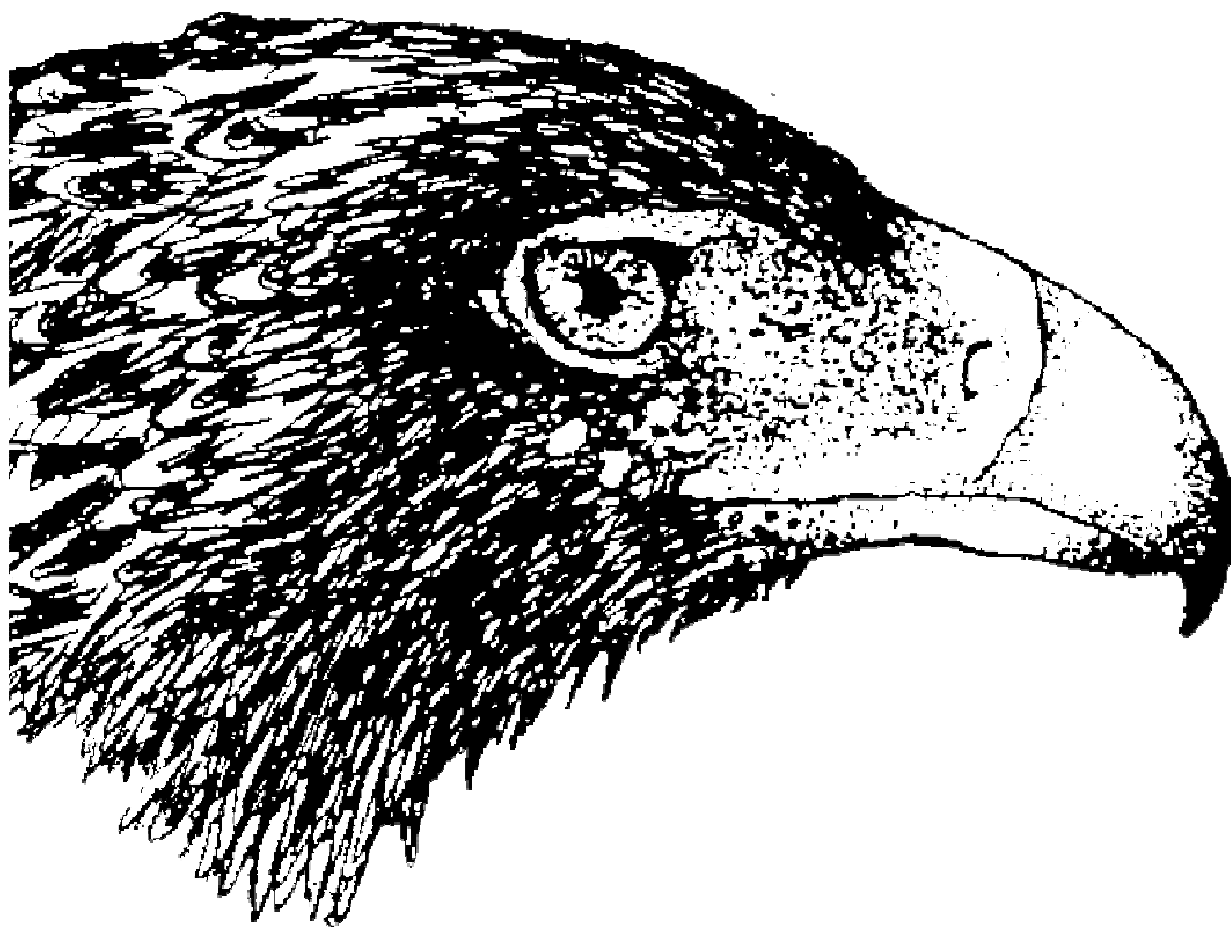


• REHABILITATION • CONSERVATION • EDUCATION •

SOCIETY for the PRESERVATION of RAPTORS (Inc.)



NEWSLETTER

June 2009

www.raptor.org.au

EDITORIAL

Here we are at the middle of the year (or the end of the year, if you're of a financial bent) and the breeding season is about to get underway with many birds displaying and getting ready to pair off once again. Of course that means the orphan season is only a few short months away so check the expiry dates on your supplement packs and stock up on towels.

The middle of the year also means that subscriptions are due. The Society has not raised subscriptions for many years so we still represent pretty good value. A renewal form is included with this newsletter. You will see from the form that we are now accepting direct deposits for membership subscriptions, which gives you another easy option for maintaining your membership.

