

Welcome to Bulletin 34 and an exciting year for the Society as we approach March and the first Conference dedicated to wombats in over fourteen years.

We hope to see many members attending and we will be holding the Society's A.G.M. during the Conference in expectation of your presence.

If you haven't booked yet, you will need to do so soon. You can register and pay on line and have a look around the new Website while you are there.

For computer-phobes, this bulletin contains forms to register and you can pay by cheque or money order and send your registration by snail mail.

Some presenters are still collecting data- please have a look at the milk survey (for rehabilitators) and the mange survey (for those who have treated wombats for mange) and remember that visual presentations, photographs, and stalls can still be entered.

## WOMBAT CONFERENCE 2011

The Wombat Protection Society of Australia is pleased to announce a conference to further knowledge, update understanding and develop strategies for the protection and preservation of wombats.

The last conference devoted to wombats was sponsored by the Royal Zoological Society of South Australia 16 years ago. Research, knowledge and policies regarding wombats will be brought up to date and published as conference proceedings.

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**PAPERS, FORUMS AND DISPLAYS  
WILL BE PRESENTED  
FROM ACROSS AUSTRALIA**

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**THE CONFERENCE WILL CREATE  
OPPORTUNITIES TO DEVELOP  
ONGOING NETWORKS TO ADDRESS MAJOR  
ISSUES AFFECTING WOMBATS**

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**SATURDAY 19<sup>TH</sup>  
SUNDAY 20<sup>TH</sup>  
MONDAY 21<sup>ST</sup>  
MARCH 2011**

**ALL SEASONS ALBURY  
LAKE HUME RESORT  
ALBURY NSW**

The conference cost of \$250.00 includes:

- Friday nights 'Meet and Greet'
- conference bag
- access to all presentations and forums
- refreshments and lunches Saturday, Sunday and Monday
- Conference dinner Sunday night.

Presenters and Conference Volunteers  
**are eligible for a reduced conference fee**

There are still opportunities to volunteer either at the conference or in the lead up to it. For each morning or afternoon of volunteering at the conference you can receive a \$25.00 discount and for presentations a similar discount is available. Volunteers at the Conference will be in the auditorium so will not miss out on proceedings.

**SPEAKERS** (Provisional List)

Presenters can still offer their work for inclusion in the conference and while we are attempting to keep presentations to one stream, should there be sufficient interest, a second stream may be included.

**Dr Ken Henry**

Master of Ceremonies

We are pleased to announce that Ken Henry has agreed to be the Master of Ceremonies Ken and Naomi Henry have been involved with wombats for many years and are very involved with the northern Hairy Nosed Wombat Recovery program and the Wombat Foundation.

**Jackie French**

How to Speak Wombat

Jackie is well known for her whimsical books about wombats and her long term commitment to them. Jackie will be starting the Conference off with her talk which highlights the communication between wombats and people.

**Phillip Borchard**

Sydney University

Wombat gates and diurnal behaviour

**Dr Peter Clements**

Natural History Society of South Australia

Southern hairy nosed wombats in Wildlife Reserves

**Amanda Cox**

Director Wombat Protection Society of Australia  
State of the Wombat

**Professor Steve Garlick**

University of the Sunshine Coast QLD & University of Newcastle

Learning from wildlife: Relational Ethics, sustainability and neuroscience

**Dr Lindsay Hogan**

Researcher, Perth Zoo Native Species Breeding Program  
Wombat behaviour, wellbeing and reproduction

**Dr Alan Horsup**

Dept of Environment & Resource Management QLD

The history and recovery of the northern hairy nosed wombat

**Tamara Keeley**

Researcher Taronga Western Plains Zoo Dubbo NSW  
Reproductive cycles and stress levels in captive and wild wombats

