



FY23

IMPACT REPORT

CONTENTS

ABOUT US	3
FROM OUR CEO	3
WIRES ANNUAL IMPACT	4
WILDLIFE RESCUE OFFICE	5
EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM	6
OUR FAVOURITE RESCUE STORIES	7
OUR VOLUNTEERS	9
VOLUNTEER SUPPORT FY23	10
VOLUNTEER ACHIEVEMENTS	11
WILDLIFE TRAINING	12
WIRES WILDLIFE VETERINARIANS	14
THREATENED SPECIES: KOALA	15
MAJOR PROJECTS	17
GOVERNMENT SUBMISSIONS	19
CORPORATE PARTNERSHIPS:	20
WOOLWORTHS	21
BRAVECTO	23
PHILANTHROPY	24
GET INVOLVED	25

 This icon can be found at the top right of every page and will bring you back to this page when clicked.

Cover Image: Laughing Kookaburra © Michael Lisser



Sugar Glider © Lachlan Hall

WIRES acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of this land and recognise their connection to native wildlife. We pay respects to their Elders past and present.



ABOUT US

WIRES is Australia's largest wildlife rescue organisation. We've been rescuing and caring for sick, injured and orphaned native animals for over 36 years.

Our mission is to actively rehabilitate and preserve Australian wildlife and inspire others to do the same.

WIRES operate a dedicated Wildlife Rescue Office assisting wildlife and the community 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. We provide rescue assistance for over 130,000 animals annually, support around 4,000 wildlife volunteers, and resource full-time mobile Wildlife Emergency Responders across New South Wales, South-East Queensland and Tasmania.

We provide significant national support for hundreds of projects to assist with wildlife rescue and rehabilitation across Australia, and work with strategic partners to support the recovery of wildlife habitat, and the long-term preservation of Australian native species in the wild.

FROM OUR CEO

As we reflect on another year of determined efforts to protect and preserve Australian wildlife, it is with sincere gratitude that I present to you WIRES' FY23 Impact Report. The past year has been both challenging and rewarding, and we are delighted to share these achievements with you.

At the heart of WIRES' mission is our 24/7 Wildlife Rescue Office, providing the community with wildlife information and advice, and organising vital rescue assistance for more than 130,000 native animals annually. This assistance is delivered by our Emergency Response Teams and hardworking volunteers, who rescue, transport, care for and rehabilitate native wildlife every single day.

Our growing fleet of Wildlife Ambulances, strategically positioned along the Australian eastern seaboard and Tasmania, continues to be instrumental in enabling critical, wildlife rescues, particularly during natural disasters including the devastating floods of 2022 and Tambaroora bushfires of March 2023. These Ambulances have been a lifeline for thousands of injured, displaced, and orphaned native animals, allowing us to reach even the most remote locations swiftly.

Our Grants Programs continue to grow, supporting projects across Australia that make a tangible difference in wildlife conservation. Since their inception in 2020, we have funded hundreds of initiatives contributing to the protection and survival of Australian native animals, and the preservation and recovery of their habitats.

None of these accomplishments would have been possible without the support and dedication of our volunteers, partners, and supporters. Your efforts and contributions continue to be the backbone of our work.

As we move forward, we renew our commitment to improving outcomes for Australian wildlife, particularly for our most vulnerable species. The challenges facing wildlife are huge, but together, we are making a significant difference. Thank you for being an integral part of our journey; we look forward to achieving even greater milestones in the years to come.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Leanne Taylor".

Leanne Taylor,
WIRES CEO

[Become a WIRES member today →](#)

