

# Night Wings



Quarterly Newsletter

AUTUMN/WINTER 2010



Ofer Levy (i)

*Taking a drink—this stunning action shot of a Grey-Headed Flying-fox belly dipping was captured by film-maker Ofer Levy. We thank him for his kind permission to publish this photograph, and another featured on page 12.*

## Dam fence no longer a bat trap!

We are pleased to report the fence from hell over a Sunshine Coast dam that has caught countless bats has finally been replaced with plain wire.

Many rescues have been conducted over the years at this hotspot, but those days are over thanks to Carmel's efforts securing the generous grant from the Maleny Credit Union and her powers of persuasion obtaining the owner's agreement to change it for plain wire.

Also thanks to the MCU, we have a fresh new roll of netting for the release aviary that will be installed over the coming months.

*Right: Sue Richardson is dwarfed by the new netting to be installed at Peachester*



*Above: The dam is wildlife friendly at last*





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Deadlines: 1st March, 1st June, 1st September, 1st December  
Please send comments/contributions to:  
[admin@batrescue.org.au](mailto:admin@batrescue.org.au)

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

### Branch Closures

This edition of the newsletter is the last that will contain Branch reports from Lockyer Valley and Gold Coast, which both officially close their Bat Rescue doors on 30th June. Thank you to our Honorary Solicitor, Ray Barber, for so willingly donating his time assisting with a few technicalities.

Bat Rescue was established on the Sunshine Coast in 2002 and was the only bat-specific care group in S.E. Queensland. The addition of carers from other areas resulted in the eventual establishment of three Branches covering a wide geographical area. In 2007, Bat Rescue Brisbane's enormous growth and widespread activity prompted the need for them to become their own entity. Bat Rescue Inc. willingly provided intellectual property and other support that they requested to ease their establishment process. Although now an entirely separate organisation, the variation on Bat Rescue's name that they have since adopted is an enormous compliment which acknowledges their roots and by association identifies with our aims, standards and reputation. It has been very pleasing to witness Bat Conservation & Rescue Inc. (as they are now known) going from strength to strength over the last three years.

Peter and Gabi from Lockyer Valley have announced their decision to start up their own bat venture, and Gold Coast members also recently expressed the desire for almost total autonomy in their own area. To accommodate these changes, it was decided that both Branches will cease operation at the end of this financial year. However, neither the bats nor the carers in those areas will be disadvantaged in that rescue and rehab operations can continue, albeit under a different banner and licence.

This organisational change will not affect carers in the Sunshine Coast region, nor any Support members, except in a positive way in that Bat Rescue will now be able to concentrate on activities on a more local level. Invitations to renew membership for the new financial year will be sent out shortly.

Bat Rescue is proud of the part we have played in providing the knowledge, experience and confidence to our members to enable them to become self-sufficient in their own local region and inspired the formation of other new bat groups in S.E. Queensland.

We thank all outgoing members for their past contribution to Bat Rescue Inc., and their extraordinary dedication to the welfare of bats. We wish them every success as they continue their bat-caring journey, and look forward to our paths crossing again in future.

*Sylvia Hood*



## TREASURER'S REPORT

Since the last newsletter, there has been a considerable amount of fundraising achieved within the group, as detailed in the table below. Our thanks to all those volunteers who have contributed, particularly during busy summer months which were also preoccupied with orphan rearing.

Being one of our quiet years in terms of orphans, and thanks to the supply of cheap and free fruit sourced by Peter and Gabi, lower than usual expenditure on creche/release resulted. The recent fundraising efforts will therefore now allow us to make our annual donation to benefit another organisation that we feel deserves support.

The Currumbin Wildlife Hospital treats enormous numbers of injured wildlife, including many of the rehab bats that are rescued by members on the Gold Coast and taken to Currumbin for assessment and treatment. This year a proposal was put forward to choose Currumbin Wildlife Hospital as the worthy recipient of a donation from Bat Rescue Inc. The Committee recently ratified this decision, and a donation will be sent in the very near future as a token of our appreciation for the efforts of Dr Michael Pyne and his staff.

We will soon be gearing up for the end of financial year which is almost upon us again. This means preparing the books for the auditor and ensuring all payments required to be made this Financial Year are finalised before June 30.