On the subject of money, our Treasurer has issued a timely reminder: members seeking reimbursement for their raptor vet bills and other legitimate expenses incurred on behalf of the Society must submit *original* invoices, otherwise payment cannot be approved.

On the National Wildlife Rehabilitation Conference front, no official announcement has yet been made but it appears that Adelaide will be hosting NWRC 2010. As mentioned before, watch this space for more information or visit the website at www.nwrc.com.au. Start thinking about your paper now!

The Society and the Western Australian Wildlife Rehabilitation Council recently joined forces to present a display at the Balingup Small Farm Field Day. Shadow the Barn Owl and Cikala the Southern Boobook Owl were a hit with the locals. The display raised just over \$200 (after costs) for the Society and helped to raise awareness of wildlife rehabilitation in the area. It was good to see that many south west residents are already aware of issues such as secondary poisoning and preservation of habitat. There were about half a dozen anecdotes concerning sightings of the Barking Owl (*Ninox connivens*) involving fairly accurate descriptions of the male's territorial scream. This is promising and may be indicative of the species making a comeback, but of course without a proper study it is impossible to say for certain. A big thank-you to Noelene and Dianne for helping to make the day a success, and an extra special thank-you to Dianne for the organisational work and the delicious jam. Thanks also to John and Lynne from WAWRC who popped in to help as well.

Thank you to Caleb and Warren for assisting Phil at the DEC Basic Wildlife Rehabilitation Course in May at Kensington. It's always good to have a helping hand when presenting and running a hands on session for a conference room full of prospective new wildlife rehabilitators.

Congratulations are in order for Society Secretary Noelene Jenkins who has a brand new grandson in little Drew. Our Noels now has four beautiful grandchildren, two girls and two boys.

DEC BASIC WILDLIFE REHABILITATION COURSES

Confirmed dates for DEC Basic Wildlife Rehabilitation courses are as follows:

July 4, 11, 12; and

September 5, 12, 13.

To book a place, contact DEC Kensington on (08) 9219 8000 and ask for Community Involvement. Marg or Judith will be able to help you.

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN SCHOOL TERMS and HOLIDAYS

Term 2 2009

Wednesday 29 April - Friday 3 July 2009

Break

Saturday 4 July – Monday 20 July 2009

Term 4 2009

Tuesday 13 October - Thursday 17 December 2009

Break

Friday 18 December 2009 – Sunday 31 January 2010

Term 3 2009

Tuesday 21 July - Friday 25 September

Break

Saturday 26 September – Monday 12 October 2009

Term 1 2010

Monday 1 February - Thursday 1 April 2010

Break

Friday 2 April - Sunday 18 April 2010

Information obtained from the Western Australian Education Department website.

A SLIP OF THE TONGUE

A reminder to members: be careful of your conversations.

I was at a Toastmasters meeting last month, and during tea break struck up a conversation with another member who is also an animal nut. She's been into horses forever and is now an animal communicator.

I was telling her about the stunning Masked Owl I have in care at the moment. The poor bird is having to endure a lot of bandage changes, since after the initial vet-directed seven days, the wound had gotten nasty. Earlier that day the vet had 'fitted her in' between appointments to anaesthetise her and cut away the dead tissue. At this point in the conversation, my companion suddenly disappeared into the kitchen.

It was several minutes later that I realised it must have been something I said.

- Marra

HAMMERING HOME THE MESSAGE

Recently at work, we had a bit of jessing to do, so your editor brought along a cute little 4oz ball pein hammer, which is a very useful tool for ensuring that eyelets are properly seated and finished.

The hammer is an "Eagle" brand tool, which I thought appropriate, but the best part is the label on the handle which reads as follows:

Strike squarely. Avoid glancing blows.

Never strike hammer against another hammer or metal harder than the hammer face.

Discard immediately if chipping occurs.

Never use hammers with loose or damaged handles.

Claw hammers to be used to drive and pull common nails only – not masonry nails.

Yes, folks. It's a hammer that comes with instructions. Now I've seen everything.



Seriously, though, a lightweight ball pein hammer is a very good tool for using if you like to hammer-set your eyelets. The punch won't always give you the exact finish needed and the shape of the ball pein allows for a bit of fine metal smithing to ensure the bird won't suffer nicks or cut from a badly finished eyelet – and neither will you.

THE MARK OF THE OSPREY

A few months ago, your editor got bitten by an Osprey. It was a tiny nick next to the middle fingernail of the left hand, incurred while hand-feeding a very weak young bird small pieces of fish fillet.