WIRES ANNUAL IMPACT



131,167

NATIVE ANIMALS ASSISTED

186,100



RESCUE CALLS TO THE WIRES 24/7 1300 RESCUE LINE

BUSIEST PERIOD: SPRING/SUMMER



25,037

CALLS RECEIVED IN OUR BUSIEST MONTH OF NOVEMBER

500+

VETS WORK WITH WIRES TO ASSIST NATIVE ANIMALS IN NEED

5921

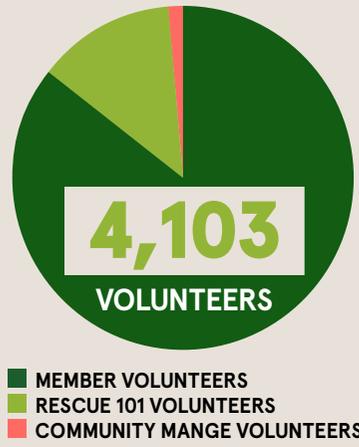
XMATTERS APP USERS CONNECTED TO WILDLIFE RESCUERS AND CARERS

41%

OF THESE USERS FROM 14 EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS IN NSW, ACT, QLD, SA AND TAS

2,688

TOTAL WIRES TRAINING COURSES COMPLETED



8 WILDLIFE AMBULANCES MAKE UP OUR RESCUE VEHICLE FLEET



WIRES WILDLIFE AMBULANCES TRAVELLED OVER

225,300kms

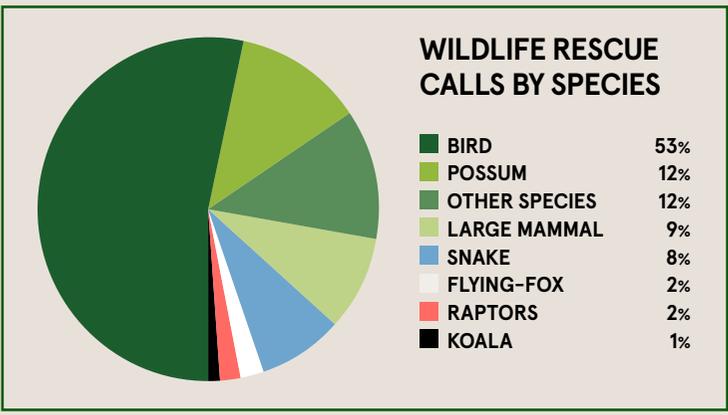
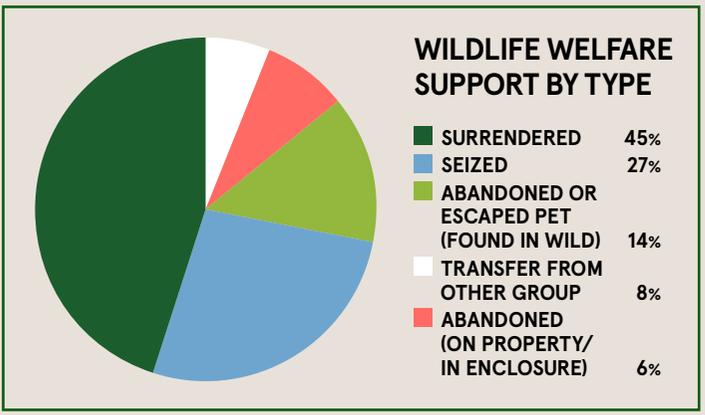
427,730

WEBSITE VISITORS

OUR FOLLOWERS

- 155,895**
- 346,004**
- 10,240**
- 6,372**

1490 MENTIONS IN MEDIA



WILDLIFE RESCUE OFFICE

In FY23, the WIRES Rescue Office (WRO) continued to serve as our crucial communication hub, providing assistance to distressed native animals around the clock, every day of the year. The WRO received and managed a significant number of rescue calls and emails, documenting vital information and collaborating with WIRES volunteers, veterinarians, and rescue organisations in all states to assist sick, injured, displaced, and orphaned wildlife. We communicate with over 180,000 callers annually to share critical wildlife information and promote harmonious coexistence between communities and wildlife in urban, regional, and rural environments. We've continued to leverage digital efficiencies through our rescue communications platform xMatters, through our partnership with Everbridge, which allows our WRO to extend its support beyond New South Wales to callers around the country, connecting them with WIRES volunteers and other national wildlife rescue organisations to assist more wildlife in critical need.

WELFARE TEAM

WIRES has established a specialist Wildlife Welfare Team providing support and training within WIRES on relevant welfare legislation, codes of practice, and best-practice rehabilitation. The team works with external agencies to improve wildlife welfare outcomes, represents WIRES on several ethics and welfare committees, and works with appropriate agencies to address animal welfare concerns.

As part of this service, we also work closely with the National Parks and Wildlife Service NSW (NPWS) to provide safe spaces for companion reptiles without a home. These could be homeless due to a range of circumstances including owners no longer being able to keep them, being abandoned, or being removed from unsuitable situations by regulators.

Through collaboration with regulators and cooperation with other groups, we are focused on improving the welfare outcomes for all Australian native animals.

186,100

**CALLS TO OUR
RESCUE LINE**

131,167

**NATIVE ANIMALS
ASSISTED**



EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM

8

EMERGENCY RESPONSE VEHICLES
ACROSS NEW SOUTH WALES,
TASMANIA AND QUEENSLAND

4,640

TOTAL CRITICAL
RESCUES

225,340

KMS
TRAVELLED



WIREs Emergency Response Team (ERT) has eight Emergency Responders on the road across New South Wales, Tasmania and South-East Queensland, who operate throughout the year in fully equipped Wildlife Ambulances.

WIREs Wildlife Ambulances carry an extensive range of rescue equipment and medical supplies to provide critical support and first aid to wildlife in the field and during transit. They are also equipped with emergency equipment to enhance communication capability and safety for our Emergency Responders when they are deployed to disaster events. Emergency Responders are highly skilled and have extensive training which enables them to attend to our most critical and challenging rescues, as well as the capability to be deployed to emergency events Australia-wide.

In addition to our Emergency Responders, we currently have over 100 members across NSW participating in our Volunteer Emergency Response Team program. The Volunteer ERT are prepared to respond to emergencies within their branch catchment and surrounding areas.

NSW FLOOD RESPONSE

November 2022: WIREs ERT and Wildlife Ambulances were deployed in November 2022 when dangerous flash flooding inundated numerous regions of inland New South Wales.

The ERT responded to urgent calls to attend critical flood-affected wildlife rescues. Sadly, many animals could not be rescued due to the scale and ferocity of the flooding. On the ground, the ERT helped volunteers in flooded areas, checking on their safety and the safety of animals in their care. This contact is essential when volunteers are isolated or directly impacted by floods. The ERT was also able to assist in replacing damaged equipment and facilities in critical need.

As floods receded, the team monitored key habitat sites – by road, on foot and by canoe – to provide welfare checks on known populations of koalas, macropods, and wombats, revisiting the region to follow up on a significant wildlife reserve and koala habitat.

The negative impact on wildlife was long-lasting, as vegetation had been contaminated by flood waters and habitats destroyed. WIREs worked closely with NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service and other wildlife groups to assess the need for support during the recovery period, including supplementary food programs.

We thank everyone who placed calls and assisted wildlife during this emergency.

TAMBAROORA FIRE WILDLIFE SEARCH AND RESCUE

March 2023: WIREs ERT provided on-ground assistance to wildlife impacted by the Tambaroora bushfire, which left a trail of destruction over 18,000 hectares in NSW's Central West. Working closely with the NSW Rural Fire Service, the team undertook a wildlife search and rescue operation in the fire-affected area of Tambaroora, south of Mudgee.