**Please ensure all receipts and any funds such as chocolate sales are submitted or banked prior to 30 June.**

December 2009 until March 2010				
Gross Income	BRSC	BRLV	BRGC	Total
sizzles	\$ 1,119	\$ 2,026		\$ 3,145
Chocs	\$ 550		\$ 477	\$ 1,027
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 1,669</b>	<b>\$ 2,026</b>	<b>\$ 477</b>	<b>\$ 4,172</b>

—Carmel Givens

## Donations & Orphan Sponsorship—Oops!

A glitch was recently discovered on our Paypal account which unfortunately prevented us from receiving notification of any donations made via the website between October 2009 and February 2010.

The problem has now been resolved, and we offer our apologies and belated thanks to the following people (two of whom are repeat sponsors), who have generously contributed to our funds in this way:

- **Craig Johnston**  
North Canterbury, New Zealand
- **Jan McKenzie**  
Currumbin Qld
- **Nicole Hemler**  
Pennsylvania USA
- **Kelly Forsyth**  
Perth WA
- **Joanne Adams**  
Civic Square ACT

Joanne's orphan (which she has already named 'Joy') will be the first sponsored baby for 2010 when the season kicks off again in Spring.

We were also pleased to receive a donation from Cody Rawlings (aged 9) from the USA, although unfortunately the banking system will not accept his cheque in foreign currency.

Finally, a special thanks to bat-loving supporters **Cesare Piazza and Lina Severino** from Parma, Italy, who have recently placed yet another large order for Jeannette's specially designed Bat Rescue t-shirts, bringing their total to almost 50!

An up-to-date list of all our donors, orphan sponsors and in-kind supporters can be found on the website's 'Sponsor a Bat' page.



## Welcome to New Member

Bat Rescue warmly welcomes Kate Louis (Peachester) as a new Active member, and wishes her a long and happy association with us.

*Only vaccinated and current financial members in the 'ACTIVE' membership category are included on Bat Rescue's group permit to care for bats.*



Photo: Kerr Shan

We were saddened to learn of the sudden recent passing of Eda Beck.

Professionally, Eda was a respected Psychologist and academic. She was also an enthusiastic supporter of many humanitarian and animal causes particularly within the volunteering community, and Bat Rescue was privileged to have been included amongst her favourite local charities. In addition to donations made to our organization, members of the Gold Coast Branch also enjoyed Eda's generous sponsorship of several Christmas parties.

Our condolences to all those whose lives were touched and inspired by this remarkable lady. Eda will be greatly missed and fondly remembered by many.



## AROUND THE ROOSTS—SUNSHINE COAST REPORT

### Drizzle at our Sizzle!

Well actually it was more than drizzle, it poured! February 7th was a challenging day with gusty winds, intermittent downpours and yet we managed to keep a smile on the dial and serve our snags in style. Feedback was great from the staff at Bunnings, who said they enjoyed our sizzle immensely. Despite the fact that we persisted on site until 4pm, the weather affected our takings but every little bit helps. We raised a grand total of \$1,119.00.

Thanks to all those members who came along and pitched in: Lyn Boston, Carmel and Rid, Jackie Williams, Heather McMurray and family, Jennifer Singfield, Sammy Ringer, Danielle Dedman and Sylvia Hood.



### WORKING BEE 14th August 2010

Volunteers needed to assist with on-site maintenance at the Peachester release aviary to ensure it is all ready for next season. Please phone Sue (54949292) if you are available to help.

### Recent Positive Media

**Sunshine Coast Daily**

**Bats really are a blessing**

By LORRIE LEE - 13/07/2010

**BLESSED** are the forest visitors. Drastic weather, severe storms, along with habitat off-fit factors and other life incidents, may force-given bats to seek refuge, but as far as the Sunshine Coast Bat Rescue and Rehabilitation Society is concerned, the last concern isn't habitat. An illustration of a bat from here on the Coast.

According to the co-president of local organization Sue Richardson, since 1993, there are "tens of thousands" of bats in colonies on the Coast, about 6000 - more than 90% of 13,000 - are in the Peachester release aviary which flows over the Bruce Highway at dusk.

"They're not at all bats," she said. "They will look for a warmer climate during the winter months, returning to breed during October to December."

She said, like humans, like bats have a memory, and they're another large group. All Peachester bats, 60,000 individuals, are known as Peachester bats and bats decide before they fly north.

According to Sue, the rescue bats are known as Peachester bats or their local or common name. They are able to pick up the pollen from eucalypts, which is only released at dusk. They capture the wasp over a large distance, unlike gliders whose range is for smaller distances.

