



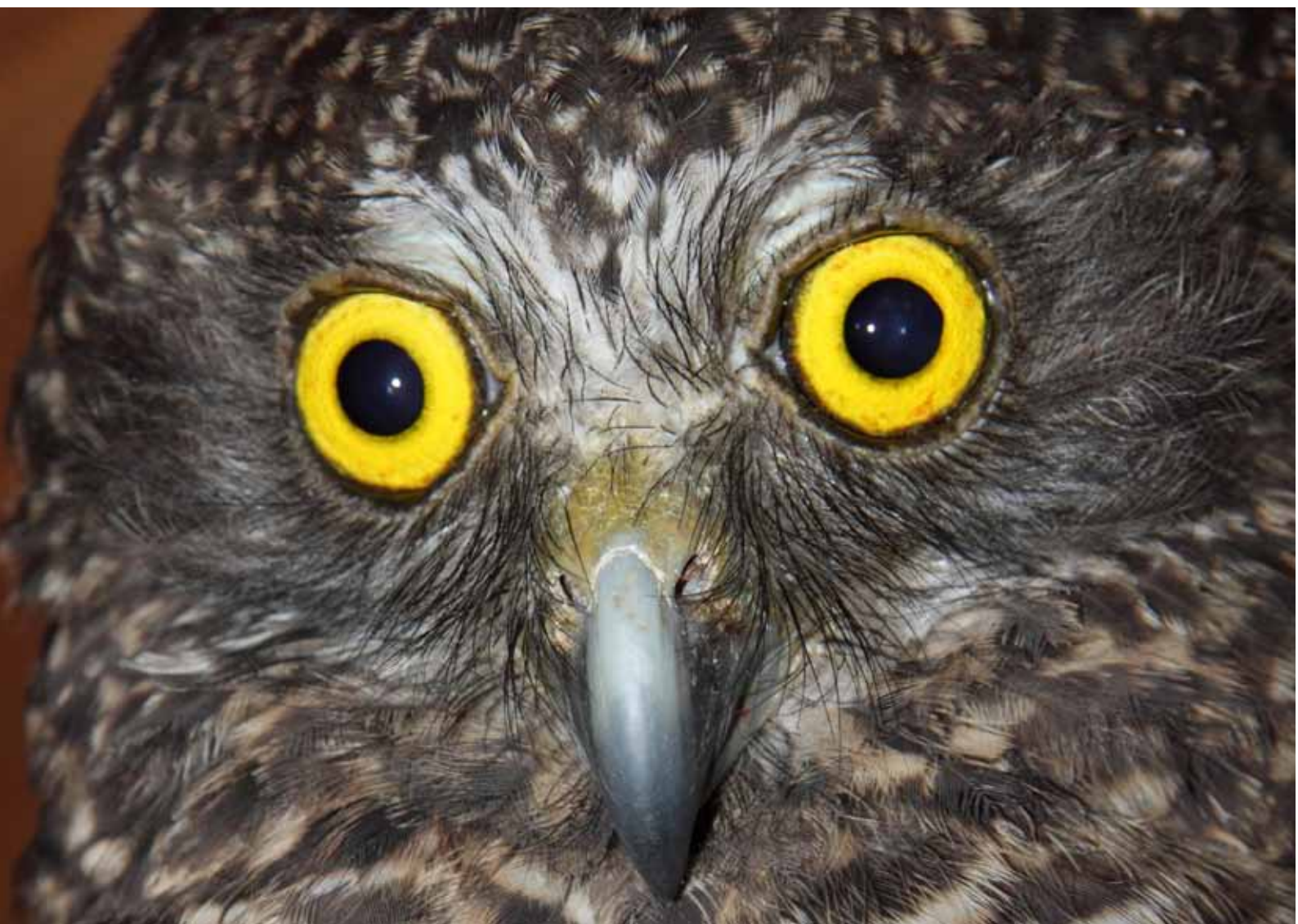
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Issue 4, March 2011 Newsletter

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## Here's lookin' at you!



