



Hunter Wildlife Rescue (NATF^{INC}) Possum & Glider Policy

Hunter Wildlife Rescue (NATF^{INC}) Possum and Glider rehabilitators are authorised to hold, for the purpose of rehabilitation, sick, injured or orphaned Possum/Glidens and return successfully rehabilitated or hand raised joey Possum/Glidens to a suitable natural environment.

Possum/Glider rehabilitators must demonstrate compliance with the Standards in the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage policies in relation to rescue, transport, assessment, care, husbandry, housing, release and euthanasia.

The following Possum/Glider Rehabilitation Policy refers to the rehabilitation of all Possum/Glidens, and must be read in conjunction with the;

- NSW Office Of Environment and Heritage (OEH) 'Code of Practice for Injured, Sick and Orphaned Protected Fauna (2011)'
- NSW Office Of Environment and Heritage (OEH) 'Rehabilitation of Protected Fauna Policy (2010)'

- Hunter Wildlife Rescue (NATF^{INC}) General Licence Conditions
- Senior Species Coordinators and Species Coordinators responsibilities

The minimum requirements for the rehabilitation of all Possum/Glidens include:

- Being a current financial member of Hunter Wildlife Rescue (NATF^{INC})
- Completing the *Introduction to the Hunter Wildlife Rescue (NATF^{INC}) & Basic Rescue workshops*
- Completing a Hunter Wildlife Rescue (NATF^{INC}) approved *Possum/Glider Rehabilitation* training course **or** equivalent one-on-one approved interim training **and** the next available approved *Possum/Glider Rehabilitation* training course.
- Being approved to rescue, hold or rehabilitate Possum/Glidens under *Hunter Wildlife Rescue (NATF^{INC})* License
- Having equipment and facilities approved to rehabilitate Possum/Glidens
 - See Appendix A: Facilities Inspection Checklist
- Reporting all Possum/Glidens to the Possum or Glider Species Coordinator
- Maintaining and reporting accurate data to the Data Base Coordinator monthly



Possum and Glider Rehabilitators' Responsibilities include:

1. Providing optimum levels of care and animal welfare



- a. Ensure no Possum/Glider suffers undue pain or distress
- b. Ensure appropriate nutrition, including access to natural foods
- c. Provide appropriate facilities that;
 - Keep the Possum/Glider safe, minimise stress and prevent further injury
 - Are well maintained, clean and hygienic
 - Provide the Possum/Glider with an opportunity to express a range of natural behaviours
- d. Ensure Possum/Glidens are not held for an extended period of time that may compromise their successful rehabilitation
- e. Provide protection from domestic pets and other predators
- f. Ensure no Possum/Glider in rehabilitation is shown in public or to other carers for any reason, other than training purposes
- g. Develop and maintain individual Possum/Glider rehabilitation plans, in consultation with the Coordinator
 - See Appendix B: Rehabilitation Guidelines & Care Progress Chart
- h. On transfer of Possum/Glider the Care Progress Chart with the Fauna Code must be provided to the receiving carer

2. Providing for an optimum level for survival in the wild

a. RESCUE

- Assistance of an experienced rescuer should be called for difficult circumstances
- Hunter Wildlife Rescue (NATF^{INC}) DOES NOT relocate uninjured or trap Possums for removal. Discuss EXTREME cases for other options, with your Coordinator.

b. ASSESSING VIABILITY

- A joey will generally be considered viable when eyes are open and ears up. Taking in account hydration levels, as a guide this means;



Brushtail Possum	> 50 grams
Ringtail Possum	> 40 grams
Sugar Glider	> 15 grams
Squirrel Glider	> 18 grams
Feathertail Glider	> 2 grams

- All joeys at vulnerable stages are to be cared initially by an experienced carer, with >12 months experience
- Viability of all neonatal Possums/Gliders is to be reassessed by the Senior Coordinator one week after coming into rehabilitation

c. REHABILITATION

- Rehabilitation placement is determined by the Coordinator with buddying a first priority
- All orphan Possum/Gliders to be raised with a buddy of similar age/size/species where possible
- The Coordinator should be advised of any changes to;
 1. Health or condition
 2. Feeding problems
- The Coordinator should be advised of any changes to the rehabilitation plan including;
 1. Buddying
 2. Transferring
 3. Temporary changes to rehabilitation e.g. joey-sitting, holidays
 4. Release
- The Coordinator should be advised of weight during monitoring stages

d. RELEASE

- Release sites are to be pre-determined according to the individual Possum/Glider management plan
- **Juveniles** to be released with a buddy where possible – the buddy with whom the joey has been raised
- **Juveniles** to be released in the dray or box in which it habited during its final stage of rehabilitation
- Release consideration may include hard release or soft release with preference given to soft release
- Final release shall occur at dispersal age and when the **juvenile** Possum/Glider(s) meets a combination of weight, age and fitness criteria, including:
 1. Is able to seek and find natural foods from the predetermined release site
 2. Has been dehumanised and actively avoid humans
 3. Does not associate disturbance with food
 4. Has been weathered and able to seek shelter from inclement weather
 5. Has been disassociated from domestic and wild animals
- **Sub Adults and Adults** are to be released back to the encounter site or as close as possible, Brushtails within 50m as per National Parks Wildlife Service (NPWS) guidelines.



