

# Animal ROUNDAABOUT



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



NSW Agriculture

## Animal Visits



*Making Friends*

There have been many articles written and studies carried out on the benefits of animals as part of a visitation program to nursing homes and other aged care facilities.

At nursing homes around the State, residents suffering from severe dementia and other debilitating disorders have shown positive reaction after regular contact with animals. An increase in social interaction and other benefits from visiting animals is rewarding to the residents, staff and exhibitor.

Peter Johnson recently had the opportunity to see a presentation by a mobile farm exhibitor at a nursing home. He saw first-hand the positive effect the animals had on the elderly residents.

For the majority of the residents who need constant assistance and care in order to perform the most basic of functions, animal therapy helps brighten their day.

For some residents, animal visits rekindle memories of past animal companions. This is particularly so for those who have moved into nursing homes because of failing health and have given up much-loved pets. For others, seeing farm animals, draws together fragmented memories of early lives spent in the country.

Various species of animals can affect humans differently, so it is essential there is collaboration and communication between exhibitors and the administrators of the aged care facilities. Exhibitors

should show sensitivity to the aged and choose only those animals that have suitable temperament, personality and behaviour.

The impact on the welfare of the animals is minimal but exhibitors must make sure the standards relating to transport and care are met.

An animal visit can offer entertainment or a welcome distraction from pain and infirmity and put a little sunshine into the hearts of nursing home residents.

*Photos courtesy of Wontama Homes, Orange and Turramurra House, Sydney*

# Looze Lipz



## Wombat mange treatment

The Exhibited Animals Advisory Committee has recently investigated the deaths of a number of wombats that had severe cases of sarcoptic mange. *Sarcoptes scabiei* is a tiny mite that burrows into the deeper layers of the skin and can only be seen in skin scrapings under a microscope.

Zoo veterinarian advice is that the use of acaricidal washes to kill the mites can be very distressing to captive wild animals and are probably best avoided. It has also been suggested that pour-on (or injectable) Ivermectin/Cydectin appears to be more effective than the oral form. However, as a legal requirement, a veterinarian must be consulted to prescribe the correct dosage for each animal affected by mange.

## Amendment to the Exhibited Animals Protection Act 1986

A number of commercial fish hatcheries and fish farms display their operations to visitors. As commercial production is the primary reason for having the fish, the tanks

have not usually been designed as exhibits. Often they do not meet the requirements of the General Standards for Exhibiting Animals in New South Wales, such as presenting the animals in natural settings.

For this reason, a recent amendment to the legislation exempts most operations of commercial fish hatcheries and fish farms from the licensing requirements of the Act. This is consistent with the exemptions that apply to farm animals displayed on farms. Fish displayed in habitat aquariums at hatcheries and fish farms are still subject to the Act. For more information, refer to Exhibited Animals Protection Amendment (Fish Farms and Hatcheries) Regulation 2001 prescribed under the *Exhibited Animals Protection Act 1986*.

## Hello again, Peter

Dr Peter Johnson has rejoined the Sydney Animal Welfare Inspectorial Office after a short time working in the Chemical Assessment Division of the National Occupational Health and Safety Commission. The commission is to be restructured, so when the opportunity to rejoin the Animal Welfare Unit came up, Peter gladly returned to his animal and old work friends. He was welcomed back with open arms and is now back in the swing of the exhibited animals inspectorial role.

## Farewells and Greetings

Licensing Clerk, Tricia Field and Clerical Officer, Diane Williamson were recently farewelled by the Animal Welfare Unit to move on to different job positions and new

challenges in different locations. Angela Thompson has been appointed Licensing Clerk and will be involved in the assessments of licence, approval and permit applications. She will also be responsible for processing the animal records. Angela started her career with NSW Agriculture as a Clerical Officer at Trangie Agricultural Research Centre in 1997.

