

Real Life Wildlife Warriors – Manfred

Manfred is a dedicated wildlife rescuer with a passion for our Eastern Grey Kangaroos. He is also a proficient 'darter', one of the highly skilled and accredited professionals we call on to help with animals that need to be sedated for treatment or relocation. Manfred has been volunteering with Wildlife Victoria for more than 15 years and has professionally darted (with tranquilizer darts) well over 1550 injured native animals.

What is it that you do?

I'm one of the main dart gun rescuers in Victoria and I specialise in rescuing the hard cases such as 80kg kangaroos. Darting means so many more animals can be caught and helped. Years ago throwing a blanket or netting over animals was what was done, but that requires lots of people to ambush them and sometimes animals would get away.

How did you first become involved with wildlife?

In 1985 I was at home with plaster on my leg. I looked out the window and saw a tawny frogmouth. It was sick - likely from eating mice that have been poisoned. I brought it inside, found out there was a Wildlife Shelter in Blackwood, got into the car with my



Manfred with a sedated kangaroo joey immediately after rescue. Manfred will raise the orphaned joey in his shelter.

plaster and crutches and drove there. When I hobbled into the carer's house, I saw wombats sleeping on the couch, birds of prey in the kitchen and joeys running around! It was the first time I had been exposed to anything like that.

From then on, my goal was to have a wildlife shelter. It took 2 years to become a licensed foster carer. My hours became full of rescues.

What is your favourite animal?

The kangaroo is my favourite. They get a bad deal in our country. They are magnificent animals, but they are very fragile, and suffer very badly.

Do you have any particularly memorable rescue stories?

A few years ago there was a wallaby that was trapped on the top of the Westfield Shopping Centre in Doncaster, three stories up on the top floor. I was worried it could jump over the barrier and fall to its death as it was so afraid. There were hundreds of people, police, and a news helicopter turned up at just the wrong time just

when I was ready to dart. Cases like this test you and push you to the limit. After the wallaby was tranquilised, a local wildlife carer took it to a local park for immediate release, so it was a great outcome.

I was recently called out to Malmsbury. There are thousands of redundant mineshafts in the area. A couple were prospecting and found a roo had fallen into a shaft. It was the largest shaft I have seen - 10m deep, and very wide. I abseiled down with a torch after I tranquilised the roo. Other rescuers came to help as it was not a one person job and we hauled him up attached to ropes. I cared for him overnight and the next day he was bouncing around my hospital room, no broken bones... it was miraculous. First thing in the morning I took him back near to where we found him, where his family would be. He was slightly sedated to keep him calm, so I stayed and waited for him to sit up...he was eating grass when I left.

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Wallaby trapped on top of Doncaster Shopping Centre.



A Message from the CEO

Happy New Year!

It's already shaping up to be a tough year for wildlife. Storms, floods, heatwaves – all in just the first month.

I recently met a new supporter who told me a familiar story. He didn't know a lot about wildlife, until one evening he hit and killed a kangaroo in his car. When he moved the body off the road he discovered a joey still moving in its pouch.

He told me of his panic when he realised he had no idea what to do next. He knew he had to help, but it was after 5pm and he didn't know the area.

Fortunately, he had a smart phone and found our Wildlife Emergency number. He told me of his immense relief at finding there was help available.

You see, it's not just distressed wildlife we help – it's distressed people too.

Like it or not, humans and wildlife are inextricably linked: injured animals can't just go to the emergency department – it's up to humans to ensure they get the help they need.

Predictions for 2017 suggest more extreme climate events, and the usual inaction from our leaders. Our wildlife need all of us looking out for them now more than ever.

Thank you again for your support, you make everything we do possible.

Warmest wishes

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Real Life Wildlife Warriors cont.

There have been dozens of kangaroo joeys. I've spent countless hours in camouflage, lying on the ground in all conditions, sometimes in 40 degree heat with ants crawling over me, waiting near a dead roo for the baby joey to come back to its mum so that I can catch it before it dies of starvation, hypothermia or is preyed upon by foxes. These joeys come back to their dead mum, pull on her ears, make upset noises, sometimes try to crawl back in her pouch but if they hear the slightest noise they will run away. Sometimes, after they are darted, they hop back to their mother and nestle into her and fall asleep like that.

What inspires you to keep rescuing?

It's the pain and suffering of animals that motivates me – it's overwhelming. Being able to capture, shelter animals and see them grow up to be a beautiful animal and be released into their environment – that's why I do this. It's hard knowing we can't get to them all – there are too many. You have to cope with doing the best you can.

Last year, your donations helped to cover the costs of over \$100,000 for dartings.

STATS FOR 2016

75,705
Calls for help

50,152
Animals helped
of which
7,845
were Kangaroos

\$0
Recurrent government
funding received

1,494
volunteers
to the rescue!



ORPHAN UPDATE: Poppy & Banksi

You'll be pleased to hear that orphaned wombats Poppy & Banksi from our Spring Orphan Appeal are doing well. Only 1.5 and 1 kgs when they were rescued after their mothers were killed in car accidents, they're now thriving at 18 and 14kgs.