**BJ Kim**

Solicitor EDO NSW (Environmental Defender's Office)  
The law and wombats

**Audrey Koosmen**

NSW Wildlife Council Chair & NATF Chair

Wombat disaster management during floods

**Shirley Lack & Lesley Waterhouse**

Feeding regimes for young wombats

**Jo McLellan**

Qld Parks & Wildlife Service

Conserving wombats in Girraween NP QLD

**Alison Matthews**

Charles Sturt University / DECCW NSW

The distribution and community perceptions of the common wombat in NSW

**Patrick Medway AM**

Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia

100 Years of Protecting Wombats

**Dr Peter Pridmore**

La Trobe University Albury Wodonga Campus NSW

Wombat locomotion

**Dr Howard Ralph**

Veterinary Surgeon Southern Cross Wildlife NSW

Pain management & toxoplasmosis in wombats

**Dr Erin Roger**

University of NSW

Roadkill

**Brigitte Stevens**

Director Wombat Awareness Organisation SA

Prophylactic treatment of wombats in broad areas

**Bill Waterhouse**

Majors Creek Wombat Refuge NSW

Wombat friendly gold mine - is it possible?\_

**Jack Wolfenden**

Researcher University of Western Sydney

Trialling broad treatment strategy

**Kris Descovich**

Qld University Researcher

Physiological responses of captive SHN wombats to environmental conditions

**Dr Suzanne Alder & Amanda Cox**

Wombat Protection Society of Australia

Psychological perspectives of wombat communication and behaviour

**FORUMS**

Wombat Care and Rehabilitation

Future Directions in Wombat Conservation

Forums are planned to be interactive so that delegates can address issues in these areas that interest/ concern them.

**FILMS and DISPLAYS**

See the last page of this Bulletin or go to website for the Conference registration form

**RESEARCHERS NEEDING YOUR INPUT**Neck Girths

There are a number of research projects concerning wombats underway and some researchers have requested input. Georgeanna Story is going to release some wombats that will be radio-collared and she is wondering whether anyone has measured the growth circumference of a wombats' neck as it grows?

We couldn't find an reference to such measurements being taken except for a wombat in a zoo in Germany! There, when a joey was born to a captive mother, zoologists regularly took measurements of the developing joey, including neck girth. We wondered why they would have done this and then realised that as the joey was attached to mum's teat, this was a measurement they could take without disrupting the joey.

Georgeanna explains her requirements; I haven't put any collars on yet, still sourcing the funding, although RSPCA has just given me a small grant.

The collars are a design that Murray Evans developed specifically for wombats and have a tapering style under the chin (paper available from the Society). Besides Murray there are several other people that have successfully used them on all wombat species.

I've approached many of these people and no one has had an issue with slipping collars. I've also spoken to Sitrack about the option of an elastic insert and while they are happy to accommodate that in the collar they don't think it will stand up to the lifestyle of a wombat.

My main question for you was on the changing neck diameter of wombats as they grow. For the radio collars I need to provide the neck diameter and I'm concerned about the growth that I need to accommodate. Assuming animals are released around the 20-25kg mark, would the thickness of their neck grow much in the following 9-12 months? Still to hear from any of the funding bodies but the ethics permit has come through.

Georgeanna Story Scats About  
02 48461238 0429 779 928PO  
Box 24 Majors Creek NSW 2622  
[www.scatsabout.com.au](http://www.scatsabout.com.au)

Release numbers

Some time ago we asked members to get hold of release figures for any rehabilitation group they may be involved in. To be specific we are interested in hand raised wombats going to a final release site in 2010. We will ask this question again for 2011. For some time the Society has been quoting an old figure of approximately 100 wombats Australia wide but we suspect this number has risen slightly. Please note, this is not the number of wombats taken into care but raised and fully released .

Feeding Regimes

There is always a lot of interest and debate amongst wildlife carers about the best way to raise wombats. Part of the reason for the debate is that it is a relatively small group of people who have this opportunity and often relatively small numbers of wombats involved.

Over time it has become clear that specialised feeds are needed to raise marsupials- though we all know of the occasional lucky one that managed to be raised on other than specialised food. These days, wombats are very fortunate because there are specialised milk formulas made for marsupials ( eg; Biolac and Wombaroo and, less specific, Divetalac). Biolac and Wombaroo formulas are adjusted relative to the age and development of the young wombat. Wombaroo specifies an amount of feed according to the weight of the wombat while Biolac and Divetalac use 10% and 10-15% of body weight respectively, this is then translated into grams of feed powder. Regular readers will recall some years ago we queried people raising joeys less than 300grams as one of the Wildlife rehabilitation groups had concluded that this couldn't be done. Many specialist carers in both NSW and VIC responded and said they had successfully raised and released such small joeys. Many commented that Biolac, (now which has a special formula for very small wombats (GOS)) had led to that success.

Most feeds give a suggested number of feeds per day depending on gross measurements- such as whether the joey is furred or unfurred (pinky). There are big developmental differences beyond this simple twofold division. Most carers reported that all sized joeys when first coming into care drink little amounts often. Some estimations suggested that small wombats

wanted to drink constantly and consumed 1ml per hour. Pinky wombats (generally under 500grams) appear to attach to mum's teat and are intricately linked to her. When first born the baby wombats' mouth is not fully open. Mum's teat is little and as it slips into the small opening of the joey's mouth and swells, it holds the baby in place. First settlers seeing this believed marsupials were born in the pouch. This is also the reason that if you remove a small joey from a dead mum, sometimes it is better to cut the teat (sounds awful but she is dead and it won't bleed) rather than run the risk of dislocating the joey's mouth.

