



Strategic Plan

Hunter Wildlife Rescue
(NATF ^{Inc})

2014-2017

Our Vision

Volunteers giving Hunter wildlife a second chance



Our Objectives

To provide care and aid for native fauna by means of

- i) Rescuing injured, orphaned or distressed native fauna;
- ii) Providing ongoing care for such animals;
- iii) If sick or injured, then providing appropriate veterinary treatment;
- iv) Assigning the care of any such native fauna which are brought to the Fund to those members who wish to participate; and
- v) Returning successfully rehabilitated wildlife to their natural environment when they are fit and able to fend for themselves.

Introduction

Message from the President

I am pleased to introduce this three year plan for the *Hunter Wildlife Rescue* (NATF^{Inc})

As a wildlife rescue and rehabilitation organisation we play a vital role in supporting Hunter's injured, sick and orphaned wildlife. Through our rescue and rehabilitation activities each of us has the unique and privileged opportunity, to intimately connect with the many individual animals we encounter. With this in mind, as volunteers we are united with one vision: To make a difference, to give each animal that comes into our care, a second chance.

Each of us has our own story, our own individual journey in wildlife rescue and rehabilitation. With every encounter, our journey touches us individually and in some unique way.

Our activities and vision also resonates with the community. With each call for advice or assistance, as volunteers we help each caller to connect with the wildlife they have encountered and help them to understand more about our local Hunter wildlife.

Our journeys and paths intersect but the commonality that draws each one of us together is our wildlife and the vision, that we can all make a difference and provide that second chance: a second chance to be free; a second chance to find a partner and ensure the sustainability and diversity of the wildlife for future generations or for some fauna, just a chance to die with dignity.

This three year plan sets the foundations to reach our vision for securing a shared future for wildlife, our members and the community. How, as volunteers we can work together with the community, to make a difference, side-by-side and give Hunter's wildlife a second chance.



Juvenile Wedgetail eagle on the day of its release

“In the end, we will conserve only what we love, we will love only what we understand and we will understand only what we are taught.”

Baba Dioum, the renowned African Ecologist

Our three strategic pillars

- **Wildlife**
- **Volunteers and the**
- **Community**



Our Organisation

Wildlife

Hunter Wildlife Rescue (NATF) was the first wildlife rehabilitation group in NSW. Formed in 1974, its primary objective is to rescue and rehabilitate injured, sick, distressed and orphaned protected fauna. The ultimate objective is the reintegration of rehabilitated fauna back into wild populations when fit and able to fend for themselves, ensuring that the sustainability and diversity of this valuable natural resource will be there for future generations.

Volunteers may be called on for a multitude of reasons to rescue wildlife with injuries, illness or abandonment associated with

- attacks by household pets or other animals
- collisions with motor vehicles
- destruction of natural habitat by urban expansion
- entanglement: fishing line, netting, barbed wire
- electricity wires
- disease
- extreme weather conditions: drought, fire, floods or storms
- fighting in the wild
- geriatric
- habitat loss
- impact with windows
- orphaned young
- oil spills
- parasitic burden
- poisons & pollution
- trapped
- undernourished
- unsuitable environment
- weapons



People: *Our Volunteers*

Our volunteers operate wildlife rescue and rehabilitation activities in the areas south of Bulahdelah, including Port Stephens, Maitland, Newcastle, Cessnock and Lake Macquarie Local Government Areas.

Hunter Wildlife Rescue volunteers become involved with

- Rescue operations
- Transportation of injured wildlife
- Rehabilitation activities includes seeking veterinarian assessment and treatment
- Search and rescue operations after disasters including bushfires, storms, floods, heat stress and oil spills.