Bushfires have a significant impact on wildlife populations, and the survival rate is regrettably low for many species. The Tambaroora bushfire was devastating for local wildlife, with many animals losing their lives and habitats.

Due to the severity of the fire, WIREs ERT encountered numerous wallabies that had perished in the bushfire. However, they were heartened to find many reptiles and kangaroos that had survived the devastation.

Watch our Emergency
Australian Floods video



OUR FAVOURITE RESCUE STORIES

TEAM EFFORT LEADS TO SUCCESSFUL WALLABY RESCUE

A Swamp Wallaby joey was found in his mother's pouch after his mother was struck by a car in Spencer, NSW. A concerned member of the public called WIRES and our volunteer Sally was able to rescue the joey and transfer him for medical care at a local veterinarian clinic. Once cleared, he was transferred to WIRES volunteer Sandra for initial, one to one care. When ready, the young Swamp Wallaby (by now named Matty) was then buddied up with other rescued joeys in the care of WIRES volunteer Anne. Three months on, Matty has come a long way; growing healthier, stronger and more skilled by the day. Rescuing and rehabilitating wildlife is a team effort, rewarded by witnessing the release of native animals back into the wild.



© Anne Marks



Elliot and Lucy

IT TAKES TWO

These Eastern grey kangaroo joeys, now named Elliot and Lucy, were found frightened and alone by members of the public. Lucy was found near the ramp of a busy highway, whilst Elliot was discovered in a flooded field. Neither mothers were able to be found, so the joeys were taken into WIRES care. Whilst most abandoned and orphaned joeys are usually very stressed and scared, their carer Anne was able to pair these two together, which made them quickly relax. She says they've since been very easy to care for.

They will be in care for about a year, learning all the skills they'll need for an eventual release in the wild. Thank you to the many people who helped to rescue and provide immediate assistance to these joeys – we know it's never an easy task but you've saved some very precious lives!



Elmo © Matt Jarrett

ELMO THE WALLAROO JOEY

Elmo came into WIRES care after he was found lost and alone in a rural garden. While Elmo was only 1.1kgs, Wallaroos are fast-growing joeys and he was fully furred at this stage. It was probably Elmo's first time out of the pouch when he'd become separated from his mother. Elmo was soon placed with WIRES' carers Matt and Christie Jarrett, where he quickly gained a healthy weight of 2.5 kgs and was described as a "very good eater". He's now been paired with a female Wallaroo joey and together, they're learning all the skills they'll need for a second chance in the wild.

GANG GANG COCKATOO

This adult male Gang Gang cockatoo was found by a member of the public in Oberon, NSW. He had a dislocated toe, which was affecting his ability to eat and fly. Nicknamed 'Creaky' because his call sounds like a creaking old door, he was nursed back to health by WIRES volunteer Christie, who also took this lovely photo of Creaky during his recuperation.

Gang Gang cockatoos are listed as vulnerable in NSW and were hit hard by the catastrophic bushfires of 2020 when huge areas of their habitat were destroyed. Creaky will soon be ready for release, after which he'll play a vital role in securing the survival of his species.



© Christie Jarrett

OUR VOLUNTEERS

We are very grateful for the ongoing dedication, compassion and tireless efforts of our front-line volunteers. Volunteer numbers remain strong, with our total number of volunteers exceeding 4,000 for the past three years running. WIRES now offer three tiers of volunteering:

RESCUE AND TRANSPORT VOLUNTEERS RESCUE 101

Rescue 101 Volunteers complete an entry level training course which enables them to get involved in the rescue and transport of possums, frogs, lizards, turtles and birds. This tier of volunteering has grown to a healthy base of over 500 since inception in 2021, and has greatly helped to provide better outcomes for wildlife with faster response times for rescues.

[More about Rescue 101](#) →

WIRES MEMBERS RICC

By completing our Rescue and Immediate Care Course (RICC), these volunteers become members of WIRES and are connected to their local branch. They are initially authorised to rescue possums, gliders, lizards, turtles, frogs, birds, macropods, wombats and raptors, and to provide immediate care for up to 24 hours. Members who complete subsequent WIRES Advanced Species Courses are then authorised to care for and rehabilitate those species for release back into the wild.

[More about Rescue and Immediate Care Course](#) →

VOLUNTEER WOMBAT MANGE TREATERS

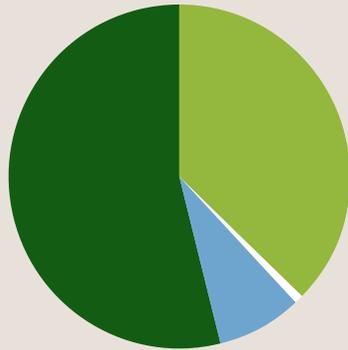
This tier of volunteering was launched in November 2022. After completing our WIRES Mange Treatment course, volunteers are equipped with everything they need to diagnose and treat wombats with mange. Calls reporting mange-affected wombats have more than doubled in the last 5 years, so we need every bit of help we can get to eradicate mange from the Bare-nosed wombat population. In the first six months of this program, we signed up 46 Wombat Mange treaters and anticipate these numbers will grow significantly state-wide as we continue to increase the awareness of this terrible disease and the success rates of providing treatment.



