




FY22

IMPACT REPORT

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Eastern Water Dragon © The Lamonts

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 and has been rescuing and caring for sick, injured and orphaned native animals for over 35 years. Our ongoing mission is to actively rehabilitate and preserve Australian wildlife and inspire others to do the same.

With over one million rescues and supporting a broad range of national projects to improve wildlife rescue, rehabilitation and recovery, we have grown to become Australia's largest wildlife rescue organisation. WIRES and the people who comprise it, embrace the conservation, preservation and extinction prevention of Australian native species and habitats.

We're proud of our beginnings, our history and the path we have taken together. Throughout our journey WIRES has lost none of its grassroots nature or mission. Ours is a past, present and future supported by the contributions of over 4000 volunteer carers, collaborators, sponsors and advocates. Driven by the desire to complete the cycle of rescue, rehabilitation and release back into the wild, our passion is unwavering.

We share this passion by providing a voice of wisdom and a hands-on approach. A highly respected go-to for national and international media, and provider of community information and education, WIRES ultimately speaks loudest for those who cannot themselves - our native wildlife.

WIRES remains focused on implementing projects that improve rescue, rehabilitation and recovery outcomes for wildlife, reduce future emergency risk, mitigate the impacts of climate change, protect habitat and help save native fauna from extinction.

FROM OUR CEO

WIRES operates a dedicated Wildlife Rescue Office 24/7, 365 days a year to assist native wildlife in distress. In the last financial year over 200,000 calls to WIRES' Rescue Line were received, and WIRES provided rescue advice and assistance to help close to 140,000 animals.

Our full-time Emergency Response Team (ERT) operates across NSW, QLD, and TAS. The ERT attended over 4,700 rescues in FY22 and were deployed extensively in response to unprecedented floods.

Together with our partner Everbridge, we expanded the national use of our wildlife emergency response communication platform xMatters. An important chapter in our story, it allows us to deliver on our ethos of providing animals timely support. Beyond our WIRES volunteer base, more than 1,800 volunteers from external wildlife organisations in SA, QLD, TAS, ACT, and NSW now utilise the rescue communications system.

In FY22 more than 1,200 people enrolled in WIRES' rescue courses, and over 700 participants completed advanced species training. This year we proudly launched four new advanced rescue courses for marine turtles, sea snakes, koalas and raptors.

WIRES continues to expand its national impact for wildlife, supporting 67 projects via WIRES' National Grants Program, 12 projects via WIRES' Research Grants Program, and with the support of Woolworths is delivering national food support programs for wildlife.

WIRES proudly collaborates on a wide range of major projects to improve wildlife emergency response, increase rescue and rehabilitation capacity, and improve long-term outcomes for native animals and their habitat, particularly threatened species.

To all our staff, volunteers, members, partners, collaborators, and supporters - we thank you. Working together to improve outcomes for Australian wildlife has never been more important than now.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Leanne Taylor". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Leanne Taylor,
WIRES CEO

WILDLIFE RESCUE OFFICE

The WIRES Rescue Office is the communication hub of WIRES, working every day of the year to assist native animals in distress. Our operators document information received from rescue calls or reports, and liaise with WIRES volunteers, veterinarians, and external wildlife rescue organisations to get wildlife assistance. The WIRES Rescue Office also plays a large role in community education by sharing knowledge on species and how communities can coexist with wildlife in various environments.

In FY22 the WIRES Rescue Office extended its assistance beyond NSW to Queensland and Tasmania thanks to digital efficiencies afforded by WIRES rescue platforms.

Read about how we're connecting rescues to care with partner Everbridge on page 10.

Wildlife rescue work is seasonal, and spring and summer remain our busiest times of year. The WIRES Rescue Office experiences a dramatic increase in calls from the end of winter to the start of spring. Data spanning the last four years shows an increase of 26-38% of incoming calls in this period (August-September WIRES Rescue Office data, 2018-2022).