RESCUE COORDINATOR - Carmel Givens and Rid Givens, who rescue and release injured bats back into the wild, and they're future Project co-coordinators, said the "key to pollution" for bats traps on the Coast - and their prediction for未来 is that products have a more neurological than auditory trap.

"I say to the humans, bats don't want to eat your traps and your poison - it's just that we have all got them all out there," Rid Givens said.

an inventory of bats can be seen at the website of the Bat Research Institute.

"And it is not yet been proved that they can pass through viruses," he added.

His flood and rescue teams, across an injured bat should not touch it.

Instead, they should call the 1300 800 7000, phone on 0441 6226 and a dedicated helpline number emerges to pick up.

### Deformity detected in orphan

A very strange case came our way this bat season. It was only when teething started and the new teeth were causing discomfort for the bat that what looked like an 'over-bite' began developing.

The teeth were hitting the gums and breaking the skin. After examination and xray by a vet to confirm the genetic deformity, the decision was made to euthanase.

When we pick up baby bats that appear to have been 'dropped', or indeed rescue orphaned wildlife of any species, we also have to bear in mind that they may have been abandoned deliberately.

Nature seems cruel at times dealing with the 'weak links' in this way, but for a carer to rear and release such individuals is contrary to the laws of nature—and could perpetuate whatever genetic disorder they may carry.

### Care Co-Ordinator

Carmel Givens has been appointed as Care Co-Ordinator for the group. She will be the primary point of contact for carers regarding all aspects of rehabilitation, including C3 incident reporting and decisions as to appropriate care and treatment, release, euthanasia etc. See page 2 for Carmel's contact details.

—Sylvia Hood



### Bat Rescue Snake Rescue

Here's a story we heard that needs to be shared!

Sue Richardson (intrepid Snake Handler, Talented Artist and Defender of Bats), was obliged to free a snake that became entangled in fish netting that is draped on the interior and exterior of the bat aviary. Fish netting makes a great landing pad for bats and is fun for them to scramble up.

So there she is, clinging to a ladder in her nightie at some ungodly hour while the bats inside hung on the bottom of the hessian sacks fearfully peeking out to see if she had retrieved it.

Snakes at Peachester are always whoppers and this one was no exception. Sue needed the help of one son to wrestle it into a sack.

A late finish on a week night meant he was very tired and was worried he might fall asleep at school the next day. Sue's advice? "Just tell the teacher you were up late last night with mum playing snakes and ladders!"

## Bat Interrupted!

### 'The Last Resort' (Sunshine Coast Release Site)

Well folks, another season over – almost....the support feed is being slowly tailed off – rather late. (Luckily for Marcus the Narcolept – another story, bless his little cotton socks). The only way to describe this season is...*weird!*

Everything was looking to be the cushiest season on record for yours truly— fewer bats, perfect weather, an abundance of blossom etc. Then a little bird (obviously a white dove) came and told me “Build an ark, and fill it with an abundance of fruit bats”.

Naturally I ignored the best advice, and was taken unawares. In not too short order the heavens opened and the bats came in begging “Let me in, I don’t wanna be a bat anymore!”

The poor little mites were cold, wet, hungry and shell shocked. I don’t think any of us knew what had hit us when the deluge started – and didn’t stop. So the cage was filled again, first with some bearing toe rings, then shut back down to separate groups with toe rings removed. Obviously there was less room, but they didn’t seem to give a hoot. There was a dry place to hang, and food to keep them warm. It seemed like forever that we were stuck in a holding pattern. The camp bats (the Greys having just turned up late and only days before the first intake) were equally miserable, hungry and cold, flying out silently as though a massive chore—which I can only imagine it was—and filled with fruitless searches.

Though the release cage was not technically flooded, a good deal of that end of the property was, and it seemed that even the slopes were a couple of inches deep. Wading was the only way to get around. The kids were ecstatic, as the road to school was flooded more often than not. They mentioned that I was going mouldy but, I had to admit, I always look like that!

I suppose the brightest side of all of this is that never have I seen so little food wastage. Those little dudes did not spare a morsel this season. I have lost count of the number of snakes removed, but it is certainly less than previous seasons.

Finally, the babies were all released. Those who came back were released well ahead of the newer ones, and though in some cases integration has been a bit slower this year (due largely to food scarcity, I think), despite smaller numbers, those coming back into care temporarily have only done so due to harsh adverse conditions and in no way due to their preparation for life in the wild. Well done. A very balanced bunch of youngsters, I must say. Thanks must be given also to Gabi and Peter for wonderful crèche work to turn out such prepared little individuals, and making sure no one



‘slipped through the gaps’ with regard to readiness. Also, huge thanks to Gabi and Carmel for seeing to all the other tiresome details such as fruit ordering, delivery etc, without which I would’ve been reduced to a mumbling idiot (hey I heard that!)

