

Wombat Policy

NATF wombat rehabilitators are authorised to hold, for the purpose of rehabilitation, sick, injured or orphaned joey wombats and return all successfully rehabilitated or hand raised joey wombats to a suitable natural environment. Wombat rehabilitators must demonstrate a commitment to legal and ethically responsible rehabilitation of all wombats.

The following Wombat Rehabilitation Policy refers to the rehabilitation of all Wombats, and must be read in conjunction with the

- NPWS Rehabilitation Policy
- NATF General Licence Conditions
- NATF Rescuers' and Rehabilitators' Policy (revise 2004) and
- Species Coordinators responsibilities.

The minimum requirements for the care and rehabilitation of all wombats include

1. Being a current financial members of the NATF.
2. Completing the *Introduction to the NATF & Basic Rescue* workshops
3. Completing a NATF approved *Wombat Rehabilitation* training course **or** equivalent one-on-one approved interim training and the next available approved *Wombat Rehabilitation* training course.
4. Being competent in the techniques of wild capture, transport, husbandry and housing.
5. Being approved to rescue, hold or rehabilitate wombats.
6. Having equipment and facilities approved to rehabilitate wombats. (See Appendix A: Facilities Inspection Checklist)
7. Reporting all wombats to the Wombat species co-ordinator.

Wombat Rehabilitators' responsibilities include:

1. *Providing optimum levels of care and animal welfare*

- a. Ensure no wombat suffers undue pain or distress.
- b. Ensure appropriate nutrition, including access to natural foods.
- c. Provide appropriate facilities that
 - i. Keep wombat safe, minimise stress and prevent further injury.
 - ii. Are well maintained, clean and hygienic.
 - iii. Provide the wombat with an opportunity to express a range of natural behaviours.
- d. Ensure wombats are not held for an extended period of time that may compromise their successful rehabilitation.
- e. Advise the co-ordinator of any injured wombat requiring rehabilitation as soon as possible.
- f. Provide protection from domestic pets and other predators;
- g. No joey to be used as an item for 'show and tell'.

JUDE WOMBAT



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

by developing an individual wombat rehabilitation plan, in consultation with the coordinator (See Appendices B & C).

Rescue

- a. Assistance of an experienced rescuer should be called for difficult rescues.
- b. NATF Wildlife Rescue Service DOES NOT relocate uninjured wombats without N.P.W.S. authority.

Assessing Viability –A joey will generally be considered viable when eye slits are visible and ears are detached from the head;

Taking in account hydration levels, as a guide this means:

- ♦ From approximately 150gms.(3 months old, mouth not fused)

Viability of all neonatal wombats is to be reassessed by the coordinator one week after coming into rehabilitation.

Benny Wombat 170 gms.



Rehabilitation

- a. Rehabilitation placement is determined by the coordinator with buddying a priority.
- b. All joey wombats to be raised with a buddy of similar age/size where possible.
- c. The coordinator should be advised of any changes to
 - i. Health or condition
 - ii. Feeding problems
- d. The coordinator should be advised of any changes to the joey's rehabilitation plan including:
 - i. Buddying
 - ii. Transferring
 - iii. Temporary changes to rehabilitation eg joey-sitting, holidays.
 - iv. Release

Release

Juveniles

- a. Release sites to be pre-determined according to the individual wombat management plan.
- b. Juveniles to be released with a buddy – the buddy with whom the joey has been raised
- c. Release consideration may include hard release or soft release with preference given to soft release.
- d. Final release shall occur at dispersal age and when the juvenile wombat meets a combination of weight, age and fitness criteria, including:
 - ♦ be able to seek and find natural foods
 - ♦ be dehumanised and actively avoid humans
 - ♦ does not associate disturbance with food

- ♦ be weathered and able to seek shelter from inclement weather
- ♦ be predator-proof and actively avoid non-species including pets.

Adults

- a. To be released back to encounter site or as close as possible

Euthanasia

- a. All decisions regarding euthanasia must be made in either the best interest of the individual animal or the species as a whole.
- b. Any injury to the wombat must be reported to and assessed by Coordinator in consultation with the treating vet.
- c. Euthanasia must only be conducted by a qualified veterinarian.

