

# Animal

## ROUNDABOUT



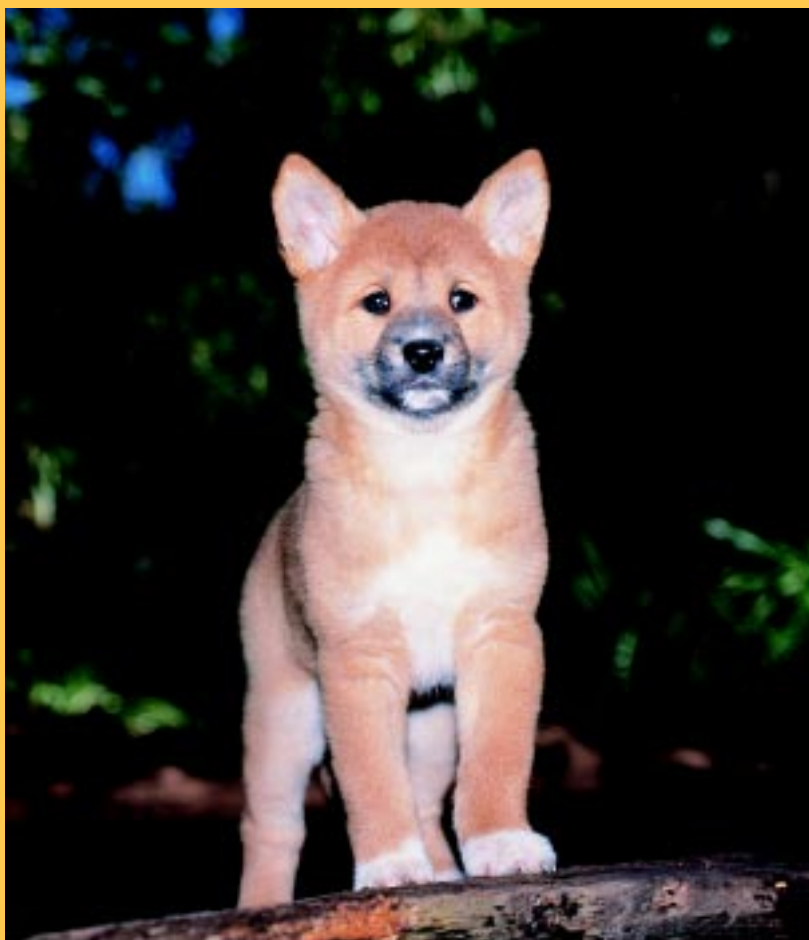
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Produced for people with an interest in the exhibition of animals in zoos, circuses, mobile farms, fauna and wildlife parks in NSW.



NSW Agriculture

### Bigger territory for dingoes



Last February, a circular about 'Changes to the Dingo Enclosure Sizes' was sent out to exhibitors for comments about a proposal to increase enclosure sizes for dingoes. This proposal arose because dingoes are a very social species with a strong hierarchy. It is therefore important for individual dingoes to be able to retreat from dominant animals during times of aggression.

Dingoes also need adequate room for exercise to develop fitness and to increase their natural behaviour patterns. Behaviour enrichment for dingoes requires space for different substrates, climbing opportunities and variety in the enclosure such as trees, hollow and whole logs, rock piles, shrubs and grass.

The proposal to increase enclosure size for

new exhibits for dingoes was discussed at the last meeting of the Exhibited Animals Advisory Committee (EAAC) and the NSW Fauna and Marine Parks Association.

These committees agreed to recommend an increase in the minimum exhibit size from 100m<sup>2</sup> to 220m<sup>2</sup> with an additional area of 10 % for each extra animal. It is also important to highlight that as part of this change, it is essential that structural complexity within the enclosure be provided to allow the dingoes opportunities to hide, climb and escape aggressive behaviour.

The NSW Fauna and Marine Parks Association and the EAAC also agreed that the sale of dingoes to the public should be more strongly regulated. Significant numbers of dingoes are being sold to the public and many of these people are finding it difficult to keep and maintain dingoes. This appears to have resulted in many dingoes being dumped or returned to pounds.

Therefore, future transactions of dingoes to members of the public from fauna parks will be thoroughly examined to make sure the person receiving the dingoes has adequate experience and facilities that are similar to those required by exhibitors.