e. EUTHANASIA

- All decisions regarding euthanasia must be made in either the best interest of the individual animal or the species as a whole.
- Any damage to any body part that may compromise release to the animal i.e. tail (injury, break, missing), mouth, eyes, limbs, membrane must be reported to the Coordinator, and assessed by the Senior Possum/Glider Coordinator in consultation with the treating vet.
- Euthanasia must only be conducted by a qualified veterinarian.



3. Behaving at all times in a manner which reflects favourably to Hunter Wildlife Rescue (NATF^{INC})

a. Transfer of wildlife between Licensed Groups & Individuals

- In line with a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with other licensed rehabilitation groups, wildlife rescued from outside Hunter Wildlife Rescue (NATF^{INC}) area are to be transferred to the originating group once stabilised and returned at the earliest possible time.
- Where there is no MOU developed with the designated rehabilitation licensed group, are to contact their Coordinator as soon as possible and the Coordinator will inform the Senior Coordinator prior to transfer.
- Fauna is **NOT** to be transferred from Hunter Wildlife Rescue (NATF^{INC}) to other licensed rehabilitation groups or individual licenced holders without the consent of the Senior Coordinator.

b. Complying with the General Licence Conditions and Hunter Wildlife Rescue (NATF^{INC}) Rescuers' and Rehabilitators' Policy including:



Rehabilitators' Policy including:

- Accepting that NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS), Hunter Wildlife Rescue (NATF^{INC}) Management Committee or the Hunter Wildlife Rescue (NATF^{INC}) Possum/Glider Coordinator has the right to monitor the progress and facilities of all Possum/Glider rescuer/rehabilitators including the right to inspect premises and facilities.
- Developing a working relationship with the Senior Coordinator and a nominated veterinarian interested in native wildlife
- All vet procedures over \$100.00 must have approval from the Possum/Glider Coordinator
- All X-rays or surgery must have prior approval from the Possum/Glider Coordinator
- Accessing ongoing training opportunities to keep abreast of current procedures and rehabilitation methods
- Ensuring NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) regulations are enforced and adult species are returned to their original encounter site
- Maintaining detailed Possum/Glider care and history report to accompany species throughout its rehabilitation
- Follow NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) guidelines and Hunter Wildlife Rescue (NATF) Permanent Care Policy for permanent care of threatened species which are unable to be released

All Hunter Wildlife Rescue (NATF^{INC}) members must put the safety of themselves and other people first.

If a rescue is considered unsafe, it must be aborted or further assistance sought through the Coordinator(s).

References	
Ann Fowler – Advanced Care of Injured Possums Husbandry & Rehabilitation of Injured Possums 2008	http://www.fourthcrossingwildlife.com/fauna_first_aid_resources.htm
Barbara Smith – Caring for Possums	http://www.fourthcrossingwildlife.com/resources.htm
Sonya Stanvic – Possums – Juvenile to Adult	http://www.fourthcrossingwildlife.com/possums.htm
OEH – Rehabilitation of Protected Fauna Policy 2010	http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/wildlifelicences/RehabFaunaPolicy.htm
OEH – Code of Practice for Injured, Sick and Orphaned Protected Fauna	http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/wildlifelicences/RehabFaunaCode.htm

APPENDIX A

HUNTER WILDLIFE RESCUE (NATF INC.)



FACILITIES INSPECTION CHECKLIST POSSUMS & GLIDERS

The following is a guide to equipment & facilities to assist in providing optimum levels of care and support for animal welfare while in rehabilitation by;

- Keeping the fauna safe, minimise stress and prevent further injury
- Ensuring facilities & equipment are well maintained, clean and hygienic
- Providing fauna with an opportunity to express a range of natural behaviours
- Ensuring they are separated from household pets

This checklist is intended to be completed by the carer prior to a facilities inspection.