WIRES Rescue Office



Coastal Carpet Python © Lachlan Cooper

202,870

**CALLS TO OUR
RESCUE LINE**

139,479

**ANIMALS REQUIRED
ASSISTANCE**



Eastern Grey Kangaroo

SEASONAL SPECIES RESCUE TRENDS

SPECIES	BUSIEST PERIOD	WHY
Birds	Spring to autumn	Many calls relate to bird species, which sees a huge increase during the breeding seasons, when we receive related calls such as swooping magpies. Post breeding season, the rescue office handles many bird-related calls from members of public seeking advice around behaviour, chicks and fledglings throughout summer and autumn.
Raptors	Spring to summer	Similar to bird-related calls, there is an increase for raptor assistance during spring and summer.
Possums	Year-round	Although they can breed year-round in autumn and spring, possums generally have what is suggested to be a breeding season. The WIRES Rescue Office generally receive more calls for possums in autumn and spring as joeys come into care after parents have been found injured or unwell. In the autumn breeding season, colder weather can pose more risks with pouched joeys and community members are reminded to ensure they are kept warm, dark and quiet until WIRES volunteers arrive to assist.
Snakes, Lizards and Turtles	Spring to summer	WIRES sees an increase in reptiles calls in spring and summer as they are cold-blooded relying on their environment to regulate their internal temperature. With an increase in temperature reptiles become more active seeking out food sources and opportunity for breeding. Unfortunately, as they are more active in the environment reptiles are at greater risk to predation, or other dangers in urban environments.
Mammals	Winter	Car fatalities become more common during winter, as people travel more often in the low light times of dusk and dawn which is when many native animals are most active.
Flying-foxes & Microbats	Summer to autumn	In summer we receive an increase in calls for Flying-foxes found within fruit netting as natural food shortages with the hot / dry weather can encourage them to seek alternative food sources. Flying-fox pup season can see increased reports of young, orphaned pups found on the ground. The summer heat can also greatly affect the Flying-foxes, resulting in higher incoming calls.
Koalas	Year-round	We receive calls requesting wildlife assistance for koalas year-round, with increased calls during spring and summer.
Other Species	Winter to spring	Echidna breeding season starts in winter and WIRES receives calls for echidna dispersals, followed by spring calls when they give birth to puggles. Lizards and small mammals also show an increase of rescue requests during spring.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM

6

EMERGENCY RESPONSE VEHICLES
ACROSS IN NEW SOUTH WALES,
TASMANIA AND QUEENSLAND

4,774

TOTAL
CRITICAL
RESCUES

182,000+

KMS
TRAVELLED



Drain rescue

EAST COAST FLOODS

In March 2022, heavy flooding inundated Queensland, Northern NSW and Sydney. WIREs Emergency Response Team (ERT) quickly contacted WIREs members and external groups in affected areas to identify where support was needed, dedicating resources to emergency wildlife food, first aid supplies, rescue and care equipment and replacement enclosures.

Wildlife rescuers and rehabilitators in flood-affected areas were overwhelmed soon after severe flooding started. Many had lost essential rescue resources in the floods and had no means to replace them. Compounding the crisis, internet access was scarce and phone service was limited. This meant that volunteers were unable to complete online forms and text was the preferred communication. Restricted road access also presented unique logistical challenges in getting rescue essentials to carers.

Working closely with WIREs members and external organisations, WIREs promptly sourced, funded and distributed supplies where they were needed. The essentials in highest demand were food and first aid for native animals, equipment, and replacement enclosures to comfortably house flood-impacted animals.

WIREs' Wildlife Ambulances were deployed to assist with emergency flood recovery in affected areas in Queensland, Northern NSW and Greater Sydney. Over 30 critical rescues were attended in Northern NSW and the ERT assisted local carers and vets with the transportation of over 40 animals. WIREs' Incident Management Team was activated to assist with monitoring volunteer and animal welfare and to facilitate funding support for impacted members and external groups. Our teams on the ground provided operational support, maintained contact throughout the emergency, and coordinated the safe transportation of animals. Alleviating this load meant that local carers could focus their attention on the immediate recovery of their own properties.

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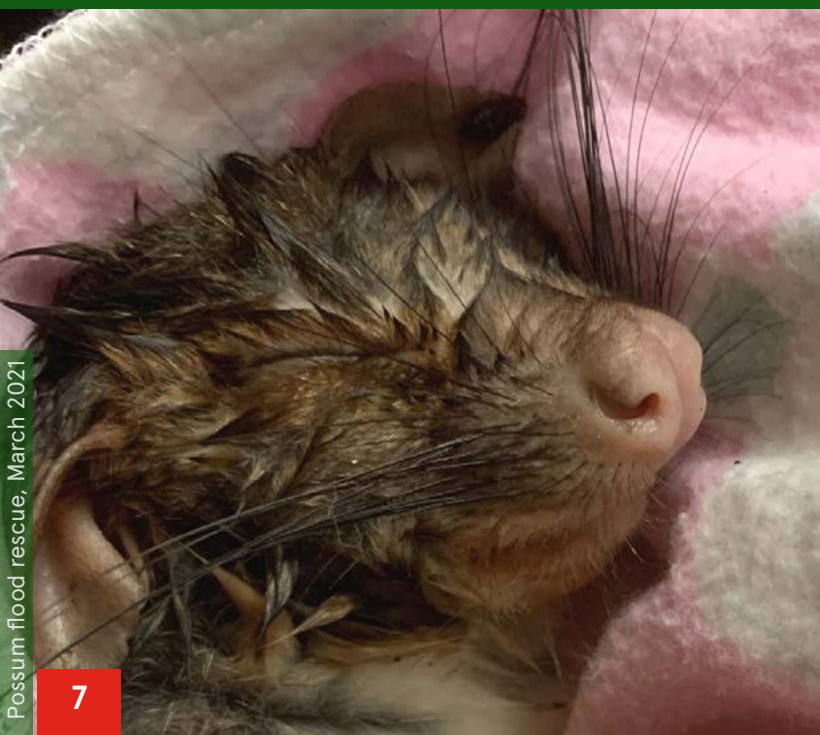


