

Possumwood Wildlife Annual Report 2024-25

This report covers the three elements that comprise the operations of Possumwood Wildlife for 2024-25, viz: Vet Hospital, Trauma Recovery Centre, and Learning Centre & Communications.

There are no paid staff at Possumwood and there is no government funding. All donations go directly to the animals.

Possumwood Vet Hospital

The triannual facility inspection of vet hospitals by the NSW Veterinary Surgeons Board was successfully completed at Possumwood in 2024. The hospital was first licenced in December 2020.

Since its inception, the vet hospital patient numbers have risen exponentially in terms of emergency assessment and treatment and surgical procedures. Dr Audrey, our supervising veterinarian and her team of assisting vets, nurses and radiographer made 12 visits to Possumwood to carry out surgical work on around 250 patients. A further 350 animals were assessed and provided with immediate emergency treatment with life-saving fluid therapy, wound dressings, and splints in the hospital. Animals treated covered a wide range of mammals, birds and reptiles with some very successful general, orthopaedic and oral surgical procedures using our new digital x-ray and orthopaedic equipment. Threatened and endangered species have been a feature of the animals treated at Possumwood, viz: Rosenbergs monitor, swift parrot, greater glider., cold climate koala, etc. Patients came from far and wide,

including from Victoria. Generally, the focus is on severely injured and sick cases.

The supporting first responder rescue service in the local region averaged around ten cases per week, or around 500 for the full year. These rescues occur at all times of the day and night and in all kinds of weather. Most of these rescues were macropods caught in wire fencing, followed by motor vehicle strikes, dog/ fox attacks, human harassment and cruelty, and misadventure, and old age. Some of the rescues were complex such as kangaroos stuck in deep dried mud, caught in deep holes and mine shafts and in concrete water tanks, caught under cattle grids, etc. In nearly all cases the outcomes were successful. Our live-in volunteers played a vital role in assisting with this important local rescue service.



Operating Theatre



Rosenbergs Monitor being operated on



Night Rescue



Echidna on the operating table



Unusual fence hanger rescue

Trauma Recovery Centre

At any one time we have around 150 wild animals recovering from trauma in the indoor recovery wards and outdoor enclosures. The six live-in volunteers have an important role in rehabilitation by giving gentle exercise, oral medication, carrying out dressing changes, turning immobile animals and bed changes, providing food and water and general cleaning.

Engaging closely with the animals to reduce stress is one of their major tasks.



Ready for test release



Wild mother and joey outside the hospital and rehab centre

Learning and Communication Programs

The key achievement in this area for the year was obtaining funding from the Bendigo Community Bank to help complete the fit-out for the proposed learning centre. The building itself was generously assisted in its build with grants from the Humane World for Animals and Animals Australia.

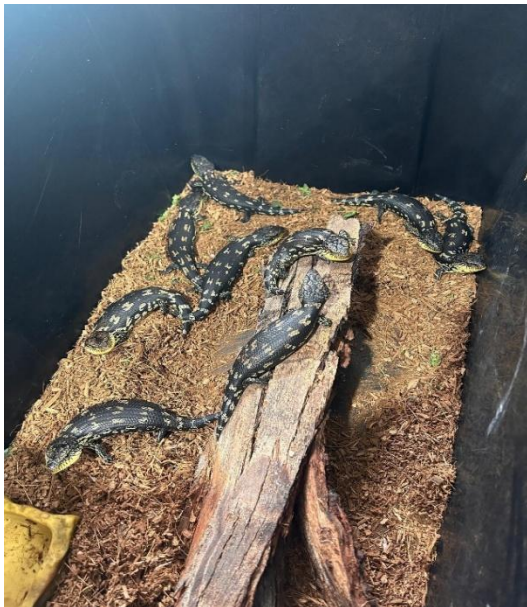
The learning centre will aim to provide both insitu demonstration as well as on-line training courses and streaming information to help veterinarians, wildlife carers, landowners and the general public better understand what they can do to help wildlife in situations of trauma. Our advanced courses will begin again in 2026.

Two papers were presented at the biannual Wildlife Rehabilitation Conference, one on nature repair and climate change and one on stress and macropod fence injuries. Our research on wildlife stress continues.

Presenting rescue and treatment cases on social media continued with Possumwood having around 18000 followers on Facebook with some posts on Instagram having up to one million views.



Learning Centre Under Construction



Blotched blue tongue lizards just born in care