In addition, members support administrative and other operations including:

- Providing advice and assistance by manning the 24 hour Emergency Rescue Phone
- Administrative and IT support
- Sewing pouches or building nesting boxes
- Fundraising
- Public Awareness and
- Education activities



Proud to be Hunter Wildlife Rescue (NATF)

From the member's survey, this is what the members said:

- "I am proud to be a member of NATF because we can and do make a difference."
- "I'm proud of the dedication and professionalism of a large majority of the members."
- "I think that collectively we have a wealth of knowledge amongst our members and some amazing kind, dedicated and knowledgeable carers. I have seen and been a part of many success stories and releases in my 9 years with NATF. The Emergency Volunteers for NATF are second to none and NATF should be so very proud of their efforts after the fires in late 2013. It was a fabulous feeling to be part of a well co-ordinated and dedicated group of volunteers. It was very physically hard, hot and heart wrenching work and they should all be highly commended. The variety of training sessions and support that I received in my early years as a rescuer and carer were invaluable."
- "I think the thing that NATF does best at the moment is their training courses..."
- "To be part of a group of people dedicated to the care of Wildlife is a privilege and an honour. NATF does everything well... it is just that most of us are caring for many animals and still have jobs and family to look after so some things are not as polished but we can't do everything as we are volunteers. The members doing these extra jobs are going above and beyond the call of duty to help NATF thrive and continue."
- "I'm proud to be a part of an organisation that is doing something. I believe in 'being the change you want to see' rather than standing back & complaining about the problems. I believe advertising is being done well- most people seem vaguely aware of NATF even if they often refer to it as WIRES."
- "When injured or orphaned animals are efficiently and effectively rescued, cared for and successfully released."



- "I'm proud of the way we drop everything and go to an animal in need. As a phonic as well as a rescuer I know that we are the best rescue operation in the area. We put their lives ahead of our own, and we speak for those who cannot speak for themselves."
- "I'm proud of the contribution we make to my local environment and community. We provide a voluntary service to assist in the wellbeing of wildlife, educate others through a wide range of avenues (i.e. scientific, events, rescue encounters, etc...)"
- "Their deep knowledge, sharing information, dedication to the work; Good training; Going to community events with animals, information, kids' activities etc."
- "Good website."

Our Community

The *Hunter Wildlife Rescue* NATF^{Inc} operates a 24 hour Emergency Rescue Hot line and this is often the first connection with the community. Annually the 24hr Emergency Rescue Hotline responds to over 14,000 calls for advice and assistance in the Hunter area- including rescue assistance for over 300 individual animals that are threatened species.

The *Hunter Wildlife Rescue* has established cooperative working relationships with its local vets, as well as other wildlife affiliated specialist rehabilitation services including Taronga Wildlife Hospital and Port Macquarie Koala Hospital.

In 2014, *Hunter Wildlife Rescue* will take possession of a demountable building, kindly donated by AGL. To be relocated to the Hunter Wetlands Centre site, it will be *Hunter Wildlife Rescue's* administrative and educational operational base. This will afford the *Hunter Wildlife Rescue* an opportunity to further provide community education in understanding the activities of its volunteers and the importance of biodiversity especially when under threat from the impact of urban expansion and natural or man-made disasters.





Our Strategic Plan

Our key strategic focus areas

Five key strategic focus areas underpin the direction and activities of *Hunter Wildlife Rescue (NATF)* over the next three years:

- 1: Wildlife rescue and rehabilitation**
- 2: Volunteer support**
- 3: Community education and involvement**
- 4: Organisational effectiveness**
- 5: Financial sustainability**


Above: Brush-tailed Phascogale

These focus areas form our priorities and the allocation of resources and effort in each action plan objective. For each focus area there is a set of key principles and strategic objectives.

The strategic focus areas are linked and support each other.

The interaction between our wildlife and people are the critical foundations in the delivery of a rescue and rehabilitation service that ultimately supports the maintenance of the Hunter's biodiversity through the successful release of rehabilitated fauna back into the wild.