6,560

VOLUNTEERS SUPPORTED

MEMBERS	3520
RESCUE 101	537
MANGE TREATERS	46
EXTERNAL (14 ORGS, 5 STATES/TERRITORIES)	2457



GENERAL SUPPORT

28 BRANCHES, VOLUNTEERS, BOARD, SPECIES TEAMS

EMAIL AND PHONE ENQUIRIES, RENEWALS, SURVEYS, WEBINARS, MEMBER WEBSITE, AGMS, DONATED GOODS, ED TALKS, COMMUNITY EVENTS, BRANCHES, VACCINATIONS, FOOD SUBSIDIES, POLICY AND PROCEDURE SUPPORT



SYSTEMS

WIRES VOLUNTEERS

TALL EMU, CARER HQ, xMATTERS, EVERBRIDGE, DATA INTEGRITY



VETS

BUILDING AND MAINTAINING RELATIONSHIPS

VOLUNTEER SUPPORT FY23

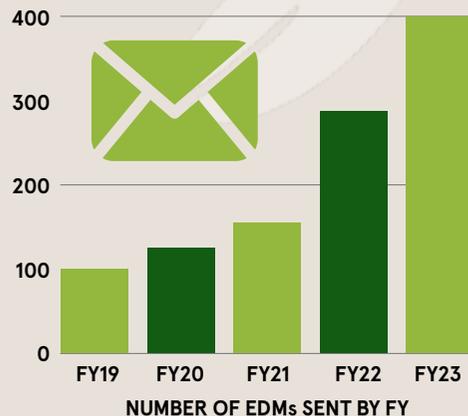
PROJECTS

ROAD SIGNS, TREE PLANTING, CALENDARS, DUKE OF ED, CLOTHING RANGE, ENVIROPRINT SHOP, NEW TIERS OF VOLUNTEERING, EXTERNAL ORGS



COMMUNICATIONS

TO VOLUNTEERS



RECOGNITION

WIRES DEDICATION TO WILDLIFE AWARDS, YEARS OF SERVICE PINS, NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK QUIZZES AND VIRTUAL MORNING TEA



WELLBEING

REGULAR WELLBEING eNEWS, BLACK DOG INSTITUTE SUPPORT SERVICES



Gary Pattinson



WIRES Blue Mountains

VOLUNTEER ACHIEVEMENTS

WIRES NORTHERN RIVERS BRANCH

Volunteer Team of the Year, October 2022 | Centre for Volunteering Australia

WIRES Northern Rivers Branch was honoured with the Volunteer Team of the Year award by the Centre for Volunteering Australia. The accolade was presented in recognition of their exceptional efforts and dedication during the devastating March 2022 floods. Working tirelessly with external organisations and emergency services, they ensured the safety and wellbeing of both the community and the wildlife in the region. WIRES Northern Rivers Chair Annie Crowley proudly attended the ceremony and celebrated the award with the team. Their remarkable sense of community and selflessness has brought immense honour to the organisation, and they continue to make WIRES proud each day.

WIRES volunteers acknowledged in Australia Day celebrations

We are delighted to see WIRES volunteers acknowledged amongst the Australia Day recipients for 2023 for their dedication to wildlife.

- **Inga Schwaiger** (pictured) from WIRES Wollondilly branch was awarded Environmental Citizen of the Year in addition to a Certificate of Achievement at the Wollondilly Council awards.
- **Susan Brookhouse** OAM from WIRES Dubbo branch was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia for lifelong commitment to animal rehabilitation.

Northern Beaches Eco Awards 2023, Northern Beaches Council

As a long-standing WIRES member, Gary Pattinson (pictured) has personally attended to hundreds of native animals, predominantly reptiles, solidifying his passion for native wildlife. His unwavering dedication as a volunteer, species coordinator, and trainer has been instrumental in the successful rescue and rehabilitation of countless reptiles, giving them a chance at a better life. Read the full article [here](#).

VIRTUAL MORNING TEA FOR VOLUNTEER WEEK

We celebrated National Volunteer Week in May 2023 with a well-attended Virtual Morning Tea to honor WIRES 4,000 volunteers and their steadfast efforts in rescuing, safeguarding and rehabilitating wildlife. Founder Mikla Lewis OAM

shared WIRES' inspiring 38-year journey, highlighting the organisation's growth and impact. Kenny Damaschke, Reptile Coordinator, moved attendees with his personal story, reflecting on his late father's legacy and emphasising community collaboration in wildlife preservation.

Throughout National Volunteer Week 2023, members participated in daily quizzes with prizes for the person who answered 100% the fastest, with the winners announced at the Virtual Morning Tea. We wrapped up National Volunteer Week 2023 with heartfelt appreciation for WIRES' changemakers, who each positively impact their communities and countless animal lives.



**"All twelve of us
who attended...
very much enjoyed
the experience.
The speakers were
amazing."**

**Beris Jenkins,
WIRES Mid South
Coast Branch**

WIRES BLUE MOUNTAINS BRANCH

Community Achievement of the Year | Blue Mountains City Council, June 2023

We congratulate the WIRES Blue Mountains branch (pictured) for winning the prestigious Blue Mountains Community Achievement of the Year award. Their outstanding service and dedication to rescuing injured and at-risk native animals in the region has been recognized and appreciated, especially during the devastating Black Summer bushfires and subsequent destructive storms and flooding. Despite facing numerous challenges, WIRES volunteers persisted in, caring for injured native animals and rehabilitating them for release. The heartfelt acknowledgment from Trish Doyle MP highlights the invaluable impact of their work.



WILDLIFE TRAINING

2,688

COURSE
COMPLETIONS
IN FY23

58

ADVANCED SPECIES
COURSES DELIVERED
TO OVER 800 PEOPLE

5

NEW COURSES
RELEASED

- 1 FROG CARE COURSE
- 1 COMMUNITY MANGE TREATMENT COURSE
- 3 GOVERNANCE COURSES

In line with our commitment to improving wildlife care across Australia, WIRES' wildlife training programs continue to grow in reach. Over 800 people participated in our advanced species courses, and we are proud to launch new training courses, empowering more people to provide expert care to a diverse range of species.

We're excited to release the Community Mange Treatment Course this year. The course allows individuals who reside in areas where there are mange-affected wombats, to learn how to identify mange and safely treat sick wombats.