You have helped this Powerful owl regain its strength.  
See inside for story

*Thankyou to our wonderful volunteers and donors who help keep injured wildlife alive. Our Australian animals need you so that they may thrive. Your support throughout 2010 has been fantastic. Knowing there are so many people out there thinking of wildlife and supporting the work we do is encouraging and uplifting.*

## From the shelter

Our sincerest thanks also to our wonderful shelter volunteers that come week after week to keep the shelter operating. We have about 15 volunteers that come in each week and negotiate space around the myriad of creatures and their quirks (including Jon and Gayle). Special thanks to Juliet for creating the great new format for the newsletter and also to Jason, Mary and Trevor for their inputs.

2010 was another busy year for the shelter, with our workload increasing proportionately to our higher profile in the community. Weather extremes impacted on some shelter operations with 2 sheds being demolished by falling trees and enclosures being flooded by the incessant rain. We have had several large trees come down over fences as well and there is quite a bit of clean up required. We are still waiting for the ground to dry out so we can commence earthworks on the animal's fire bunker, but it has been a welcome relief having a wet fire season.

The wet, wet summer has meant that we haven't had as many kangaroos, wombats and koalas as we would normally see at this time of year, although unfortunately we are still seeing plenty! The feed and water have been so good that some animals have not had to move about so much, which is often when they get into trouble. We have, however, seen a massive increase in insect life. Butterflies and dragon flies fill the air, along with mosquitoes and flies. Little frogs chase microscopic feasts across the windows, our overflowing dams are full of tiny fish, spiders we have never seen before appear weaving their silks across our paths – at about head height! The eucalypts in the forest have been flowering for months and they intoxicate us all with their heavy honey scents. This summer has been glorious at the shelter and animals and humans have enjoyed the benefits.

The insect abundance has meant that we have had more insect eating and hunting birds, echidnas and micro bats come into the shelter, either as orphans or because of injuries. We are currently looking after five owls, one of which is a Powerful Owl – an endangered

species. Unfortunately we have also seen an increase into care of poisoned birds. This is most likely due to spraying of locusts and poisoning of mice and rabbits; all of which have also done well this year.

We recently had four carpenters donate a couple of days of skilled labour and we now have fly screens on the indoor joey and hospital areas! They also generously fitted out one of our sheds with two stable pens for really large kangaroos. The day they finished we had two 70-80kg males come in; word travels!

Your donations to the shelter are what enable us to care for the wildlife. If you would like to make a wildlife "adoption" as an Easter gift to friends or family, the shelter will very soon be offering a great adoption package, the proceeds of which will go directly to helping the wildlife. Have a look at our web site – [www.hepburnwildlifeshester.org](http://www.hepburnwildlifeshester.org).



Warm regards,  
Gayle Chappell and Jon Rowdon

*A special thankyou to Anne Harris who ran her own raffle amongst friends and raised \$100 for the shelter. A really lovely surprise. Anne regularly runs raffles to support local charities.*

## In the News

### High rainfall and wildlife



*The smaller of these echidnas was washed from her burrow still with no spines, and was then promptly attacked by a dog. The large echidna was hit on the road and delivered to us by the police. Both recovered after a couple of months in care and both were happily released. They seemed to like each other!*

Echidnas have had a year of feast as ants have risen closer to the surface due to the heavy rains; termites proliferate and insects abound. Hopefully they've had a really good breeding season as a result and no little puggles will have been burnt in spring controlled burns.

The heavy rains are not so comfy for wombats as burrows fill with water, despite their ingenious front door design that catches and pools rainfall at the entrance and normally keeps the rest of the burrow dry. Wombats have been taking up residence under people's houses as they are about the only dry spots left in the forest. We ask people to be a little more tolerant during this season of wet.

The floods have caused further problems for wombats as burrows in the moist river zones have been completely inundated and many other burrows have collapsed under the weight of water logged soils. In South Australia many Southern hairy nosed wombats were known to be buried alive as their sandy burrows collapsed. Rescuers were kept very busy trying to get them out. The wombat toll across the country is unknown.