Lesley Waterhouse and her husband Bill run Majors Creek Wombat Refuge in NSW. Les is wombat coordinator for two wildlife groups; WILDCARE (Queanbeyan) and Native Animal Rescue Group (Braidwood). Les writes; I have been a wombat carer for eight years and have raised or triaged over 100 orphaned baby wombats. From my own experience I have found that baby wombats that are not fed often tend to be much more active and agitated than those fed more frequently. They are often difficult to feed and often actually refuse to feed. Small babies that have long intervals between feeds (6 hours or more) have been known to have fits. This is often attributed to neurological damage when it is actually the result of low blood sugar. When fed more often and given the correct amount of fluid, the fitting stops.

Lesley would like to hear of your experiences in raising young wombats and get input on the feeding regime recommendations tabled below, a result of collaboration with other carers.

While all animals are different, a rough guide to the frequency of feeds over a 24 hour period is as follows:-

up to 250 grams- every 2 to 4 hours

250- 750 grams- every 4 hours

800 grams to 1.5 kgs- every 4 to 5 hours

1.5 kgs to 4 kgs- every 6 hours

4 kgs to 7 kgs- every 8 hours

7 kgs until weaning- every 12 hours

This schedule applies to all brands of milk powder.

### How to Comment

You can write directly to Lesley and explain your experiences and make direct comments on the tabled recommendations.

Majors Creek Wombat Refuge  
55 Red Hill Road Majors Creek NSW 2622  
4846 1333 4285 5504 0439 375 275  
[wombat@aspire.com.au](mailto:wombat@aspire.com.au)

### Mange

Would people who have treated a wombat/s for mange please supply the following information. If more than one method or more than one wombat has been involved please indicate. This information to be included in the Conference Mange presentation/display.

Name and Contact details

Product/s used

Rates and methods of application

Your conclusions/evaluation/comments

Please send to [info@wombatprotection.org.au](mailto:info@wombatprotection.org.au) or mail to PO Box 6045 Quaama NSW 2550



PICTURE THANKS TO NICOLA CRONIN YARRAMALONG VALLEY NSW SEPTEMBER 2010



PICTURE THANKS TO JAMES FRENCH CEDARS COTTAGES KANGAROO VALLEY OCTOBER 2010

### Research on Road Deaths Completed

Natasha Crook from University of New England undertook research last year on road deaths of wombats in certain areas of NSW. This is an issue that Society Members remain very concerned about, particularly as there seems to be no solutions other than educating the general public about wombat behaviour on road verges and teaching drivers to SLOW DOWN where there are WOMBATS AROUND.

This is what Natasha had to say-Thank you for developing the wombat road kill map, it provided a valuable resource indicating areas where hotspots are forming. There is an attachment (because my study site is in the Northern Tablelands, NSW) of locations where wombats have been killed. I also generated using GIS a density surface map indicating hotspots where there is clumping of wombat road kills. I only used points in NSW and some points I could not use because it must be within specific datum (some points were located in the ocean). This is a start and over time more data can be collected and this will important information about wombat hotspots.

The second attachment is just a summary (mainly the abstract) of my honours thesis of road mortality on wombats on Thunderbolts Way. The thesis has been submitted for marking and can be provided to you via a PDF format after it has been submitted ,if requested. Again thank you for helping me- Natasha ( The maps mentioned are available should you require a copy, please contact the Society. )

### **Summary report – Factors associated with road mortality of the Bare-nosed wombat (*Vombatus ursinus*) in the Nowendoc “hot spot” region.**

Thunderbolts Way is a road located within the Northern Tablelands, New South Wales and has been identified as a hotspot for road deaths of the bare-nosed wombat (*Vombatus ursinus*). Many wombat populations throughout NSW have been reduced because of high road mortality; an understanding of particular characteristics of wombat populations within hotspots is limited. Increasing such understanding could help increase the effectiveness of measures to mitigate wombat

road kill within hotspots.

This honours thesis aimed to assess a wombat population within a hotspot location and to evaluate if existing road structures can be used as an effective mitigation measure to reduce road mortality. The study examined aspects of wombat ecology, specifically, burrows density and occupancy, and assessed the use of drainage culverts by wombats.