In November and December 2022, WIRES partnered with the Centre of Veterinary Education (CVE) to deliver two wildlife-specific webinars to veterinarians and vet nurses to improve outcomes for wildlife being admitted into a clinic. Over 250 veterinary professionals from across Australia and internationally accessed the webinars.

During FY23, we partnered with the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) to develop three new governance courses for the wildlife rehabilitation sector in NSW. The Wildlife Rehabilitator Leadership Course, the Wildlife Rehabilitator Conflict Resolution Course and the Wildlife Rehabilitator Train the Trainer Course were released on 26 June 2023 to foster a stronger, more accountable wildlife rehabilitation community in NSW.





WIRES COURSES COMPLETED IN FY23

INTRODUCTORY COURSES	ATTENDEES		
Rescue 101	213	Rescue and Immediate Care Course	457
Immediate Care Course	30	Rescue and Immediate Care Refresher Course	19
Community Mange Treatment Course	53		
NATIONAL COURSES			
National Koala Rescue Course	86	National Sea Snake Rescue Course	68
Introductory Tasmanian Mammal Training	25	Introduction to Wildlife Rescue	250
National Sea Turtle Rescue Course	1		
SPECIES COURSES			
Avian Care Course	179	Raptor Rescue and Transport Course	125
Flying-fox & Microbat Rescue, Rehabilitation and Release Course	134	Snake Handling Course	113
Frog Care Course	155	Sea Snake Rescue and Transport Course	3
Koala Rescue and Transport Course	93	Sea Turtle Rescue and Transport Course	13
Lizard and Turtle Care Course	105	Wombat Mange Treatment Course	115
Macropod Rescue, Rehabilitation and Release Course	206	Wombat Rescue, Rehabilitation and Release Course	89
Possum and Glider Rescue, Rehabilitation and Release Course	84		
SPECIES COURSES			
Conflict resolution	30	Species Coordinator Course	17
Roles & responsibilities of the Branch Executive	15	Train the Trainer	10

WIRES NATIONAL TRAINING GRANTS PROGRAM

WIRES Training continued to support wildlife rescue and rehabilitation groups around Australia with access to high-quality, wildlife rescue and care-specific training. Since the program began in 2021, 30 organisations around Australia have participated in the program, exceeding \$50,000 worth of training support. In FY23, WIRES supported four groups in NSW, two groups in QLD, one group in VIC, three groups in WA and one group in SA with access to training material through this program.

WIRES WILDLIFE VETERINARIANS

During FY23, WIRES' wildlife veterinarians, Dr Tania Bishop and Dr Nikki De Fina, made significant strides in advancing wildlife care and conservation in Australia. Their efforts were directed towards training, education, research, literature contributions, advisory roles, and qualifications.

In the realm of training, new Seabird training and a comprehensive review of WIRES mammal training were implemented. Additionally, they spearheaded the "Creating Wildlife-Friendly Practices: Housing, Husbandry and Basic Procedures for Australian Wildlife", a Continuing Veterinary Education program, enhancing the skills of professionals involved in wildlife care.

Fostering knowledge exchange and collaboration in the wildlife sector, Dr Bishop delivered presentations at the Port Macquarie Koala Conference and the WRENN NZ Conference.

Their contributions to wildlife literature were notable, as they actively participated in researching flying-fox paralysis syndrome and collaborated on innovative research involving a flying-fox automated sprinkler program. Dr Bishop co-authored a publication on estimating flying-fox mortality, and their guidelines for koala care, reptile examination, and trauma care are invaluable resources for veterinarians and wildlife rehabilitators.

Acting as advisors, our Wildlife Veterinarians provided remote guidance to Australian vets in wildlife cases, supported reptile facilities, and facilitated collaboration between WIRES and Taronga for enhanced wildlife referrals and guidelines. Their involvement in key programs like the National Koala Disease Risk Analysis and Grey-headed flying-fox recovery program underscores WIRES commitment to species preservation.

Our veterinarians furthered their expertise through qualifications, with Dr Bishop obtaining certificates in facilitating species conservation planning management and conducting wildlife disease risk analyses from CSPG and IUCN, respectively.

Dr Tania Bishop and Dr Nikki De Fina's dedicated work during FY23 has significantly advanced wildlife care, research, and conservation, leaving a lasting impact on Australia's natural heritage.



Dr Tania Bishop with Eastern Grey kangaroo joey (Felix)



Dr Nikki De Fina with a leucistic Eastern blue-tongue lizard

DR TANIA BISHOP

Dr Bishop is an accomplished Zoo and Wildlife Veterinarian with 24 years of experience. She holds memberships in avian medicine, an industry fellowship at the University of Queensland, and qualifications in wildlife disease, risk analyses, and species management development from IUCN. Dr Bishop is actively involved in renowned organisations including the Australasian Bat Society, Wildlife Disease Association, One Health Australia, and Wildlife Health Australia. She contributes to koala and grey-headed flying-fox recovery programs and contributed to the National Koala Disease Risk Analysis. With extensive experience managing wildlife hospitals, Dr Bishop has mentored veterinarians and nurses, treating various land, sea-based, and zoo species. She focuses on mitigating the impact of wildlife disasters and authored Queensland's heat event management policy for flying-fox camps. Dr. Bishop's expertise extends to training wildlife professionals through lecturing, conducting research, and supporting wildlife care at WIRES.

DR NIKKI DE FINA

Dr De Fina is extremely passionate about improving outcomes for wildlife and has an interest in identifying and addressing gaps in animal care. Nikki has experience in small animal practice treating wildlife and works closely with wildlife rehabilitators to support treatment and triage needs for a range of species. Nikki specialises in advanced bird care and has experience triaging and treating animals from the Black Summer crisis. She is currently working in small animal practice in the Illawarra region of NSW.

