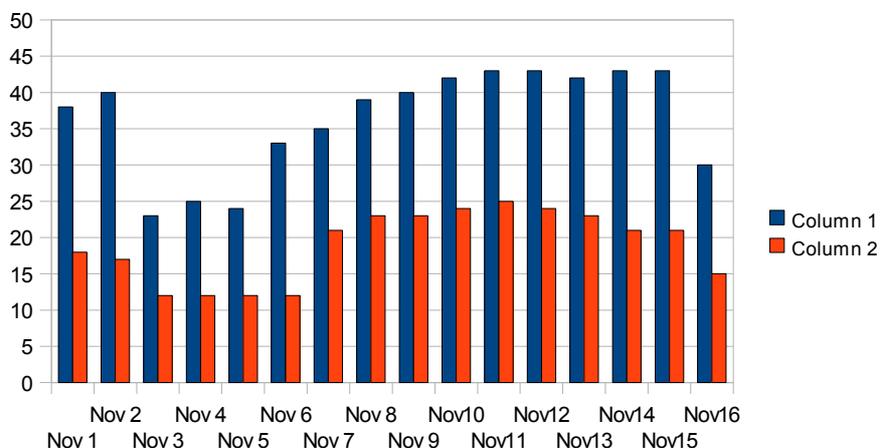


WOMBAT PROTECTION SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA BULLETIN 27
January 2009

Welcome to Bulletin 27.

A new year has begun and the work of the Society to help wombats and support people who do continues. The Society's Annual General Meeting will be held in March following the audit of the Society's accounts and operation by Kothes. A formal notification of the A.G.M. and voting issues will be sent to all members. Membership renewals need to be processed prior to the A.G.M. for those wishing to vote. See last page of this bulletin.

The end of 2009 saw unfavourable conditions for wombats, very hot and dry with little rain and as a consequence many wombats moved burrows looking for water and greener grass. Floods in the new year in places also created problems for wombats that had moved into river and creek beds as a result of the dry. A great many calls to the Society and its members were received from people finding themselves with a wombat visiting, often under their house, creating worries that the wombat would make a permanent home and undermine foundations. The good news is that such wombats rarely stay long and rarely make permanent burrows under houses. The sound of them rubbing their backs on low beams and their snuffling and scratching has people demanding they be caught and removed. A wombat under a house indicates that he or she has been displaced or is not well so particular care needs to be taken before any decision to trap and remove the wombat is made. Wombats have a tough time finding territory as it is, having had their range squeezed as humans have spread across and utilised the best wombat territory throughout Australia. Like humans, wombats have selected the best areas which provide them with suitable soils into which to dig burrows and adequate water supplies. Areas favoured by wombats, are generally good farming areas, particularly for dairying. The wombats' range has moved East in general (see Triggs, B.) and as conditions dry they move lower into gullies and creeks following water and food. In 2009 the Society developed a presentation for politicians, "Wombats, Barometers of Climate Change" and conditions in 2010 seem to be underlining the truth of this.



Pre -summer temperatures soared in South Australia during the day and dropped significantly at night explaining why wombats are nocturnal.

Mange Work Continues

Many people have been treating wombats with mange using burrow flaps and Cydectin. Other products work, but Cydectin's use on wombats has been monitored for three years so information about how much and how regularly to apply product is available. In Australia, chemicals used on animals are registered for use on a particular species following testing and no products are tested or registered for use on Native animals simply because there isn't a financial market for this to occur. Vets. and others have to "experiment" with medications used on eutherian animals (non marsupial and usually domestic) and adapt that knowledge for native animals.



Fort Dodge, the manufacturer of Cydectin, donated 20 litres to the Society late last year and we are very grateful for this donation of product. We have been able to distribute this to people helping wombats through provision of decanted amounts in the Society's mange kits and through larger amounts sent out to rescue groups. Fort Dodge is in the process of being sold and the product Cydectin is likely to be bought or sold seperately, meaning that long term we are unsure whether it will be bought out and retired or will continue to be produced by another company. We

will keep members informed of what transpires.

