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SNAPSHOT NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2020

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GREETINGS



DROUGHT, FIRES AND FLOODS have affected every part of this Snapshot.

We all know the fallout from the last six months with one million hectares burnt and one billion animals dead. These events have changed the arena in which we operate in many different ways. We have had great losses but also some great gains. Hence the lateness of this Snapshot for which I am very sorry.

A huge thanks to all those who have risen to the challenge: Kerryn as membership and fundraising officer, Corrina with all those bats, Robyn with statistics and baby bats, Michelle and the birds and moving house, Jo and the marvellous phonies with an unprecedented number of calls, Ron and Mary with a huge number of rescues in the heat and with painful operations.

So, where to from here? One of the big deficiencies in helping wildlife in NSW has been rescuing in and around burnt areas. The local Mount Nardi fire burnt 6,500 hectares and we know that we could not get anywhere near the area until it was too late to help injured wildlife, despite training with the RFS some years ago.

The recent NWC meeting (which Garry will report on at the next general meeting in March) was a venue for the reporting of devastating experiences by groups who were not as lucky as we have been. Some groups were able to rescue wildlife on private lands by invitation of the landholder or on lands permissible by the RFS. They were able to do black walks but most did not enter national parks. However, police, firefighters and members of the general public and NPWS officers who were allowed into the parks started bringing them animals.

Treatment of injured wildlife needs to be a component of our statewide and national disaster preparedness as it is clear that in many areas almost nothing was done this time around due to a number of factors.

Last week I gave a talk to the Tweed Shire Council on our organization and practical ways to ease the stress on wildlife. I concentrated on slowing down on the roads to avoid hitting displaced wildlife, and replacing the abysmal signage in the shire. I will follow this up with meetings to establish a fire response protocol which will mean a much closer relationship with the RFS, Police, SES, the Tweed Shire Council and the local Parks and Wildlife Service. Much remains to be done, including the establishment of a working party. If you are interested, please come to the next general meeting. This meeting will be crucial both for the fate of our fauna in the coming months and for future planning in the face of continuing extreme weather events and habitat disasters. The antidote to despair and feeling overwhelmed is action.



Council sign at Tumbulgum. No wonder everybody still thinks we are WIRES.

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING

NEW MEMBERS

A very warm welcome to:

Andia Cally, Alix Kerr, Mandy Schaefer, Bianca Sandfort Westhoff, Caroline A-Vard, Christopher Bertuccio, Daniel Ashton, Emma Goodwin, Emma Pollard, Francine Walter, Gail Rich, Hayley Stevens, Jessica Ashton, Jessica Cogill, Joanne Hamilton, Julie Kohring, Jeffrey Pollard, Kerry Button, Karen Hargreaves, Kay McLaren, Kendall Nesci, Kelly Patterson, Kenneth Rippin, Kathy Whines, Kasia Piotrowski, Leanne Beazley, Maria Barbieri, Michele Lockwood, Melanie McHugh, Michelle Ryan, Nikayla Austin, Neroli Sheldon, Naajee Stremouchin, Olga Kalenbach-Wieczorek, Patricia Pollard, Renee Mills, Rayma Sargeant, Susan Gillespie, Sasha Maija Kruse, Sue Macklin, Sarah Mailey, Tony Adams, Trinity Mattocks, Tanya Viney, Wendy Yearsley. Renewing members Tracy Lindberg, Sarah Elliot.

I cannot tell you what a great experience it was to see all your faces at the orientation. An influx of new blood, skills and enthusiasm is just what we need in this upsetting and exhausting time. I can't wait to see what comes out of this as we act together to try and save all these species from extinction. It is strange how a time of loss can produce gains as well and our greatest asset will always be you, our tireless wildlife carers.

Jump onto Viber if you want to rescue or transport and have done the training. Please contact any of our office bearers if you would like to help in other ways. I really need to be contacted by anyone with administrative or organisational skills, experience or interest. Everyone who can is already working to full capacity so we are relying on you to be a self-starter.

Please consider phone training with Jo as we are in desperate need of new phonies.

To find out what it going on ... please keep reading. If you have any concerns or questions, please contact Ron, Rachael, or Robyn or Jo.