## Congratulations

The Pet Porpoise Pool at Coffs Harbour has won an Encouragement Award for the 2000 Prime Minister's National Gold Medal Access Award. The awards recognise excellence in planning, promoting and providing access for people with disabilities. The Pet Porpoise Pool has wheelchair access throughout the park, wide access amenities, smooth pathways and low level pools that allow visitors in wheelchairs to interact with the dolphins.

Manager, Mr Hec Goodall has instituted a work experience program for those with a disability and for those from disadvantaged backgrounds. He also continues to encourage interaction between the dolphins and visitors with a disability. The Pet Porpoise Pool has been recognised for its service to the community as an Honorary Associate of the Australian Museum; the Starlight Foundation and the Make a Wish Foundation.



## Byte Wise

<http://agric.nsw.gov.au/reader/1218>

Direct access to Primate Policy and standards under the *Exhibited Animals Protection Act 1986*

<http://www.zoolex.org>

This site features international zoo designs highlighting a gallery of animal exhibits from all over the world. The site promotes suitable holding conditions for wild animals in captivity and supports research and vocational training related to zoo design.

<http://www.australianmammals.org.au>

This is a site for people with an interest in Australian mammals. The aim of the society is to contribute to greater understanding of the Australasian mammalian fauna. Other interesting links are available from this site.



## Welcome

Dr Stephen Jackson comes to the Animal Welfare Unit with a wealth of knowledge and experience in his new role as Project Officer, Animal Welfare.

Stephen has worked as a zookeeper at Taronga Zoo in the Australian Mammal Division and was Acting Curator of Mammals on several occasions during his time at the Zoo.

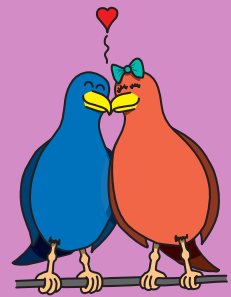
After a short stint with the Queensland Department of Environment, he became the Curator of Life Sciences at Healesville Sanctuary in Melbourne before moving to Orange to join NSW Agriculture.

Stephen's qualifications include a BSc in Zoology and Botany, MSc in Environmental Biology and he has completed a PhD on the endangered mahogany glider (*Petaurus gracilis*) in Queensland. The mahogany glider was rediscovered in December 1989 after not having been seen since 1886.

It won't be long before exhibitors will become familiar with Stephen, who is looking forward to meeting animal exhibitors and sharing his knowledge of Australian native mammals.

Stephen can be contacted on (02) 6391 3474 or by email: [stephen.jackson@agric.nsw.gov.au](mailto:stephen.jackson@agric.nsw.gov.au)

# Happy Husbandry



## Hints for efficient food preparation and delivery

There are costs in feeding your animals that are not related to the purchase price of their food.

Feed has to be purchased, collected or delivered to your location. It has to be stored, refrigerated or frozen. It also has to be prepared and apportioned. It has to be delivered to the animals and feed receptacles have to be cleaned.

Each of these activities costs you time and money and can make inefficient use of your animal keepers.



Protecting feed buckets from other animals

Here are a couple of suggestions that may make things easier, cheaper and more efficient.

- Reduce the number of food suppliers you use. It lowers transport costs and gives you more bargaining power due to your average purchase being larger.
- Consider having dedicated food preparation staff – gain efficiencies from specialist staff, centralised storage, bulk processing and feed bowl cleaning.
- Try training some non-keeping staff to assist in food preparation. For example, zoo volunteers or maintenance staff could be trained in food preparation techniques. This will allow keepers more time for animal care, exhibit development and conservation work.
- Consider soaking used feed bowls in water for 15 minutes or more before cleaning. Most food items will be removed more easily after soaking.
- Use trolleys, quad bikes or tabletop utilities to transport several buckets or hay bales at a time. Food can be dropped off at satellite locations to reduce time wasted in back-tracking to the food preparation/storage area. This avoids carrying lesser amounts by hand and barrow.
- Prepare enough food for two days at a time. As long as the second day's food can be stored satisfactorily, it means food preparation only has to be second day. This saves time, as there is more efficient handling and less washing up.
- Use mechanical dicers/food processors to speed up dicing/cutting of food items.
- Place lids on buckets of food being transported on the back of trucks and bikes to minimise spoilage and access by flies or food-robbing birds.
- Have two or more sets of feed bowls so food delivery is not dependent on the previous day's bowls being cleaned. This allows cleaning of bowls to be carried out at a more convenient time. It also permits the use of commercial dishwashing machines to save labour.