A list of reasons for determining approval to sell dingoes to the public has been recently distributed in a circular. Copies can be obtained from

Stephen Jackson,  
Animal Welfare Unit  
Ph: (02) 6391 3474.

# Looze Lipz



## Joeys at risk

If you wish to temporarily exhibit a joey outside your fauna park, only use hand reared kangaroos that are pre-pouch emergence or have only just starting leaving the pouch. This is because larger individuals can be difficult to recapture once they escape from the pouch and, if frightened, can be easily injured. The recent escape of a joey from a temporary exhibit highlights the risks. The animal disappeared into bushland and could not be found. Still dependent on hand feeding and without maternal assistance, the chances of this animal surviving without human intervention are low. Placing a young joey on exhibit without an enclosure fence is also risky!

## Euca Lyptus

Zoologists at the University of Queensland have discovered the world's first identical koala twins. The twins christened Euca and Lyptus, were successfully born and reared as part of the

University's Koala Study Program. The koalas were the first to be DNA-fingerprinted to determine their parentage. From the genetic analysis it was established that the young koalas were identical twins.

## Bitey, scrubby pythons

An exhibitor of Morelia amethystina (Amethystine Pythons, commonly called scrubby pythons) recently had a problem with hostile behaviour and biting among pythons. The 'bitey' pythons, a male and a female, stopped biting when they were introduced to a bigger enclosure measuring 2400 mm x 2800 mm with the usual heating, climbing, hiding, water and security features. It was apparent that the larger enclosure resulted in decreased aggression.

## Chipping into koalas

A reminder to koala exhibitors to make sure each koala is identified by a Trovan-compatible microchip (passive integrated transponder tag). These chips are implanted between the shoulder blades of koalas more than 10 g in body weight. Exhibited Animals Protection Act inspectors will be focusing on checking all koala microchips in the future so it is

important that exhibitors correctly identify their koalas.

## That time of the year!

All licence and approval holders are required to renew their licences, approvals and permits at the end of each financial year. All renewals should be sent to the Animal Welfare Unit. If anyone has problems associated with renewing insurance, completing forms or filling in animal record books contact Tammy Kirby on (02) 6391 3725.

## Notable births



During the past few months, Taronga Zoo has announced some remarkable animal births. For the first time in 25 years, a female Andean condor was successfully hatched after 59 days in incubation. Christened 'Megan' by her keeper, Treena Carney, the young condor is growing so fast, it won't be long before it reaches an adult weight of around 12 kilos. Proud fishing cat parents, 'Fiddle ll' and 'Pak' produced two beautiful kittens, a male named 'Beranang' and a female named 'Cantlik'. A precious baby chimpanzee called 'Lani' was a triumphant birth for the Taronga Zoo's chimpanzee family. The birth of 'Lani' was cause for a celebration as she is only the second chimp born in the last six years at the zoo.

## Hello from the editor

*The Animal Roundabout team is pleased to announce the fifth anniversary and 10th edition of Animal Roundabout since its introduction in November 1997.*

*The aim of the newsletter to exchange information between the exhibited animals industry, community and government, has been instrumental in helping exhibitors to improve the welfare of animals on display.*

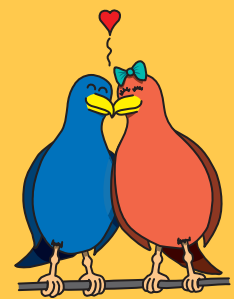
*A big thank-you to readers who have provided feedback with comments such as 'your newsletter is eye-catching, informative and timely' and 'easy to read, helpful and very positive'. It is also pleasing that the circulation of Animal Roundabout has more than doubled since its introduction.*

*To continue to help exhibitors, please tell us what you would like to see in the newsletter so we can help you further. Feel free to contribute topical articles and photos so your good ideas can be shared among other exhibitors. And, thanks to everyone who has shared their 'notable births'. It's always exciting to hear about special events of exhibited animals!*

*Sonya Begg*



# Keeping animals busy



The presence of animals in captivity generally results in limitations being placed on both their solitary and social behaviour. As a result, the use of behavioural enrichment techniques can be used to stimulate animals in captivity and promote natural behaviour.

Enrichment is the provision of stimuli that promote appropriate behavioural and mental activities, resulting in healthier and more active animals and more interesting displays.