3 *Behaving at all times in a manner which reflects favourably with the NATF including:*

Complying with the General Licence Conditions and NATF Rescuers' and Rehabilitators' Policy including:

- a. Informing the coordinator of all wombats that come into rehabilitation.
- b. Recording all wombat and submitting NATF data sheets to the data base coordinator monthly.
- c. Accepting that NPWS, the Management Committee or the Wombat Coordinator has the right to monitor the progress and facilities of all wombat rescuer/rehabilitators including the right to inspect premises and facilities.
- d. Developing a working relationship with a nominated veterinarian interested in native wildlife.
- e. At no time authorising X-rays or surgery without the permission of a Wombat Coordinator.
- f. Accessing ongoing training opportunities to keep abreast of current procedures and rehabilitation methods.
- g. Ensuring NPWS regulations are enforced and adult species are returned to their original encounter site.
- h. Maintaining detailed joey care and history report to accompany joey throughout its rehabilitation.

All NATF 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).

Reference. A guide to the care of Common Wombats.

Linda Dennis: Course organiser, presenter and author of the care guide.

Kim Rolls: Course presenter and author of the Veterinary guide

Shirley Lack: Course co-presenter

Peggy Wombat



APPENDIX A

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FACILITIES INSPECTION CHECKLIST

WOMBATS

The following is a guide to equipment & facilities that will 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.

It can be used as a checklist and completed by the member prior to a facilities inspection.

A. General Rehabilitation: Emergency Care & Orphaned Young			
HEAT SOURCE Quantity & Type eg Heat pad	☐ YES ☐ NO	BASKETS or BOXES Number & Type	☐ YES ☐ NO
DIGITAL SCALES	☐ YES ☐ NO	Portable Cot	☐ YES ☐ NO
FIRST AID EQUIPMENT Vetwrap; antiseptic,	☐ YES ☐ NO		
REHYDRATION Equipment (Lecatade, Polyaide; syringe/tubes etc).	☐ YES ☐ NO	TOWELS	☐ YES ☐ NO
FOOD ➤ Feeding containers - general ➤ Bottles and teats ➤ Milk formulae – Wambaroo, Divetelact, Biolac	☐ YES ☐ NO	STERILISATION EQUIPMENT & Facilities Eg Milton; Bleach, Nappisan etc	☐ YES ☐ NO

Location suitable for Emergency Care (Quiet, warm, access to shade)	☐ YES ☐ NO
Maximum Wildlife Capacity for Emergency Care	
Maximum Wildlife Capacity for Long term rehabilitation	

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**FACILITIES INSPECTION REPORT**

(To be completed by person conducting the Facilities Inspection)

MEMBER'S NAME: _____**ADDRESS** _____

I agree that the equipment & facilities held by _____ will provide optimum levels of care and 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 and
- Providing fauna with an opportunity to express a range of natural behaviours.

1. TRAINING

Course	Date Completed	Training Update Required (Year)

2. DATA

Data submitted monthly	☐ YES ☐ NO
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3. LEVEL OF AUTHORISATION OF FACILITIES APPROVED:

- ☐ Emergency Care
- ☐ Orphaned Young: Up to 2.5 Kilos
- ☐ Emerging Young: 2.5 Kilos to 6-7 Kilos
- ☐ Pre Release: From 6-7Kilos to 18 Kilos

4. SPECIES OF FAUNA SUITABLE TO THE FACILITIES APPROVED☐ Wombats

Person Completing Inspection: _____

Signature: _____ Date _____

Member's Signature _____ Date _____

(Copy to be sent to member; Original to be held by:)

Review Date if required (to be set by the member in consultation with person completing inspection) _____

FACILITY REQUIREMENTS

- 1 **Emergency Care:**
Equipment (pouches, heat source, hydration fluids and feeding bottles/teats/milk, first aid equipment.)
Quiet dark area
- 2 **Orphaned Young:**
Equipment (pouches, heat source, baskets, boxes, frames, cot, scales, feeding equipment, food, rehydration fluids, sterilisation equipment, towels.)
Area for “play time”
- 3 **Emerging Young:**
Access to an outdoor grazing area at dawn and dusk. Access to an area where the natural instinct to dig can be accommodated. Still needs “Inside” accommodation at other times. Needs carer as “Foster Mother” to “supervise” activities.
- 4 **Pre release:** Wombat enclosure as detailed in “A guide to the Care of Common Wombats” by Linda Denis, Kim Rolls and Shirley Lack is the base requirement for this stage.