

# Wildlife Whispers

Issue

1

January  
2021

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## IMPORTANT LINKS

[www.nwc.org.au](http://www.nwc.org.au)  
[www.environment.nsw.gov.au](http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au)

Follow us on instagram  
@hunter\_wildlife\_rescue



Red-necked Wallabies  
(*Macropus rufogriseus*)



## A Message from the HWR TRAINING TEAM.

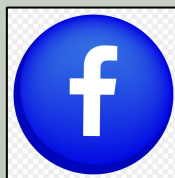
Our training courses have started up again, and more courses will be run throughout this year.

We have aimed at having more advanced courses so our more experienced carers can increase their knowledge.

Not forgetting our new members where we will hold courses to suit them on the introduction to caring.

We have had quick responses to the three training courses being held in the coming months. All placements have been filled and now registrations have closed. The next members in line will be contacted if there any cancellations.

Thank you all for responding so quickly.



## Follow us on Facebook

- Hunter Wildlife Rescue, NATF Inc  
- MEMBERS ONLY Hunter Wildlife  
Rescue, NATF Inc

The Native Animal Trust Fund Inc. Hunter Wildlife Rescue  
is a non-profit incorporated association, licensed by the  
NSW Office of Environment and Heritage.





# Hunter Wildlife Rescue

## *Presidents Message*

Hello all,

Well I do hope you all had a wonderful Christmas and hope 2021 will be so much better for us all as well as our wildlife.

Our numbers in rescue has indeed dropped this year with the weather being so much better. The habitat has come back great and we are finally on course recovering from the drought conditions. Our flying foxes have done much better this year but we had a scare a little while back with a few warm days and only had to rescue a few babies. The number of babies in care this year so far is low compared to last year which we hope is due to better conditions and more food out there for them now.

We are not out of trouble yet but hope we have continuing better conditions in 2021.

We just want to let everyone know we will be looking at starting inspections of properties very soon. This is a condition that is placed on us by NPWS that all approved members who hold an Authority under our General Licence are inspected to see where fauna is held and cared for is to the standards required under the Codes and Policies.

This is something we have failed to do for some time. Please don't feel you are being singled out and over time we hope everyone will be seen. I know some have been inspected but our records show it has been many years in some cases.

We were very lucky to be given \$20,000 towards supporting our carers with fauna food bank and medications. To let you all know so far we have spent over \$18,000 of that money on food support so we do hope to be able to keep this support going with more funding if it is forthcoming. I know our carers are very grateful for this support as it is very expensive to care for our wildlife.

Take care all the best for 2021.

Regards  
Audrey Koosmen



# *Vale Annette Rees*

With a sad heart we wish to let everyone know that on Saturday the 9th of January, HWR and the world lost another wonderful wildlife warrior and friend to many, Annette Rees.

Annette passed away suddenly, she was a long term member of our group for many years. She served on the Management Committee, was the Macropod and Wombat coordinator for many years, she was a mentor to so many members, teaching them the skills in wildlife care and management. She did fundraising for the group and formed a wonderful network of members in the Cessnock area where she was so well known.

She was a very talented lady who showed nothing but kindness to all she met, she was very welcoming and warm in her nature towards all.

Annette and husband Warren opened their beautiful property up to us to use as a soft release area for so many species of wildlife. Annette always called her place part of God's heaven. Her passion for wildlife and all creatures made her such a lovely caring person, she fought many a fight to save wildlife habitat in the Cessnock area. Annette and Warren were both granted lifetime membership to HWR for their commitment and dedication over the years.

Our love and thoughts go out to Warren and the family at their great loss and we thank them for allowing us to be also part of Annette's wildlife family.

May she now be at peace in God's care and be reunited with all our other wildlife warriors we have lost and beloved family members.

Annette we will always remember you deep in our hearts.

Audrey Koosmen

President HWR

On behalf of all members, friends and our beloved wildlife.





# Donations to Hunter Wildlife Rescue

## From IFAW and Gina Cannie

It was through the kind donation of **IFAW** and **Gina Cannie** from **Orphans of Fire Project** that we have been able to get our Fauna Hub which will be used for our fauna in rehabilitation while our carers are attending training classes in our centre at the wetlands.