If you have trouble logging in to the members' area, please contact Louise, our website manager.

FACEBOOK AND TWEED VALLEY WEEKLY

Rachael Lebeter, our super talented training officer, grant writer and member of the media and publicity team, has won the Horne Prize, a prestigious literary prize for creative non-fiction. Her essay 'Diary of a Wildlife Carer', on the plight of native fauna in the face of climate change and diminishing biodiversity, is a quietly devastating account from the front line of the extinction crisis. It was published in *The Saturday Paper* in December and is also available as a chap-book through Aesop stores. Rachael says, "I was very angry when I wrote the essay. I feel like even now, after the bushfires, when awareness is heightened, the average Australian doesn't comprehend the seriousness of the situation. You only have to read the call logs to begin to comprehend the sheer scale of animals dying every day. And that is just here. And just what is being recorded". Rachael is very honoured to have won the prize and hopes her essay helps raise awareness of the threats facing our native wildlife, as does the fortnightly column in the Tweed Weekly newspaper that Rachael continues to write.

Our Facebook page continues to be a great success and now has 5,000 likes (partly due to the efforts of a new member).

Please contact Rachael for the column or Jasmine for Facebook if you have any interesting stories, photos or videos. Please consider taking good quality photos or videos of interesting rescues, caring, releasing, etc.



Left: Top knot Pigeon currently in care.

MEETINGS

Last general meeting and December 2019 Xmas party was very well attended.

Joanne wrote (on Viber): ***A big thank you to Jan for organizing the visitor at our meeting yesterday. What a sign of the times to listen to a psychologist discuss our mental health due to the climate crisis.***

Makes you wonder what the future holds.

It was a great Xmas party, good to put faces to the Viber clan.

With help from the New South Wales Wildlife Council (NWC) we were able to invite a psychologist with experience in disaster responses to our meeting to help us think about some future ways of enabling us to keep on doing what we are doing. As Jo said at the meeting:

Like the firies and the SES we interact with injured and orphaned animals who are in pain and distress daily. Unlike them, we have to bring them to our homes and live with them

until they can go off by themselves. Imagine if the SES had to do that with the people they rescue. There is no way to take a break and get time to yourself.

The psychologist outlined some of the common symptoms of stress:

- Tunnel vision
- Appetite disturbances
- Sleep disturbances
- Increasing consumption of alcohol or recreational drugs
- Feelings of worthlessness
- Excessive anger at the behaviour of fellow members

Here are some of the things you can do:

- Recognise and accept your feelings, whatever they are
- Be kind to yourself and don't expect too much
- Try not to listen to the inner critic
- Do something that feels good – massage, hot bath, tv watching, whatever it is

She brought some cards that were painted for us wildlife carers by local kindergarten children.



The need for increased support for wildlife carers has been a universal response to the fires. Wildcare across the border has now incorporated a stress relief workshop into its training schedule. Ways that our group can support each other will be addressed at the next general meeting.

Other meetings include:

Records, Fishing Line Bin Project (TSC), Grants, Justine Elliot, Bats (TSC), Phonies.

The Committee Meeting in February was dealing with the topics that are in this Snapshot.

NWC NEWS

Due to the fires, the NWC cancelled their AGM. However, they have been working tirelessly to support wildlife groups during this trying time.

GRANTS, FUNDING AND DONATIONS



Left: Joanne accepting a donation from Flutterbies.



Tweed Wildlife L-R: Jan Pilgrim President & Coordinator Tweed Valley Wildlife Carers, Justine Elliot MP. Photo supplied.

The public response to the crisis has been amazing. We have been inundated with towels, pouches, equipment and offers of help from all around the world.

The group has benefitted from the work of the following wonderful members:

Sarah Jantos raised an amazing \$2,000 over Xmas and has since sourced an additional \$4,000 for the flying foxes. Sarah is also putting the donated possum boxes together.

Garry Gnapp was instrumental in bringing IFAW in as a donor of cages and possum boxes that are worth about \$40,000.

Kerryn raised \$500 over Xmas and is now working on a new fundraiser for Easter.

Rachael wrote submissions before the crisis that have resulted in \$12,000 of grant money.

