



MALUBILLAI WILDLIFE CARERS NETWORK INC.

ABN 54 155 708 894

Newsletter No: 54

June 2017

MOPOKE

Welcome to our winter 2017 edition of Mopoke, the newsletter for Malubillai.

Writing this and looking out of the window it would not seem that we are at the beginning of winter, as you will all know the endless warm sunny days and the cooler evenings are really too good to be true and as much as we all love the sunshine it is playing havoc with our wildlife. With the lack of decent rain falls the existing waterways are losing the battle to provide fresh, pure water for our wildlife, especially the water birds, many cases of botulism are being treated and it is a heartbreaking job for the carers involved. One of the many waterways where the botulism cases are very high is Tomato Lake, the city of Belmont has been very supportive in efforts to try and help the water birds involved but until we have decent rain fall nothing will change very much.

It is such a concern for all of us these days, the effects of global warming are at our front door and yet there are some who deny its existence and will not take action to try and halt this massive problem. Everyone talks about it yet it is only getting worse. The carbon footprint we leave on this planet will affect generations.

At least humans have some sort of understanding of what is going on but our beautiful wildlife are completely confused, as carers of these creatures we see the constant destruction of not only their habitat but the most vital requirement of all - fresh, pure water, nothing can survive without this.

Heather Seear

President

Malubillai Wildlife Carers Network

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

This important meeting is scheduled for Saturday 16th September 2017 commencing at 2.00pm at 22 Garland Street, Victoria Park, this meeting will follow our normal General Meeting.

REMEMBER: - You need to be a financial member at the time and all committee positions will be vacated, new ideas and new input will be very welcome.

CONSIDER: - taking on a position or become a member of the committee.

VISITORS: - All visitors', potential members are **very very welcome**.

Suburban Wildlife versus Freeways and Road Travel

Sometimes I look at our wildlife and see some really funny things, behaviour adaption that you would not expect. Travelling over the Canning Bridge it is not uncommon to see Pelicans resting or possibly watching the world go by atop the street lights installed on the bridge, the other day all the lights were 'taken' so a couple of Pelicans took the initiative and landed on the large green freeway sign which heralds the left lane is the designated freeway entrance. They are large birds and that sign, although huge, is not terribly wide, for them to make a perfect landing and take-off is remarkable. I have seen (and honestly not wanted to look) at Red Tailed Black Cockatoos feasting on dwarf Banksias which had been planted down the middle of Nicholson Road, these had huge flowers on them and obviously the lure of food was too much for these birds to resist, even the strong possibility of being killed by an unsuspecting motorist was not enough to keep them away. Finally, on the way back from Geraldton recently I was amazed at the numbers of Swallows playing Russian roulette with the traffic on the Indian Ocean Drive. We know these little birds head off when 'winter' comes and returns to welcome in the warmer months of summer, but seriously they take huge chances on that road. Maybe the freedom of



the open road is just
Heather too appealing.



I've learnt another language. It's called Pidgeon English.

I've recently ended up with a large white pigeon, quite by accident. I think it's a male and I've named him "El Blanco". In the beginning he was quite timid and would "attack" me if I put my hands near him. Two weeks later, we are conversing...the minute he hears my voice he starts to coo and struts and turns around in tight circles. I do the same back, thank goodness there are no cameras around!

I've had to put my new neighbour in the picture as every morning I converse with Billy, my extremely talkative rainbow lorikeet, and as he sits outside with his coffee early in the morning, he must have been wondering about the strange noises coming over the fence!

Jackie Boucheix

When I became a carer and started looking after joeys I didn't realise the emotional ups and downs that I would experience and the many sleepless nights I would have. You put so much love and care into these little ones and your days are totally planned around their feeding routines, exercise routines, and as they get bigger and start hopping out of their pouches, it makes going out anywhere very hard. But it is totally worth it and the rewards are endless. You get so much joy watching them grow and knowing that you are the one responsible for giving them their second chance of life.

Then comes release stage.

As a relatively new carer I find release stage very hard. I feel a separation anxiety knowing that once they are set free their safety/ future is out of my control. I am hoping that with more experience, these feelings will lessen and I can experience the happiness of seeing them run free. Sometimes joeys are unable to be released for various reasons.

I had the pleasure of raising two Western Greys by the name of Gypsy and Harry. To me each joey has their own personality and these two were no exception. They came into care together and were bonded from the start. Everywhere one went the other had to go and they both had the gentlest of souls.

Not long ago Gypsy passed away. I got to experience firsthand how sensitive animals are and how they grieve their love ones when they go.

