. For us to comply, all statistics must be submitted well ahead of this deadline, so that the data entry and checking work can be done. Please send your records through to the relevant coordinator as quickly as possible, not forgetting the fate of animals that may have been in your care from previous months that have not yet been reported. Co-coordinators must also send through the statistics ASAP each month.



National Parks are insisting that all wildlife carers submit their statistics as per the regulations – and that means everyone! Please understand that this is now a mandatory requirement, so we will not be able to issue you a wildlife rescue authority renewal unless your statistics are up to date by mid-June.

Answers to the questions above

1. Although birds make up around 48% of all rescues, the Eastern Grey Kangaroo is the single most common species rescued - by a long way,
2. Sanctuary Point
3. No surprise that the winter months are the quietest especially June, with July a close second
4. Overall, roughly 40% of all animals are recorded as being successfully released.



Six Juvenile Sooty Terns came into care underweight after being blown off course. These juveniles were probably from Lord Howe Island. Adults stay out at sea and only come to land to breed. They eat and sleep on the wing and dive for food – They don't even land on the water. Two died but these four were released 21/2/10 at Culburra Beach.

- Judy Bailey

* Dogbert name and image copyright Scott Adams / Harper Collins

South Coast News

FAR SOUTH COAST FUNDRAISER

NANA's Far South Coast Pre-Christmas raffle was a great success. Many thanks to NANA members and supporters for their help in selling tickets at the Candelo markets and Bega shopping centre. Prize winners were:

- Food hamper – Judy Winter
- Decorated Christmas cake and wine – David Barrett
- Dubbo Zoo and Wellington package – Rick Cowan

Picture is of the appropriately decorated cake.



From the Treasurer's Desk

In the last newsletter I quoted the high number of phone calls coming in and predicted that this would indicate a busy time ahead for our volunteers and our organisation in general.

It has indeed been a busy time for many carers with many travelling great distances to rescue animals, and there is some interesting reading in the newsletter of some of the experiences.

Thankfully, from my perspective, this did not translate into higher vet expenses. We would particularly like to thank those vets who are so cooperative and who provide so many services for very low, or no, cost to us. It is very much appreciated. Members - Please pass on our gratitude when dealing with YOUR local vet.

Fund Raising:

We would like thank the following people for their very generous support and/or donations to NANA since the last news letter:

Mrs L Tully,
Mr J Clarke,
Ms B Ramon,
OO.com.au,
Sanctuary Point Garden Centre,
and other members of the public

NANA Fund:

Donations over \$2 to the NANA Fund are tax deductible (ie you can claim them as a deduction on your next tax return). Donations for this financial year are now up to \$740. We thank all those friends of our organisation who are so generous.

Don't forget to encourage your friends or colleagues to donate to the NANA Fund. You might even consider a 'gift' donation for that 'hard to buy for' friend's birthday etc.

Full Name:

Address:

Contact Phone Number:

Please make cheques payable to: Native Animal Network Association Fund
Forward all payments to: PO Box 666
Nowra 2541

All donations over \$2 are tax deductible. Receipts will be sent to the address quoted above.

New Members!

On behalf of NANA, we would like to welcome our newest members, who have joined us since our last newsletter. These are:

Jeanette Aston (Nowra),
Cathy Brotherton (Falls Creek),
Debbie Burt (Culburra Beach),
Margaret Lorang (Mosman),
Jane Mills (Bolong),
Helen Pirie (Bomadery),
Name Withheld by request (Nowra),
Pam Russell (Callala Bay),
Claire Synnott (Kalaru),
Sam Wallace (Wyndham), and
Dominique Kavanagh (Wyndham).

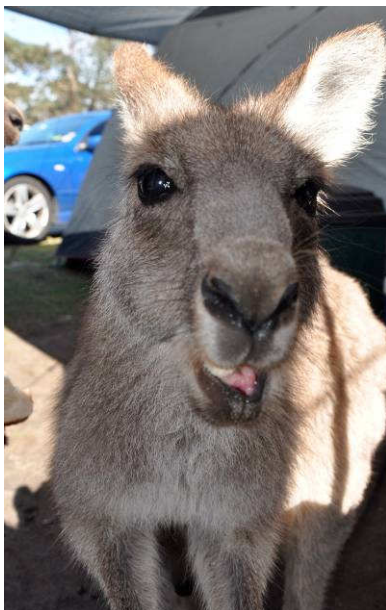
It is great to see a mixture of people from the northern area as well as the far south coast. It is also good to know that we have a variety of interests – some of our new volunteers have already signed up to help with the phone roster, and others with administration, lobbying and publicity. We have already seen a few at our meetings, and signing up for the training courses so that they can assist with wildlife rescue and rehabilitation.