WIREs Wildlife Ambulance

Over a 6-week period, we assisted and collaborated on flood relief efforts with WIRES branches plus 17 external organisations, further collaborating with Woolworths to provide emergency food supplies to local wildlife volunteers. Throughout March, when floods were at their peak, our Emergency Responders and Ambulances attended 480 critical animal rescues, many of which were impacted by the severe weather. The ERT response was successful in supporting and providing immediate relief for WIRES volunteers and local wildlife groups during one of the nation's worst recorded flood disasters on record.

Watch our Emergency Australian Floods video →

Read WIRES National Emergency Response and Recovery Plan →



Possum flood rescue, March 2021

FY2021-2022 PRIORITIES

FY22 PRIORITIES	KEY ACHIEVEMENTS
Increase wildlife rescue and rehabilitation capacity	<p>67 projects funded under the National Grants Program for wildlife support and recovery.</p> <p>Opened Greater Sydney's largest purpose-built Koala Rehabilitation Centre.</p> <p>Increased access to food for wildlife with Woolworths.</p> <p>Vets supported through our Flying-fox Veterinary Vaccination Grant.</p>
Improve wildlife emergency response capability	<p>Emergency Response Team expanded to a fleet of 6 equipped Wildlife Ambulances.</p> <p>Prompt emergency flood response deployed for regional wildlife groups across NSW and QLD.</p>
Establish a strong network to improve national outcomes for wildlife	<p>WIRES Emergency Response Team attended the Response, Recovery and Resilience Expo.</p> <p>Collaborated with wildlife organisations nation-wide to connect wildlife to timely care with 35% of xMatters platform users hailing from organisations external to WIRES.</p> <p>Joined the Conservation in Action 2022 Conference as sponsors and attendees.</p>
Expand wildlife information, education and training programs	<p>2838 total training courses delivered.</p> <p>4 new species courses launched for koalas, raptors, marine turtles and sea snakes.</p>
Implement improved and innovative systems for wildlife rescue and rehabilitation, to deliver the fastest possible rescues and best practice care for native animals	<p>5367 users are now using our xMatters wildlife emergency response platform to connect rescues to care.</p> <p>National conservation AI network WildSeek Project: Community Wildlife Intelligence Hubs launched with Landcare Australia and Queensland University of Technology.</p>
Support critical projects to improve rehabilitation and conservation outcomes	<p>12 projects funded across 5 states in the Research Grants Program.</p> <p>Extended national support for koala research.</p> <p>Funded research at Sydney University School of Veterinary Science to better understand and manage disease.</p> <p>WIRES x AWC delivered on project outcomes on three key projects following the Black Summer bushfires to provide new hope for threatened species.</p> <p>Invested in Turtle Conservation through a freshwater turtle conservation program with Western Sydney University.</p>
Collaborate on projects to protect and preserve critical wildlife habitat	<p>12 habitat projects funded nationally in our 2021 National Grant Program. including grant recipient Phillip Island Nature Parks who are expanding breeding habitat for Phillip Island's short-tailed shearwater colony.</p> <p>3 habitat projects funded nationally through our 2021 Research Grant Program.</p>

OUR YEAR AT A GLANCE



139,479

ANIMALS ASSISTED

RESCUERS RECEIVE
RESCUE ALERTS
VIA OUR APP

5376

35%

OF THESE ARE
FROM EXTERNAL
ORGANISATIONS



2838

TOTAL TRAINING
COURSES COMPLETED
BY VOLUNTEERS

6

WILDLIFE AMBULANCES
MAKE UP OUR RESCUE
VEHICLE FLEET

WIRES WILDLIFE
AMBULANCES
TRAVELLED OVER



182,000kms



202,870

CALLS FOR ASSISTANCE
RECEIVED

11%

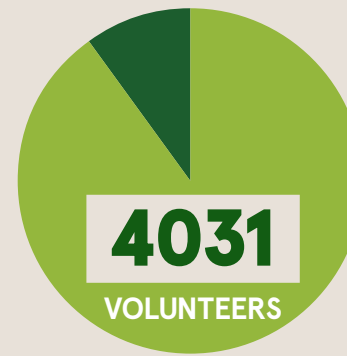
INCREASE IN INCOMING
CALLS TO 1300 0 WIRES

