

Flying-fox Roosting Site Restoration Project

You may have seen the item on WIN News which aired on Thursday 24th February or the story in the *Nambour Weekly* on Wednesday March 23rd. The story outlined the plan to attract the flying-foxes living behind residents in Tallangatta Street, Parklands, back to their original roost site on the opposite side of the highway.

Local residents are very supportive of the proposal, along with their State Government representative Mr Peter Wellington MP, Sunshine Coast Council, DERM and of course Bat Rescue Inc.

The State Minister for the Environment Ms Kate Jones MP has given support to the project and after a meeting with officers of DERM and Peter Wellington MP on 15th March, it was agreed that DERM will meet with the Department of Main Roads(DMR) as their support is critical to the project being able to commence.

DERM have committed to develop a Project Plan and carry out the initial weed management of the site, which is virtually inaccessible due to the choking weeds that are encroaching on the site. Ongoing maintenance of the site will be under DERM supervision and involve volunteer labour such as residents of Tallangatta Street and Bat Rescue members.

Due to the difficult location of the site on a major highway in a 110kph zone and the difficult terrain with steep gullies it is not going to be an easy site to access and work in so a detailed plan to manage the risks etc is vitally important.

The aim of the restoration project is to undertake some maintenance work in this former



flying-fox colony site in the hope of restoring it back to pristine bushland and luring the bats back. The invasive vines are smothering the canopy which has forced the flying-foxes out.

Bat researcher Billie Roberts has supplied us with some excellent documentation regarding the revegetation of flying-fox roosting site habitat, and we are seeking support and advice from various other experts. We also be asking for volunteers to put their hands up to offer a day here and there to assist the on-ground maintenance so any time you can spare would be most appreciated. *Pictured above are volunteers at our first working bee held on 17th April—Brian, Peter, Carmel, Lyn, Jenny and Leanne plus Les (behind the camera).*





BAT RESCUE INC.

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

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Rescue Hotline (WILVOS) Ph. 5441 6200



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

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

We can almost breathe a sigh of relief that bat season for 2010-11 is all but at an end, apart from those diligent release sites still support feeding. However for the general carers, it is a welcome break

to what was a busy and costly rehab season, not to mention a baby season that was fairly quiet until orphans were found abandoned at the Gympie colony.

We will hopefully have a quiet winter ahead so that we can concentrate on some important conservation matters (see front page article on Parklands) and recharge the *bat-teries*!

Forthcoming Events

In this edition you will find dates for training, display and fundraising scheduled for later this year. Those carers who were unable to attend the Rescue and Rehabilitation workshop last year will be required to attend this year, so please note this date in particular.

Holidays

I will be taking a three week holiday in late August, and I encourage anyone else planning holidays to contact us and/or the Wilvo hotline to let them know so as not to waste time finding a rescuer. I have to say I am REALLY looking forward to probably one of the longest holidays I have ever had!

Night Wings Newsletter

Vicki and Gary are still living in the Middle East but have some changes coming up in the next few months, so Vicki needs to hand over her well-worn newsletter editor's hat to concentrate on other things. If you look good in hats and are familiar with Publisher, please let me know! The newsletter is published quarterly, with the next edition due out in June. A big thank you to Vicki for all her hard work in making Night Wings such a great publication.

I look forward to catching up with many of you during the forthcoming months.

Here is Annabat nearly ready to take her flight to the wild! Quite a different bat to the fly-blown, dehydrated baby when found on her own!

Sylvia Hood
President



TREASURER'S REPORT



Creche and release costs this year were very reasonable—just over \$500. We currently have \$826.74 remaining in the General Account and \$3210 in our Fund Account, so if we need to we can utilise these funds as necessary.

We will be looking to hold a fundraising sausage sizzle over the coming months, and have also stocked up on Cadbury's fundraiser chocolates. If anyone is able to sell chocolates please let us know as Megan will be happy to share them around!

For our next display days we will have a refreshed merchandise stall thanks to Danielle and her website searching for the best batty gear available.