Food is still short out there, I fear, and so the tail off will take as long as it needs to, and perhaps the remaining wild Blacks here (probably bearing frostbite at this stage!) will finally move North and take our youngsters to warmer climes. At present they are grateful for a bit of extra support but in no way attached to the release site, and hanging out during the day with their wilder cousins, so in that respect we have achieved success despite harsh conditions.

I will keep you posted in the next newsletter as to the final outcome of the wettest season on record for many years.....

—Sue Richardson



Colony Site	Total	Grey-Headed	Black	Little Red
Landsborough	1,630	5%	95%	0
Peachester	5,460	40%	60%	0
Parklands	3,180	30%	70%	0
Mooloolaba	6,200	49%	50%	1%
Weyba Creek*	0	0	0	0

\*campsite unoccupied



## LOCKYER VALLEY BRANCH REPORT

By all accounts it was a very 'weird' bat season for many wildlife groups!

### Creche Report

Creche One consisted of 13 orphans and two mums with large juvenile babies which were released on 25<sup>th</sup> February. After much concern re the mothers joining crèche, I am happy to say the exercise was a great success and the whole group benefited from the wise mums—especially Tessler who unfortunately had to be separated from her unviable mum before she came to us.

I'd like to share one quite moving experience Pete and I were privy to with this group.

It was the first weigh day for Crèche One. All had been weighed, mums and bubs checked and Tessler (who had only been separated from her mum the week before and crash weaned) was the only one left. She was naturally nervous and one of the mums opened her one free wing for Tessler to snuggle in. Her own baby was in the other wing. Tessler was greatly comforted by this and after a bit of soothing talking by us, we were able to gently bundle Tessler up from the mum's wing without any fuss from either for weighing. The mum knew we meant no harm and passed that message on. We really all know so little about these

animals and experiences like this just highlight how big that gap really is.

Creche three, comprising five juveniles, officially started on 1<sup>st</sup> March. Included in the mix were three 10 week juveniles who had no idea about captivity, complete with strange food and scary monster humans. This presents quite a challenge for rehabilitation and often requires that the 10 weeker is treated like a 5-6 weeker until he/she comes up to speed.

Creche three had one extra challenge thrown in as well—a corneal ulcer!

Every single evening we had the bonus of offering ALL our crèche inmates mango kebabs. Our kind neighbours gave us open slather on their abundant mango orchard for which we are most grateful. Thank you Jim and Judy Whistler-Kerr.



After weeks of chopping and drilling fruit we said goodbye to the last of the orphans, wished them a long and flappy life and hung up our orphan hats for another season (maybe).

### Little Red Rescue

We have had one rescue of a delightful Little Red named 'Hally' with severe membrane damage. We enlisted the help of Gavin at the Gold Coast to assist us with a treatment plan. Hally now requires time and a lot of treatment and healing energy. He was treated with aspirin, clavulox and Macadamia oil massages. We so hope he will fly free again one day.

The photos below are of Hally's membrane damage.

### New Year Sausage Sizzle

Lockyer Valley Bunnings sizzle was held on 3rd January. We raised \$1,462 and would like to thank the non-members that made this possible—Hugh, Kerry and Daniel. Thanks to Emily, Jenny, Gitie, Peter and Gabi for their hard work. Daniel and Hugh were the BBQ stars and we are hoping they will come back again. Emily and Daniel thank you for travelling all that way to help.

—Gabi & Pete

### SURVEY

Assessment of Mammal Rehabilitation as a Conservation Strategy & Investigation of methods to improve success.

A request has been received from Amanda Guy, PhD Student at UNSW, Sydney seeking willing participants in the above survey. If you are interested in assisting Amanda, please login to:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/GB2LLX3>

All data will be treated anonymously and no individuals will be identified in the data or any publications.



## GOLD COAST BRANCH REPORT

### More Gold Coast Powerlines Bundled



#### Netting cloud a silver lining for Karl

Gold Coast discovered that the problem an animal presents with might not be the one that poses the most risk to its health.

Adult black flying fox 'Karl' came into care the usual way – entanglement in mango netting. With minor wing injuries and a graze on the nose, Karl was expected to stay the routine 7-10 days for observation.