BUSIEST
PERIOD:
SPRING/
SUMMER



26,763

INDIVIDUAL CALLS
RECEIVED IN OUR
BUSIEST MONTH
OF OCTOBER



MEMBER VOLUNTEERS RESCUE 101 VOLUNTEERS

483,303

WEBSITE VISITORS

OUR FOLLOWERS

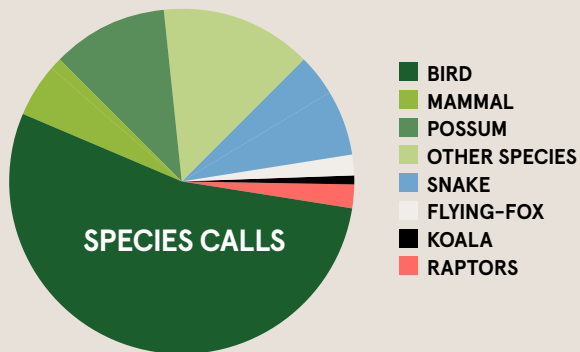
145,000

360,000

11,000

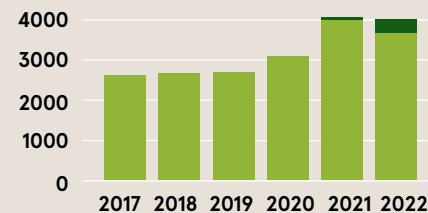
4,200

1270 MENTIONS
IN MEDIA



54%
6%
11%
14%
10%
2%
1%
2%

MEMBERSHIP FY2017-2022



MEMBERS MEMBERS + RESCUE 101

THERE WAS A RAPID RISE IN MEMBERSHIP NUMBERS IN 2020/21 DUE TO WIDESPREAD MEDIA EXPOSURE FOLLOWING THE 2019/20 BLACK SUMMER FIRES. THERE WAS A SMALL DECREASE IN MEMBERSHIP IN FY22 THOUGH STILL TRACKING AT 19% ABOVE THE 2020 FIGURES AND 36% ABOVE 2019'S.

OUR VOLUNTEERS



Through flood, fire and a global pandemic, we are grateful for the tireless dedication of WIREs volunteers who devote their time and expertise to the welfare of Australian wildlife. WIREs membership remains strong, with 3,638 members recorded at 30 June 2022. The second year of WIREs' Rescue 101 course has continued its popularity with 383 new recruits, placing our total membership number at 4,031.

VOLUNTEERS (RESCUE AND TRANSPORT)

Rescue 101 volunteers: Launched in 2021, the Rescue 101 Program enables volunteers to get involved with WIREs with base-level training. Once volunteers complete the WIREs Rescue 101 course they are authorised to rescue and transport possums, frogs, lizards, turtles and birds to vets for treatment. Rescue 101 volunteers report directly to the WIREs Rescue Office (WRO) and the WIREs Rescue 101 Volunteer Coordinator. Rescue 101 volunteers are not authorised to care or rehabilitate any species for any length of time. As this tier of volunteering continues to grow, we expect to see better outcomes for wildlife with faster response rates for rescues leading to wildlife receiving treatment, care or humane euthanasia as quickly as possible.

[More about Rescue 101](#) →

MEMBERS (RESCUE AND CARE)

Rescue and Immediate Care Course (RICC): At a minimum, members have completed the WIREs Rescue and Immediate Care Course (RICC). This authorises members to rescue possums, gliders, lizards, turtles, frogs, birds, macropods, wombats and raptors and provide immediate care for up to 24 hours. Members who complete subsequent WIREs Advanced Species Courses are authorised to care for and rehabilitate particular species until the point of release.

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

VOLUNTEER ACHIEVEMENTS

Launched on International Volunteer Day in November 2021, the 'WIREs Dedication to Wildlife Awards' celebrates volunteers who demonstrate outstanding commitment to wildlife rescue. Close to 300 nominations were received from members, to acknowledge outstanding commitment to WIREs. All nominees received a certificate, and 20 finalists were awarded a framed certificate and a prize pack.



WIREs founder **MIKLA LEWIS OAM** (right) received an honorary badge for 35 years of service.

LYNETTE MILLETT OAM, WIREs member of 25 years from the Northern Beaches Branch, was awarded the **Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM)** for her service to animal welfare. Lyn has been involved in over 10,000 calls for wildlife help.

"What makes me most proud about this award is that the nomination came from my peers".

PENNY COOK was awarded a **Community Service Award** from Dubbo Regional Council for her community work and commitment to wildlife through her work as a WIREs rescuer and carer.

WIREs ILLAWARRA BRANCH was awarded **Community Group of the Year** by Kiama Council for their tireless work rescuing and sheltering native wildlife, especially following the black summer bushfires.

SHAUN WARDEN of WIREs' North Shore Branch was honoured with a **2022 City of Ryde Community Heroes Award**. In Shaun's first year with WIREs, he has been involved in approximately 140 rescues.