If you live near these areas, please make contact with new members and make them feel welcome

Members Photo's



These wonderful pictures were sent in by Nick Gibson. Thanks Nick!



Flying fox / Microbat Report:

Gerardine Hawkins

The 2009/2010 season has almost come to a close and NANA's bat carers are all ready for a well earned rest. This has been one of our busiest seasons on record. All our local colonies were occupied throughout the whole season and consequently we have had many busy days with up to seven flying foxes coming into our care on one occasion.

The bat hospital was fully operational and a local vaccinated vet (Robyn) made several house calls during the peak of the season as there were too many flying foxes in need of veterinary care to take to the surgery.

Most bats requiring care came in from ill fitting nets over fruit trees - the last one a young juvenile male came in this week from an orchard in Berry. He was euthanized two days later as his injuries were too bad. The number of bats rescued from barbed wire this season has declined, this has improved our release stats as their injuries are usually more severe.

I would like to thank Jan Guscott for all her help this season. At the height of the season Jan was cutting up to 40 kilos of fruit a day, supplying both the release cage at Jamberoo and our local flight and hospital cages in Nowra. NANA members manned 5 shifts a week at the

Jamberoo release facility and successfully fed and soft released over 60 flying foxes, as well as carrying out rescues on the South Coast, Southern Highlands, Nowra and Berry areas.

A larger than usual number of juvenile bats have come in over the past several weeks with some as small as 350g. These will have to be held over till October while their injuries heal and they gain enough weight for release. Our flight cage and hospital aviaries in Nowra will continue to operate throughout the winter months.

If you are interested in becoming a bat team member or if you can spare an hour or two once a week to clean aviaries, work in the bat hospital or cut fruit contact me on 0414931452.

This year has been very quiet as far as Microbats is concerned with only a small number coming into care. During one month all but one was released with that one DOA (thanks to Steve Amesbury as he hit it in his car). I don't think we have ever had that sort of record.

I would like to thank all our dedicated Bat Carers for their work over the past several months you have done well.

Reptiles & Amphibians

This is NANA's first Reptile & Amphibian Coordinators report since the introduction of species coordinators. In December NANA held a Reptile & Amphibian basic training course with 18 members attending. Carla Jackett from the Wires Reptile Team presented the course with help from a team member from the Mid South Coast Wires Branch. Species Identification and husbandry played a large part of this training with a practical demonstration of giving an injection to a Blue Tongue.

NANA members gained a wealth of information from Carla and thoroughly enjoyed the training course. I have received very positive feedback and Carla has indicated that she is available to our members who have a problem with any reptile or amphibian.

Since the heavy rain at the end of January a number of Eastern Long-Necked Turtles have come into care, all have been hit by cars. I have several in dry dock, so any members interested in helping please contact me. We are interested in building several hot boxes for our members' use, if you are an electrician and you would be available to build a box or two, please contact me.

Please contact me 0414931452 or at batsgalore@shoalhaven.net.au if you get a reptile or frog into care so that a NANA number can be issued to that animal. It's starting to get cold now so please think carefully about releasing Reptiles and Amphibians.

Picture – (G.Hawkins) a threatened Green and Golden bell Frog which nearly got squashed, as it was hiding behind a cushion on this outside chair!



NANA Website

We constantly update our website, including information about meetings, training courses and changes to our rules. Recently we added a section on "What NANA Believes" with value statements about issues such as culling, hunting, keeping wildlife as pets etc.

We get over 60,000 "hits" per month. What that means is that the NANA website gets about 5,000 different people visiting our website each month. Most people seem to be looking for information feeding possums, building possum boxes and controlling cats!

Say goodbye to the old website (right) we have known for the past eight years. A new and improved version went live on April 19th. Go to www.nana.asn.au to see!