A keen eater, in good shape and flying well, Karl was all set for release when on day nine this 'graze' begun to turn into a rather ominous bump. A trip to Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary confirmed that Karl was in fact suffering from a chronic decay of a canine tooth that had gone on to cause a re-occurring abscess and infection in the jaw bone.

Vet Michael Pyne performed some impressive dentistry, removing the rotten tooth and infection, and after two months on antibiotics Karl received a clean bill of health and was released.



It's rare that the dreaded backyard fruit net does any good for anyone, but in the case of Karl the timely entanglement may have saved him from a slow and painful death.

*Karl after treatment at the dentist*

While it was a quiet season for young orphans, a number of older bubs between 10-16 weeks came in during January and February after getting in to trouble and requiring care and creching. There was the usual crop of pregnant mums caught in fruit netting then birthing in care, as well as the typical netting and barbed-wire adult rescues and rehabs. Rescue capacity on the Coast is always stretched, with Gold Coast rescuers kept busy with 110 calls resulting in 75 rescues being attended in the 84 days between the start of the December and 22 February.

Some highlights included Gold Coast branch successfully lobbying to have a particularly lethal set of powerlines bundled to prevent bat and bird electrocution. After a third bat death in seven days, Energex heeded requests from Bat Rescue and approved a work order to fix the powerlines in Rudd Court, Broadbeach as a priority.

#### Carer decides to specialise

After a horror start to the season when the destruction of a number of microbat habitats led to many animals coming into care, Katrina realised bigger isn't always better, and decided to specialise in looking after micros. She and husband Jim constructed a dedicated soft release aviary and, after a lot of study, is having some success with the little guys.

#### ABL detected during rescue

Katrina and teenage son Oscar (also vaccinated) attended a rescue in Beaudesert of a Little Red Flying-fox that had no apparent injuries but was convulsing and struggling on the ground.

Quick-thinking Oscar had never seen the effects of Australian Bat Lyssavirus (a rabies-related virus) before, but observed enough to recognise the signs he had heard about. Katrina did the rescue, taking even more care than usual, hydrating and stabilising the patient and keeping her in quarantine. A few hours later the bat had died. Katrina immediately contacted DPI and organised ABL testing, which came back positive.

The death of this poor animal serves as a reminder to all carers that while ABL is thankfully rare, it is very much still in existence and a potential killer, so taking the utmost care with all rescues and handling is essential.

—Jeannette Miles

Members will be concerned to hear that Gold Coast carer Wendy Augl is battling a serious illness.

We offer our prayers and support to Wendy and her family that they can find courage and strength during this difficult time.





## Maya—My First Ever Orphan

She was strange and a little frightening on first encounter. Sharp little teeth and razor-like claws. Slippery membrane that seemed as fragile as gossamer. When you touched it, it seemed to stick to you and it was impossible to gauge how 'tough' it was. Bright little eyes and a vocabulary that seemed to consist of 'grumpy' and 'grumpier'.

She clambered and skittered and attached herself to me in odd ways. I wasn't sure how to handle her and she – quite obviously – wasn't sure that I was her new mum.

When frightened she would use her sharp teeth and terrier-strong mouth to latch onto me – usually in the nipple area! When content she would purr and hiccup. Or was it contentment? Could it be a sore tummy or fear? I could only guess.

Maya wasn't soft and cuddly like a possum, but she did have one thing in common with them – total devotion to the bottle and a savage sucking of same till the last drop of her milk was gone. Even when it was gone, the bottle was *still hers* – and she wasn't going to let go of it!

On that first night, she settled on her airer and watched me as I went about my business. Nine p.m. and time for a feed. She seemed to know the routine and jumped onto my stomach and then hung from my sleeve. Gently untangling her, I got her into her mumma roll and pulled the bottle from the warm water.

"Sceech durp durp che che che!!!"

She obviously knew exactly what the bottle was and, eventually, even came to know the sounds of her milk being prepared (well, I think she did anyway!)

So she was smart. Not cuddly, but cute in her own way. Our first morning and my first 'wash' of my new girl. I must admit it was rather difficult turning her over and around and sponging down her svelte wings and grey-specked fur. But she loved it.

With time, I came to enjoy our morning closeness when she would stretch out luxuriously first one wing then the other for her wash and then giggle as she wee'd over herself.

Maya grew and I put her on steamed apple between milk feeds. Then raw apple. Then grapes and pears and mango and anything else that had 'fruit' written on it.