[Become a WIREs member today](#) →





CONNECTING RESCUES TO CARE

5367 VOLUNTEERS RECEIVING WILDLIFE RESCUE ALERTS

35% APP USERS COME FROM ORGANISATIONS EXTERNAL TO WIRES

139,479 ANIMALS ASSISTED

70% OF THESE ANIMALS WERE CRITICAL

"Helpful and time saving, especially as we find ourselves getting busier and busier, anything that saves time is invaluable, not only for the operator but also the wildlife needing help."

xMatters external user organisation

WIRES is establishing a national affiliation of wildlife rescue organisations through a new rescue communications system that has improved extensively the ability to communicate and coordinate wildlife rescue capacity.

Everbridge company xMatters provides critical response software that has vastly improved the speed, scope and effectiveness of our rescue networks. Everbridge generously donated licences to WIRES which has allowed us to host an additional 10 external rescue organisations across 5 states/territories. By offering increased efficiencies, we have been able to help other rescue organisations achieve faster response times for wildlife in need of assistance.

Flood and storm weather events across QLD and NSW in 2022 were unprecedented in scale, and the repercussions on communities, the environment and our native wildlife were devastating.

During this event, dedicated WIRES staff managed flood calls from the community, vets and volunteers. In March alone, WIRES received around 10,000 rescue calls, more than 10% of which were flood and storm related. xMatters proved again to be an invaluable asset, providing the ability to effectively notify volunteers, coordinate groups in storm areas and maintain regular contact with our Wildlife Ambulances.

Access for rescue teams was difficult in the immediate aftermath, and we needed to focus on 24/7 phone support for people dealing with displaced wildlife, and urgent logistical support for volunteers. Many animals in care needed to be evacuated. Without the organisational efficiencies afforded by the rescue communications system, this task would have been impossible.

The system allows us to rescue animals faster by reducing manual administration. Once volunteers are registered in the system, the rescue team can contact available, qualified, local volunteers in an instant. All rescues escalate automatically if not resolved within set timeframes. Undoubtedly, a greater number of rescues are now solved faster than ever before.

WIRES received over 200,000 calls for advice or assistance for orphaned, injured or displaced wildlife this financial year – 10% higher than last year.

WIRES currently has 4,031 volunteers, over 3,474 of whom use the app. Of our total rescuers, 1893 are volunteers from ten external organisations across Australia.

WIRES continues to expand its reach to provide critical response. With volunteers from other animal rescue organisations being incorporated into the rescue communications system, WIRES can instantly broadcast rescue notifications to appropriately trained volunteers, no matter which organisation they are from, getting help to more animals even faster.

RESCUE STORIES

GREY-HEADED FLYING-FOX

A Grey-headed Flying-fox was rescued from a school playground in Newcastle, NSW. He was uninjured but had worn teeth and was slightly underweight. The rescuer noted that it was banded and had been previously rescued by WIRES as an orphaned pup in 2003!

Thanks to long-time WIRES volunteer Judy and her meticulous record-keeping the story unfolded. In November 2003, this tiny three-week-old Grey-headed flying-fox was rescued in Bellingen by WIRES Mid North Coast. He was nicknamed Belgarion and buddied with two other orphans, Polgara and Beltira. The trio thrived and, when old enough, were transferred to the WIRES Bellingen creche to learn survival skills and prepare for their life in the wild. They were released from the creche in March 2004, with other hand-raised orphaned pups.

The news of his rescue has thrilled flying-fox and microbat volunteers everywhere, especially WIRES carer Stephen who fondly remembers Belgarion as one of the first pups he raised back in 2003. Belgarion is currently in care while he puts on weight and will then be released back into the wild.

It is a credit to our dedicated volunteers that orphans like Belgarion live such long and valuable lives pollinating our native flora. In the words of WIRES volunteer Denise:

"It is stories like these that make all the rescues and rehabilitation we do so very rewarding."



Grey-headed Flying-fox



Grey-headed Flying-fox pups

COCO AND ROCKY

Wombat joeys Coco and Rocky were orphaned in Tasmania, both due to motor vehicle accidents. Since their rescue, Coco and Rocky were buddied together for company and placed into care. Young wombats need up to six feeds a day meaning they would require constant care as they are raised for eventual release back to the wild. When the two wombats were mature enough, they were transferred to another wildlife carer with a pre-release enclosure to ensure their gradual, safe release. The pair are now at sub-adult stage with a healthy size and weight for release.



Common wombats



ATHENA & FLORA

oAfter spotting a koala and a joey on a low branch of a tree, concerned members of the public called 1300 0 WIRES for help. WIRES Emergency Responder Amy attended the rescue and confirmed on-site that the mother koala, Athena, had conjunctivitis. Athena and Flora were located about 5 metres up in the tree. Amy carefully flagged the two koalas down from their branch before transporting them to Currumbin Wildlife Hospital for treatment.