Guest Speaker February Meeting



Our guest speaker at the February general meeting was Tanya Fisher, the State emergency response coordinator from WIRES.

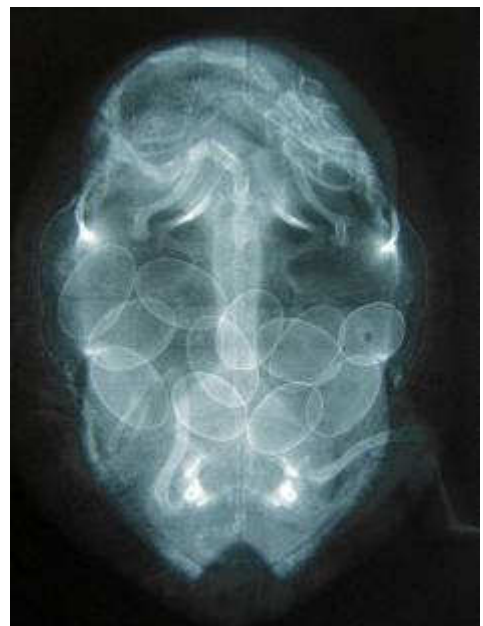
Tanya spoke to us about how their emergency response plans had evolved over time, and what they learned from their experiences during the "Black Saturday" fires in Victoria last year. Coincidentally at that exact time last year, Tanya was at the fire site in Victoria.

Tanya showed some fairly graphic pictures of the aftermath, including carers trudging through acres of still-warm ash, and animals that had been unable to escape the fires.

Not a light topic, Tanya's talk was a frightening insight into the wide ranging devastation caused by such a hot fire.

Mystery Picture

Any thoughts as to what this might be? Answer later in this issue.





Do You Ever Shop Online ?

You can grab a bargain online from OO.COM.AU – anything from Ipods to wine, stationery and pet supplies!

When you "check-out" at the end – make sure to enter "NANA" as your fundraising code. A percentage comes to NANA and you get a bargain –everyone wins!

Birthday presents, gifts or just a bit of retail therapy – give oo.com.au a try.

Education Report:

Gerry Hawkins

Over the last few months our members have been busy with many animals in care and school holidays, which is why we don't do much training in summer. In January we ran a Basic Reptile and Turtle with 16 members attending. This was held because of the large numbers of reptiles coming into care and our need for specialist carers. Several of the members attending this course have decided to specialize in lizards & turtles.

A Basic Rescue/Emergency Phone course is planned soon; dates will be decided after checking availability of new members. Contact me by phone on 0414931452 or at batsgalore@shoalhaven.net.au to reserve a seat.

A Basic Bird Course will be held on the 19th May at, Nowra Hill. Numbers will be limited, so get in quick. The time will be determined by the number of responses.

Members are reminded that Training courses are available from other groups from time to time, if you are interested in a certain topic contact me and I will try to source these training courses for you.

Sometimes training courses just aren't enough

Just imagine a quiet Sunday morning, reading the paper when the phone rings: It's the phone operator from Illawarra Wires with a request for help for a turtle rescue in our area. The information she has is second hand and vague, but you decide that you have carers in the area and you agree to take on the rescue.



I make a long call to the Duffy household in Shoalhaven Heads giving them instructions on transporting and handling sea turtles and passing on the location of the turtle, then I wait for their report on their first rescue.

An hour later the Duffy's call to say that they had walked 5 kilometers up and down the beach and could not find the turtle. I call the Wires operator who in turn phones the HQ operator to confirm the first sighting.

Another more reliable report has come in placing the turtle kilometers from where the search had been organised. The Duffy's enlist the help of the Shoalhaven Heads Surf Life Saving Club and their beach buggy. Together they head off in the opposite direction. Several kilometers down the beach they see the turtle. Instead of the 10Kg turtle they expect to find, they have one weighing over 80Kg on their hands. Unfortunately the turtle has died but they manage to place the turtle on the bonnet of the beach buggy and take it back to the club house.

Several phone calls later to Taronga Zoo (Vet section), Parks and Wildlife etc. It is decided to transport the Loggerhead Turtle to the West Nowra Depot of Parks, from there it will be transported to the pathologist at Taronga Park to establish its age, sex and reasons for its death.

