

# Animal

## ROUNDAABOUT



ISSUE No. 14, Winter 2004

Produced for people with an interest in the exhibition of animals in zoos, circuses, mobile farms, fauna and wildlife parks in NSW.



## Native animal rehabilitation

Peter Johnson

Caring for injured or abandoned native animals and contributing to their rehabilitation is an important, commendable activity.

Many licensed animal display establishments and approval holders are often approached by wildlife rehabilitation organisations or concerned members of the public to take in and care for injured or abandoned native animals.

Before accepting this responsibility, licence and approval holders must first make sure that they have the necessary experience and an appropriate licence issued by the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) to

care for the animals for the purposes of rehabilitation. Animals accepted into care and rehabilitation must be held in an appropriate, secure, off-display area and must not be exhibited to the public.

In some cases, it may be determined that a particular animal is unsuitable for release because of permanent disability that would prevent it from surviving in the wild.

In such circumstances and where the NPWS agrees to the licence or approval holder keeping the animal, an application to acquire the animal for the purposes of display must be sent to the Exhibited Animals Registrar.

For more information contact Tammy Kirby on (02) 6391 3725.



Caring for a baby brushtail possum. Photo Jo Cullender.



# Looze Lipz



## Inside information

Maps showing the location of all licensed Animal Display Establishments in NSW have been inserted, loose-leaf style, in this edition of Animal Roundabout. The Sydney area is highlighted on the back of the NSW Establishment's page.

An entry form for the photo competition is also included as an insert with the conditions of entry on the back. Send this form in with your photos for the 'Get Snapping Photo Competition'.

## Response to 'Reptile Hygiene'

In the last issue of Animal Roundabout reptile hygiene and its relation to Ophidian paramyxovirus (OMPV) was highlighted.

Anthony Stimpson from Australian Wildlife Displays, Colo Heights has been working closely with flying foxes for nearly 20 years and has a special interest in their conservation and captive management. He maintains that careful management is the key to reducing risks posed

by Lyssavirus and advises that there should be no reason to remove flying foxes from display.

"Public should have no 'hands-on' access to bats but an audience should be able to get close enough to see their beauty without touching," Mr Stimpson said.

For further ideas in managing flying foxes on display and the risk of Lyssavirus, contact Mr Stimpson on (02) 4565 0116.



## Win win win

For the third year in a row, Featherdale Wildlife Park at Doonside near Sydney, has won the 2003 New South Wales Tourism Awards for Business Excellence in Tourism Retailing. At the same time, induction to the Hall of Fame was presented to Featherdale for its outstanding contribution to the tourism industry by winning the same category three years in a row. Not content with two prestigious awards, Featherdale also was presented with an Award of Distinction for coming a very close second in the Major Tourist Attraction category.

The awards were presented to Featherdale's General Manager, Mark Thomas at a gala dinner in Sydney last November. Congratulations.

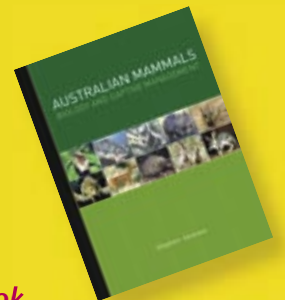
## Travelling virus

Fortunately, Australia remains free from the avian influenza or bird flu that affects several Asian countries. It is, however possible that migratory birds carry the avian influenza virus. While most bird migrations occur in spring, it may be possible for wild birds in Australia to be infected by travelling birds.

Avian influenza can infect a wide range of birds including chickens, turkeys, pheasants, partridges, quail, pigeons, ducks, geese, guinea fowl and ostriches.

Exhibitors finding birds in their collections that are showing respiratory distress, unusual signs of illness, or have died suddenly, should immediately seek the advice of their veterinarian.

The Exhibited Animals Registrar should also be notified on (02) 6391 3716 if exhibitors notice unusual bird deaths, particularly in groups of birds.



## Steve's book

Described as 'a must have volume' by Ed McAlister (AO), the President of the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums, Dr Stephen Jackson's Australian Mammals: Biology and Captive Management is a comprehensive guide to the husbandry of Australian mammals.

Published by CSIRO Publishing, the book covers platypus, echidna, numbats, bats, dingoes and all other Australian mammals.

Mr McAlister believes Dr Jackson's publication should be: "on the library shelves of people seriously interested in the future of Australian mammals".

Dr Jackson is NSW Agriculture, Animal Welfare Unit's very own Exhibited Animals' Inspector, Steve—of whom we are very proud for producing such a magnificent publication!

## Notable birth

This little Gila Monster (*Heloderma suspectum*) emerged from its egg in early May at Taronga Zoo. One out of four eggs hatched, the baby monster (a female) is now doing well. Gila Monster venom is extremely potent and is delivered via grooves in the animal's teeth. When the monster bites, it hangs on and chews hard to release its venom. It is one of only two venomous lizards in the world.