General Rehabilitation – Intensive Care & Orphaned Young			
HEAT SOURCE Quantity & Type e.g. Heat pad, Wheat bag Optimum requirement is a Heat pad with a thermostat for variable heat levels	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO Quantity:	BASKETS or PLASTIC BOXES Quantity & Type Optimum size is 0.3 x 0.2m	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO Quantity:
DIGITAL SCALES	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	CAGES: Immediate Care Optimum size is a cocky cage 1m ² Type & Size Type & Size	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO Quantity: Quantity:
FIRST AID KIT Saline, Gauze, Bandaging materials	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO		
REHYDRATION KIT Lactade, Vitrate, syringe/tubes etc.	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	LAPADASHERY Towels, Pouches with liners, Pillow cases Multiple and various sizes	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
FOOD <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Divetalac, Biolac or Wombaroo ○ Feeding dishes various sizes e.g. D Cups ○ Feeding dishes suitable for small gliders ○ High Protein Supplement e.g. Insectivore 	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	STERILISATION EQUIPMENT Baby bottle steamer, Milton, Bleach, bottle brushes Note: when using Bleach or Milton you must re-clean	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Location suitable for Intensive Care (Quiet and warm room)			<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Maximum Wildlife Capacity for Immediate Care and Orphan Young			<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Maximum Wildlife Capacity for Release preparation			<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO

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Outdoor Rehabilitation – Long-term or Release Stage									
Guidelines	SMALL AVIARY				LARGE AVIARY				
	Under Cover				Weathering				
Size, Quantity & Maximum Wildlife Capacity	Size <input type="text"/>	Maximum Capacity <input type="text"/>			Size <input type="text"/>	Maximum Capacity <input type="text"/>			
	Size <input type="text"/>	Maximum Capacity <input type="text"/>			Size <input type="text"/>	Maximum Capacity <input type="text"/>			
	Size <input type="text"/>	Maximum Capacity <input type="text"/>			Size <input type="text"/>	Maximum Capacity <input type="text"/>			
Maximum Species Capacity	Brushtail	<input type="text"/>	Sugar Glider	<input type="text"/>	Brushtail	<input type="text"/>	Sugar Glider	<input type="text"/>	
	Ringtail	<input type="text"/>	Squirrel Glider	<input type="text"/>	Ringtail	<input type="text"/>	Squirrel Glider	<input type="text"/>	
	Other	<input type="text"/>	Feathertail	<input type="text"/>	Other	<input type="text"/>	Feathertail	<input type="text"/>	
<i>To keep the fauna safe, minimise stress and prevent further injury consider;</i>									
Weathering Protection from rain and heat	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO				<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO				
Water Availability	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO				<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO				
Separated from Family Pets	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO				<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO				
Aviary Condition Well maintained, clean & hygienic	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO				<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO				
Locks used for Security	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO				<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO				
Vermin Proof	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO				<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO				
<i>To provide fauna with an opportunity to express a range of natural behaviours consider;</i>									
Exercise Availability Logs, branches, ropes etc.	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO				<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO				
Habitat Food Provided	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO				<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO				
Weathering Access to Rain, Wind, outside Noises	Not Applicable				<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO				
Floor Substrate As natural as possible	Not Applicable				<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO				
Other species requirements									



Suggested Areas for Improvement:



HUNTER WILDLIFE RESCUE (NATF INC.)

FACILITIES INSPECTION REPORT

To be completed by the Species Coordinator conducting the Facilities Inspection

Member's Name: _____

Member Address: _____

Contact Number: _____

I agree that the equipment & facilities held by _____ will provide optimum levels of care and will support animal welfare while in rehabilitation by;

- Keeping the fauna safe, minimise stress and prevent further injury including ensuring they are separated from household pets
- Ensuring facilities & equipment are well maintained, clean and hygienic
- Providing fauna with an opportunity to express a range of natural behaviours

Training Courses	Date Completed	Year Update Req.
○ Introduction to Hunter Wildlife Rescue (NATF) <i>Includes: DECC Code of Practice for Injured, Sick & Orphaned Protected Fauna</i>		
○ Introduction to the Rescue and Rehabilitation and Hand Rearing of Possums		
○ The Care, Management & Hand Rearing of Orphaned and Injured Gliders		
○ Browse workshop		

Data Submitted Monthly	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
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Approved Level of Authorisation of Facilities

- ☐ Intensive Care (minimum 12 months experience)
- ☐ Just viable Young (minimum 12 months experience)
- ☐ Orphaned Young
- ☐ Immediate Care
- ☐ Preparation for Release

Approved Fauna Species to the Facilities

- ☐ Brushtail Possum
- ☐ Ringtail Possum
- ☐ Sugar Glider
- ☐ Squirrel Glider
- ☐ Feathertail Glider
- ☐ Other Possum/Glider

Coordinator Name: _____

Coordinator Signature: _____ Date: _____

Member Signature: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX B



HUNTER WILDLIFE RESCUE (NATF INC.)