It is very helpful when people using Cydectin or any other product keep good notes about progress and any problems they observe as Tony in the story below has done. Readers may recall that a presentation at the National Wildlife Conference by Gayle Chapel, a Victorian wombat enthusiast, mentioned that she had been using a 1% solution of oral Ivomec as an adjunct topical treatment for patches of mange that were difficult to clear. Members in N.S.W. used a similar oral product, Paramectin in the same way at 1-10%. It should be noted that in BOTH cases, the topical spray was IN ADDITION to the use of either injectable ivomec or Cydectin used as a pour on. Tony's observations confirm that oral products used as topical sprays are not adequate as a total treatment and once again, getting Cydectin onto the wombat is the main and most important treatment strategy.

Hi,

I'm working at Manna Park, near Merimbula, and have been assigned the task of trying to help the mangey wombats. See attached picture; this one grazes on the grass here every afternoon.

I've been provided with a product called "Paramectin", which is a cattle pour-on that contains Abamectin. It has been applied by diluting with water and spraying at the wombat. The wombat runs away, but tends to stop once



under the forest canopy and can be sprayed from a few metres away.

Lenore at Potoroo Palace suggested Cydectin is a better product, and showed me the hinged flap she has installed at a burrow entrance. As this flap tilts, a cap full of Cydectin pours onto the Wombat's back.

Should I make one of these flaps to apply the Paramectin? Is there any other treatment or application method you recommend?

Regards
Tony Hastings
Resident Naturalist
Manna Park

Tony was sent a mange kit and some time later wrote to tell us of his observations.

To: <info@wombatprotection.org.au>
Sent: Monday, November 16, 2009 4:50 PM
Subject: Progress report

Hi,

Writing to let you know that the Cydectin treatment is working very well.

There are 4 known Wombats here, only one of which has mange. It was very bad, with its lower sides & limbs bald and maggoty. Previous treatment of diluted Paramectin spray had no noticeable effect. Almost everyone advised euthanasia.

Initial treatments with Cydectin were applied by sneaking up on the affected Wombat, and directly pouring 4ml onto its shoulders. A 3m long batten was used to aid this method of application, but was not always necessary as the wombat seemed quite deaf and blind. When rain washed the wombat soon after treatment or sudden movement caused some spillage during application, I re-applied the dosage within 2 days. Otherwise treatment has been applied every 7 to 9 days.

For the first 6 weeks of treatment, there was little change. The mange had a distinct line, or front, where it advanced up the wombat's sides and forwards onto its face.

After 6 weeks the fur was noticeably thicker on its sides; with recovery of fur in the bald areas. However the front continued to advance, now badly affecting the eye area.

At 8 weeks the improvement seemed to accelerate, with most observers commenting how good it looked, with thick fur now covering most of the body. The hearing improved so that I could not sneak up on it anymore, and changed to using the swinging hatch door instead. The wombat was no

longer foraging all day, but only emerged in the late afternoon. It stills seemed blind.

Now at 10 weeks, I can't report on the fur condition or eyesight, as the wombat is firmly snuggled into its favourite burrow all day and I haven't been able to sight it. I'll continue the weekly treatment until I am sure of full recovery.

Thanks for your great help and advice, I think we've saved this one!

Regards
Tony Hastings
Resident Naturalist
Manna Park

<http://www.mannapark.com.au/>
<http://www.mannaparkscamp.com.au/>

Great to hear Tony and good on you for your diligence. Tony's observations fit with many others we have received, particularly the relatively long lead time before observers feel sure that the wombat is recovering. The Wynans from Nimmitabel in N.S.W. have treated many wombats with mange and Mr. Milligan, previously shown in bulletins was a very manged wombat sucessfully treated over a number of months. The long lead time before clear improvement is seen has previously led people to believe there was nothing you can do to help a wombat with mange, but we know this is clearly not the case. While not underestimating the difficulties and the need for diligence to undertake regular treatment, it is quite clear that wombats can be treated and do recover. At the moment there is no way of preventing a reoccurance of mange, it is caused by a mite that can hop onto any animal any time- and long term being able to vaccinate against this mite and its impact on wombats would be the ideal solution. Until then, treating wombats that have mange is the humane and appropriate action to take. The earlier treatment begins, the quicker the infestation resolves. The other important area of work is to try and prevent mange by regular treatment, such as we do with our pets, particularly in areas where wombats have been seen with mange.

