



MALUBILLAI WILDLIFE CARERS NETWORK INC.

ABN 54 155 708 894

**Newsletter No: 50**

**June 2016**

## **MOPOKE**

Welcome to our winter 2016 edition of Mopoke, the newsletter for Malubillai. This year seems to be speeding along and it's hard to believe that Xmas was 6 months ago!

It would appear that, so far this year, the seasons seem to be a little like what we used to call 'average', we certainly had a very hot summer, followed by mild and wet (short) autumn and of course now we are into winter, which as you will all know has been pretty wet, windy and wild. As a result of some sort of regularity in weather patterns our wildlife appear to have settled into a more normal routine, the result being we don't seem to be getting in babies who have arrived completely out of season. These babies very often do not make it and this could be due to either exhausted parents who are trying to find, and usually cannot, the correct food for their young or bad weather arrives just as the babies do. Rain, wind and cold pretty much end any chance these babies may have had.

For any parent to successfully rear their young, they must have a chance to build up their natural resources between seasons, to do this they need to have a break and a chance to strengthen and revitalise themselves (sounds a lot like human parents!). Of course the offspring of healthy and fit parents will stand a much better chance of surviving than babies of parents who have had several clutches of young in a short period. We always find that by the end of spring/early summer many babies which come into care are often not very strong and need a lot of extra attention if they are to survive.

Hopefully this year and future years will continue to have clearly defined seasons, enabling our precious wildlife the best chance of surviving in an ever changing world.

Heather Seear  
President – Malubillai

Meeting Reminder – Our Annual General Meeting will be held on Saturday 17th September 2016 at our admin. Centre at 22 Garland Street, Vic Park. All interested parties are invited to attend.

## *In Memory of our Jan*

I think I am speaking on behalf of all the carers and everyone who has any involvement with Malubillai, since Jan has left this world it just doesn't seem quite the same anymore!!

Meetings are much quieter, the possums must be missing her, her happy smile and obliging nature is sadly missed by the vets she picked wildlife up from. Sausage sizzles just don't sizzle like they used to and it just doesn't seem fair that Jan is no longer here.

### *Because you are not here...*

We can't call you on the phone  
We will never again visit your beaming home

Jenna, your best friend is happy, fit and healthy  
Jan and Paul love her dearly

Claudia loves your Lori's, Donna your Pink & Greys  
Kathy your Maggies, even the one with bung eyes

We can't sit and have a chat,  
You with your coke and me with my long black

One day again we will meet  
Until then, we love you, Jan McPheat

Heather



## Tassie Road Kill

Recently I went on a quick trip to Tasmania which is a place I simply adore, the scenery, people, wine and food all just fabulous. Not to forget the wildlife which is amazing.

Whilst there I was chatting to a local and during the conversation the topic of road kill came up. (If you haven't been to Tasmania the sheer numbers of road kill can be quite confronting.) I was amazed by his comment, which was 'since the demise of the Tassie Devils the road kill numbers had increased dramatically', when I asked how that worked his reply was 'they drag 'em off the road and we don't see them'. My logic says that the numbers will be just the same until road travelers slow down and actively avoid these creatures.

If it's not possums or wallabies in Tassie, it is sharks off the WA coast. Humans seem hell bent on destroying as much native wildlife as they possibly can. We all need to work together to sort out the best outcome for ALL wildlife.

Observations by **Heather**



## My Magpie Mob

I have a group of the above which has visited me for many years now, they are an interesting bunch, one is missing part of her beak, another has pox on her foot (I cannot get close enough to treat it) and as a result she will often sit on her belly, the others are not too bad but a few have some missing feathers and other minor ailments. I feel this group are cast offs from other groups and they aren't too particular about looks. They never come for handouts during nesting time and once nesting starts I don't see them for around 6 months, when they return they have sorted out who stays or goes and usually there is a new addition to the group. Currently they are in 'visiting' mode and call in a few times each day, the local Ravens have now figured out what's going on and one Raven in particular attempts to get a few freebies, the magpies are tolerant to a degree but once that Raven forgets who is in charge and crosses an imaginary line the whole mob turn on it and very quickly the Raven retreats to the safety of the gum trees. In the case of the Raven versus Magpie Mob, the Maggie's will tolerate the intruder to a degree but trying to get to their food source is strictly non-negotiable as far as they are concerned.

The behaviour of birds is interesting to watch and be part of.

**Heather**

## The Silent Victims

During the hot summer months, Australia experiences many bushfire events. On January 6<sup>th</sup> 2016 a lightning strike started the Waroona/Yarloop bushfire. It burnt for 17days, 70,000 hectares burnt, claimed 2 human lives, burnt down around 180 homes, almost wiped out Yarloop and caused the death of hundreds of our fauna and flora, the Silent Victims.