The tiny little nick, barely two millimetres in length, was quite painful, but that was put down to the location – it always hurts when you get cut close to the fingernail. Over the following weeks, however, blisters started to form on the finger, and eventually the nail deformed, weakened, split and was badly damaged.

The GP who was consulted said that the most likely explanation was that the immune system reacted vigorously to whatever kind of bacteria were on the Osprey's beak, causing the problems. Cortisone ointment was prescribed and applied.

So, word of warning: be very careful when dealing with Ospreys. Wear latex gloves if possible and always see your doctor if your skin is broken. Those Osprey bugs are nasty little things indeed.

MINIMUM STANDARDS IN WILDLIFE REHABILITATION

There has been some discussion around the internet of late regarding the DEC Minimum Standards in Wildlife Rehabilitation. The rumour circulating (due, it is believed, to a misinterpretation of DEC information rather than any kind of will to mislead) was that the Minimum Standards were about to be enshrined in State legislation and that we were all about to be legally obliged to adhere to them.

We asked Marg Buckland head of DEC's Community Involvement Unit about the rumours and she was kind enough to clarify a few points.

The Minimum Standards will be written into the Wildlife Conservation Act regulations eventually, until that time they will be used as a guideline for the department's staff and rehabilitators. This process has been spoken about since 2006, there is no reason for anyone to feel intimidated or threatened as we all working together on the best outcomes for our wildlife.

We don't know when the legislation will change, just that its been flagged for change, so we are working towards the process to ensure everyone is on the same page and it should just roll into the change when it happens.

Adhering to – and preferably exceeding – minimum standards is always going to be a good thing. It does raise a few questions, however, such as how DEC plans to support us in complying with standards, and what happens if rehabilitators are unable to do so.

Standards are an important part of maintaining a quality cycle. It means that a baseline is set. We've all heard the horror stories about people releasing birds out of aviaries that are too small to give the animal the best chance of release, and we know that the Society's standards equal or exceed the DEC standards, so as long as we've all been doing the right thing the way we've been taught from the outset, none of our active members should have any problems.

We [DEC] are advising people to look at the Minimum Standards when updating or starting to get involved with wildlife rehabilitation, we would not be forcing people to change to the Minimum Standards overnight, purely to consider them when building new enclosures, changing equipment or purchasing new equipment.

As all wildlife rehabilitators' were involved, or had the choice to be involved during with the consultation period with the development of the Min Standards document, we would hope that it is supported by all wildlife rehabilitators.

Marg makes a valid point about keeping the standards in mind when making changes and upgrades to our facilities. The minimum standards were distributed to all registered rehabilitators some time ago, and we should all have read them, or at least the sections relevant to our own activities. Of some concern are the unregistered rehabilitators, who can't be contacted by DEC because they aren't registered and may not be in contact with registered rehabilitators to be given news and information. Isolation always brings problems. Hopefully, DEC will have the matter in hand and will conduct an outreach/advertising programme as the time for legislating the standards draws nigh. In the meantime, members can help by making sure that any unregistered rehabilitators known to them are provided with accurate information.

At the time the Minimum Standards was developed and the decision was made to have it incorporated into the Wildlife Conservation Act regulations, the Wildlife Rehabilitators Consultation group requested that 28A, (providing anyone with temporary care for sick, injured and orphaned wildlife) be deleted from the Act, so this would no longer be a problem.

It is hoped that we can go to a licensing situation instead, however, this will be decided by the Director at the time.

Once this is in place, it will only be registered wildlife rehabilitators (in future to be known as accredited wildlife rehabilitators) and the volunteers working with them, who will have access to wildlife.

This accreditation process is currently being worked through with the Consultation group and once we have a consensus for the new process, a consultation period will be initiated through the DEC website for people to make comment.

The new accredited process will be for registered wildlife rehabilitators, and their centres or homes, networks or incorporated wildlife groups.

DEC stopped the registration process for registered wildlife rehabilitator status about 12 months ago just before the Minimum Standards were released, as the new accreditation process will reflect much from the standards and the basic rehabilitation course manual.

All registered wildlife rehabilitators in the Directory will be going through the accreditation process so everyone is starting from the same base line.

MINIMUM STANDARDS IN WILDLIFE REHABILITATION (continued)

Volunteers with the centres and groups will be managed in the usual way through the centre, networks, registered individual rehabilitators, and incorporated groups and they (the centres, networks or incorporated groups) will be responsible for ensuring their volunteers premises would be up to, or working towards the Minimum Standards, if they are caring for wildlife at their home address.