In the next issue, Happy Husbandry offers suggestions for exhibit cleaning.

# School Standards

Successful presentations of animal performances for schools in New South Wales require research, planning and preparation. The Performing Arts Unit of New South Wales Department of Education and Training (NSWDET) believes that presentations must be based on specific educational aims.

Before being accepted in New South Wales Government schools, all performances must meet the criteria set down by NSWDET. Some Exhibited

Animals Protection Act (EAPA) authority holders, with the assistance of local teachers, have used this as an opportunity to develop excellent animal education programs for student groups.

The major factors influencing the planning of performances in schools include addressing the needs of teachers and delivering performances that are relevant to the school curriculum. It is also important that

the exhibitor has the ability to entertain and hold the attention of students.

**Is the time right to develop an EAPA standard for educational presentations?**

Your opinion is valuable. Please give your comments to:  
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# New Wildlife Sanctuary

New South Wales has a new licensed fauna park. Officially opened on 1 April, Calga Springs Wildlife Sanctuary is the brainchild of Barry Cohen. With son Adam and wife Rae, Barry has spent the last 13 years developing a management plan to protect an area of natural bush on sandstone ridge country on the New South Wales Central Coast.

Barry is perhaps best remembered for his time as the Federal Member for the Central Coast and Minister for the Environment under the Hawke Labor Government. During this time, he became deeply concerned at the devastation of native species caused by introduced predators such as cats and foxes.

The sanctuary encloses 80 ha of heath and eucalypt woodland, with a diverse range of native flora and resident populations of native mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians.

The purpose of the sanctuary was to create a site for recreational nature study, bush walking and education

where visitors have an excellent chance of observing native species under natural conditions. Native flora and fauna are protected behind a predator-resistant electrified fence and foxes and feral cats have been removed from within the boundary.

Walking tracks, including some suitable for wheel-chair access, and watering points for animals have been made. Timber walkways have been built over sensitive areas. Visitor amenities include a comfortable building that will be used for presentations to school and special interest groups.

The site was extensively used by local Darkinjung people prior to European settlement and has significant rock carvings and hand stencils made by them.

The next phase of the project will be the controlled release and monitoring of additional captive-bred mammals, belonging to species that are, or were until recent times, native to the area.

# Koalas leave Kingfisher Park

In the early days of Kingfisher Park at Port Macquarie, Giovanna Pawson, took delivery of two koalas for the park's inaugural koala exhibit. The koalas were received from a private zoo on the South Coast in a milk crate without branches, protection, history or instructions.

Twenty-one years later with the closure of Kingfisher Park, the koala colony has been relocated to Taronga Zoo. Milk crates were nowhere to be seen.

This time, the koalas underwent an intense, in-depth clinical examination before being accepted by Taronga Zoo.

Giovanna was impressed by the copybook techniques of the examination of the koalas by the zoo staff. Each animal had swabs and blood taken for testing and assessment of body condition was made with the absolute minimum of stress. The procedures for each animal were completed very quickly and the koala's recovery closely observed.

The koalas passed the medical with flying colours and the results were complemented with Kingfisher Park's individual animal records showing birth, health and reproductive history.

The exercise highlighted the professional procedures now in place for relocation of the koalas, a remarkable contrast to their arrival 16 years ago and Giovanna is delighted to know her precious koalas are now happily exploring their new home.

*Thank you to Giovanna for her contribution*

*Examination of koalas at Kingfisher Park*



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Disclaimer: The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing (July 2001). 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 Agriculture or the user's independent adviser.



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