THREATENED SPECIES: KOALA

One of Australia's most iconic species, the koala, was listed as endangered in NSW, QLD and the ACT in 2022. WIRES has witnessed an increase in the number of calls for koala assistance, reflecting the severe challenges threatening koalas – including natural disasters, road collisions, disease and habitat destruction. WIRES is actively involved in a range of programs and partnerships to improve outcomes for koalas, including technology that speeds up response times for injured and displaced koalas, research into disease, breeding programs, rehabilitation, habitat restoration, and post-release monitoring. These shared, sector-wide efforts are crucial for securing the health and viability of koalas in post-fire landscapes.

KOALA ADVISORY GUIDES

WIRES produces Guides for Vets and Wildlife Carers on how to care for koalas, including trauma care, anaesthesia, examination, intubation, pain relief and euthanasia.



CALLS FOR KOALA ASSISTANCE

FY20: 607

FY21: 651

FY22: 617

FY23: 631

MOTOR VEHICLE 74

DISEASE 53

HABITAT LOSS 51

DOG ATTACK 15

BIRD ATTACK 6

FY23 COMMON THREATS

SECURING THE HEALTH AND VIABILITY OF KOALAS IN POST-FIRE LANDSCAPES

WIRES Research Grants Program 2022: Flinders University Victoria program update

We are assessing the health and behaviour of koalas on Kangaroo Island to determine how koalas cope in a landscape that was severely burnt during the 2019/2020 bushfires and is still recovering. We have found that koala populations are most abundant in unburnt blue gum (*Eucalyptus globulus*) plantations, where koalas occur at densities of up to seven koalas per hectare. Koalas are also found in relatively high densities in unburnt native vegetation, with much lower densities occurring in the burnt habitats (both blue gums and native).

We have already assessed the health of 75 koalas living mostly in unburnt vegetation. The good news is that koalas on Kangaroo Island are very healthy, with few signs of overt disease and high rates of reproduction (>80% of females in our recent field trip had joeys in the pouch and/or nearly independent young).

We are using cutting-edge satellite trackers (K-Trackers) developed specifically for koalas by Endeavour Veterinary Ecology (QLD) and LX Group (NSW). We have deployed 40 K-Trackers on koalas living in burnt and unburnt habitats to monitor their movement behaviours. This work is still preliminary and we look forward to sharing important insights into koala behaviour and health soon.

Dr Karen Burke da Silva & Julian Beaman



\$169,367

WAS GRANTED FOR KOALA SUPPORT ACROSS 13 PROJECTS IN WIRES NATIONAL GRANTS PROGRAM 2022

This support provided rescue and rehabilitation, population monitoring and habitat restoration.



BIOMAPPING, DISEASE TREATMENT & PREVALENCE MAPPING, HABITAT MAPPING AND KOALA MONITORING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH AUSSIE ARK

BREEDING PROGRAM FOR KOALAS FROM KANGAROO ISLAND AND VICTORIA WITH



KOALALIFE

\$907,000

IN FUNDING WAS PROVIDED TO LANDCARE AUSTRALIA

for a WildSeek Koala Conservation Drone Project with WIRES, Queensland University of Technology and Landcare



ESTABLISHED THE SYDNEY BASIN KOALA NETWORK

With Total Environment Centre and a consortium of environmental organisations to provide a voice to fight for koala protection

POST-RELEASE KOALA MONITORING WITH

SCIENCE FOR WILDLIFE

KOALA HEALTH HUB

SUPPORTING AN INITIATIVE FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY TO BENEFIT KOALA WELFARE AND CONSERVATION

\$40,712

WAS GRANTED THROUGH WIRES NATIONAL GRANTS PROGRAM TO KOALA RESEARCH

Granted to the University of the Sunshine Coast, QLD to research the prevalence and impact of other bacterial, viral and chlamydial co-infections in koalas.



CONTRIBUTING TO THE IMPROVEMENT OF KOALA TREATMENT OPTIONS

Through Wildlife Medicine Research with University of Sydney is

WIRES WATER FOR WILDLIFE

PROJECT SUPPORTS ARBOREAL SPECIES, PARTICULARLY KOALAS, BY SUPPLEMENTING WATER VIA ARBOREAL DRINKERS

MAJOR PROJECTS

WIRES provided funding under its national grant programs to 83 projects covering wildlife research, conservation, habitat restoration and rehabilitation. Projects were also approved to increase support for the wildlife rehabilitation sector by providing funding to individual rehabilitators and wildlife shelters across the country.

NATIONAL GRANTS PROGRAM

In 2022, 74 projects were approved under WIRES National Grants Program across seven states and territories and included habitat restoration, threatened species rehabilitation and conservation, increasing capacity in the wildlife rehabilitation sector and increasing community awareness and participation in wildlife support.

[Read more about this year's National Grants projects](#) →



\$374,465

WORTH OF RESEARCH GRANTS ALLOCATED ACROSS

9 NATIONAL PROJECTS

[Read more about this year's National Grants projects](#) →

RESEARCH GRANTS PROGRAM

WIRES Research Grants Program 2023 provided funding to nine projects. The projects include threatened species research, disease research, conservation and rehabilitation methods and genetics research. Each project will run for 2-3 years and progress reports will be provided yearly.

Across five states there were nine successful projects in 2022.