Gina is a kind lady in the USA, who alongside IFAW, decided they would donate funds to HWR to obtain the Fauna Hub and our new Rescue Emergency Response Trailer.

HWR has worked alongside IFAW for over 30 years now and they have funded and supported us in times of need.

In March 2021 we will be going to Lismore to share with **Friends of the Koala** our HWR Plan. HWR will also introduce our new Rescue Emergency Response Trailer to help and share with them on how to set-up for an emergency. If needed, again IFAW will be funding this trip.

I would like to thank **IFAW International Fund for Animals Welfare** and **Gina** for their most kind donation.





# HWR FAUNA DATABASE & OUR RESPONSIBILITIES

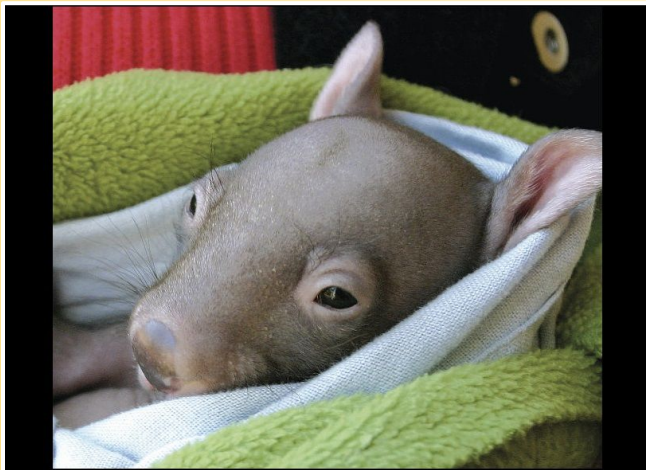
As a part of our mandatory reporting to NPWS, all members "...must maintain a current register of all protected fauna reported, encountered or rescued" (Standard 14.1.1, Code of Practice NSW).

The Code contains both standards and guidelines for the care of protected fauna that is incapable of fending for itself in its natural habitat. This includes any fauna that may have died in your care, euthanased, healthy fauna relocated to another area, road-kill encountered and information provided to members of the public to resolve a fauna encounter ie reunite baby bird with parents or take immediately to the vet.

## **Objectives:**

To maintain a database of fauna that has entered rehabilitation. Records of fauna admissions represent a vital resource for fauna rehabilitation groups, OEH and research institutions. They can be used to develop better treatments, educate rehabilitators, identify statewide trends in fauna incidents and identify threatening processes.

The Code of Practice for Injured, Sick and Orphaned Protected Fauna (the Code) is intended for everyone authorised to rehabilitate and release protected fauna by the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) and has been developed to protect the welfare of fauna in their care.



The link below will take you to the Code of Practice for Injured, Sick and Orphaned Protected Fauna in NSW.

Please read and familiarise yourself with or update yourself with the standards for wildlife rehabilitation in NSW.

[Minimum Standards for Wildlife Rehabilitation in New South Wales](#)

**For all native wildlife injuries, illness or at-risk,  
please call  
Hunter Wildlife Rescue on**

**0418 628-483 or 0418 NATIVE  
24 hours/7 days**

Author: "Code of Practice for Injured and Protected Fauna". NSW Environment, Energy and Science, n.d., <https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/research-and-publications/publications-search/code-of-practice-for-injured-sick-and-orphaned-protected-fauna>. Accessed 12 January 2021.





# The Importance of Fauna Data Collection

Reminder to all Members.

Requirements of our Licence conditions is that we report all fauna we handle via rescue or caring into NSW NPWS yearly.

Part of your authority to rescue and care for fauna under the HWR General License is to send in your Fauna Data report MONTHLY to our Fauna Database Officer.

I understand last year was a very hard year for all of us but I also must say how disappointing it was to see that so many of you did not send in your fauna data when requested. This meant we lost a major number of animals not being reported to NPWS and also breaking the licence condition.

This data is used for many reasons: not just reporting to NPWS but to help us save habitat, to allow us to approach councils for road signs and also for funding.

This year the Committee will be assessing fauna data more closely. It is very unfair of you all to send in months and months of fauna data at once to the Fauna Database Officer, expecting him to sit for hours trying to pull it all together when you could make his role easier by sending data in monthly.

Your Mentor or Coordinator will help you by showing you how to enter data.