They've moved outdoors to a large wombat enclosure with minimal human contact in preparation for their release in a few months time. They spend their days digging and play-fighting to develop all the important skills they'll need in the wild to be able to defend their territory from other wombats.



Poppy and Banksi are almost big enough for release.

Although they're not allowed human contact, their carer, Dana, does admit she's been sneaking cool wet towels into their enclosure when they're asleep on hot days!

For those who donated to our Spring Orphan Appeal, thank you for helping Poppy and Banksi and thousands of other orphans like them.



Wildlife Tips Heat Stress

In December alone we helped over 6,000 animals, with heat stress making up a large proportion of the calls we received.

When heatwaves last more than 24 hours, animals like birds, gliders, bats and possums get so dehydrated they literally start dropping out of trees. Heatwaves that last several days can be fatal.

During heatwaves we get thousands of reports of dazed and confused animals drinking from swimming pools or pet bowls, or trying to cross busy roads to get to water.

Know the signs

Any native animal that appears lethargic or doesn't run away when you approach it on a hot day is likely to be suffering from heat stress.

If you see a nocturnal animal such as a possum, wombat, bat or glider out during the day, it's always a sign that something is wrong.

Koalas don't usually drink, so if you see one on the ground or trying to drink water it's likely to be suffering from dehydration.

Birds show heat stress by panting and holding their wings outstretched.

How you can help

One of the simplest and most effective ways to prevent heat stress is to leave water out in shallow containers when it gets hot, with sticks and rocks in it to ensure smaller animals don't fall in and drown. If you watch closely, you'll find creatures from all levels of the food chain visiting- a single bowl of water may provide rehydration for your smallest bees to your largest marsupials. Don't forget to replenish it throughout the day!

Make sure you leave water bowls in a safe place, well away from pets, preferably in a shaded area. If there isn't any shade, create some!

Confused animals on the ground are easy prey, so please keep your pets inside during heatwaves - for their wellbeing and for wildlife.

If you find a heat-stressed animal, offer it water from a shallow container or eye dropper for smaller animals. Possums and birds can be placed in a ventilated box and taken inside to a cool, dark, quiet place to recover. Spray mist over the animal, but avoid spraying water directly at it.

If the animal has signs of burned feet or injuries, or it has not improved within 1-2 hours please give us a call. If it's looking better, release it back to where you found it in the cooler evening, or nighttime if it is a nocturnal animal such as a possum.

If you need advice please give us a call or have a look at the heat stress factsheets on our website.



Add sticks and rocks to the bowl so that small creatures don't drown.

Upcoming Events

Wildlife Victoria's Wildbytes: Stories from your backyard events will continue around Victoria this year thanks to our partnership with RACV. Bring the whole family along for great tips, advice and real life wildlife rescue stories from our amazing volunteers and staff.

Saturday 11 February 2017
Sustainable Living Festival,
Birraring Marr from 2-3pm
- no booking required

Wednesday 8 March 2017
Norma Richardson Hall,
Woodend from 6:30-8:30pm
- online bookings now open

We're planning to visit Geelong, Bundoora and Gippsland in the following months so please keep an eye on our website www.wildlifevictoria.org.au/racv-wild-bytes for updates about upcoming events in these areas.

School Education Program



Wildlife Victoria presentation please email Isabelle on education@wildlifevictoria with details of the age and group size of the children.

Parents, we can only take bookings from the school staff directly so please ask your child's teacher to get in touch with us.

Sadly, we are unable to bring animals to presentations as they are being rehabilitated for release back into the wild, and must have minimum human contact. The program is full of fun activities like identifying those animals in your backyard and knowing if they are native or introduced species.

For more information about program content, please visit our website www.wildlifevictoria.org.au/education

Wildlife Victoria believes teaching the next generation about the environment and our unique wildlife is vital to the future of our native creatures.

Passionate volunteer Isabelle runs our school education program for primary school students that uses engaging rescue stories, games and activities to introduce young people to native animals, the challenges they face and how they can help. If your school would like to book a

OTHER WAYS TO GET Involved

Fundraise for us. Have a birthday or celebration coming up and can't think of anything you really need? Help more wildlife by asking your friends and family to donate to Wildlife Victoria in lieu of gifts.

Volunteer. It's not for the faint-hearted, but we need volunteer rescuers and transporters all year round. Visit our website to register your interest.

Workplace Giving. Ask your HR department to add Wildlife Victoria to your organisation's workplace giving charity list to make pre-tax donations. Some organisations will match anything their employees donate to double your impact.

Make sure you save our emergency response number (1300 094 535) in your phone. You never know when you might need our help on a stretch of road with no google access.

Yes, I want to help sick, injured and orphaned native wildlife!

I will give:

\$25 \$50 \$100 My gift of \$ _____

I would like to make this a regular monthly donation

Donations \$2 and over are tax deductible.

ABN 27 753 478 012

Name _____

Address _____

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Phone _____

I will give by:

Credit card: Visa Mastercard Amex

Card number

Expiry date

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CVV

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Signature _____

Please post this form to:

Wildlife Victoria, Reply Paid 86041, Abbotsford VIC 3067

or call (03) 9445 0310 to make a donation. *Thank you for your support.*

www.wildlifevictoria.org.au