We will be seeking volunteers to help out on the forthcoming displays—World Environment Day Festival on June 5th, and a couple of Saturdays at Eumundi Markets (dates to be confirmed).

Our heartfelt thanks to Megan Davidson, Carlton North, Vic. for her generous donation received in January 2011. Thank you also to Pat Frisby, Buderim. We are always very grateful for any financial support that we receive!

Carmel Givens
Treasurer



FREE TO GOOD HOME

Two refrigerators are available free to carers who would like them. Please call Sue Richardson on 5494 9292 and arrange collection.

These were originally supplied by Bat Rescue before the cool room was in operation and are no longer required.

MINOR GRANTS

Sunshine Coast City Council

Many thanks to the Sunshine Coast Council for awarding us \$401.50 in the November 2010 round of funding. The grant will be used to produce a new Bat Rescue Inc brochure.

Thanks is also due in no small way to our Grants Officer, Jennifer Singfield, whose grant-writing expertise resulted in this great outcome.

Jennifer puts an enormous amount of effort into her role, which is not an easy one when there are so many other worthy causes competing for very few funding opportunities available to community organisations like ourselves.

Unfortunately we were not successful in being awarded a grant for our online training program, however second round offers sometimes come up so we may still be in with a chance!

We will however persevere with this concept as it is the most sensible solution, especially with our carers' busy schedules and volunteers becoming few and far between in our specialised field of wildlife caring where considerable expense is worn by the volunteers themselves.

Membership Renewal due 30th June

The membership renewal form is available in the FORMS section of the website and a reminder email will be sent to members who have online access, or forms can be sent via snail mail.

2011 Training Dates

| | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|
| Orphan Workshop for Beginners | August 14, 2011 |
| Microbat Workshop | September 25, 2011 |
| Rescue & Rehabilitation Workshop | September 18, 2011 |

VENUE: Nambour - To be advised

Please note Active Members must attend two training workshops a year to meet permit requirements.



MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE UPDATE

A warm welcome to Danielle Dedman who has been doing a wonderful job as Minute Secretary on the Management Committee, and has provided some great input into the meetings.

The following is a brief summary of some of the major decisions made by the Committee at the last meeting held on 8th April:

- In recognition of the high fruit costs borne by carers during Winter/Spring of 2010, High Protein Supplement will be purchased in bulk by Bat Rescue and supplied to carers free of charge (funds permitting).
- The State school at Conondale (adjacent to a flying-fox colony) will receive an information flyer and BR contact details before school breaks for Easter, along with an informative talk by Sammy, Zoe and Carmel. A full report will be included in the next newsletter.

The colony has been there about five years and has grown to 8000-9000 Grey-Headed flying-foxes, according to Zoe and Steve's ground count. Zoe has 'adopted' this colony to monitor and conduct regular counts for the DERM colony monitoring program.

- There is a new protocol being drafted up for 'Intervention at Flying-fox camps during abandonment or orphaning events'. More details in the next newsletter.
- It was agreed that the next newsletter should be posted, along with the renewal form and copy of the BR permit and insurance papers.
- It was agreed to revise our e-training grant to look for 'off the shelf' solutions to offer refresher training to our members.
- The new member package will be revamped in conjunction with Membership Secretary.
- Reports have come through that the Gympie colony has moved. There has been no word about the Energex upgrade in the Widgee Crossing area as yet. It is scheduled for July/August to underground the new power line past the colony.
- It was suggested that a 'refresher article' be included in each future edition of the newsletter on varied topics of bat caring.



Endorsing members on our Rehabilitation Permit

Some of our members have been asked to produce proof of their membership status and our Permit details when receiving services, so we are in the process of having these sent to all active members.

The current Permit, and the Group Public Liability and Personal Accident Insurance Certificates are also available for download from the FORMS section of the website.



CARERS' CORNER

PROPOSED DERM/RSPCA PARTNERSHIP

The Department of Environment (DERM) and RSPCA Qld are exploring a partnership to enhance wildlife rescue, care and rehabilitation in Queensland. This partnership will cover various aspects of the management and regulation, and the RSPCA assuming responsibility for the co-ordination of wildlife carers. As part of this process, DERM and the RSPCA will conduct a review of the Code of Practice.