STATE	RECIPIENT	PROJECTS
NSW	Charles Sturt University	Deploying artificial refuges for threatened fauna in fire-prone landscapes
	Western Sydney University	Quantifying heavy metal and anthropogenic contaminant exposure in platypus (<i>Ornithorhynchus anatinus</i>) populations in a World Heritage Area
	The University of Wollongong	Parasites, pathogens and population health: investigating threats to the endangered greater glider in NSW
	Western Sydney University	Strengthening wildlife rehabilitation: advancing scientific literacy and best practices for the care and management of injured turtles by wildlife carers
VIC	La Trobe University	The marsupial gut microbiome: improving rearing and release outcomes by supporting the development of host-associated gut microbial diversity
	Monash University	Disentangling the long-term effects of marine debris on Australian fur seals
QLD	University of the Sunshine Coast	Understanding the prevalence and impact of other bacterial, viral and chlamydial co-infections in koalas
WA	The University of Sydney	Possum on a hot-tin roof! Assessing treatment and release outcomes for critically endangered possums burned during extreme heat events in Western Australia
TAS	University of Tasmania	Vectors and victims: East Australian pathogen surveillance for Australia's threatened marine birds (EA-PATH)





**WIRES NATIONAL GRANTS PROGRAM 2022
WILDLIFE SUPPORT & RECOVERY**

74 PROJECTS
NATIONALLY



PAT CONNORS
AVIAN GRANT: BRINGING
BACK THE BLACK COCKATOOS

HELEN GEORGE OAM
MAMMAL GRANT:
WILDLIFE FRIENDLY FENCING IN
THE WET TROPICS, QLD



MIKLA LEWIS OAM
HABITAT
RESTORATION AND
ENHANCEMENT GRANT:
HEATHCOTE LOCAL TO
LANDSCAPE, VIC



69

UPGRADING & NEW FACILITIES,
MEDICAL SUPPLIES AND
RESCUE EQUIPMENT

6

NEST BOXES
AND BURROWS
INSTALLED AND
MAINTAINED



5 WILDLIFE HABITAT
RECOVERY PROJECTS

8

MONITORING
AND SURVEYS OF
NATIVE SPECIES



13 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
AND EDUCATION PROJECTS



PROJECTS
PROTECTING
WILDLIFE AND
THREATENED SPECIES:

8 MACROPODS
13 KOALAS
5 WOMBATS
2 GLIDERS

5 BATS
2 OTHER MAMMALS
8 BIRDS
1 RAPTORS



GOVERNMENT SUBMISSIONS

WIRES put forward submissions to protect and preserve wildlife in response to the following proposals:

- 1** Submission to the Statutory Review of the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 (NSW)
- 2** Letter to Minister for Agriculture in support of introducing bat-safe netting regulations under the NSW Animal Welfare Bill 2022 Div 1.3: of the Act “to prevent animal cruelty.”
- 3** Submission to the Review of the native vegetation provisions (Part 5A and Schedule 5A and Schedule 5B) of the Local Land Services Act 2013
- 4** Submission to the Environment and Communications Legislation Committee on provisions of the Nature Repair Market Bill 2023 and Nature Repair Market (Consequential Amendments) Bill 2023 (NRM Bill)
- 5** Submission to the Toondah Harbour Development Proposal Draft Environmental Impact Statement

CORPORATE PARTNERSHIPS

WIRES extends a huge thank you to its Corporate Partners, Corporate Fundraisers, Workplace Givers, and all organisations that chose to support us this year.

Working with WIRES can help organisations meet their Environmental Social and Governance (ESG) objectives, whilst at the same time helping WIRES deliver projects that have tangible, positive and long-term outcomes for the rescue, recovery, and preservation of Australia's wildlife. To discuss how your organisation could work with WIRES contact our Corporate Partnerships Team at partnerships@wires.org.au



PLATINUM



GOLD



SILVER



BRONZE

- Koko Black
- Cheeki
- Brentos

WOOLWORTHS

Beginning in early 2020 in a collaborative response to unprecedented natural disasters, Woolworths and WIRES have built a long-term partnership for the protection of vulnerable Australian wildlife. Now into its third year, our Food for Wildlife Program is helping feed rescued wildlife in care – alleviating one of the biggest costs to wildlife carers, whilst supporting Woolworths’ goal to reduce food waste.

Through our partnership with Woolworths, WIRES can provide immediate assistance to wildlife rescue groups experiencing extreme weather events and natural disasters.

FOOD FOR WILDLIFE

Rescue Food: This program helps Woolworths meet its goal of zero food going to landfill by diverting unwanted food to wildlife in care.

- **166 Woolworths stores** across Australia are involved in the Rescue Food Program, providing food to **140 wildlife groups and licensed individual carers**.
- Members from **13 WIRES branches** use this program.
- Fruit and vegetables are the most frequently collected foods, with some meat and seafood occasionally available. Most carers can collect food once or multiple times a week.

The Rescue Food program continues to grow year after year, and we are very proud to work collaboratively with Woolworths on this.

“We are very thankful for the donation we receive, it makes a huge difference to our food bill. The savings we have from their donation can be distributed to provide for other species”

Trish LeeHong, Wildlife Rescue, Rehabilitation and Education Association, QLD



[Read about Woolworths & WIRES national wildlife programs](#) →

FOOD FOR WILDLIFE

Wildlife Food Support: 171 wildlife groups and licensed individual carers across Australia were supported through the Food Support Program during FY23. Wildlife food is one of the most expensive costs for wildlife carers and we are proud to help alleviate some of this burden through this support program.

State Breakdown:

ACT: 2 groups and individuals

NT: 5 groups and individuals

NSW: 12 groups and individuals

SA: 13 groups and individuals

QLD: 38 groups and individuals

TAS: 25 groups and individuals

VIC: 57 groups and individuals

WA: 19 groups and individuals

Food Support sources high-quality wildlife food from nine suppliers across Australia. Most carers use the support to purchase formula for infant wildlife. Macropod pellets and critical care formula are also popular items.