## Wombat holds down car!



As with everything related to the shelter, it was the collaborative team effort of generous souls who made sure the shelter was in the 2011 New Year's

Eve parade. Float organisers discovered just hours before the parade was about to begin that vandals had destroyed the shelter's display stands, so we had very little time to create an eye-catching wildlife float. Fortunately we had our trusty fibreglass wombat - once she was secured to the bonnet of Jason B's ute, and the tray was filled with enthusiastic vocal supporters we were away.

Thanks to Alana, Val, Jason B and the local children for rescuing the HWS 2010 parade float. Also a big thank you to Val, who put in a long day at the shelter and then completed two laps of the parade circuit collecting donations on foot in the 40 degree heat. The bucket was so heavy with coins the handle snapped off, which really says something about the generosity of Daylesford folk.

## Some very special patients.



*This is Pyjamas, an Antichinus joey. A very sharp-eyed gardener spotted this tiny furless creature (about the size of a thumb nail) just before she was about to step on him. Antichinus have about 6 joeys at a time and the little ones hang on to the teats for dear life as mum scrabbles about looking for food. Pyjamas must have been knocked off !*



*This is Legion; a 55kg male. That makes him about 4 years old. Legion had been caught in a fence by his toe and the chances are that somebody cut him out of the fence and then left him to his own devices. Fences cause terrible wounds even though they may not look like much at the time of the injury. Legion was rescued from some body's front door step (literally) with a life threatening infection travelling up his leg. He was thin, very ill and we did not know if he would get away with his life let alone his toe. It seems now, after a month in care, that he may keep both. He has many more weeks of being in bandages and care but his future is looking sunny.*

## The dollars!

Our fund raising efforts have diversified over the past 12 months, with a variety of income streams being put in place to ensure that the shelter remains operational well into the future. Annual shelter expenses are approximately \$50,000 per year and there still remains no ongoing financial assistance from local government; the shelter is totally reliant on support from the local community and the private funds of the founders, Jon and Gayle.



Over January 2011, stall volunteers Juliet, Di, Bridie, Tanya, Lynda, Gina, Chantel, Jason B, Damien and Alison raised over \$1 000 by selling wildlife

car rescue kits, HWS greeting cards and HWS stickers in the Coles Arcade. The stall team were constantly amazed at the generosity of locals and tourists alike, who crammed the donation tins to the brim with coins and notes and left many messages of support. The stalls will continue through March and April (every second week). Once again thanks to all our dedicated stall volunteers and thanks to Coles, Daylesford for providing us with the opportunity to fund raise in a safe and sheltered public space.

## Members in action

On the 7th of Feb 2010, the shelter launched it's first public membership drive. We decided to introduce memberships for a number of reasons: first, it provided a new and very direct way for the community to assist the shelter. Every cent of an annual subscription goes straight to the care of wildlife; second, a strong membership provides proof of support for the shelter that we can use in our grant applications; third, it expands and strengthens our network of wildlife advocates.

So far we have nearly 40 annual donor members. Our target is 1,667 members which would mean our annual costs could be met entirely by memberships. Can you help us reach this target? If you donate \$30 or more to the shelter you can become a donor member by filling in a membership form. Ask your friends and family or co-workers if they'd like to support a great cause and become a member. Membership forms are available at the HWS stall, on our web site or contact Jason Beks on 0401 540 546.

*Volunteer labour contributions @ \$20 ph (as per govt specs) amounts to approx \$300 000 pa - THANK YOU!!!*

## Quick, buy one!

We're having a raffle and we have 9 great prize packages donated by local businesses; - B&B stays, store vouchers, hair treatments, facials, jewelry, artworks, liquor, garden supplies, giftware, stationery.

For just \$2 you could be staying in a luxurious Daylesford design award weekender; or be pampered in a local tourism award-winning Japanese guest house, the beautiful Shizuka Ryokan.