Enter John Meany, who agrees to pick up the turtle at Shoalhaven Heads, he brings it in his trailer to my place (see picture above). We measure its carapace and take photo's then take it to West Nowra where it is transferred to a Parks trailer. This rescue started at approx. 9.30am and it was almost 4.00pm when we transferred it into Park ranger's hands.

Well done the Duffy Family a great first rescue

Mystery Picture Solution (Page 8)

The picture is an X-Ray of an Eastern Long-necked Turtle, with 12 eggs. (Courtesy Justin Clarke, Shoalhaven Veterinary Clinic)



Native animal carer Rhonda Parker reads a pair of kookaburras for release at the Culburra Sewage Treatment Plant.

Kookas in a muddle in a very pongy puddle

A kookaburra that mistook a sludge pond at Culburra Sewage Treatment Plant for a solid surface learned a smelly lesson.

As it struggled in the oily water its mate dived in to save it.

Soon both birds found themselves up the proverbial creek and there are no paddles for kookas.

A kindly worker waded in and fished out the pair of very pongy birds.

A call to NANA and the birds ended up at Currarong, where carer Rhonda Parker washed them repeatedly.

Three days later and they were busting to get out.

Rhonda took them back to their home territory at the treatment plant, opened the door of their cage and moments later, the kookas were back in the old gum tree with a great story to tell the grandkids.



Bill Parker is helping nurse Molly the albino echidna back to health.

She'll be white

By Frances Rand

Echidnas are lucky – they are one of a few animals in the world without a predator.

However life hasn't been so good for one little spiky creature who had the misfortune of being born white.

Molly the echidna came into the care of Bill and Rhonda Parker from Currarong after she was found by Sanctuary Point resident Brett Brunker.

He saw the poor critter by the side of the road being attacked by birds and contacted the Native Animal Network Association.

The Parkers are wildlife carers with NANA and said six-month-old Molly was in very poor shape when she came into their care.

"She is very underweight," said Mrs Parker who has been pumping fluids into her.

Vet Stephen Henry ran some blood tests on Molly which showed that she was suffering from acute malnutrition.

"Without camouflage she stands out, leaving her open to predators. She can't hide from anything," said Mrs Parker.

Which also means she can't easily forage for the ants and termites that make up the echidna diet.

This is the first albino echidna the Parkers have seen, although there is one in Nowra Wildlife Park and a few others in zoos around Australia where they can live safely.

Normally the Parkers would be releasing Molly into the wild once she had regained her health, however it's unlikely this will happen in her case.

"I wouldn't feel right letting her go in the wild – she would be predator bait.

"We'll find a good home for her in a zoo somewhere."

In the meantime, Molly has a bit of eating to do.

She looks a bit brighter since she first came to the Parkers and she's still alive.



NANA carer Rhonda Parker with the orphaned baby echidna, or puggle, she raised.

Animal attraction

Wind storms, bushfires and increased traffic all have a human toll, but they have a worse animal toll.

They have all meant an increased volume of calls to the Native Animal Network Association (NANA), while a drop in volunteer numbers has meant that a few carers must drive further, perform more rescues and raise more animals than before.

Added to this, NANA has to raise most of its own funds. It receives no government funding while a donation from Shoalhaven Council only covers two per cent of annual costs.

Many of the same volunteers who rescue wildlife are also involved in

fundraising and applying for special-purpose grants to allow NANA to meet its expenses.

Volunteers also undertake other work such as publicity, membership administration, managing accounts, transporting animals and constructing cages, aviaries and nest-boxes.

NANA needs more volunteers.

Volunteers must be 18 or older and undertake training before they can be authorised to rescue and rehabilitate wildlife.

For more information call Gerry on 4423 1635, Jenny 44418192 or 0418 497345, information email nana@nana.asn.au or visit www.nana.asn.au.

Street stall to help critters

Animal carer Rhonda Parker has raised an assortment of native critters for NANA as well as a fair amount of money.

She is the organiser of the NANA Monster Street Stalls held at Junction Court two or three times a year.

The next is on November 27 and

Rhonda is looking for donations of home-made jams, pickles, cakes, plants, craft, books and bric-a-brac for the stall.

If you have anything you would like to part with that you think someone else might like to buy, contact Rhonda on 4448 3414.