Information sessions are being held all over Queensland and all rehabilitators are being encouraged to attend. See below for details:

INVITATION

Bat Rescue members are invited to attend the Sunshine Coast information session

4th May 2011 6.30 p.m.

Waterfront Hotel, 2/46 David Low Way, Diddilbah.

*Please RSVP by 3rd May to:
adam.northam@derm.qld.gov.au*

Creche & Release Season Summary



| Species | F | M | Total |
|------------------------|----|----|-------|
| Black Flying-fox | 3 | 7 | 10 |
| Grey-headed Flying-fox | 7 | 6 | 13 |
| Grand Total | 10 | 13 | 23 |

A BIG Thank You!

Bat Rescue Inc. would like to thank Danielle Dedman for conducting crèche for us this year. It was a busy time for Danielle and the other volunteers at 'Pura Gua Lawah' ('bat temple' in Balinese).

Thanks to everyone who chopped fruit and weighed and measured bats: Carmel Givens, Sammy Ringer, Zoe Jung, Sylvia Hood, Annie Van der Meulen and members who assisted in the transportation of bats: Lyn and Chris Boston.

A big thanks also to Ridley Kennedy and Rod Dedman who ensured the coolroom was set up well with security and tarp, and again to Carmel and Rid for sourcing and delivering fruit.

This year Sue Richardson had the year off, a well earned break from successive years of release site commitments. We are very thankful to Jan Davies for offering to release our bats and



also to crèche the last small group for us. Jan runs the banding program in the Noosa area and all bats that come into her care are banded as it provides potentially vital information on the movements and longevity of bats. Our orphans have therefore been banded and Jan will report back any news that may result.



MEET A MEMBER

Member Profile—Jennifer Singfield

How did you become interested in bats?

I have always been fascinated by Flying Foxes. I remember the microbats flying around inside our house at night – amazing! Ric Natrass conned me into becoming a carer. He told me that the orphan flying-foxes need as many foster mums as possible and unfortunately he was so right.

When did you start caring for bats?

In 2007 I rescued little Baxter from a Cordyline plant in a Geebung back yard. He had been there for 2two nights and a full day screaming, and it took that long for the resident family to check out what was the problem with the 'baby bird'! He was a real character and we all joked that we knew why his Mum had never come back to collect him. He was always in trouble.



Embroidery is my indoor hobby and if anyone has any Bat patterns I would love a copy!

Now for the regular zany out-of-left-field question. How about telling us what is the strangest item sitting in your freezer right now?

Probably, the strangest items in my fridge are dirty crockery. When I am by myself (which is often) I tend to put my plates, cutlery and crockery in the fridge so that I can do one wash up for the day – saving water.

Prior to bats, have you cared for any other wildlife?

Raised two male offspring – does this count?

How does the rest of your household feel about sharing their lives with bats?

My husband is very enthusiastic about the babies, although he was not so impressed recently when he was woken after midnight by one of the babies licking his hand. After that we barricaded ourselves behind a closed bedroom door each night. My sons and their girlfriends are fascinated by the babies too, so the whole family actually enjoys baby bat season.

Please share with us your favourite (non-bat) anecdote

When one of my sons, David, was seven, we went to the Drive In. He decided to bring a director's chair to sit on next to the car. So he set himself up next to the driver's seat close to the speaker. The next thing I hear an exclamation and look over in time to see David's ten toes flying in an arc backwards over the edge of the window. Then ten fingers appear on the window edge and this sad little face rises up seeking sympathy. My husband and I were in hysterics and to this day I don't think David has forgiven us for being so heartless and reminding him whenever possible about this incident.

Do you have any other hobbies?

My passions are wallum, wetlands and clean water in our waterways. I spend as much time as possible feeding mosquitoes in the wetlands. Apart from bulldozing and fragmentation, weeds are our wetlands' biggest enemies. The past two wet summers have led to a weed explosion in our wetlands. The environmental weed situation is quite frightening and I despair that we will be able to save our forests.

Do you have a day job Jennifer?