She was the first thing I saw on waking in the morning – all cloaked up in her wings, two little eyes watching me. The downside – I live in an open plan flat and she learned to fly (to me) all too quickly. I was told that I should



Sammy Ringer

make her stints in the outdoor aviary a 'reward' but she knew better and hated it.

Poo – yes, they do a lot that. And of course, the spat-out fruit that I am still finding stuck to odd things around the place.

And the red T-shirt! Getting ready to go out one night I slipped on a bright red T-shirt and went to give her a goodbye cuddle. My screams of "Maya! NO BITING!" were wasted as she pummelled, bit and scratched at me and my offending apparel.

Actually we were advised in the training course to have a special 'bat shirt' to be worn whenever handling them – but I had to learn the hard way. Perfume or any other strange smell clinging to me would have the same effect, and some afternoons she would go into full fight mode for no other reason than it was 3 o'clock. Or 4 o'clock. I never did discover what set her off in these moods but they always passed – usually with her cuddled near my arm-pit nibbling on my arm and hiccupping in pleasure.

The day grew nearer when she was to go. I had her well plumped up (overweight) and spending longer (but not happier) periods in the aviary but I was convinced, when I heard Carmel's car in the drive, that Maya wasn't quite ready – she really needed a few more days...Or was it I that needed them?

Of course Maya made the trip without mishap and spent a few moments missing me before deciding that other bats *really* were more interesting and fun to be with.

Fly well, my little Maya and have many little Mayettes in the future. If I should come across them, I'm sure I'll recognise you in their cheeky little eyes – and their skill in nipple-wrestling!

—Sammy Ringer

## Website's 5th Birthday!

Not long after Bat Rescue's domain name was first registered in May 2005, a basic website was launched. Back then, creating a website (particularly with all the features we wanted) could cost around \$5,000. Way beyond our reach! Early in 2006 a design project by UQ students resulted in the current website template, but unfortunately no finished product.

A few months later BRGC co-founder Gary Bressan persuaded a business associate to complete the website, and to provide a one-hour crash course in operating it's Contents Management System, all for the grand total of \$50! The cost of annual webhosting has subsequently been donated through the same connection. We extend our thanks to Brett Warner for his continued sponsorship.

Our new bargain website went live in October 2006. The PayPal facility and the online records system were added during 2007, with Gold Coast Branch pioneering the use of the Rescue Call Logs function from 1 July 2007.

We recently received a website enquiry from a business in Holland which breeds and sells various exotic animals (including sugar gliders) seeking advice on what to feed a newborn Egyptian Fruitbat (*Rousettus aegyptiacus*) which had been rejected by it's mother. From the photo sent to us (→), their breeding colony appears to live in a rather barren cage environment. However, the Netherlands (like many other countries) has no legislation governing individuals keeping and breeding exotic animals. A pair of 'pre-loved' Egyptian Fruitbats can be purchased in England for £250 (approximately \$425). Baby sugar gliders are sold as pets for approximately \$205 each!

Num	Perc.	Country Name	Flag
277	55.40%	Australia	AU
132	26.40%	United States	US
23	4.60%		
15	3.00%	Switzerland	CH
14	2.80%	Canada	CA
9	1.80%	India	IN
6	1.20%	United Kingdom	GB
4	0.80%	New Zealand	NZ
3	0.60%	Singapore	SG
2	0.40%	Sri Lanka	LK
2	0.40%	Indonesia	ID
2	0.40%	Tanzania, United Republic Of	TZ
1	0.20%	Ukraine	UA
1	0.20%	Spain	ES
1	0.20%	Korea, Republic Of	KR
1	0.20%	Bulgaria	BG
1	0.20%	Austria	AT
1	0.20%	Philippines	PH
1	0.20%	Japan	JP
1	0.20%	Netherlands	NL
1	0.20%	United Arab Emirates	AE
1	0.20%	Nigeria	NG
1	0.20%	Czech Republic	CZ

HITLOG STATS: 28/05/10



## Increasing visitor numbers

The website's hitlog provides daily statistics about visitors to the website. Owners of commercial sites would probably be a bit horrified by our figures, but considering the limited popularity of bats (and our website's various shortcomings!), the number of visitors we are now achieving is surprising.

Year	Page Loads	Total Visitors
2007	19,163	5,902
2008	34,295	14,122
2009	39,478	16,583

During 2009 a total of 94 email enquiries were received from all over the world via the *Contact Us* page on the website. As a result, information and in some cases supplies, has been sent to people caring for bats in Guam, Papua New Guinea, Singapore, USA and UK.