There are various behaviour enrichment strategies that can be used including:

- Physical enrichment – providing space and furniture to encourage natural behaviour. Plant out enclosures with native species to provide additional smell and shade or providing plenty of climbing
- opportunities for arboreal species by the use of trees, trunks, branches and ropes.
- Occupational enrichment – providing objects for the animals to manipulate.
- Feeding enrichment – providing novel food items and feeding devices. Examples include providing browse for herbivores and providing live invertebrates for omnivorous and carnivorous birds and for small to medium sized mammals and reptiles. Hiding food or varying feed times can also promote foraging behaviour and can increase animal activity.
- Senses enrichment – providing novel smells or noises such as vanilla, blood and peppermint or playing sounds of predators and/or prey.

- Physiological enrichment – providing proper temperatures, humidity and light to stimulate natural behaviour patterns.
- Social enrichment – providing opportunities to interact with the same or other species by keeping them in pairs or groups.

## Useful websites

### The Environmental Husbandry Manual

<<http://homepage.ntlworld.com/gordon.mcleod/MainPages/contents.htm>>

### Managing animal behaviour through environmental enrichment with an emphasis in rescue and rehabilitation centres

<<http://www.zoolex.org/ivan/title.html>>

## Future issues of Animal Roundabout

will highlight further examples of behavioural enrichment specific to particular groups of animals.

We are keen to include behavioural enrichment strategies used by exhibitors, so we would be glad to receive your contributions. Send to the editor at the address on the back page.



## Rare event



*Maia and Apollo, Oceanworld's baby grey nurse sharks*  
Photo courtesy of Oceanworld, Manly NSW

'Artemis' a grey nurse shark on display at Oceanworld, Manly NSW gave birth to two healthy pups, a male and a female, last December.

Each pup measured nearly a metre long when born. They were named 'Maia' and 'Apollo'. Proud aquarist, Kelly Page, reported that the birth is only the third successful captive birth in Australia and

only the fourth in the world. Because the birth is such a rare event, it is an important milestone for the captive population of grey nurse sharks.

Grey nurse sharks have been protected in New South Wales since 1984 due to a large decrease in numbers during the 1960s and 1970s and in 2000, they became listed as an endangered species.

# A lucky escape

The last thing on the minds of the Radnidge family, was preparation for bushfire at their newly-acquired Symbio Wildlife Gardens at Helensburgh, south of Sydney.

But on Christmas Day 2001, they faced a roaring furnace as a horrendous bushfire raced through bushland up to three sides of the park boundary.

A number of animal enclosures caught fire and a plantation of eucalyptus trees grown for koala feed went up in the blaze. The Radnidge family and their animal charges were vulnerable and afraid. Members of the community were in tears thinking the Wildlife Park and its animals were destroyed. But luck was on their side.

While large quantities of glowing ash swirled through the air, eucalypts, she oaks and pines inside the park did not ignite. No buildings were burnt to the ground and amazingly, no animals were lost in spite of the heat, flames and smoke.

In the days following the fire, appeals went out on radio and television for access to eucalyptus for koala feed. The response was overwhelming. The park was inundated with support from local councils, private citizens, and a tree-logging company. However, managing supplies of other fresh foods was extremely difficult.

The electricity supply and telecommunications were out of action

and refrigerators and freezers shut down. Fortunately, the State Emergency Service helped out with a generator on the second day of the fire but nearly all the food was spoiled.

The Radnidge family was very grateful for being spared but the close call has highlighted the necessity to plan and be better prepared for future bushfire seasons. They realise now, they need to have adequate 'loss of profits' insurance as unexpected costs were incurred because of the fire and the need to employ people to help clean up the mess.

The dream of running a wildlife park could have come to an untimely end. But thankful for their good luck, the Radnidge family recognise that they must be prepared and have plans in place to deal with the threat of bushfire in the future.

### ***The Radnidge family has put preventive measures in place to help deal with any future bushfires including:***

- installation of new water outlets
- buying a generator
- removal of vegetation from fence line
- community fire fighting trailer to be kept on property
- keeping mobile phones charged to ensure communication



Thanks to all the firefighters & emergency services for saving Symbio Wildlife Park  
love from the animals



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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 2002). 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.



NSW Agriculture