My husband and I are in our own business, which is a service industry to the oil industry. We live in Shorncliffe and our work place is in Willowbank, south of Ipswich where I spend at least two days a week. So any fostered baby bat of mine has clocked up quite a mileage by time he has been released.

We thank Jennifer for allowing herself to be 'grilled' for this edition. In addition to her caring activities, Jennifer is Bat Rescue's 'Grants Officer Extraordinaire' and we are very grateful for the effort she puts into researching and applying for grants.

Wet Summer Boosts Bat Populations

Greater than usual numbers of insectivorous bats have been reported in the South Australian Riverland in recent months. The increase has been attributed to high river flows which have in turn boosted insect breeding.





AROUND THE ROOST

Communities for Sustainable Futures Conference 2011

Noosa Biosphere is the natural location for an international sustainability conference ***Communities for Sustainable Futures: A Dialogue*** which will be held 24-26 July 2011. The conference will bring together over 250 policy-makers and socially and environmentally responsible businesses to discuss sustainability issues such as policy formulation, infrastructure planning, energy and utilities, tourism and biodiversity.

Baby micro bat saved

The last thing I expected to be doing at 9pm on Monday night was to be making frantic phone calls to WILVOS, and eventually to a lovely couple near Maleny named Carmel and Rid, who were kind enough to meet me and my family as we drove up the road to hand over to them the care of a baby micro-bat.

The baby had fallen off his mother and landed next to my bed as I was coming upstairs to go to sleep. He was squeaking profusely and attempting to drag himself along the floor, but him being bald and blind, I put him in a tissue and rushed to call help.

Thankfully though, he is 100% savable and will be joined up with another colony of microbats, or be put back here with his mother as soon as we can confirm who she is.

Thank you so much again to Carmel and Rid for being available at any time to save the bat's life. My love and goodwill go to the bat baby as a fully fledged member of the community.

Kala Angela Boulton
(Range News 25/11/2010)

Picking bats instead of cherries!

After Cyclone Yasi struck in early February, Lisa White (FNQ Wildlife Rescue) posted on FFICN that there were many screaming baby bats at Edmonton, Cairns and Yorkeys colonies.

Thanks to a generous donation from Sammy Ringer, Lisa was able

to hire a cherry picker and retrieve some injured bats.

Bat Rescue is very proud of Sammy assisting another group in need, and enabling the rescue of animals that were otherwise destined for a long, slow death. Well done Sammy!



Louise Saunders

In Memory of Gilbert

We were sad to hear of the sudden and unexpected death of Gilbert, Bat Conservation & Rescue's education bat.

Those of our members who were originally part of Gold Coast branch may remember Gilbert, who was occasionally borrowed for education and displays. In fact, Gilbert was originally a Bat Rescue Gold Coast baby.

According to our records Gilbert was an electrocution orphan rescued on 28th October 2005 and initially cared for by Vicki Bressan. He took his first flight on 20th December 2005, crash landing into a chest of drawers. Comforting him afterwards, his carer Jemima Batts-Andersson, noticed that all of Gilbert's canine teeth were crum-

bling. The vet at Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary was unable to determine the cause (not the crash), but without these teeth, once released into the wild Gilbert would not have been able to feed properly or defend himself and therefore considered unlikely to survive.

Gilbert's gentle, affectionate and extrovert nature made him ideal for educational purposes, and he was transferred to the permanent custody and display permit of Louise Saunders to begin his career as a 'teacher'.

Gilbert was a wonderful ambassador for flying-foxes, and much loved by many people. The cause of Gilbert's sudden death on 1st February 2011 is a mystery and was a huge shock and loss to Louise, her group and all who had been charmed by this special bat.



Website Update

The Bat Rescue website has been running very well with the new Contents Management System and anti-spam measures in place. The revamped design has also received some lovely compliments, even from other groups!

Latest Hit Log Statistics

We received a total of 25 enquiries via the CONTACT US page during the first three months of 2011. Most of these enquiries were seeking advice regarding microbats, several were membership enquiries and one was for a flying-fox rescue. Messages that are sent via the website are delivered as emails and unfortunately a rescue reported in this way is not guaranteed to be read and actioned straight away. Often the bat needing rescue is out of our operating area or even in another State or country!