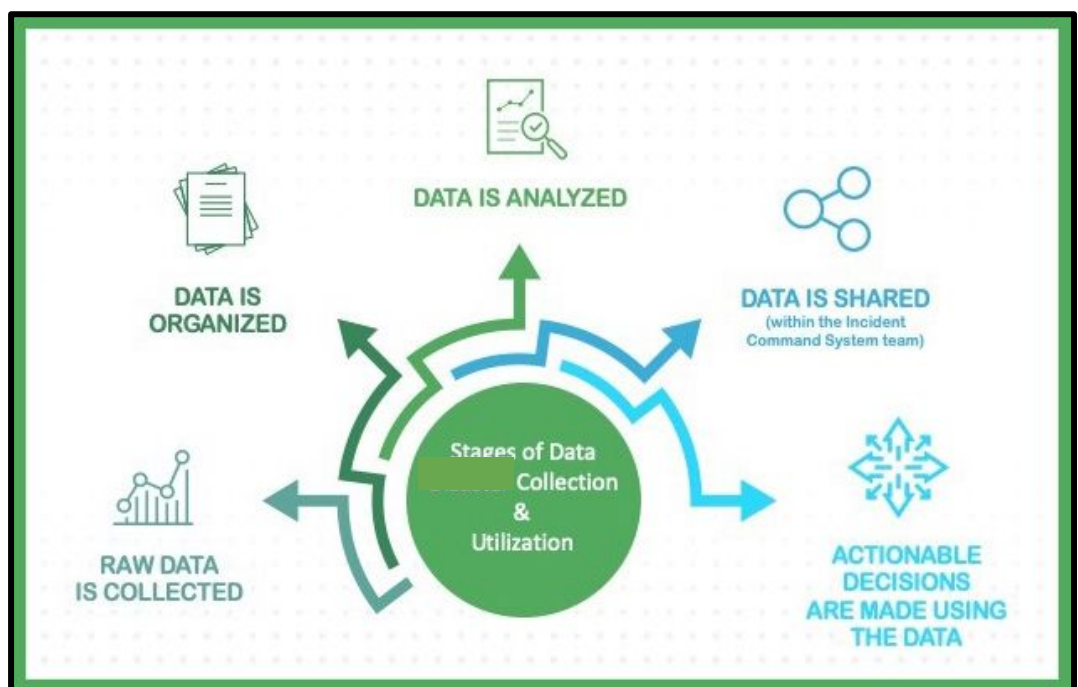
We do have a few people who have offered to help members struggling with data entry so please let our Secretary know if you need help.

Please this year let's get the data in so that we can show all the hard work we do in saving and protecting our Hunter wildlife - fauna data will help save lives .

Regards

Audrey Koosmen

President HWR





## *Profile on:*

# Common Ringtail Possum

**Scientific name:** *Pseudocheirus peregrinus*

## Introduction

The Common Ringtail Possum is well known to many residents. Together with the Common Brushtail Possum, it has adapted well to living in close association with humans and is often seen in suburban gardens at night.

## Identification

About the size of a small cat, the Common Ringtail Possum is grey with white patches behind the eyes and on the belly, and orange-brown tinges on the tail and limbs. Its long prehensile tail has a white tip and it uses it like a fifth limb to climb and jump between connecting branches, fences and powerlines. The structure of its forefeet, with a gap between the second and third fingers, allows the possum to hold onto branches securely.

Some characteristics that help to distinguish the Common Ringtail Possum:

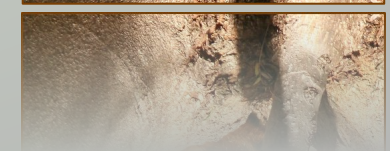
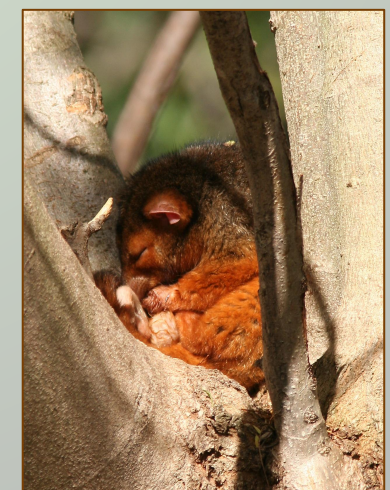
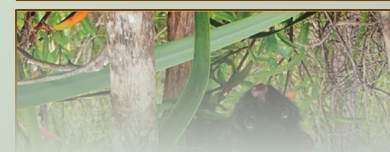
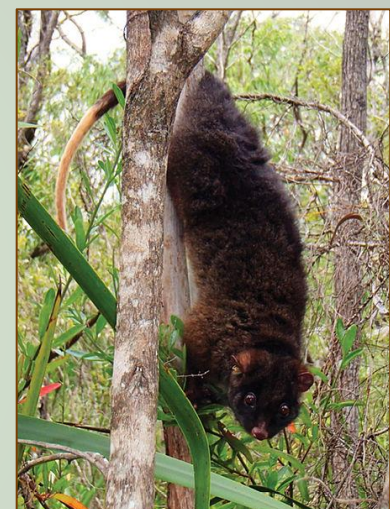
- Front teeth: Three pairs of upper incisors, one pair of lower incisors.
- Head: Rounded head with slightly bulging eyes.
- Ears: Short rounded ears with white patch behind.
- Colouring: Variable grey to near-black back, sometimes tinged red-orange, white to red-orange below; red-orange legs.
- Tail: Tapering prehensile tail with a white tip, naked underside, furred above. Carried in a coil when not used.

## Habitat

Almost exclusively tree-dwelling, the Common Ringtail Possum lives in forests, woodlands, rainforests, dense scrub and suburban gardens. During the day, the Common Ringtail Possum sleeps in its spherical nest or 'drey' made from grass and shredded bark. It builds the drey in a tree hole, tree fork or dense vegetation, and several individuals may share the one nest.

## Distribution

The Common Ringtail Possum is found in Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia.





# Tighes Hill RSPCA Centre Closed Down

The Tighes Hill RSPCA Veterinary Hospital closed its doors as of 1st December 2020, as part of plans to expand the organisations hospital at Rutherford.

RSPCA NSW says the closure is part of plans to centralise services in the region to one location, by adding more consultation rooms, surgical offerings and specialised services at Rutherford.

The RSPCA says the opportunity to expand the other centre was made possible by a generous bequest from dedicated supporter, the late Sheila Woodcock, who was a passionate animal lover.

“Our hope is to see more services and support available to all animals in the growing Hunter community.”

Hunter Wildlife volunteers will now have to visit a veterinarian clinic or the Animal Referral and Emergency Centre (AREC) located at 4 Lang Rd, Broadmeadow which is open 24 hours a day/7 days a week.



The old Broadmeadow RSPCA building

The new RSPCA building in Rutherford







# Their Future is in Our Hands



For our wildlife "we are both  
their greatest enemy and their only hope.

These wonderful creatures  
will not argue their case.

They will not put up a fight.  
They will not beg for reprieve.

They will not say goodbye.

They will not cry out.

They will just vanish.

And after they are gone,  
there will be silence.

And there will be stillness.

And there will be empty places.

And nothing you can say  
will change this.

Nothing you can do  
will bring them back.



**Their future  
is entirely in our hands."**

Bradley Trevor Grieve







# HWR LITTLE PENGUIN RELEASE

ARTICLE BY ANNE WILLIAMS

Our Little Penguin was found late Wednesday evening looking quite forlorn and near the stairs at Cliff Beach, Merewether. When he did try to walk he was stumbling badly so a member of the public took him to AREC, Broadmeadow Vets.

Hope Genge then picked the Little Penguin up and brought it to me to care for. He was given anti-inflammatory drops and then x-rayed by Noahs Ark Vets the next day – luckily no breaks, just bad bruising and swelling so he was given the drops for another four days until the swelling had subsided.

He fed very well on white-bait and pilchards. He appeared to have just finished moulting as there were a couple of loose plumes amongst it's coat. He weighed just over a Kilo – normally they weigh 1,300 - 1,500 gms but while they are moulting over a period of 11-15 days they cannot feed because they are not waterproof and therefore lose weight.

He ate approximately 200 – 250 grams of fish each day. They can only be fed morning and evening as it takes a while for the fish to digest. If you try to influence them to eat more than that they will regurgitate it back and then often bring back the previous meal too.