The wombat ecology was examined using two methods: distance sampling to determine wombat burrow density and camera trapping using the detection/non-detection method to determine occupancy estimations of burrows and wombat presence. Culvert use was assessed by using cameras and tracks, as well as the detection/non-detection method.

Results showed a high wombat burrow density in areas of high forest cover and burrow occupancy was lower than wombat occurrence at the burrow.

Wombats will use culverts regularly with results from track analysis having higher probability of use than did camera trapping analysis.

The high burrow densities, determined by distance sampling, and study results that show that based on the averaged-model estimate from camera-trapping which show that half of the burrows are being occupied, suggests that there is a high wombat population in areas around Thunderbolts Way. The indications are that wombat habitat preference found in the habitat characteristics along Thunderbolts Way have resulted in the road being a hotspot for wombat road mortality.

Drainage culverts look promising as a tool for providing wombats with a safe passage across the road. A further benefit of this study is the finding that the detection/non-detection method can be used as a monitoring tool.

Further studies are required to determine: if road mortality does in fact have a significant negative impact on wombat populations; and whether culverts can be made more attractive for wombat use. Such studies would further increase knowledge of wombat ecology in hotspot locations and facilitate the development of effective mitigation strategies to reduce wombat road mortality.

### Volunteer Available

First Name: Kirianna

Last Name: Crowe

Email Address: [kirianna-crowe@hotmail.com](mailto:kirianna-crowe@hotmail.com)

Phone: 14039385210

It is OK for you to contact me - Yes: Checked

Message Subject: Wombat protection volunteers

Message: Hello,

My name is Kirianna, and I was interested in doing volunteer work while in Australia. In a volunteering book I had, it has your organization listed as being able to volunteer at. If there is any information you could provide me with, that would be great!

I do not have experience with wombats, as I am from Canada, but I do have experience with volunteering abroad and also dealing with animals. I'm a quick and keen learner as well.  
From: [info@wombatprotection.org.au](mailto:info@wombatprotection.org.au)  
To: [kirianna-crowe@hotmail.com](mailto:kirianna-crowe@hotmail.com)  
Subject: Re: My Contact Form  
Date: Tue, 4 Jan 2011 09:37:47 +1100

Hello Kirianna,

We'll put your offer/request into our next bulletin so that members who have need for volunteers may contact you. The Society itself has more administrative work available for volunteers, but members actually working with wombats are probably your best options for some hands on work.

Good luck and stay in contact.

Hello,

That is perfect, thank you! I will be in Australia very soon, though, from February 8 until March 23. Any work within that time frame would be greatly appreciated! thank you!

Kirianna

### Mange Treatment

Late last year NSW members met at Braidwood to discuss furthering the treatment of wombats with mange.

At this time, bureaucracy is the main impediment to successfully treating wombats with mange in NSW. Licensed rehabilitators are allowed to take any wombat suffering from mange into care and under direction of a veterinarian treat them for mange. Where this can be done, good results are achieved. The problem is that very few rehabilitators have the necessary facilities to hold an adult wombat and a range of problems result from moving a wombat out of its habitat. Veterinarians can prescribe what is known as "off label use" of products to treat native animals. In general, products used in the treatment of native animals are not registered for that purpose. This is because manufacturers wanting to produce a product, apply for license to test that product on the animals they will make money from. As products are registered for animal use in Australia, they are registered for those animals tests were conducted upon. Cydectin®, which can be used as a pour on and which has been used successfully on wombats, is registered throughout Australia for use on cattle and red deer.

Apart from regulations pertaining to the use of products on native animals we also have a second tier of bureaucracy pertaining to who can administer products to a native animal. In general, throughout Australia, but certainly in NSW, legally, the only people allowed to do anything with native animals must belong to a registered wildlife rehabilitation group and must be specifically licensed by that group as carers. Such licenses are called rehabilitation licenses. The second way people may do things with native animals is via a scientific license which will allow nominated people to undertake work with native animals for science based reasons. Sadly, it is still easier in NSW to obtain a license to kill native animals, and these are freely issued by National Parks and Wildlife Rangers to farmers and property owners wanting to eradicate native animals than it is to obtain a rehabilitation license or Scientific license, to assist them.