Jasmine has done fantastic work with our Facebook page resulting in many anonymous donations.

We have also received more money from outside sources for which we are very grateful:

Flutterbies \$1,500; WIRES \$20,000; Tweed Shire Council \$2,000 and truckloads of equipment from the Australian Rescue Cooperative.

If I have left something out, and I am sure I have, please let me know so I can put it into the next Snapshot.

OTHER EDUCATIONAL TALKS

I gave a talk to all the Year 10s at Lindisfarne on their first day back to school for 2020.

ANIMAL NEWS

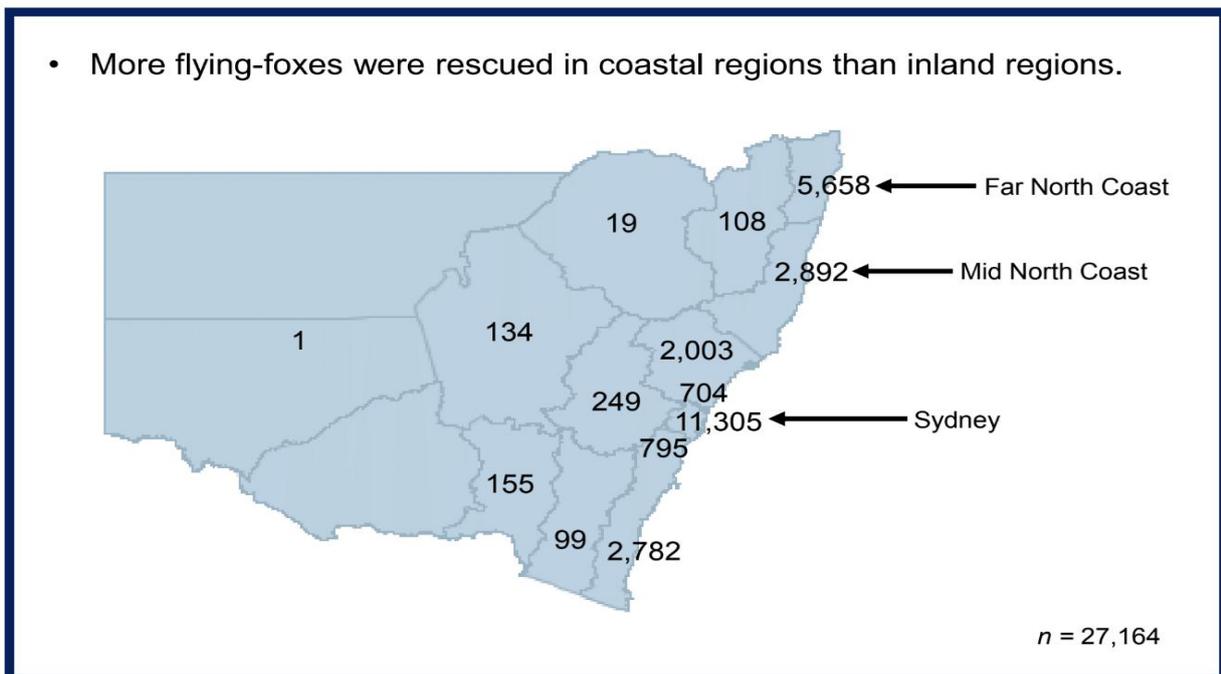
Jo Cabale is our new Reptile Co-ordinator



Thanks so much to Max who has been a wonderful Reptile Co-ordinator and a very warm welcome to Jo, our new co-ordinator who is the keeper of Lloydie, our educational python. That's her on the left of the photo, teaching members of the local SES how to handle reptiles. We are delighted to have her working in this capacity and we know she will do a great job.

ANIMAL RESCUE AND CARE

We knew before the fires that something very strange was happening. As you can see from this recent NPWS slide of the rescues in NSW, the far north coast does half as many rescues as Sydney and far more than any other region.