The website received a total of 3,132 visitors during January and February 2011. This represents an increase of 436 visitors compared to the same two months last year. Around 53% of the traffic was predictably domestic, and a combined total of 36% came from the USA, UK, and Europe. The balance was made up by visitors from more unusual places including Bulgaria, Brazil, Serbia, Syria, Saint Lucia, South Africa, Peru and Armenia — not to mention one particular visitor from the UAE who apparently visited the site on a number of occasions (*cough* that would be me!)



Whether it's a wedding, short film or promotional film, Aaron Singfield can deliver! Using the latest in

DSLR technology and top-of-the-line editing computer, he can produce any outcome that you desire. It doesn't matter how big or small the project, he will use his passion and enthusiasm to reach your goal. For more information, visit www.aaronsingfield.com



Above: Check out the BE A BAT CARER page and watch Jennifer and her bats in action!

Updates to the Website

- BAT COUNTRY VIMEO - Film-maker Aaron features his Mum (Bat Rescue member Jennifer Singfield) in action with her three orphans from this season. Many thanks to both Aaron and Jennifer for such great footage!
- A new page entitled FOUND A BAT? has been added to the website which provides links to national and international organisations. This has greatly reduced the number of rescue enquiries we receive via the CONTACT US email.
- The 2011 certificates for the group's Public Liability and Personal Accident Insurance have been added to the FORMS section. The Group Permit is also available for download.

*Vicki Bressan
Website Administrator*



Wildlife Strike Statistics

Aviation wildlife strike statistics released by the Australian Transport Safety Bureau show rabbits and hares accounted for 82 of the 257 reported plane collisions with animals between 2002 and 2009 - the highest for any non-winged creature.

Kangaroos (58 strikes) were third behind bats and rabbits on the list. The most common terrestrial animals involved in damaging strikes were kangaroos, wallabies and livestock.

Not surprisingly, the most significant proportion of all reported incidents involved birds and bats. During the period there were a total of 9,287 strikes. Lapwings/plovers topped the list with a total of 597.

Bats/flying-foxes were second with a total of 542 strikes—of which 265 incidents occurred in Queensland. The number of bird/bat strikes has doubled since 2002 when there were 780 reported compared to 1477 in 2009. The increase was attributed to more

flights and more birds around airstrips.

Most collisions occurred in Autumn and Spring within 5km of airports. Darwin had the highest bird strike rate (10.02 per 10,000 flights) followed by Rockhampton (7.61). Sydney recorded a relatively low 2.78 per 10,000 flights.

Although there were no human fatalities as a result of any of the strike incidents in Australia, sadly all the wildlife and livestock involved came off second best.



Talking Bats

It seems that *Homo troglodytus*, or more commonly known as 'pollies', frequently display this odd behaviour—particularly when talking about subjects they know very little about!

The *Talking Bats Blog* features amusing quotes attributed to politicians, and other ill-informed public figures, including gems such as: "flying-foxes are an invasive species from Thailand", and "they need to be culled because all they're doing is terrorising people and dropping ticks and lice everywhere".

Another interesting topic on *Talking Bats* puts into perspective just how deadly flying-foxes really are.

Briefly, out of 2.5million human deaths from 1990-2008, cardiovascular and cancer rated top of the list with greater than 10,000. No surprises there. Further down the list boat accidents, horses and choking on food caused between 11 to 100 deaths in that same period. Car jacks, snakes, cattle, bees/wasps, lightning, sharks, dogs and tree felling were to blame for between 1 to 10 deaths each. So where exactly does Public Enemy No. 1, flying-foxes, fit into this list? Actually you have to look hard to find them at the bottom—along with crocodiles, hay bales, air conditioners and spa baths which all scored <1!

Talking Bats is a new blogsite which presents balanced factual insight into many issues surrounding bats. It is well worth visiting, or subscribing to the RSS feed.