Womats with mange get very thirsty because the mite buries into the skin and causes it to "leak". Ensuring a good supply of fresh water is essential.



One of the reasons wombats with mange come into properties and run the quantlet of dogs is their need for water.

Fencing For Wombats



Whether you are a carer trying to build a Wombatorium to keep wombats in, or a property owner wanting to keep wombats out, there are challenges when it comes to fencing for an animal "hard wired" to dig.

Many property owners describe wombats as "destructive" to fences. Often their problems are exacerbated by how they go about managing wombat entries and exits under fences. A little thought and pre planning will overcome most issues. Actions most commonly used by property owners - blocking holes under fences with logs or rocks are counter-productive. When you understand that the wombat is built to dig burrows around rocks and logs, then putting these obstacles in their way encourages more digging. The wombat is hard wired to cope in a burrow situation where logs and rocks may block entrances or need to be dug out or around to continue the burrow. Putting such obstacles under fences or over burrows does not work.



Wombat Gates can be made from anything heavy enough for the wombat to push but too heavy for dogs, rabbits or wallabies to manage.



Gates need to be inserted where the wombats are pushing under the fence . Wombats use smell to direct themselves which is why there may be an entry at one place and an exit a short distance away. It is best to work with the natural inclinations of the animal and put two gates in, however where this is not suitable, directing the wombats to the

required gate can be done using stand off electric fencing.



Stand off electric fences are made to hook onto existing mesh fences. Wombats do not cause damage to strand fences as they can easily walk through these without needing to dig. Mesh fences are used to keep rabbits and other animals out or in and currently the upsurge in goat farming has led to many kilometres of mesh fencing being used in Australia.

Gates are another area where wombats will dig. The rigidity of gates gives them good purchase to dig underneath. A wire "skirt" made by laying mesh on the ground resolves the problem of gates adequately. While 500mm is generally sufficient for a "skirt", a full roll width of wire can be used and is used to keep wombats in exercise yards and wombatoriums.



Counter-intuitively ,soft mesh makes it hard for womats to get a purchase to dig and shademesh or similar soft mesh will usually deter a wombat digging around difficult to fence places like water tanks. It may deter a wombat from building a new burrow but is not effective as a deterrent to stop them entering an exisiting residential burrow. The most effective method of managing a burrow in

a place where it shouldn't be is to wait until the wombat has moved to another burow and de-commission it then. The bare nosed wombats in N.S.W., Victoria and Tasmania use a number of burrows according to weather conditions so there will be times when they are not in residence. Placing sticks or a sheet of cardboard near the burrow entrance or using sand or similar to check tracks will give an indication of whether the burrow is curenly in use. It is not true that all burrows in use will have entrances cleared of leaves and other debri, many a well used burrow requires the wombat to walk over piles of sticks, stones and fallen debri. While some wombats are fastidious and clear away anything from their burrow entries, others are happy to leave their entries littered. Scats may be found near to

some active burrows ,however some wombats travel significant distances from their burrows and make a toileting place so presence or absence of scats is not a definite indicator of burrow use either.

Vegetable gardens can be protected by corrugated iron buried into the ground at least 500mm and this provides protection from a range of animals likely to dig and enjoy vegetables.Wombats don't generally damage trees but may dig



nearby trying to get water if trees are irrigated. Metal sheeting used for above ground pools makes an effective weed and wombat barrier around trees.





RSPCA AUSTRALIA SCIENTIFIC SEMINAR
Convergence or conflict: Animal welfare in
wildlife management and conservation
Tuesday 23 February 2010, CSIRO Discovery Centre, Canberra

Managing wildlife populations and ecosystems or conserving threatened species are complex activities that include many interrelated elements, with consideration of animal welfare often only given a minor role. But the impact of human activity on wildlife and many of the conservation goals we set to protect Australian biodiversity can have serious implications for animal welfare, in both positive and negative ways.

The 2010 RSPCA Australia Scientific Seminar brings the issue of animal welfare in wildlife management and conservation issue to the fore, examining the way in which these activities can at times come into conflict with animal welfare goals, or at other times converge to produce outcomes that benefit both welfare and conservation. The Seminar will broadly examine the animal welfare issues associated with the management of wildlife across four overlapping themes:

- the impact and management of threatening processes, such as invasive species
- the conservation of threatened species
- the impacts of urbanisation and agricultural development on wildlife
- the impact of climate change on wildlife conservation.