RESCUE TRENDS

We have a very high number of bats in our area compared to other groups. However, during our usual rest period over three winter months last year just before the fires, we experienced a tsunami of 150 bat rescues at a time when we generally have about 10. Thanks to Robyn, the best statistician in the business, we knew right away that we had a problem. We sent information about the bats to NWC who alerted the government. All the care groups along the east coast in NSW and Queensland pooled our data. It is important to know when the bats are in trouble. The grey-headed flying fox is at present the only local animal to be on the government list of animals endangered by the bushfires, presumably because it was suffering from malnutrition before the fires and now its food sources are even more reduced.

On another note, in the latest testing of flying foxes in Australia, out of 90 bats there were only four cases of lyssavirus.

BATS



Baby grey-headed flying foxes currently in care.

There are 52 foxes in care at present, 26 babies and 26 juveniles and adults.

We have had a lot of financial support to aid with food and extra housing.

DPI have provided 100kg of food for three weeks in alliance with Woolworths, Tweed Heads, to support feeding costs.

Food for Animals group have also started the ball rolling with Woolworths with agreements for collection of out-of-date fresh produce that might be useful for animals in the Casuarina and Kingscliff shops.

A small group of members - Kate Poole, Jo Cabale, Mary Lou Coupereid, Maya Sapir, Donna Davies, and Rachela Mura and her husband - have put their hand up and have assisted over the last few months in chopping about 16 kilos of fruit three times a week to assist Daen Audet (flying fox aviary location) with daily feeding. Our flying foxes in care, not including babies, go through about 16 kilos of fruit a night.

Rachela and her husband work at New Leaf Café and on the days that they can assist have been chopping fruit at the café.

A big thank-you to you both and New Leaf Café for assisting. The café also has a donation box at their shop in the hopes of raising funds for the purchase of a chopping machine for the group. Ask any of the members that have been involved in chopping fruit. Not as much fun as it seems. And blisters.....

On the baby front, a group of Hunter Region baby Grey flying foxes are being cared for in the group with Robyn Gommers. As well as our own from the Tweed.

With funding supplied to the group, we are hoping to have more aviaries built to accommodate the extra influx. Anyone wanting to become more involved with flying foxes, please feel free to contact Corrina Lever. Once again asking members in the Pottsville/Kingscliff area for anyone interested in observing a flying fox rescue. No vaccinations needed. Anyone in the UKI/Murwillumbah area that might be interested in chopping fruit for animals.

Please phone bat co-ordinator Corrina on 0429 012 852.

BIRDS

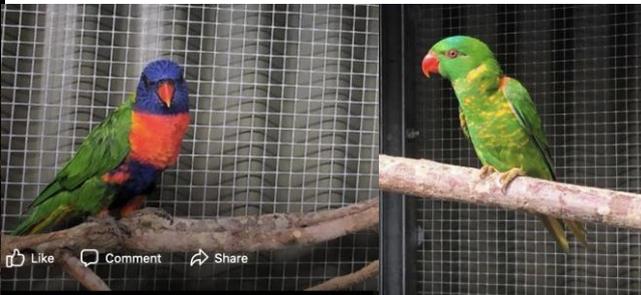
Thanks to Jo for her hugely successful bird training day. I know that she wants to put on another one as soon as she can.

We have had an influx of birds due to the Lorikeet Paralysis Syndrome.



Left: New cage from IFAW on Cheryl's property.
She is caring for a lot of lorikeets.

Below left: Rainbow lorikeet
Below right: Scaly breasted lorikeet



Rainbow lorikeet paralysis syndrome, also known as clenched claw syndrome, has been recognized as a disease of wild rainbow lorikeets (*Trichoglossus haematodus*) throughout eastern Australia for 50 years. The cause of the condition is unknown.

The disease affects both adult and sub-adult birds, but appears to be more common in juveniles, 12-16 weeks of age. It occurs mainly in spring and summer but cases have been seen throughout the year.