Athena and Flora

BULLDOZING VISITOR

When Brian arrived at work at Kyogle BWS bottle shop, he found the shop in a mess, with things knocked over and broken bottles on the floor. His immediate thought was the shop had been broken into or vandalised.

He noticed a stack of shelved wine casks 8 boxes high had been slightly moved. Brian investigated further and soon realised that the intrepid intruder was an Echidna, now curled up below the shelving which it had managed to move.

WIRES volunteers often call Echidnas the bulldozers of the bush, their strength is incredible, for a small mammal they can move logs and rocks; they can climb fences and swim across creeks and rivers. Not much will stop an Echidna getting to where it is going.

WIRES volunteer Rebecca is fortunately trained in how to encourage an Echidna to give up its grasp. After an examination where no injuries were found, it was released.

WILDLIFE TRAINING

24 hours a day, 365 days a year WIRES staff and members receive rescue calls – in rain, hail, drought, fire and flood. WIRES now services beyond NSW borders, extending wildlife rescue and training to all states in Australia with groups and industry professionals across the country accessing WIRES training. As WIRES continues to grow its impact across Australia, we are investing in new training courses and materials to improve outcomes for wildlife.

2838

COURSES COMPLETED BY VOLUNTEERS

700

700 PEOPLE COMPLETED ADVANCED SPECIES COURSES

4

NEW SPECIES COURSES LAUNCHED FOR KOALAS, RAPTORS, SEA SNAKES, AND LIZARD AND FRESHWATER TURTLES.

WIRES COURSES COMPLETED IN FY22

INTRODUCTORY COURSES	ATTENDEES		ATTENDEES
Rescue 101	16	Rescue and Immediate Care Course	25
Immediate Care Course	297	Rescue and Immediate Care Refresher Course	307
NATIONAL COURSES			
Koala Rescue and Transport Course	63	National Sea Snake Rescue Course	2
Introductory Tasmanian Mammal Training	39	Introduction to Wildlife Rescue	269
SPECIES COURSES			
Avian Care Course	85	Raptor Rehabilitation Course	12
Bat Course	90	Raptor Rescue and Transport Course	135
Koala Rehabilitation Course	125	Reptile Handling Course	58
Koala Rescue and Transport Course	260	Sea Snake Rescue and Transport Course	24
Lizard and Turtle Care Course	160	Sea Turtle Rescue and Transport Course	169
Macropod Course	35	Wombat Course	123
Possum Course	195	Wombat Mange Treatment Course	97

WOMBAT MANGE TREATMENT COURSE

WIRES runs an online Mange Treatment Course to support WIRES volunteers and approved treatment providers nationally. Mange is a skin infection that has devastating effects on wombats and, if left untreated, can be fatal. The course details the effects of mange on wombats and wombat populations and outlines how to treat mange in situ via approved methods.

Learn about WIRES
Wombat Mange Courses →

WIRES NATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAM

Launched in 2020, the WIRES National Training Grant program provides the opportunity for licensed wildlife rescue and care groups around Australia to access WIRES wildlife rescue and rehabilitation training, addressing areas including introductory rescue and transport of low-risk species, koala rescue training, sea snake rescue training and treatment of mange in wombats.

This year, WIRES provided training to volunteers and industry professionals from over 20 organisations around Australia. Organisations who signed up to the program in FY22 were located in South Australia, New South Wales, Western Australia and Queensland.





WIRES WILDLIFE VETERINARIANS

Dr Tania Bishop with Eastern Grey kangaroo joey (Felix)



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



During FY22, Dr Tania Bishop and Dr Nikki De Fina were focused on developing and reviewing materials and resources for wildlife rehabilitators and industry professionals based on best practice and scientific research to further improve outcomes for wildlife in care throughout Australia.

Dr Tania Bishop is a highly dedicated Wildlife Veterinarian with 23 years' experience in avian medicine and an industry fellow with the University of Queensland. Tania has worked across the 3 largest wildlife hospitals in Queensland providing emergency and intensive care, treatment, disease investigation and rehabilitation of up to 20,000 animals per year as well as providing veterinary support to a vast network of carers. Tania has a special interest in troubleshooting orphaned wildlife hand raising for carers.

Dr Nikki De Fina is 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.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS THIS YEAR

Our expert veterinary team has been developing a range of courses for wildlife rescuers and rehabilitators including Understanding Pain in Wildlife Course, Seabird Rescue and Care Course and Emergency Response Course.

Dr Tania Bishop was a keynote speaker for the Australian Wildlife Rehabilitation Conference 14 August 2022, addressing bat heat stress events and camp sprinkler systems.

Our vets provided critical context and expertise for the development of the Koala Rescue Course, Frog Care Course, Lizard and Turtle Care Course and Sea Snake Courses that were released in FY22.