Black Saturday survivor on the run from a wild wombat

REID SEXTON

April 7, 2010 (Sydney Morning Herald)

A SURVIVOR of Black Saturday feared for his life yesterday during a wombat mauling that lasted up to half an hour and ended only when a neighbour saved him.

Bruce Kringle, who lost his house in the deadly blaze in Victoria last year, was in hospital last night recovering from bites and lacerations sustained in the attack.

Mr Kringle, 60, a painter, is living in a caravan until his house in Flowerdale is rebuilt. He was walking down the caravan steps yesterday when the wombat appeared out of nowhere and attacked his legs, bringing him to the ground.

The animal continued to bite and scratch Mr Kringle as he tried to escape.

Terrified that it would tear his throat out, he eventually lay on the wombat until a neighbour, known only as "Rob", heard his cries for help.

Rob told Mr Kringle to get off the animal, then killed it with a blow from the back of an axe.

Yvonne Kringle said the family, who have lived in the area for 28 years, was shocked a wombat could inflict so much damage.

She said her husband, who is believed to take medication after suffering an unrelated heart attack, thought he might die.

"He was too scared to get up," she said. "Every time he tried to run away initially it kept running after him. It kept on going him.

"Obviously it was quite angry or very sick. He's got bites all over him. The doctors said they can't believe how many bites he's got."

She said the wombat had been seen headbutting a glass door at another property before it was chased away minutes before the attack.

One neighbour said the wombat was about 60 centimetres long, meaning it would be at least two years old, according to a wildlife expert. Experts were divided about why a wombat, which are herbivores and usually docile, would attack a human. A wildlife officer at the state Department of Sustainability and Environment, Geoff McClure, said in 34 years he had never heard a story like this, saying the most aggressive he had seen a wombat was when they were cornered.

He said the animal had probably been hand reared and might have been bumping the glass to draw attention to itself.

But Phillipa Mason, a veterinarian at Healesville Sanctuary, said the animal probably had the skin condition mange which could cause blindness, leaving it scared and defensive. But a neighbour, Don Dawson, said: "It looked quite healthy apart from the fact it was dead."

First case of white-nose fungus found in Ontario bat colony

Extracted from an article by By Patrick Kahtouni
The Ottawa Citizen April 6, 2010

Canada's first reported case of a disease that kills bats by the thousands has been discovered at a hibernation site in the Bancroft-Minden area.

White-nose syndrome, a lethal fungus that has decimated populations of bats in the northeast region of the United States, could pose a threat to the survival of several species of bats in Canada.

The name of the disease refers to a ring of white fungus around the muzzles and bodies of bats.

"It's a very significant threat," said John Dungavell, a wildlife health policy advisor with Ontario's Ministry of Natural Resources.

Dungavell said the disease could be transferred by physical contact among the bats, as well as carried by humans to various hibernation sites.

The disease, which was first discovered four years ago in a cave near Albany, New York, has been associated with the death of more than one million bats in the eastern U.S.

The impact of the disease and how quickly it spreads can't be underestimated. Within two years, a site in New York with the largest colony of little brown bats in the world dwindled from 200,000 to 3,000 bats.

"In terms of assessing the impact here in Canada, we have to look to the U.S.," said Dungavell, adding the mortality rate in the U.S. has been 80 to 99 per cent amongst infected bats.

Dungavell stressed the importance of bats to wildlife diversity as they contribute to insect population management.

Ed. Diseases such as Chytrid fungus have already reached Australia. We need to be aware of outbreaks like this, which respect no borders.

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Meeting Dates

NANA MEETINGS

2nd Wednesday each month at 7:00 pm

Meeting Place

Nowra Town Library
Meeting Room
10 Berry St
Nowra

Refreshments provided

2010 meeting dates

April 14
May 12
June 09
July 14
Aug 11
Sept 08
Oct 13
Nov 10
Dec 8

Email Address:

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Phone: 0418 427 214

Submissions for the June issue of the Newsletter required by the 15th May 2010 all material to the committee by this date please

DISCLAIMER

The opinions expressed in articles published and editorial content do not necessarily represent the policy of The Native Animal Network Association.

CORRESPONDENCE

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Cover Photo: Black-shouldered Kite taken by Steve Amesbury

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