Affected birds generally appear bright, alert and continue feeding over the course of the disease which is one to two weeks. They present with unilateral or, more commonly, bilateral, flexed hocks and clenched feet and are unable to perch, usually resting on their hocks. A head tilt and intention tremor may also be present. Occasionally birds collapse and die within one to three days. Other birds continue to live and adapt to resting on their hocks. Only low numbers are known to recover completely and return to the wild. Diagnosis is based on clinical signs presenting in conjunction with histological evidence of a non-suppurative encephalomyelitis. Differential diagnoses include traumatic injury and polioencephalomalacia. Although a variety of treatments, including CaEDTA, fluids, meloxicam, corticosteroids, and Vitamin E and Vitamin B injections, have been tried, none have proven to be successful. Control of the disease is not possible at this stage because the aetiology is unknown. However, as thiamine deficiency is one possible cause, and many affected birds are found near feeders, it would seem prudent not to feed wild lorikeets.

One study reported that between five and ten percent of lorikeets rescued annually in south-east Queensland and coastal NSW presented with this syndrome. Wildlife Health Australia is interested in receiving reports of this condition in wild birds in Australia. Contact admin@wildlifehealthaustralia.com.au. To gain a more complete epidemiological picture of the disease as many cases as possible should be entered into eWHIS.

From wildhealthAustralia.

REPTILES

A huge thanks again to Sue Johnson, this time for running a Reptile Rehabilitation and First Aid training day at Crabbes Creek Community Hall on 30 November. Eleven people attended, 10 from TVWC and one from Northern Rivers Wildlife Carers. Sue covered a lot of theory ranging from identification of snakes and lizards found in the Tweed, through safe handling techniques, reptile anatomy, identifying injuries, selecting appropriate caring facilities and providing first aid and basic care to injured reptiles.

In the afternoon Sue demonstrated how to administer sub-cutaneous fluid injections and medication injections on a dead lace monitor and carpet python, followed by everyone having a go. We were lucky also to have some qualified vet nurses in the group.



From here the aim is to have some more reptile enclosures made to get those who are interested up and running as a reptile carer.

WHAT'S COMING UP

EVENTS



The Sheoak Shack at Fingal Head is putting on a fundraiser for us on the evening of Saturday, 7th March, the same day as the General Meeting. I will be speaking there after the meeting. For further details about their silent animal art auction, see our Facebook Page.

THE NEXT GENERAL MEETING

General meeting **Saturday 7th March** Murwillumbah Comm Centre 1pm – 4pm

Will be all about the fires and what we can do about future similar events.

NEXT ORIENTATION

Sunday 3rd May M'bah Community Centre, Nullum Rd, 9am – 1pm

TRAINING

I am inundated with baby possums and have run out of carers at a time when the groups that we rely on to train new members are too busy to put on training or are booked out. Check out the Wildcare training schedule below to see all the filled-up training workshops. Training is going to be a huge problem this year for all the wildlife groups due to the fires.

I am going to put on a possum training day which will run from 9.30am to 3pm. It will be held at my house so places will be limited. Please contact me (Jan Pilgrim) if would like to be involved in possum care.

I am so busy at the moment that I am going to need help in organizing this event which needs to take place as soon as possible. Ring me if you can help in organizing it.



Phone training Contact: Jo

Record training Contact: Robyn 0423 167 344 robyn@ozwildlife.com

TVWC	TVWC members Non-members	FREE \$20	Bookings:
Bats Qld	BQ members Non-members	FREE \$10/yr	Membership Bookings: committee@batsqld.org.au
Wildcare	Wildcare members Non-members	FREE \$20 full day, \$10 half day	Bookings: Cathy education@wildcare.org.au
WIRES NR	TVWC members	2 day - \$65 incl Lunch	Bookings : Suzanne Ulyatt Susie_u@bigpond.com Or wiresnr@wiresnr.org

Training dates and venues may be altered due to unforeseen circumstances – please check Viber and the latest Snapshot for updates.

TVWC Workshops are at Murwillumbah Community Centre (Nullum Rd, Murwillumbah, near the netball courts) unless otherwise stated.