WIRES Wildlife Veterinarians also advised on various panels such as:

- Grey-headed Flying-fox recovery group
- Wildlife Disease Association Australian Section
- Australian Wildlife Health Institute Initiative
- Flying-fox and Lorikeet paralysis event group
- Queensland Koala Conservation forum
- National Koala wildlife disease risk analysis
- Wildlife Health Australia working group
- Bat health focus group branch

THREATENED SPECIES: KOALA

The koala is now listed as an endangered species in Queensland, New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory, after a dramatic decline in numbers. The once-thriving marsupial population numbers have been ravaged by land clearing, bushfires, drought, disease and other threats.

WIRES takes calls for koala rescue advice and assistance 24/7, rescuing hundreds of koalas annually. Mobilising the community to improve outcomes for the threatened species, a Koala Rescue Course was launched this year for volunteers. Week to week our full-time Emergency Responders assist with urgent rescues for koalas and all species, and lead WIRES emergency response to floods and fires.

Many rescued koalas require close care, WIRES has opened a dedicated Koala Rehabilitation Facility in the Hawkesbury region and works with Port Macquarie Koala Hospital to provide koala rehabilitation training for the sector. Currently in planning are a new koala facility in Southwest Sydney, and WIRES-hosted koala rehabilitation courses.

10 rescue organisations across different states use WIRES rescue communications platform, which will improve koala rescue in many regions. Nationally we've provided over \$4 million to rescue and rehabilitation groups, vets and WIRES branches to improve emergency response and increase rescue and rehabilitation capacity for all wildlife, a range of whom have assisted koalas.

HAWKESBURY KOALA FACILITY

Officially opening on 3 December 2021, WIRES and University of Western Sydney established the Hawkesbury Koala Facility in Richmond NSW. The new facility hosts 6 custom-made demountable rehabilitation enclosures, all designed to mitigate heat through the warmer months. Specialised misting systems are installed in each enclosure for temperature control in spring and summer, keeping leaves fresh and moist. Native *Leptospermum polygalifolium* and *Callistemon shiressii*'s were planted for screening on the northern side of facility. The facility has now rehabilitated 6 koalas since it was established.



\$5M+

INVESTED BY WIRES INTO PROJECTS IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR KOALAS SINCE 2020

WIRES NATIONAL GRANTS PROGRAM: 9 PROJECTS TO SUPPORT KOALAS, TOTALLING

\$180,983

WIRES RESEARCH GRANTS PROGRAM: 3 PROJECTS FOCUSED ON IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR KOALAS, TOTALLING

\$146,460



Monty, West Syd Uni facility

OTHER MAJOR KOALA PROJECTS

AMOUNT	PROJECT	LEAD AGENCY
\$1 million	The Koala Health Hub	The University of Sydney
\$200K	Biomapping, disease treatment & prevalence mapping, habitat mapping, koala monitoring	Aussie Ark
\$282K	Breeding program with koalas from Kangaroo Island and Victoria	Koala Life
\$1.2 million	Establish Sydney Basin Koala Network	Total Environment Centre
\$1 million	Project to support arboreal species, particularly koalas	Water for Wildlife
\$109K	Post-release koala monitoring	Science for Wildlife
\$369K	Wildlife Medicine Research in part to improve koala treatment options	The University of Sydney

MAJOR PROJECTS

As WIRES continues to grow and expand its scope of activities nationally, our projects and grants remain focused on the rescue, rehabilitation and recovery of sick, injured and orphaned wildlife. Two of the biggest national grants programs in WIRES history were launched for the first time; the WIRES National Grants Program and the WIRES Research Grants Program which made available up to \$1.5 million in FY22 for wildlife rehabilitation, rescue and preservation projects across Australia. We work with all levels of government on relevant legislative proposals and support the wider wildlife sector and conservation movement by volunteering our time in an advisory capacity to represent WIRES on panels and in action groups.