I remember coming back from the vet and going out to see Harry. At this stage I don't think he realised what had happened as she had only been gone a short time. That soon changed. Over the next few weeks he would hop around the enclosure constantly calling out for her, going to her blanket where they slept together, and whenever I went out their hopping up to me with such sad empty eyes looking at me for answers. He withdrew himself from the mob and went from being so gentle to aggressive. He would pick fights with the other kangaroos. I also became scared of his behaviour not being able to predict how he was going to react to me. After a few months Harry slowly started returning to normal. He started mixing again and finding company with another female kangaroo.

Unfortunately Harry is no longer with us.

To lose Harry and Gypsy was a very emotional experience for me. The grief you feel when you lose an animal, going out into your back yard and not having them come hopping up to you breaks your heart.

As carers we all know that this the unfortunately part of what we do. I am told it never gets easier.

I remember thinking of a poem I had read in one of my manuals and it expressed exactly how I was feeling and I wanted to share it with everyone.

It is called "Why we Rescue"

Lyn Manuel



shutterstock · 69071143

The truth is

You see a lot of things you never thought you'd see.

You witness a level of cruelty you didn't think was possible.

You feel a degree of helplessness you never thought you'd know.

You stare at painful images, soon burned into your memory that will haunt your thoughts forever.

You try to pick up the pieces. So many pieces...from the damage you didn't do.

You do everything in your power, but still outcomes aren't always successful.

You'll try to stay strong but you'll mostly feel weak.

You'll build walls to protect your heart... but they'll never keep you safe.

You'll place barriers around your soul. But the pain will always reach you.

And no matter how hard you try to fight. Over time. Here's the truth about what happens in animal rescue...

The abuse hardens you.

The suffering breaks you.

The ignorance disturbs you.

The injustice destroys you.

On a daily basis your faith will be tested.

Your heart will be wounded.

Your soul will be altered.

On a weekly basis you'll question yourself.

You'll question the world.

On a monthly basis you'll fall down.

You'll get up. You'll go on.

On a yearly basis you'll look back you'll see faces...

Of those you couldn't save.

You'll learn to mourn.

To grieve, to sob.

You'll learn to trust a little less.

To do a little more.

To fight a little harder.

To hope. To pray.

You'll learn to fail.

To succeed.

To accept.

You'll learn when to hold on.

And when to let go.

You'll learn who you are.

What you stand for.

Why that matters.

Then at times. You'll forget why you matter.

But hers the good news...

When you forget...

When you question...

When you wonder...

All you have to do...

Is take a look around...

And you'll see them.

You'll see their faces.

You'll see their contentment.

You'll feel their love.

In their eyes, you'll see their journeys,

You'll remember their beginnings,

The neglect changes you.

You'll know how far they've come,

You'll remember when they didn't know you,

When they didn't trust you,

When they'd given up.

You'll remember how you healed them,

How you loved them,

How they loved you, too

And as you look back.

You'll want to move forward,

For them...and because of them.

In your darkest hours, you'll look around,

To find the differences made...

The hope given...and the lives saved.

Because you existed.

In those moments, when you look into their eyes,

Every doubt will be erased.

*You'll question what you're doing.
You'll wonder if it's worth it.*



*Every question will be answered.
Every worry will subside.
Because in that instant...in each of your hearts...*

*You both share the very same thought
"Every bit of pain was worth it..
For this moment of safety, here with you."*

*And honestly no matter what else happens,
These moments hold all the strength you need
To keep going.*

*Rescue is pain.
Rescue is joy.
Rescue is worth it...
Because they are worth it.
And that's the honest truth.*

SAUSAGE SIZZLE – Sincere thanks to all who supported our fund raising efforts, however due to the weather on the day being awful, our takings were considerably down, while we didn't make a loss our profits were only around the \$300, so we are planning another at the end of November, and trust the

weather will show us far more kindness



I recently decided to clean out my wildlife area..... again, and was quite amused at what I found. People in their panic when they find injured or lost birds use the first thing that they can get their hands on so consequently I have some lovely and very good quality pillow cases and towels.

I also have a cone shaped hanging basket in which a fledgling dove was comfortably installed in the bottom, complete with perch, bread and an improvised plastic container with water, cleverly attached to the inside.

In my garden is a lovely ceramic planter. This came into my possession complete with a planted branch on which "Bogan" was perched. Bogan was a fledgling Magpie, named by its rescuers, a young couple, who also decorated the branch by painting its name on it and adorning the branch with a bandana. Bogan also came with food and water and instructions about its bedtime! A week later, the couple took me to the tree from where it came and a happy reunion took place with Mum and Dad. They told me to keep the planter.