March 2020

Sunday 1 st	Possums (Basic)	Nerang	9.30am – 4.00pm	<i>Caring for Orphaned Mammals</i>
Saturday 7 th	Lorikeets	Upper Coomera	9.00am – 1.00pm	<i>Native Birds (Basic)</i>
Sunday 8 th	Wildlife Rescue (Advanced)	Pomona	9.30am to 4.00pm	<i>Rescue and First Aid for Native Wildlife (Basic)</i>
Sunday 15 th	Caring for Orphaned Mammals	Wacol	9.30am – 4.00pm	
Saturday 21 st	Advanced First Aid for Native Wildlife – Dr Robyn Stenner	Nerang	9.30am – 3.00pm	<i>Rescue and First Aid for Native Wildlife (Basic)</i>
Saturday 28 th	Possums (Basic)	Redlands	9.30am – 4.00pm	<i>Caring for Orphaned Mammals</i>
Sunday 29 th	Gliders	Nerang	9.30am – 4.00pm	<i>Caring for Orphaned Mammals</i>

April 2020

Saturday 4 th	Lizards (Basic)	Nerang	9.30am – 4.00pm	
Sunday 5 th	Wildlife Habitat and Plant ID	Gold Coast Hinterland	9.30am – 4.00pm	
Sunday 19 th	Orientation and Rescue and First Aid for Native Wildlife (Basic)	Nerang	9.00am – 4.00pm	<i>Wildcare members only</i>

May 2020

Sunday 3 rd	Bandicoots, Native Rodents and Small Carnivorous Marsupials	Beerwah	9.30am – 2.00pm	<i>Caring for Orphaned Mammals</i>
Saturday 9 th	Wellbeing for Wildlife Volunteers (Compassion Fatigue) - A seminar focusing on evidence-based tools and strategies for coping in the wildlife industry. Dr Nadine Hamilton	Nerang	9.00am – 4.00pm	
Saturday 23 rd	Caring for Orphaned Mammals	Upper Coomera	9.30am – 4.00pm	
Sunday 24 th	Native Birds (Basic)	Wacol	9.30am – 3.00pm	

June 2020

Saturday 6 th	Native Birds (Babies)	Wacol	9.30am – 3.00pm	<i>Native Birds (Basic)</i>
Sunday 7 th	Echidnas	Upper Coomera	9.30am – 2.00pm	<i>Caring for Orphaned Mammals</i>
Sunday 14 th	Microbats	Beerwah	9.30am – 4.00pm	
Sunday 21 st	Orientation and Rescue and First Aid for Native Wildlife (Basic)	Wacol	9.00am – 4.00pm	<i>Wildcare members only</i>

Note about full workshops @ 20 January 2020

Since recent bushfires in both South-east Queensland and interstate have occurred over the past few months, many people have become more aware of the plight of our wildlife. As a result, most wildlife groups around Australia have received more applications from new members than is ordinarily received. As a result of this, our volunteers have been working very hard to keep new memberships processed and to answer everyone's queries. Our 2020 Education Calendar was finalised several months ago and we are having difficulties in securing venues to offer additional workshops.

Wildcare is 100% volunteer-based with most of our trainers and key volunteers also working full-time in other industries. Please be assured that we are doing our best to schedule in additional workshops but there are very limited venues available on weekends that can cater for the number of attendees required, and which are available at a reasonable cost (bearing in mind that our workshops are offered free of charge to members).

You are welcome to register your interest in attending a workshop, even if it is full, as any additional places or workshops scheduled, will be firstly offered to those on the waiting list.

We appreciate your patience at this time and rest assured that we are doing our best to try to accommodate everyone.

To register for workshops please email: education@wildcare.org.au

Please register at least 7 days before the scheduled date to allow appropriate arrangements to be made for training resources. Registrations are subject to availability, and satisfaction of any pre-requisites listed.

The right of admission to any Wildcare Australia Inc. training workshop or event is hereby expressly reserved. In particular, we reserve the right to deny registration, refuse entry to, or remove from, any Wildcare workshop or event, any person(s) who are under the influence of alcohol, whose conduct is unlawful, disorderly or offensive, or who is not entitled to attend the event. Any person who causes a disturbance, engages in inappropriate behaviour or refuses to comply with reasonable requests from the trainer or other authorised person may be asked to leave the premises and be refused admission to any further Wildcare Australia Inc. training workshops and/or events.

Workshop Costs

All workshops (other than 'Specialised Workshops'):

Members - Free (includes training manual in digital format)

Non-Members – Half day workshops \$10 per person (includes training manual in digital format)

Full day workshops - \$20 per person (includes training manual in digital format)

Non-members will be expected to pay registration fees at the time of registration via PayPal.