Check out Facebook and the web site for more detail. Tickets can be purchased for \$2 each or 3 for \$5 from the info stall on Vincent St from Sunday 13th March, or send your request to [info@hepburnwildlifeshelter.org](mailto:info@hepburnwildlifeshelter.org); payment can be made via Paypal or direct credit.

We also need people to sell tickets on the shelter's behalf; so order your book now. The raffle will be drawn on 31 August 2011.

## Successful releases



*This koala joey is snuggled up to his mum. Both mum and joey came into care after mum had been attacked by a dog. She managed to protect her joey from harm and the dog owner acted quickly to save both their lives. Mum was bitten and although the damage did not look like much (just one tooth mark on the arm) the bruising and tearing to the muscles meant that she was unable to climb. She was also in shock which meant that she and her joey were very vulnerable to further dangers.*

*Both mum and joey were released after several weeks of care.*



*This beautiful Barn Owl was rescued by Jane and Robert who rescued her a second time from a vet who wanted to euthanase her. She had quite a nasty broken wing and her chances were slim. Thanks to our vet Emma who did a fantastic repair and pinning of the wing. This owl made it back home and flew off like a silent white streak in the night sky.*



*Many of the Daylesford locals will be very pleased to see this guy back. He is the male of a family of five swans on Daylesford lake. He had to be rescued as he could no longer walk - but boy could he swim! After 5 attempts by Jay, Jon and Gayle, Jason B managed to usher him onto the bank, where he was netted by a friendly passing tourist. The swan had a fish hook embedded deep in his heel and it was infected.*



*Walking on the wild for the first time!*

## Chocolate heroes.



We would like to acknowledge the support that local business 'The Chocolate Mill' offers to the Hepburn Wildlife Shelter. The owners, Jennifer

& Chris raise awareness of the plight of local wildlife with their in-store HWS display and make regular financial contributions with their HWS collection tins. The Chocolate Mill demonstrates that local people can be dynamically and indirectly involved with the success and growth of our local specialist shelter. The Chocolate Mill raises over \$5 000 every year for the shelter. If your not in the area you can order chocoaltes on line and they do a great range of vegan chocolates too!

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

## Your donation does this.....

Many animals require vet attention, x-rays, surgeries, medications, bandages and dressings: \$15 000 pa.

Sick animals also require nutritional supplements that are appropriate to their species, on top of their every day food requirements: \$14 500 pa. (\$500 a month just on milk formulas for the orphans).

A vast array of equipment is needed for cleaning, for providing feeding and water containers and stations for animals: \$5 000 pa.

Tools are needed to collect food for animals, transport containers and capture equipment are necessary and need regular replacement and maintenance: \$1 500

Bedding and heat pads are needed for an array of animals, enclosures for various stages of recovery and rehab: \$4 000 pa.

We need to assure a sustainable water supply electricity and phone costs: \$3 600 pa.

Enclosure building and maintenance and property & habitat maintenance: \$9 500 pa.

## Stickers for wildlife

'I DRIVE SLOW FOR WILDLIFE' stickers are now available. They can be purchased from the street stall or from the shelter by mail. Not only do the proceeds directly help the shelter, but they send a clear message to other motorists that we need to develop a greater sensitivity and awareness of the animal traffic in local wildlife corridors. Let's try to get one on every bumper in town.

Postal order: send \$2.00 with a stamped self-addressed business-size envelope to HWS, PO BOX 1013, Daylesford, Vic 3460.



Thanks to Kim, Jay and Ren for getting this worthwhile promotion off the ground.