Members should not be worried by the 'A' word (accreditation.) Accreditation is actually a very useful way to carry out self-assessment and improvement in almost any situation. As more information arises and the system evolves, the Society will be developing tools and supporting individual members in attaining and maintaining accredited status. When approached and carried out in a positive way, with a focus on quality and improvement, accreditation is actually quite simple, straightforward and should constitute a great step forward for wildlife rehabilitation.

The challenge for DEC and for groups like the Society will be to take that positive approach at all levels of our organisations and allocate sufficient resources to bring what is an admirable vision into reality.

Thank you to Marg Buckland of DEC for supplying information on Minimum Standards.

FROM THE AUSTRALIAN WILDLIFE HEALTH NETWORK

The AWHN is interested in receiving test results and any reports of disease testing or events in the following categories: mass or unexpected mortalities/ morbidities of unknown causes; significant clusters of deaths; suspect livestock associated notifiable diseases; undiagnosed syndromes; suspected human/ zoonotic connection; diseases likely to spread and be difficult to eradicate if they become established; suspected exotic and OIE list diseases; diseases with overseas events or international drivers and; diseases listed as key threatening processes by the Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts. Current, specific disease reporting priorities are for: avian influenza viruses, Australian bat lyssavirus, Salmonella, mass mortality events and any cases associated with non-suppurative encephalitis (especially avian). Please alert your appropriate local Wildlife Coordinator ... and forward copies of all testing to them...(negative results are also a high priority).

The AWHN Wildlife Coordinator for WA is Cleve Main of the Animal Health Laboratory at the Department of Agriculture. His office number is (08) 9368 3426. Secondary contact is Simone Vitali, Senior Veterinarian at Perth Zoo (08) 9474 0326. Tertiary contact is Tamra Chapman, Zoologist at the Department of Environment and Conservation (08) 9334 0455.

RAPTORIAL REPAST

It's winter, and winter is the perfect time for making sausage rolls. Delight the kids and freak out your non-wildlife friends with sausage rats!

Simply take 500g of sausage meat and three pre-packaged puff pastry sheets. Cut each pastry sheet in half then trim each half-sheet into an elongated teardrop shape, wide at one end and slightly narrower at the other. Save the trimmings.

Fill the pastry with sausage meat and roll the pastry up. Each roll should be somewhat wider at one end and tend to being pointy at the other.

Use the pastry trimmings to cut out ears, eyes and tails for each rat. Position appropriately, then prick the pastry with a fork to allow it to vent during baking.

Cook in a moderate oven for 20-30 minutes or until golden brown. Serve hot with the condiments of your choice.

Bon appétit!



WORD SLEUTH – FOR THE JUNIORS

Can you solve the word sleuth and decode the secret phrase?

W	E	D	G	E	T	A	I	L	E	D	E	A	G	L	E
H	P	Y	O	C	A	S	T	U	V	C	A	U	R	I	N
I	H	E	B	L	L	P	T	B	I	S	O	S	E	T	S
S	P	R	R	O	O	T	C	R	S	P	B	T	Y	T	P
T	E	C	O	E	N	B	A	A	I	O	L	R	G	L	A
L	T	O	W	A	G	A	R	H	O	T	A	A	O	E	R
I	B	U	N	R	R	R	N	M	N	T	C	L	S	E	R
N	U	O	G	S	A	K	I	I	R	E	K	I	H	A	O
G	Z	S	O	P	S	I	V	N	K	D	K	A	A	G	W
K	Z	P	S	B	S	N	O	Y	E	H	I	N	W	L	H
I	A	R	H	E	O	G	R	K	S	A	T	H	K	E	A
T	R	E	A	A	W	O	E	I	T	R	E	O	R	C	W
E	D	Y	W	K	L	W	K	T	R	R	I	B	O	S	K
R	A	P	K	T	O	L	R	E	E	I	S	B	A	T	O
S	T	O	O	P	O	P	E	L	L	E	T	Y	O	Z	K
F	E	A	T	H	E	R	S	B	A	R	N	O	W	L	A

CLUES

Australian Hobby
 Barking Owl
 Barn Owl
 Baza
 Black Kite
 Boobook
 Brahminy Kite
 Brown Goshawk
 Buzzard
 Carnivore
 Cast
 Ears
 Feathers
 Grass Owl

Grey Goshawk
 Kestrel
 Little Eagle
 Osprey
 Pellet
 Peregrine
 Sparrowhawk
 Spotted Harrier
 Stoop
 Talon
 Vision
 Wedge Tailed Eagle
 Whistling Kite

What is the secret phrase?