Before his morning feed I put him into a little shell pool to have a wash and defecate, then I would feed him, I then put him in his container in dappled sunshine to preen himself for an hour or so.

Also, with penguins and other seabirds you do not give them a feed close to when you are transporting them anywhere as they will most likely regurgitate it all – they must be fed 4 – 5 hours before.

By Sunday evening the swelling had finally gone down and the penguin was standing on his leg comfortably and walking better. We kept him in care until Thursday afternoon when the weather was sunny and the water at Shoal Bay near Tomaree Point in Port Stephens Harbour was smooth. Jason Hodges and I took him out and Donna Hucker our Newsletter Editor came to take photos.

He swam off beautifully out into the Harbour heading towards Cabbage Tree Island & Broughton Island where they breed each year – it is the most northern extent of their breeding grounds along the Eastern coast. *Note: we say 'him' in this article but we don't really know if he is a she?*

A threatened species of petrel – the Gould's Petrel (*Pterodroma leucoptera*) also breed on Cabbage Tree Island – this is the only known place in the world for them to breed, so we are very lucky to have them in our region.



# Emergency Rescue Advice for Wildlife

## RESCUE PROCEDURE: WILD CAPTURE & HANDLING of BIRDS

### Capture

Catching and handling birds is a source of stress. Watch the bird for a few minutes to see if you can see where it may be injured; also see what its escape areas may be.

Catch the bird by throwing a towel or net over it. Most birds become quiet when they can no longer see. Be quiet and slow with your movements. If you can corner the bird, then capture becomes easier. It is better to make one definite throw than 10 half-hearted attempts, causing the bird to stress and flap. It may be quicker to work in teams where possible.

- Capture as quickly as possible to reduce stress.
- Distract the bird's attention to catch it.
- Leather gloves reduce sensation and are not recommended.
- Cover its head.
- When you hold a bird so it is comfortable, it will relax and stop struggling.
- Keep the bird upright and do not compress the chest.

### Handling

- Use gloves/towel
- Do not handle unnecessarily
- Once captured do not try to calm bird by talking to it
- Keep other domestic animals away



### Warmth

The bird should feel warm to the touch. Small and/or injured birds will need an ambient temperature of 25-30°C. If it is a large bird and looks bright and alert, room temperature should suffice. If the bird is cold it will be unwilling to feed.

### BABY BIRDS

Many of the rescues for baby birds are unnecessary.

It is very rewarding to place a baby back with its mother, no matter how much we would love to raise that baby it should be placed back where it belongs.

Some birds raise their babies on the ground and this should be considered before interfering.

Baby birds, where possible, need to be left where there are found and can be moved to a safer location such as a bush.

For full details on Emergency Bird Rescue Advice, visit our website at <https://www.hunterwildlife.org.au/birds>



# Hunter Wildlife Rescue



## Uniforms for Members

### Polo Shirt and Fleecy Jacket

A polo shirt and a fleecy jacket are available for members to purchase at very affordable prices. These shirts can be worn at anytime.

They can be worn when you are attending a rescue or collecting animals from a member of the public or from veterinary surgeries. The uniform shirt and jacket should be worn if you are representing Hunter Wildlife Rescue such as conducting training or as functions or events like helping at the Total Field Days.

There is no recommended colour or requirements for the trousers, shorts or skirts.

*Hi-Vis vests or shirts should be worn when you are attending a rescue in the open, near roads, etc for safety reasons so you can be clearly seen.*

To Order: Please contact Chris Hill for further details. Email: [rhill122@bigpond.com](mailto:rhill122@bigpond.com)



Colour: Navy blue

Ladies: 8, 10, 12, 14 16

(one button at collar and slightly shorter sleeves)

Men: S, M, L, XL XXL

(3 buttons at collar)

Logo: Hunter Wildlife Rescue

Cost \$20.00



Colour: Navy blue

Sizes: S, M, L, XL, XXL

Logo: Hunter Wildlife Rescue

Cost \$35.00





I hope you enjoyed this latest issue of the HWR Newsletter.

Remember, if you are a new volunteer, make sure you get a great mentor to teach you more about the wildlife you rescue.

Do you have photos, news or success stories or any appropriate jokes! to share? Don't be shy ~

Email me at [donna.hucker18@gmail.com](mailto:donna.hucker18@gmail.com) or post on the HWR facebook page :)