I've received a Barbie doll bath with a honey eater in it, a cardboard box so big that it barely fitted in the back seat of a car with a baby dove and a hat with a baby pigeon nested comfortably within it, found in a back yard. There is certainly never a dull moment!

Jacque B

SWANS AT KENT STREET WEIR

I am a regular walker at Kent Street Weir in Cannington, a large area of extremely well kept park land with fantastic walk ways and facilities for adults and kids including BBQ's
A great variety of bird life is also present and on walks with my grandies, we have observed up to 27 different varieties between us.

There is a resident pair of black swans who make this area their home moving around as the seasons deem fit.

On a recent walk I noticed them showing off their latest offspring, five cygnets all gorgeous grey and fluffy. The following day I noticed they had only four. Damn.



Not the swans in the story

The weir is also home to, at times two large Pelicans, whom I observed in a very sheep dog like way, cutting one of the remaining cygnets out and trying to get the baby in its mouth. The male flew at the pelicans and scared them off. Both parents were vocalizing their distress at the pelicans. I believe they consumed the missing one, this is only a problem for a short while as very soon they will be too big.

At the Perth Zoo there are many uninvited Black Pacific ducks who breed on the main lake, ideal situation I would say with plenty of food and shelter. However uninvited pelicans also live there and regularly consume the ducklings. When observed by Zoo visitors it has caused them to become very upset and complain to zoo staff.

It has to be explained that the zoo is meant to be as close to "normal" living conditions for animals as is possible and this is just nature as it happens. Ronda McKnight

Footnote – at last count only two cygnets remain.

Greta

This is the story of Greta, the limping pelican who didn't know she was a pelican. I first met Greta (as she became known) when she was rescued limping down Great Eastern Highway. Over the next few weeks I picked her up twice more always limping down a busy road in the Bayswater/Ascot area. She was very easy to catch and seemed almost relieved to have been saved each time. Of course she was vet checked to establish the cause of her limp but nothing showed up on x-rays and after a thorough examination she was given the OK to be released. I wonder if perhaps it was all that walking on hard bitumen! So it was decided to rest her up for a few weeks in the hope that she would forget about walking on busy roads but each time we tried a release she would follow us straight back. What to do with this little girl? We couldn't just leave her as she would surely be attacked by dogs or eventually would be hit by traffic. We tried to get her into a sanctuary but she was deemed to be "too tame and would frighten the public". Eventually it was decided to drive her up to Moore River where there is a colony of local pelicans and hope that she would settle in with them - away from busy roads. Greta loved nothing better than a ride in the car. All those vet visits and aborted releases meant she got used to being chauffeured around. She would sit comfortably in her crate turning to face the windscreen and take in the scenery BUT she was very impatient at traffic lights and would shuffle her wings as if to say what we are waiting for - just get going.

After the long drive and with much coaxing she eventually mixed in with the other pelicans and I quickly made my escape. One week went by - no calls for limping pelicans, two weeks - nothing. It had worked she must have settled down. Six weeks later - a limping pelican was reported at a lake in Osborne Park. I found the pelican quickly and knelt down trying not to frighten the bird and work out my strategy for a capture. When the bird spotted me it did a double take, recognized me immediately and as if to give me a hug ran straight over with wings extended. The look on Greta's face said it all "it's taken me six weeks - but at last I've found you!" This time she was in care for months, not that she minded and everyone who met Greta fell in love with her. But this was not good for Greta. She needed to be with her own kind. I worried whether she would cope on her own. But a tough decision had to be made - release or euthanised. Surely she deserved one last try. So once again I took her down to the river. It must have taken an hour to coax her into the water, wading out with her, then return to the shore, wade a bit further, back to shore again. Eventually a couple of pelicans came over to see what all the fuss was about and tentatively she swan alongside them, constantly looking back for reassurance. I monitored her progress from a distance for days. After being in care for so long she no longer had strength in her wings to fly but one day she managed to fly over to greet me, so proud of herself, as she skimmed to a stop. The next week Greta was gone, nowhere to be seen. She had finally managed to fly away with the other pelicans. All those months, all that effort put in by so many willing carers, had finally paid off. Our beautiful little Greta was now a true blue Pelican.

*I still see Greta from time to time, she is always the first to come over to say hello and thankfully she no longer likes to take walks along busy highways. She seems very content with her life along the river amongst her pelican friends. **Louise Dawson***

Editor's Note - What a gorgeous story, animals never cease to amaze! thank you. –