The number of emails received so far this year indicates enquiries for 2010 will be far in excess of last year's, and represents a lot of midnight oil being burned by Sylvia and Vicki who share the job of responding to them all.



## END OF YEAR

Carers, please ensure all your online animal records and call logs are up to date by 30 June to enable us to start preparing end of year activity reports.

Thank you!



## C3 Incident Report Form

These days it seems public liability can easily become an issue, so for each incident involving a bat bite or scratch it is necessary to document that official procedures have been followed. An official C3 INCIDENT REPORT FORM is now available for use. The injured person is required to sign this form to acknowledge they have been provided with advice on wound washing and seeking medical follow-up.

The document can be downloaded from the website's FORMS section or, for those without access to a printer, hard copies can be obtained from Carmel or Sylvia. Forms should be kept handy with your rescue equipment.



# Vampires Suck!

Almost no culture is free from superstitions about vampires. The earliest known Old World vampire myths date from ancient Babylonia, as well as Greece, China and India—all long before the earliest European tales of blood-sucking bats.

A popular vampire myth amongst eastern Europe gypsies apparently originated from India where Buta, Brahmaparusha, and Rakshara (and we'll be keeping an eye out for these distinctive names cropping up next orphan season, by the way) roamed at night, killing and sucking the blood of humans.

According to Indian and gypsy folklore, vampires had the ability to transform into various animals including chickens, horses, dogs, cats, snakes, fleas and even into pumpkins or watermelons. Despite their association with demons and the souls of the dead, bats were never actually connected with vampires.



Large bats that kill, and in some cases eat people, occur in folklore throughout much of South America.

Artwork on pre-Columbian ceremonial knives and other artefacts also show that bats were closely associated with ritual sacrifices, usually through decapitation in which human blood was offered to appease the gods.

During the late 17th and 18th centuries outbreaks of mysterious devastating epidemic diseases, particularly bubonic plague and smallpox were often believed to be of supernatural origin. This all created and fuelled vampire hysteria and obsession.

England was relatively free of vampire mythology until eventually inspired by stories from the Continent, particularly Dracula.

Bram Stoker's tale 'Dracula' written in 1897 not only associated bats with vampires, but also with a real person—Vlad Tepes (Vlad the Impaler), a Romanian prince who lived from 1430 to 1476.

Vlad Tepes was the famously blood-thirsty son of Vlad Dracul. He called himself Dracula ('son of Dracul') and reputedly ordered the deaths of 100,000 people. Vlad was an expert at torture, but his legend is not associated with drinking the blood of his victims.

Much of the fear that people have about bats, and one of the questions often asked at Bat Rescue's displays and educational events, is whether bats suck blood. In fact a few species DO feed off blood (see story below), but none are found here in Australia. We should perhaps be grateful that the only sucking our local bats can do are on bottles of milk, not to mention the constant drain on our pockets!

## The real 'Twilight Zone'

Of approximately 1,000 species of bats in the world, there are only three vampire species and all are found within Mexico, Brazil, Chile and Argentina. These small bats are between 6-9cm long and can weigh up to 50gms. Their main prey is domestic livestock particularly cattle, goats and fowl.

Once a vampire bat locates a host, usually while it is sleeping, it lands and stealthily approaches it from the ground, walking on all fours. They are highly-evolved hunters with specialised thermoreceptors which help them locate



Photo: PassmoreLab

areas where the prey's blood flows close to the skin. Their front teeth are efficient at cutting and removing skin and their saliva contains an anticoagulant which, when injected, prevents the prey's blood from clotting. To add a little 'yuk' factor to this story—often they will return night after night to the same animal so they simply just have to pull back the scab from previous visits to feed on more blood. The volume of an average feed is around 20mls.



Vampire bats are also known to be very charitable and will adopt orphans and donate some of their meal to others back at the colony who are sick or haven't fed adequately themselves.

## Flinders Reef Bat Encounter



Flinders Reef is located some 220km East of Townsville and forms part of the fragmented sections of the outer Great Barrier Reef. A place of extreme beauty, Flinders abounds with unique diving experiences for those fortunate enough to visit this nautical marvel of nature.

It was during our visit to the area in mid-2007 that our family encountered 'Betty Bat', as she was named.

We had sailed our 50 foot catamaran *Elanah* out to Flinders Reef, arriving mid-afternoon and dropping anchor in the crystal clear sandy bottomed lagoon. The weather and the water was pristine and inviting, it was not long before a visit to the nearby sand cay was in order. Although not large, a ten minute stroll will take you all the way round; the most interesting treasures await to be investigated.