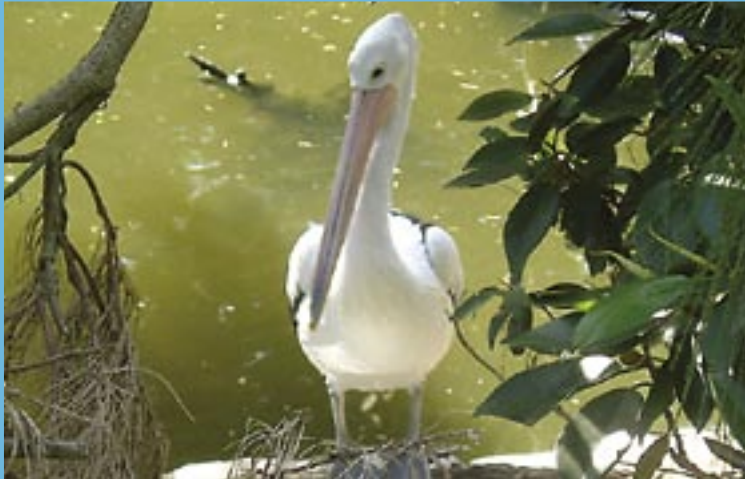
# Go Natural

Matthew Crane

Most modern zoos and wildlife parks understand that the wellbeing of their animals depends on them regularly expressing a range of natural behaviours.

A natural setting that resembles the animal's habitat is a requirement of *Exhibited Animals Protection Act 1986* Standards with some of the benefits to the animals highlighted below.

It is also generally accepted that zoos and animal parks should have a role in wildlife conservation. Part of this role is educating the public about the animals on display.



This pelican feels 'at home' in a natural habitat.

When enclosures mimic the animal's wild habitat, visitors gain a better understanding of the animals and how they interact in a natural setting.

Exhibitors designing natural enclosures should spend some time researching the behaviour and habitat of the animals. Incorporating or imitating natural plants found in the animal's wild habitat, and including rocks, pools, trees and branches will help to stimulate natural animal behaviour.

The visitors' area can also be landscaped in a similar way, to make them feel they are sharing the animal's habit.

Studies have shown that natural enclosures improve visitors' perceptions of and responses towards captive animals and stimulate positive attitudes towards zoo practises.

## Benefits to animals in natural habitat settings

- Security within the refuge and habitat structure.
- Opportunities to browse naturally.
- Contact with natural surfaces and substrate materials.
- Increased exploratory behaviour.
- Increased activity levels.
- Stimulation of senses of sight, touch, smell, hearing and taste.
- Interaction with other species (if in a multi-species display).

# Behind the Scenes

While Angela Thompson, Licensing Clerk, is working in another division, Tammy Kirby is acting in her position.

Tammy is responsible for preliminary assessments on new applications for licenses, approvals and permits. She is currently assisted by Rebecca Hutchinson who looks after distribution of renewal notices and receipt of applications under the *Exhibited Animals Protection Act 1986*.

Right: Rebecca (on left) and Tammy checking applications.



# Gates close on Wildlife Park

It was a sad day when the Australian Wildlife Park, a component of Wonderland Sydney, the largest theme park in the Southern Hemisphere, closed its gates on 26 April 2004.

I was given the unenviable task of coordinating the movement and relocation of the animals. With a collection of over 600 animals, placement of the animals was a high priority.

It was my job to notify the relevant organisations that the Wildlife Park was closing and to coordinate a stock take of all the animals. A price list of surplus animals was compiled and circulated to NSW Fauna and Marine Park Association (NSWFMPA) members, the Australasian Regional Association of Zoological Parks and Aquaria (ARAZPA) and its Queensland branch.

It was important that the animals were moved as quickly as possible and most were received by NSWFMPA member parks with a number of animals going interstate. One crocodile went to a zoo in the United States while some birds, reptiles and amphibians and two camels were placed privately.

Success rates for the animal transactions were high with only a few that fell through after some institutions realised they were unable to easily meet the relevant standards for exhibition.

I was overwhelmed with all the assistance and help I received with moving and relocating the animals and would like to sincerely thank everyone who was involved.

*Liz Romer, Zoological Consultant*



*Croc gets a help in moving to a new home. Photo Liz Romer.*

## Showcase your photos

The **Get Snapping Photo Competition** has been extended. The Editor received some wonderful photographs – with thanks to those who contributed. Unfortunately they did not meet the criteria of 'an animal exhibited in NSW in a naturalistic habitat'.

If you have photos that meet the criteria, send them in and you could soon be enjoying a Sydney Harbour Cruise for two people – a fabulous prize for the best photo.

See Matthew's article, *Go Natural*, to give you inspiration for natural habitats. Get snapping and capture those animals on film. Fill out the enclosed entry form and send with photo/s to the Editor.

**Prize details:** Gift voucher for two people to Vagabond Cruises for its 'Coffee Cruise' on Sydney Harbour, NSW, valid until 20 December 2004.

## NEXT ISSUE

**Winner of Photo Competition announced**



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### Animal Roundabout is complimentary.

The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing (July 2004). However, because of advances in knowledge, users are reminded of the need to ensure that information upon which they rely is up-to-date and to check currency of the information with the appropriate officer of NSW Department of Primary Industries or the user's independent adviser.



NSW DEPARTMENT OF  
PRIMARY INDUSTRIES