COME AND SEE THE REAL THING

Rats can be a little daunting to feed in at first sight. They are a fairly large food item and can present quite a clean-up the next day when the birds have draped the somewhat pungent entrails all over the aviary.

To this end, it is a good idea to gut rats before feeding them in. This is quite easy and simple to do if you know how, so here is our handy illustrated step by step guide to preparing a rat.



Step 1: with the rat resting on paper, slice across the abdomen using a sharp knife



Step 2: fold the rat backward



Step 3: the entrails should start to push out



Step 4: using a sharp knife, ease the entrails out onto the paper



Step 5: slice away any attached organs



Step 7: ready to feed to your bird.

Ensure all waste is well wrapped and stored in the freezer until rubbish day.

Gutted rats are also easier to cut in half if need be than ungutted rats. They are a good, nutritious food for carnivorous wildlife providing calcium and bone to help keep beaks in trim.

Again, *bon appétit*.

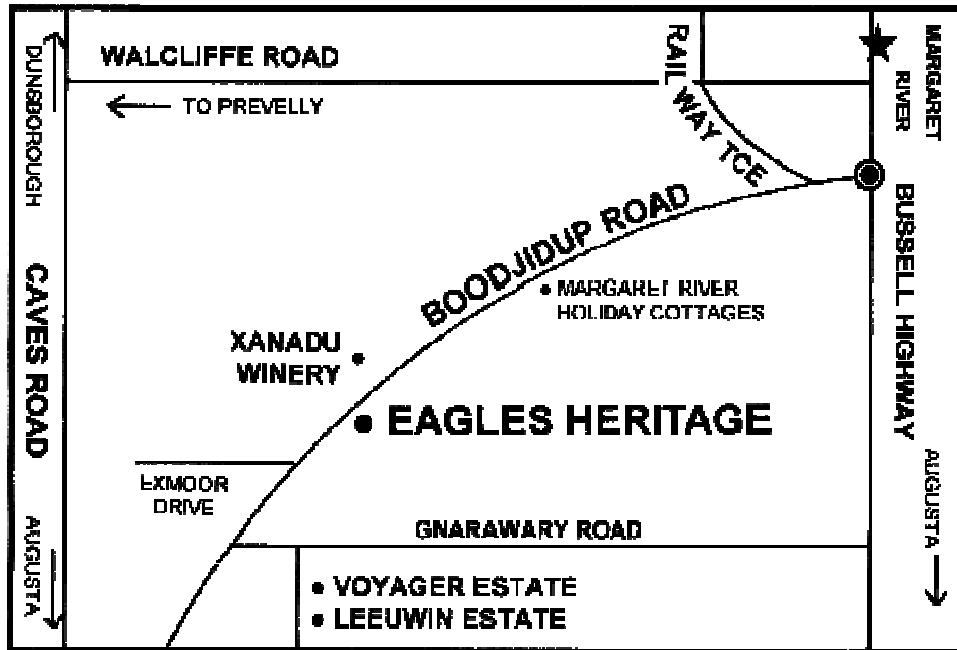
NOTICE OF MEETING

The 2009 Annual General Meeting will be held at Eagles Heritage on Saturday, 8 August at 4:30 pm.

Come for the day or the weekend and catch up with Society members. Take in the educational displays and stay for a meal with friends after the meeting.

Following the afternoon feed round, there will be an informal workshop on making loop leashes.

Eagles Heritage is at Lot 303 Boodjidup Road, Margaret River, approximately three hours' drive from Perth on the new highway.



HOW TO CONTACT THE SOCIETY

General inquiries

- e-Mail: via the website
- Post: PO Box 415, Forrestfield WA 6058
- Website: www.raptor.org.au

Coordinator – Philip Pain

- Telephone: (08) 9757 2960 (Margaret River)
- Fax: (08) 9757 2964
- Post: PO Box 415, Forrestfield WA 6058

Emergency assistance

- Marra Apgar and Dion Mendel – Perth Raptor Care, Midvale Ph: (08) 6369 0705
- Caleb Delamare – Raptor Centre, Shenton Park Ph: 0412 622 176
- Yvonne Sitko – Western Australian Bird of Prey Centre, Herne Hill Ph: 0438 388 383
- Philip Pain – Co-ordinator SPR, Eagles Heritage, Margaret River Ph: (08) 9757 2960
- Brian Mawby-Brown and Nancy Tang – EarthWings, Nannup Ph: (08) 9756 0669
- Janelle and Glenn Ende – Just Raptors, Geraldton Ph: (08) 9938 1447