## Life at the shelter



*For the first time in six years we have had 4 hand raised female roos rear their joeys on the property. Their joeys wont let us any where near them and it has been a rare privilege.*



## More patients who need you.



*This is an Inland Free tail bat. As an adult he will weigh between 6g - 8g but when he came in he was under 2g. He too must have fallen from his mum as she flew about. He was fed with a small paint brush dipped in a special bat milk formula. It only took a few drops to fill him! He was nearly vacuumed in a church. His name is Gabriel.*

### **Adoption program.**

The shelter will very soon be launching its “adoption option” by the end of March, just in time for Easter. Please keep an eye on our web site for our “adoption” packages, proceeds of which will help greatly in raising the orphans to full release back into the wild. Heres a preview.



Coca and Cola are twin kangaroo joeys, a fairly rare occurrence. Their mother was a young female who dropped them from her pouch when they were very small. We don't know why she dropped them, perhaps she had been chased? Her inexperience meant that she could not get her small joeys back into her pouch.

## A very special in-patient from the front page.



*We didn't really believe the call when it came in for this magnificent Powerful Owl. She was picked up off the ground in the Castlemaine Botanic gardens, (Powerful Owls love botanic gardens because of all the tasty possums!) She had clipped her wing and eye on power lines (we think) and luckily had no broken bones. She did however lose a significant number of flight feathers from bruising, so she now patiently awaits her feathers to regrow; that could be 6 - 12 months.*

*In the mean time she's called herself a mate to keep her company. We're pretty sure the local possums aren't so pleased about that!*

*The Powerful owl is an endangered species and she costs about \$150 a month to feed. Her normal diet is Possum (Brushtail and Ringtail) but she has to make do with purpose bred large rats that are humanely euthanased. We have done our research to find the most ethical source of food that we possibly can.*

*If any body would like to sponsor the owl while she is in care please let us know.*

## How you can help.

Stall volunteers receive many enquiries from members of the public asking how they can be more involved in protecting local wildlife. There are several ways you can be of great assistance:

1. Be a part of the wildlife network. Email jbeks@hotmail.com and ask to have your email address added to the HWS email list to receive regular updates.
2. Become an annual paying member of the HWS. Your annual membership fee of just \$30 will help ensure that assistance is always available for injured and orphaned wildlife in the Hepburn Shire.
3. Become a volunteer. New volunteers perform a variety of important tasks: from rescuing and feeding injured wildlife to fund-raising and promoting the shelter. New shelter volunteers begin with short 2hr shadow shifts and light duties, working under the guidance of experienced volunteers as they do their daily rounds. To arrange for an introductory volunteer shadow shift, please phone Jason Beks on 0401 540 546.



*Tobago the Alpaca helps out with the laundry.*

There's a huge variety of indoor/outdoor, administration & outreach jobs: washing & drying laundry, feeding, preparing milk bottles for orphans, sweeping & cleaning floors, cleaning enclosures & cages, rescuing injured & orphaned animals, collecting & distributing donation tins, fund raising activities, promotions & stalls, small building projects, gardening and property maintenance.

Skills in excavation, building and handyman, fencing, plumbing and gardening are very welcome.

## Can I visit the shelter?

The answer is no. It's an unfortunate necessity that the Hepburn Wildlife Shelter is off-limits to the general public, but minimum exposure to human beings ensures that the residents in care recover more swiftly, suffer less stress and are less susceptible to human conditioning and dependence. Unlike zoos or wildlife parks which are stocked with domesticated permanent animals, wildlife shelters are more like intensive care hospitals - the residents are sick, delicate and often scared and stressed by the presence of human beings. Many people confuse wildlife parks with wildlife shelters, the latter of which is always closed to the public in the interests of the 'patients' welfare.

## Poison victim.



*It took us a while to work out what she is - a Square-Tailed Kite juvenile. There are an estimated 50 breeding pairs in Victoria and this one was nearly taken out of action. She was poisoned by eating other creatures that had eaten poison themselves or insects that had been poisoned. She was very ill but is now making a great recovery and will be back in time for the next breeding season.*

## To report injured wildlife

Phone the 24hr Wildlife Emergency Line:  
BADGAR: 1300 223 427 or  
Wildlife Victoria: 1300 094 535  
Hepburn Wildlife Shelter: 5348 3932