“I would like to thank WIRES and Woolworths for your support. You have helped so many sick, injured and orphaned wildlife. Your help has given dozens of animals a second chance at life.”

Shane Williams, Bridgetown Wildlife Rescue, WA

“Our heartfelt thanks for contributing to this very worthwhile cause. Wildlife carers around the country struggle with the time and monetary commitment of caring for our wildlife and every bit of help is greatly appreciated. Your contribution is invaluable.”

Tonia Cochran, Inala Nature Foundation, TAS



FOOD FOR WILDLIFE

Emergency Support: This partnership allows WIRES to act quickly and efficiently to support groups experiencing natural disaster. The items we provide often dramatically increase a native animal's chance of being rescued and surviving the trauma.

WIRES assisted eight wildlife groups across two states over the past 12 months. Both were flood events, one in Victoria and the other in Broome, Western Australia.

A large majority of Emergency Support program's funding is spent on food, however it also contributes to items such as temporary fencing, pumps, and in one case was used for materials to construct an emergency wombat pen.



COMING TOGETHER TO SAVE OLIVIA THE LOGGERHEAD TURTLE

Olivia the Loggerhead Turtle had lost the ability to swim when rescued by Native Animal Rescue Broome (NAR) in November 2022 and she needed significant care.

Olivia was severely underweight and was encumbered by 4kg of barnacles on her back. The barnacles hinted at underlying health issues and posed a threat to her wellbeing. Chris Mitchell and his team embarked on a mission to provide Olivia with the necessary care and nourishment to restore her health.

As Olivia started to feed, the rescue group's food costs skyrocketed. Through the Food for Wildlife Program, WIRES and Woolworths were able to cover Olivia's food costs, taking the pressure off NAR Broome who were handling an influx of other species being rescued by floods in and around Broome.

In late April, Olivia was finally ready for release and the Woolworths team flew to Broome to lend a helping hand. The release was covered by local radio and ABC, and a beautiful video was made to celebrate the occasion and the power of partnerships.



MORE WIRES X WOOLWORTHS INCENTIVES

Woolworths provide their support to WIRES by donating a percentage of sales through their Spring Garden Ornaments and Reindeer Carrots, which have been a huge success, allowing WIRES to distribute funds to wildlife groups across Australia. This year, Woolworths also launched a merry new product - Wally the Wombat - a festive cake featuring a wombat wearing Santa's hat.

BRAVECTO

WIRES and Bravecto are on a mission to improve the welfare of Australia's vulnerable wombats. Our partnership provides volunteers and wildlife rescue groups access to Bravecto Spot-On for Dogs to treat wombats suffering from sarcoptic mange, contributing to the reduction in the prevalence of the disease.

Through this partnership, Bravecto provided WIRES with 2,000 doses of Bravecto which we distributed to WIRES members, Community Mange treaters and various wildlife rescue groups and individuals. Based on the numbers distributed, it is estimated the partnership has so far helped treat over 1,000 wombats.

WIRES is grateful for the support of Bravecto and MSD Animal Health and is excited to watch the partnership grow to help save the lives of many more vulnerable wombats.



Connect your company to wildlife →

A close-up photograph of two budgerigars perched on a tree trunk. The birds are green and yellow with dark stripes on their wings. The tree bark is thick and textured, with some peeling. The background is a soft, out-of-focus blue sky.

PHILANTHROPY

Thank you to our wonderful Supporters, Major Donors, Trust and Foundations and Benefactors, who make it possible for us to rescue, care for and rehabilitate Australia's vulnerable wildlife. At no other time in history has WIRES' mission been more critical, and we are deeply grateful for the important role you play, in helping us carry out this vital work.

WIRES would like to acknowledge the following generous Trusts and Foundations that supported our vital programs this past year:

- Allen Family Foundation
- Ereshkigal Foundation
- Gum Tree Foundation
- JMS Foundation
- Johnson Family Foundation
- Orgill Family Foundation
- Savannah Foundation
- S & J Cook Family Foundation
- Senn Family Trust
- Smail Family Foundation
- The Warren Robert Watkins Charitable Trust

We would like to acknowledge our generous benefactors who have created a legacy to protect wildlife through WIRES this past year. Thank you to the Estates of the late:

- Robert William Freestone
- Patricia Margaret Harriott
- Jacqueline Merlino
- Lynette Marie Forbes
- Walter Igor Kohut
- Noela Maude Lunney
- Robert Henry Mattock
- Gail Leonard
- Helen Elizabeth Kemp
- Audrey Joan Holloway
- Ann Gray
- Patricia Margaret Harriot
- Karen Macdonald
- Alison Jane Rosetta Fox
- Irene Richardson
- Brenda Beatrice Magnifico
- Barbara Taylor
- Edward Douglas Potts
- Margaret Rose Taylor

GET INVOLVED



WIREs is committed to growing and improving wildlife rescue, rehabilitation, information and education services nationally, and to protecting and preserving Australian wildlife for future generations.

Our rescue, rehabilitation and release work returns life to the wild and community support makes this work possible. By donating to WIREs, you are supporting this mission. Gifts \$2 and over are tax-deductible within Australia.

Donate to WIREs →

MORE WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

Follow our journey on your favourite social media:



Subscribe to WIREs updates in your inbox →

Leave a lasting legacy with a gift in your will →

Become a wildlife rescuer →

FINANCIAL UPDATE: WIREs' FY23 Audited Financial Statements will be available before the deadline via the ACNC Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission website www.acnc.gov.au

**NSW Wildlife Information,
Rescue and Education Service Inc.**

**Wildlife Rescue Line
13 000 WIREs**

wires.org.au