It was whilst we were preparing to go 'ashore' that my fearless crew member and wonderful wife, Geraldine, was standing on the foredeck when she was surprised by the sudden unexpected arrival of Betty Bat.

If a creature was to rehearse a grand entrance, there would be no better script than the one Betty used. Not satisfied with coming to rest in the rigging (of which there is plenty), she chose instead to make a landing on Geraldine's back. With claws filled with hair and shirt she wasn't going anywhere!

You can probably imagine the surprise we got. Especially Geraldine! So it was over to fearless husband to come to the rescue.

"Don't move I want some pictures!!!"



What else would you do? No one would possibly believe a story such as this without the pics to prove it. So, dutiful wife that she is, my dearest stayed put for 'Cecil Beaton' to do his thing.

Betty stayed put for some ten minutes or so, by which time Geraldine was definitely getting tired of trotting around the free-loader. But what to do? Where do you relocate a wayward bat when the nearest tree by our calculations is some 80-odd kilometers away over open ocean?

I think Betty must have sensed our concern and took matters into her own wings. A leap and off she flew, only to land in the sea 20 meters off the starboard side. This mustered all hands to the rescue. Having quickly donned some heavy leather gloves, Betty was duly retrieved and given a gentle rinse in fresh water, a drink of the same and a safe roost under the furled headsail for the immediate future. Satellite phone calls to shore advised us to leave her be, let her rest and she would find her own way.

After regular checks to see that all was well with Betty we settled down for the night. The 1 a.m. check showed no change. Still on the headsail with wings wrapped tight. However come 3 a.m. Betty was gone. We can but hope that she found her way to safety or took refuge at the small weather recording structure on Flinders Cay.

The question is— how did she get this far out to sea? Maybe she 'jumped ship' having stowed away aboard a freighter of some sort? We just don't know. It was a very much unexpected encounter and one to be remembered always.

—Peter & Geraldine Moon

*This lovely couple visited the Bat Rescue display stand at the recent Maleny Wood Expo. We thank them for sharing their strange story of Betty Bat with us!*



## Mechanics of Bat Flight

When birds flap their wings, they obtain lift on the downstroke. With each upstroke, they open their wing feathers like slats on a venetian blind, so air can pass through them.

Bats, with their thin wing membrane instead of feathers, have evolved a complex system of wing movements that provides lift on both the down-stroke and the upstroke.

Researchers in the USA studied bats flying in a fog-filled wind tunnel and discovered that slow-moving bats give their wings a backward flick during the upstroke, which helps lift them into the air.

Each bat wing also generates its own vortex, interlinked by other air currents shed by the body - something not seen in birds. Another find was that during each upstroke, different parts of the



bat wing produce negative and positive lift.

According to an article published in a past edition of *Science* journal, Defence experts are actively investigating the de-

velopment of small, highly maneuverable robot air vehicles for military surveillance based on the way microbats move so easily around tight spaces, twisting and turning as they chase their insect prey.

## 2010 Training Schedule\*

DETAILS	NEW CARER ORPHAN TRAINING	RESCUE & REHABILITATION
DATE	4 September 2010	18 September 2010
TIME	9.30 a.m. to 3.30 p.m.	9.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.
VENUE	98 Windsor Rd Nambour	98 Windsor Rd Nambour
COST (BYO LUNCH)	\$10 Members only (includes morning & afternoon teas)	\$10 Members \$20 Non-members (includes refreshments)
OTHER INFO	This workshop is compulsory training for all <b>new</b> members wishing to raise an orphaned flying-fox this forthcoming birthing season.	Presented by Dave Pinson, author of <i>The Flying Fox Manual</i> . This workshop is compulsory for all members to attend to meet the requirements of our DERM (formerly known as 'EPA') permit.



\*A microbat workshop will also be scheduled, details to be advised in the next issue.

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

### WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY FESTIVAL

Sunshine Coast University, Sippy Downs

6th June 2010

9 a.m. until 4 p.m.

### NOOSA BIOSPHERE DAY

Noosa Woods (end of Hastings Street)

19th September 2010

10 a.m. until 4 p.m.

If members in the Sunshine Coast area are available to help out on Bat Rescue's display stand at either event, please contact Carmel or Sylvia.

### 14th Australasian Bat Society Conference

Darwin 12-14 July 2010

Information about this year's conference can be found on:

<http://conference.ausbats.org.au/>