I had a call from my friend Marg Lerner who asked me to help with a Wildlife bushfire triage caravan in Waroona. I have had a little experience with the aftermath of a bushfire in Bullsbrook and Ellenbrook but nothing prepared me for this.....

The triage caravan was donated to FAWNA in Bussleton and girls from NARGA flew in from over East to guide us in disaster management. The van is kitted out like a small hospital, with all medical supplies to treat and house small burnt wildlife. We had vet support so medications could be administered.



Someone manned the caravan 24/7 and we had a camper trailer loaned to us for sleeping quarters. The van was not allowed into Waroona due to safety reasons, so we set up at the Harvey Recreation Centre and were very well supported by the staff there throughout our stay. The van became the hub of activity with visits regularly from volunteers, RSPCA officers, DPAW officers, DFES and locals too. We were a collection/donation point for food for wildlife and domestic animals. We had a local stock-feeder take donations such as hay for stock. We had 4 joey kangaroos come through the van but most of the work was done in the field by the volunteers doing the 'black walks' and the van for co-ordination of the teams.

I had the opportunity to go on one of the black walks. It was absolute devastation as far as the eye could see. It was silent almost claustrophobic. Nothing seemed to be alive in the white/grey ash and blackened landscape. The trees looked like black skeletons with no rustling leaves or chatter of birds. The smell of smoke and burnt wood still lingering in the air with the occasional white wisp of smoke as something still smolders. It was almost eerie and something I will never forget



We set about looking for survivors but there were few. There were many injured with burnt feet. Some were sent to a better place as their injuries too severe to treat and others went into care with a hope to put the back out in the wild in the future.



A survivor



A casualty

Some tried to hide in the base of a tree but perished  
In the heat

We found it very important to be searching areas for weeks. Kangaroos can live with burnt feet for more than 8 weeks before they succumb to septicemia or starvation as they can't walk to find food. Reptiles survive weeks with burnt bodies. There is a need to continue searching for the orphaned and injured and providing food for the survivors. Food drops should continue for weeks after most people forget about the fires. It can take burnt bushland 5-10years to get back to what it was.

We now have a caravan donated to turn into another wildlife triage van. It will be based in the metro area but for use statewide. As you can see it requires a lot of work to bring it up to the standard of the one in Bussleton.

**Donations and tradesmen and women are needed to help get this van ready for next fire season.**



Article by Sue Burns

Every week day I make my way into the city, dreaming of the countryside, trying to shut out the city noises. I've been doing this for eight years now and in my quest to escape the chaos that accompanies my daily commute I have discovered the city birds. There's the Willy wagtail that rules the nearly completed bus station. It sits on a fence, always in the same spot at the same time and chatters noisily at the passing parade, occasionally swooping at some tasty, invisible to me, insect. Then there's the constant war between the city pigeons and the seagulls, scrapping over some little morsel. Pigeons talk a different language to seagulls so take no notice whatsoever of the



angry ritual proffered by the seagull!

I've got to know and recognize some of the pigeons

over time. I've seen new ones come and go and families form and a very old pigeon with a drooping wing that seems to keep on keeping on. One very hot day after work, I decided to take a short cut down an alleyway and came across a baby pigeon that was clearly suffering extremely from the heat. I had a bottle of water and an empty lunch container in my bag which I filled with water and coaxed it until it started to drink and oh boy, did it drink! Since then it's become a beautiful bird, orange and white in colour. I've taken quite a few sick pigeons home in my work bag on the bus and by the way, bus drivers don't like honeyeaters in their bus because the tweeting makes them think there is something wrong with the bus! I love watching the pelicans soar on the air currents from the windows of the building I work in and one day a peregrine falcon landed to rest just outside on the seventh floor, a lovely surprise. I also love to see and hear the swallows that nest up under the eaves of shops and look up to see a row of bright yellow mouths open, waiting for mum and dad to arrive with food. Even the odd tree has its inhabitants with the busy and noisy rainbow lorikeets. It's amazing how Nature adapts to this ever increasing concrete jungle and it helps me to stay in touch with what is really important to me. **Jackie Boucheix**

**MEETING REMINDER: Saturday June 18<sup>th</sup> at 1.00pm 22 Garland Street Victoria Park. A committee meeting will precede this meeting commencing at midday.**

**Membership Application Form:**

Surname..... First Name.....

Address.....

..... Post Code.....

Telephone: Home..... Mobile..... Email.....

Membership Costs: \$20.00 single      \$30.00 Family      \$15.00 Pensioner/Student/concession; Donation \$.....

Please make cheques/money orders payable to Malubillai Wildlife Carers Network.

I am interested in becoming an active voluntary member YES/NO (please circle), If yes please request and complete a volunteer application for. **Direct Credit: BSB: 016 263 A/c No: 109493371 ANZ A/c name: Malubillai Wildlife Carers Network Inc.**

**Please send membership application form to: Malubillai Wildlife Carers Network Inc. PO Box 595 Victoria Park WA 6979**