Amazing as it sounds, some people firmly believe the ridiculous myth that flying-foxes poo out of their mouths, but did you know there is an endangered species that actually DOES?



K. Fearby

This young Grey-headed Flying-fox demonstrates how they really do it!

NEW BAT BLOGS

<http://talkingbats.blogspot.com/>

<http://yearofthebat2011-12.blogspot.com/>



It isn't true that bat guano is used to make Bacardi, but it does fertilize the sugarcane used in Bacardi

According to BACARDI's official website, the association of bats with the company brand originated in 1862 when the founder Don Facundo's wife, Dona Amalia Lucía Victoria Moreau, suggested adopting the Bat as the trademark for their new rum.

Upon entering the first BACARDI distillery, Amalia noticed a colony of fruit bats living in the rafters. Bats have great local significance. Cuba's extinct native people, the Taínos, regarded bats as possessors of all cultural goods and according to local belief were popularly thought to bring good health, fortune and family unity. Because of the high rate of illiteracy at the time, a product needed a memorable graphic logo to become identifiable and sell and Amalia suggested the Bat become BACARDI's trademark.

According to local storytellers, the Bat brought good fortune and added magical powers to Don Facundo's rum.





BAT LANGUAGE

Not only humans have their own accents!

Bats develop dialects depending on where they live which can help identify and protect different species, according to Australian scientists.

It has long been suspected that bats had distinctive regional calls—as studies have shown with other animals—but this was the first time it had been proven in the field.

A recent edition of Forest NSW's *Bush Telegraph* Magazine reports that researcher Brad Law of the Forest Science Centre found that bats living in the forests along the east coast of NSW had different calls. The different calls of about 30 bat species were used to develop a system so that scientists could identify the various bats along the coast, assess their numbers, and protect them.



Researchers took 4,000 bat calls and used a custom-made software program to develop identification keys for bat calls in different parts of New South Wales. As many of our readers would be aware, microbats use their calls to navigate and hunt using a process called *echolocation* in which high frequency ultrasounds (inaudible to humans) hit objects and echo back.

Although the identification process was time-consuming, it would lead to time and money savings in field surveys and possibly increase the accuracy rate and make long-term monitoring of bats cost-effective. However the development of automated identification keys for bat calls is in its infancy and needs further testing and refinement.

The project was conducted by the Forest Service Centre, a unit of the State Government body Industry & Investment NSW, and researchers from the University of Wollongong and the University of Ballarat.

Unusual Roost Choice



According to a new study published in the journal *Biology Letters*, bats in Borneo have been found roosting in carnivorous pitcher plants.

Nepenthes carnivorous pitcher plants grow in nutrient-poor soil and rely on trapping insects to acquire enough nitrogen for growth.

The plants apparently benefit from nutrients in the bats' droppings while the bats—Hardwicke's woolly bats (*Kerivoula hardwickii*) receive safe shelter roosting above the digestive fluids inside the plants' pitchers. The environment inside the plant is also free of annoying blood-sucking ectoparasites that often frequent bat roosts.

This is the first time mammals have been discovered living inside pitcher plants.

Model Bats

Regular readers may recall the Spring 2009 edition of *Night Wings* which included a small article on Bat Rescue's long-distance supporters, Cesare Piazza and Lina Severino from Parma, Italy. Since then, 50 Bat Rescue t-shirts have been shipped to Cesare because he liked the design so much!



With Bat Rescue's blessing, Cesare adopted the graphic on the t-shirt for his 'Flying Fox' model aircraft landing gears, which made their debut at the Model Show in Nuremburg in February 2011.

We wish Cesare well in his business venture, and thank him for promoting and celebrating flying-foxes in this Year of the Bat!



THE AUSTRALASIAN BAT SOCIETY
now has a Facebook page:

<http://en-gb.facebook.com/pages/Australasian-Bat-Society/122051564496903>



Join YEAR OF THE BAT on Facebook for up-to-the-minute news, event links and bat-related media coverage.

www.yearofthebat.org



BAT RESCUE INC.
MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS DUE
30 JUNE 2011

**Active membership
(carer) \$20.00**

**Support membership
(non-caring) \$15.00**