Children at Workshops

Children under 14 are not permitted to attend workshops due to workshop content and to ensure adequate places are available for members that are actively involved in wildlife rescue and rehabilitation. Children between the ages of 14 and 16 years of age must be accompanied by an adult at all times.

Workshop Attendance and Etiquette

Please remember that the Wildcare training workshops are conducted by volunteers, who invest substantial time into developing and delivering the Wildcare training program. Please be considerate – if you are no longer able to attend a workshop, please give the Trainer the courtesy of letting them know as soon as possible. *In many cases, there will be a waiting list for each workshop and your place can be offered to someone else.*

Please ensure that you arrive at least 15 minutes before the scheduled commencement time to allow access to the training facility and to ensure minimal disruption to the Trainer and fellow attendees.

If you know that you will not be able to stay for the entire duration of the workshop (i.e. you will need to leave early), please advise the trainer *before* the workshop date as you may not receive credit for attending if you miss important aspects of the training session.

Members that repeatedly register for workshops and fail to attend may have future registrations cancelled.

Workshop Pre-Requisites

Please take note of the pre-requisites noted on the Calendar. Some pre-requisites need to be enforced to ensure the training meets the expectations of the attendees. However, there may be some leniency for some pre-requisites. If you have any questions about the pre-requisites, please contact us at the time of registration.

Training Material

All training manuals are provided free of charge in digital PDF format via a Dropbox link following the training. Limited quantities of printed copies of manuals are available for most training workshops for a nominal cost (manuals vary in price). Manual prices will be advised at time of final registration confirmation.

Certificate of Attendance

A Certificate of Attendance will be emailed to workshop attendees in PDF format once they have completed the training workshop. Attendees that leave before completion of the workshop will not be eligible for a Certificate of Attendance. Please allow two (2) weeks for the Certificate to be emailed to you by our education team volunteers.

Recheck Admission Forms

Carers complete this form when an animal comes back for a recheck. It's especially important that we get this information where the carer is not the person transporting the animal to the hospital. Please give as much detail as possible on the form, as this will help achieve the best possible outcome for the animal.

Transport Cages/Baskets

Wherever possible, we would prefer that transport carriers are not left at the hospital for collection at a later date due to a lack of storage space. When carriers are required to be left here, please ensure that it's clearly labelled with your name, and ensure it's collected within a few days.

Post-mortems

Please be aware that while we are happy to carry out post-mortem exams on deceased animals, we may not always have time to do so, as live animals will always take priority. Also, please understand that post-mortems are often inconclusive. We can look for signs of trauma in deceased animals which would indicate an event (such as a vehicle hit) has caused injury leading to death. We can also assess the body condition of the animal, where an animal in good condition is likely to have succumbed to an acute event, while an animal in poor condition is likely to have been unwell for some time.

Chronic conditions are very difficult to diagnose on post-mortem exams. In cases of large numbers, or clusters of deceased animals, Biosecurity may be willing to test the bodies, but even then, it's often inconclusive. In cases of suspected poisoning, Biosecurity would need to know specifically what poison to test for to get a positive diagnosis.

So, while we are happy to accept deceased animals for post-mortem, please don't be offended if it doesn't occur, or if it doesn't establish a cause of death. To arrange a post mortem, please talk to your coordinator.

Calling the Hospital for Outcomes

During spring and summer, please wait until the following day to call for patient outcomes, as the vet notes are often not typed up until late in the day.

Please also try to call after 9am, as the first hour of the day can be very hectic at the hospital.

Providing the Hospital with Outcomes

For those that don't know, the hospital would like to be informed when foster patients have an outcome, i.e. released, died etc. Some carers update us immediately, whilst others send monthly updates. We would really appreciate if you could flick a quick email to vets@cws.org.au with your updates.

COPIES OF DOCUMENTS/CONTACT LISTS

All members may access Minutes of Committee and General Meetings as well as contacts of committee members. Please contact Secretary via committee@twvc.org.au

FEEDBACK

If you have anything you would like to say about the group, good bad or indifferent, please call Jan on 0410 475 716 or Yvonne on 0411 622 720.