The topic raises some difficult questions, including: When should the welfare of wildlife override human interests? Should environmental impacts carry more weight than agricultural or direct economic impacts? When it comes to animal welfare and conservation, should we be concerned with the welfare of individual animals, populations, species, or ecosystems? And how much should we intervene to improve animal welfare when populations have been damaged by human activity or development?

As is the tradition with this Seminar Series, the program aims to cross conventional topic boundaries, challenge current thinking, and stimulate further discussion. RSPCA Australia welcomes the participation of all interested people to help make this a fascinating and thought-provoking day.

Registration form: <http://www.rspca.org.au/what-we-do/our-work/science-and-policies/science-seminar.html>.

A full program for the seminar will be available in January 2010.

RSPCA Australia relies on email and website notification to publicise the Seminars. We would be very grateful if you could help us by passing on this notice to any interested colleagues or organisations.

Shooting Issues in N.S.W.

The Society continues to monitor the N.S.W. State governments' relationship with the Shooter's party and the current bid by the later to have shooting allowed in National Parks. The on line petition to protect wombats continues

so if you haven't signed this, please access it via our website.

Stand-off with Shooters still stuck in a stalemate

Author: Brian Robins Publication: Sydney Morning Herald
Date: 22/10/2009 Section: News and Features
Words: 237 Page: 6
Source: SMH

THE Shooters' Party continued their "strike" in State Parliament, again refusing to attend question time yesterday as their stand-off deepens with the Government over the Shooters' proposed legislation to shoot in national parks. Any deal allowing shooters into national parks would involve culling vermin and other feral animals, but not hunting, the Premier, Nathan Rees, said yesterday.

The Government has been negotiating with the Shooters' Party for several months over their legislation, which the Government has refused to back. Since the dispute began, the Government has largely lost control of the Legislative Council, with the Opposition and the crossbenches succeeding in forcing the Government to table papers in a range of areas from the M4 East project to the Tillegra dam and the Hurlstone Agricultural College.

Mr Rees said despite the lack of support of the Shooters' Party, the Government has been able to get legislation through, negotiating with the Opposition and crossbenches on a case-by-case basis.

Earlier this week, the Herald reported the Government has a proposal to allow shooters access to 13 national parks along the Queensland and South Australian borders.

Asked in the Legislative Council yesterday about negotiations, the Treasurer, Eric Roozendaal, refused to be drawn, saying that he talks with a variety of members in the both the Opposition and crossbenches. Mr Roozendaal, along with Mr Rees's chief of staff, Graeme Wedderburn, had been talking to the Shooters to resolve the impasse. with AAP



Membership Renewal

Would all members please ensure their membership is up to date prior to the Annual General Meeting scheduled for March 2010. It would be helpful if members complete and return the information below so the Society's records can be updated.

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Email Address _____

Telephone Number(s) _____

Birth DAY and MONTH (for cards, optional) _____

Would you be interested in assisting the work of the Society? Please indicate whether you are interested in any of the following ways of helping and add any others you may be able to do;

- Editing Newsletters
- Making telephone calls
- Giving advice to members of the public re wombats
- Being a contact on our get help for wombats program
- Becoming a member of the board
- Undertaking a role such as secretary, public officer, accounting
- Making up mange prevention kits
- Undertaking internet research
- Project liason (connects you to a particular project)

Other;

Membership fees for 2010 are \$20.00 per year per adult by email contact and \$25.00 for snail mail, \$10.00 and \$15.00 respectively for children and \$30.00 and \$35.00 for families. Cheques should be made out to the Wombat Protection Society, direct deposits to the Operating Account can be made ; BSB 802124 account 77328 Wombat Protection Society of Australia. Pay Pal deposits can be made on site www.wombatprotection.org.au. Please ensure if you are using pay pal or direct deposit that you indicate who you are and what your deposit is for. Members who joined in 2009 do not need to renew until 2011. Hon. members and Directors do not need to renew but please upate your contact details if these have changed.

Not a member yet? You can complete this form and become one. Indicate below if you are newly joining. New Member _____

Wombat Protection Society of Australia Bulletin January 2010
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