REHABILITATION GUIDELINES

Development Milestones		Sugar Glider	Squirrel Glider	Feathertail Glider
Stage 1 Pouch Young	Facility	Basket	Basket	Basket
	Viable Weight	15 grams	18 grams	2 grams
	Lapping	20 grams	35 grams	3 grams
Stage 2 Emerging Young	Facility	Cocky Cage	Cocky Cage	Cocky Cage enclosed
	Weight	40 grams	65 grams	4 grams
	Weaned	70 grams	80 grams	6 grams
Stage 3 Fully Emerged	Facility	Aviary	Aviary	Aviary enclosed
	Weight	55 grams	85 grams	6 grams
	Release Weight	80 grams	140 grams	8 grams
Adult Weight (Approx.)	Female	135 grams	180 grams	12 grams
	Male	160 grams	300 grams	14 grams
	Sexually Mature	8 – 15 months	12 months	8 – 12 months

Development Milestones		Brushtail Possum	Ringtail Possum
Stage 1 Pouch Young	Facility	Basket	Basket
	Viable Weight	50 grams	40 grams
	Age	80 – 120 Days (4 months)	80 – 120 Days (4 months)
	Lapping	200 – 300 grams	100 grams
Stage 2 Emerging Young	Facility	Cocky Cage	Cocky Cage
	Weight	300 – 500 grams	100 – 250 grams
	Age	120 - 180 Days (5 – 6 months)	120 - 180 Days (5 – 6 months)
	Weaned	500 – 1000 grams	200 – 300 grams
Stage 3 Fully Emerged	Facility	Aviary	Aviary
	Weight	600 – 1000/1500 grams	250 – 700 grams
	Age	180 – 180 Days (6 months)	120 – 180 Days (6 months)
	Release Weight	1200 grams (9months)	500 – 700 grams (7 months)
Adult Weight (Approx.)	Female	2500 grams	650 grams
	Male	4500 grams	1000 grams
	Sexually Mature	2500 grams (18 months)	750 – 1000 grams (14 months)



HUNTER WILDLIFE RESCUE (NATF INC.)

RECEIVING CARE PROGRESS CHART

Species:			Location:			Rescue Date:	
PINKIE	JOEY	JUVENILE	SUB-ADULT	ADULT	AGED	MALE	FEMALE
Weight: (10% =)			Age:			Stage:	
Reason for Rescue:						Data No.	
Transferred From:						Transfer Date:	

Initial Observation, Assessment and Treatment Plan																	
Key to be used for assessment								A = Alert		B = Bright		D = Depressed		M = Moribund			
N = Normal		O = Other		G = Good		F = Fair		P = Poor		X = Excellent		E = Emaciated					
Fluids	Type: Lactade, Vitrate, Water												Assessment	Observation			
Date:	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Demeanour	A	B	D	M
Quantity													Overall body	G	F	P	E
Milk	Type: Divetalac, Biolac, Wombaroo												Mobility	G	F	P	X
Date:	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Eyes	Normal		Other	
Quantity													Ears	Normal		Other	
Medication	Type:												Mouth	Normal		Other	
Date:	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Teeth	Normal		Other	
Quantity													Nose	Normal		Other	
Observations:													Head	Normal		Other	
													Forearms	Normal		Other	
Fluids	Type: Lactade, Vitrate, Water												Legs	Normal		Other	
Date:	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Abdomen	G	F	P	E
Quantity													Chest	G	F	P	E
Milk	Type: Divetalac, Biolac, Wombaroo												Breathing	Normal		Other	
Date:	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Cloaca	Normal		Other	
Quantity													Faeces	Normal		Other	
Medication	Type:												Urine	Normal		Other	
Date:	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Fur	G	F	P	X
Quantity													Tail	Normal		Other	
Observations:													Other				
													Other				
General Findings:																	



HUNTER WILDLIFE RESCUE (NATF INC.)

DAILY CARE PROGRESS CHART

Date	Fluid	Food	Urine	Faeces	Weight	Daily Observations
Date	Fluid	Food	Urine	Faeces	Weight	Daily Observations
Date	Fluid	Food	Urine	Faeces	Weight	Daily Observations
Date	Fluid	Food	Urine	Faeces	Weight	Daily Observations

Date	Fluid	Food	Urine	Faeces	Weight	Daily Observations
Date	Fluid	Food	Urine	Faeces	Weight	Daily Observations
Date	Fluid	Food	Urine	Faeces	Weight	Daily Observations
Date	Fluid	Food	Urine	Faeces	Weight	Daily Observations
Monthly Observations:						