While many of these rules have been made with the best of intentions, it now results in a situation where people may be considered to be

technically acting illegally if they treat wombats on their properties for mange. The Society would like to continue to send private property owners mange kits so they can protect their wombats and treat them if they show signs of mange. Many such property owners do not belong - nor do they want to belong- to rehabilitation groups, they simply want to ensure wombats on their properties have a good quality of life and do not suffer. Currently, in NSW, such people must call in licensed rehabilitators to treat wombats and where their local group does not have enough people, or does not have expertise in dealing with wombats, or where the local group have decided treatment isn't worthwhile, the only options offered to such people is that the group will send someone out to shoot the wombat when it is so deteriorated that it needs to be euthanised.

The Society is trying to work on how to resolve this problem and following the NSW members' meeting, three Society Directors met with Ron Haering and Brendon Neilly ; NSW DECCW's Rehabilitation and Scientific Licensing Officers respectively. Jack Wolfenden and his supervisor from University of Western Sydney also attended the Scientific Licensing discussion part of this meeting.

The minutes of the meeting are currently before the Board and members will be updated regarding further action the Society takes via the Bulletins. Members wanting a copy of the minutes can contact the Society.

One of the good things to result from this meeting is the approval of a Scientific License for work to treat wombats with mange at Emirates Resort Lithgow, N.S.W. , trialling two different applications of Cydectin®. Jack will hopefully be able to get enough work done to give some preliminary information at the Conference.

This link is to an on line survey members may be interested in; sent by Lenore Taylor.

### Members' News

Just wanted to thank you for having us at Fridays' meeting. It was a pleasure to meet you all! You really are a very good speaker and we are fortunate that you are so passionate about the welfare of wombats that you manage to handle the politics of the Wombat Protection Society all with a wombat down your shirt!

I was lucky enough to see the indoor and outdoor enclosures of Bill and Lesley's and Anne William's and had a wonderful cuddle with Bindi my little orphan Joey now fat and healed. Magical !!!

Just after leaving the meeting I received a phone call from a distraught security guard at Bendeela about a wombat that was badly injured by a 4 WD. I called Lesley who made some calls and eventually NANA sent a shooter out. I would like to write about having a better plan for dealing with accidents in the future.  
Tracey

Little Merri was very badly injured when she came to Wildhaven, as she healed her left front foot curled under, Annie from Darraweit Guim Wildlife Shelter, massaged her foot and leg for 2 months. Look at her now.

Stella. Wildhaven

[www.wildhavenstandrews.com.au](http://www.wildhavenstandrews.com.au)

[stellareid@bigpond.com](mailto:stellareid@bigpond.com)



MERRI AND WARRI DOING WELL PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF STELLA REID, WILDHAVEN SANCTUARY

[ABC Feral Animal Survey:](http://collectiveaction.com.au)  
[Collective Action](http://collectiveaction.com.au)

Source: [collectiveaction.com.au](http://collectiveaction.com.au)

## CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FORM

Please direct enquires to:  
[conference@wombatprotection.org.au](mailto:conference@wombatprotection.org.au)

**Phone 02 6493 8245**



Please indicate if you are claiming a conference fee reduction

- Presenter \$25.00 per session
- No. of presentations
  
- Volunteer \$25.00 per session
- No. of sessions

**NAME** \_\_\_\_\_

**ORGANISATION** (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS** \_\_\_\_\_

**EMAIL** \_\_\_\_\_

**PHONE** \_\_\_\_\_

All delegates receive a conference bag and CD Rom of proceedings. Additional Conference Bags @\$25.00 can be ordered.

- No. of additional bags

Please state any special dietary needs:

**Please indicate your payment method:**

**Direct Deposit to the Wombat Protection Society of Australia**  
BSB 802 124 Account No. 77328  
(please quote conference and your name)

**Via PayPal - donation button at**  
[www.wombatprotection.org.au](http://www.wombatprotection.org.au)

**By Money Order or Cheque**  
(payable to **Wombat Protection Society**)  
Mail to: **Conference Booking**  
PO Box 6045 Quaama NSW 2550

**Delegates are advised to book their accommodation directly with**  
**All Seasons Albury Lake Hume Resort**  
[reservations@lakehumeresort.com.au](mailto:reservations@lakehumeresort.com.au)  
Phone 02 6026 4444  
[www.all-seasons-hotels.com](http://www.all-seasons-hotels.com)

A range of motel and self contained cottage accommodation is offered to conference delegates at discounted rates.

The Conference Secretary will confirm your booking and send you further details with your receipt.

**If you want to have a display, hold a stall or present at this conference please make sure you contact the Conference Secretary. Stalls are \$25.00 per day or donated % of sales.**