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Above: Squirrel Glider

1

Wildlife rescue and rehabilitation

Key principle

Positioning the NATF Hunter Wildlife Rescue as a leader in rehabilitation practices by enhancing the capacity of its volunteers to respond to and rehabilitate rescued, injured, sick and orphaned wildlife

Above: Brushtail Possum pouch young

Strategic objectives	Actions
<p>Objective 1.1 To maintain high standards of animal welfare.</p> <p>Objective 1.2 To advocate for habitat protection and wildlife biodiversity.</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improve the coordinated response to rescue, placement and rehabilitation of injured and orphaned wildlife.• Identify and address gaps in wildlife rescue and rehabilitation service provision• Deliver quality targeted education and training opportunities that supports best practice• Create new innovative approaches to increasing member access to information, knowledge and skills• Support conservation endeavours that impact on the well-being of wildlife and their habitat.



Above: Bowerbird chick

2

Volunteer support

Key principle

Establishing a culture that positively supports its volunteers to build capacity and respond to injured and orphaned wildlife.

Above: Adult Feathertail Glider

Strategic objectives

Objective 2.1

To increase physical support to members to enhance their capacity to assist injured wildlife.

Objective 2.2

To value and appreciate the contribution of each member and to provide the support necessary to best achieve our objectives and to keep members long term.

Actions

- Value and support new volunteers to keep them long term
- Recognise member's experience and encourage sharing knowledge and skills
- Create new innovative approaches to increasing member access to information, knowledge and skills
- Build a cohesive and locally motivated support network to share the workload and support members
- Focus positively on member well-being to retain existing members
- Develop the building into a functional operational base for members to increase formal and informal networking opportunities.



Above: Northern Brown Bandicoots pouch young

3

Community education and involvement

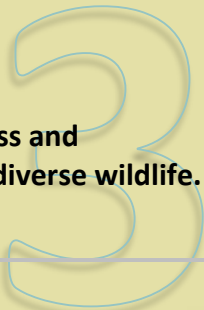
Key principles

Increase community knowledge and understanding to better value Hunter’s wildlife and respond to injured wildlife.



Above: Grey-headed Flying-Fox

Strategic objectives	Actions
<p>Objective 3.1 To facilitate long-term, inspiring connections between the Hunter community, NATF and its wildlife.</p> <p>Objective 3.2 To increase public awareness and understanding of Hunter’s diverse wildlife.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Develop and improve on strategies to raise the public profile of Hunter Wildlife Rescue (NATF) by promoting the achievements of its volunteers in supporting injured wildlife2. Enhance infrastructure to better engage the community to access information on Hunter’s wildlife3. Promote community education about the Hunter’s diverse wildlife



Above: Little Green Tree frog

4

Organisational effectiveness

Key principle

To ensure systems and policies support the organisational effectiveness of the Hunter Wildlife Rescue (NATF^{Inc}) and its members.

Above: Bare-nosed Wombat

Strategic objectives	Actions
<p>Objective 4.1 To ensure practices and procedures are reflected in current policies.</p> <p>Objective 4.2 To enhance administration practices to further support the rescue and rehabilitation of injured, sick and orphaned wildlife.</p> <p>Objective 4.3 To enhance communication systems for sharing information.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review and/or create policies and guidelines that provide structured support to its members• Review the Constitution in line with future position(s)• Review and streamline current administration practices• Develop the species coordinator role to support wildlife and members• Create new communication modes for sharing information• Create positive connections with other supporting wildlife affiliated organisations/services

4



Above: Green Tree Snake



Above: Dunnart with pouch young

5

Financial sustainability

Key principle

Ensuring the ongoing ability of our organisation to fund and sustain successful rescue and rehabilitation outcomes that support our objectives

Strategic objectives	Actions
Objective 5.1 To build a financially sustainable organisation.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Create new revenue streams for growth in supporting our objectives2. Enhance current processes to better source community donations

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Above: Eastern Long Neck Turtle

Please support our rescue and rehabilitation activities by becoming a member or making a donation by visiting us at www.hunterwildlife.org.au



Above: Juvenile Squirrel Glider undergoing vet treatment from burnt paws.

For more information go to www.hunterwildlife.org.au