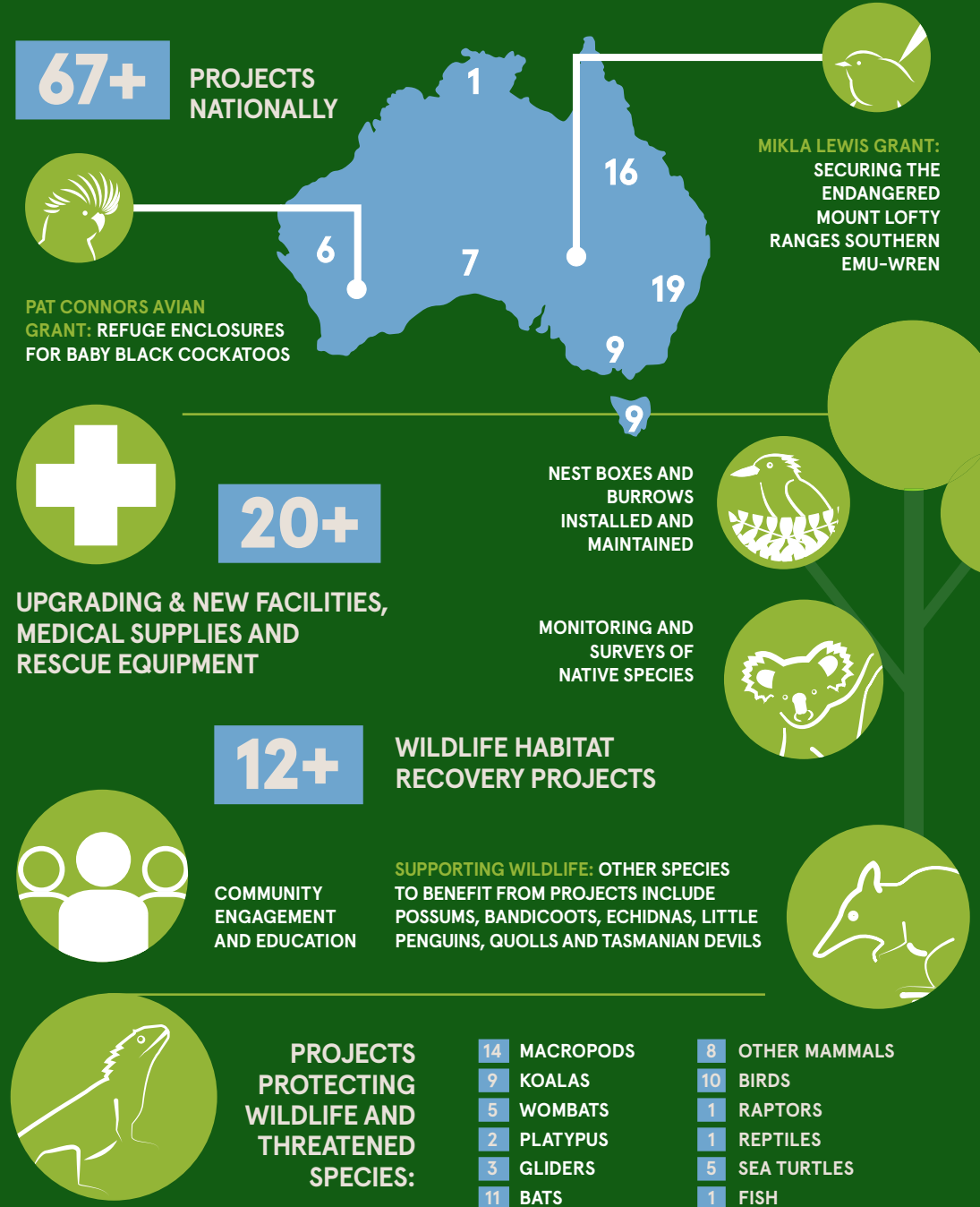
NATIONAL GRANTS PROGRAM

In 2021, WIRES launched a five-year \$5 million National Grants Program, with up to \$1 million per annum to be allocated to support wildlife rescue, rehabilitation and recovery across Australia. The program was developed to provide ongoing support for wildlife, and their habitats, across Australia.

In 2021, 67 projects were funded, ranging from research, on-ground restoration and revegetation works, community engagement initiatives, facility upgrades, medical supplies and other equipment.

The four tiers of grants ranged from individual carers to multi-partner collaborations. Successful projects include habitat recovery, nest boxes and burrows, population monitoring and surveys, rescue and medical equipment, upgrading of rehabilitation facilities and community engagement programs. These projects support a wide variety of native animals including macropods, wombats, koalas, snakes, bats and gliders, turtles, raptors, penguins and other birds.

2021 WILDLIFE SUPPORT & RECOVERY



THE MIKLA LEWIS OAM HABITAT RESTORATION AND ENHANCEMENT GRANT: NATURE FOUNDATION PROJECT

Helping to secure the endangered Mount Lofty Ranges Southern Emu-Wren

The Fleurieu Peninsula swamp reserve in South Australia (right) is listed as a critically endangered ecological community and supports a significant population of the Southern Emu-Wrens. The project aims to increase conservation efforts through revegetation, increasing the area of suitable habitat to promote and support population growth along with surveys to monitor Emu-Wrens within and beyond the reserve. This involves engagement with Traditional Owners by undertaking a cultural heritage survey and providing cultural education and engagement opportunities with Ngarrindjeri Aboriginal Corporation.



The Fleurieu Peninsula swamp reserve © Nature Foundation

PAT CONNORS AVIAN GRANT: NATIVE ANIMAL RESCUE PROJECT

Refuge Enclosures for Baby Black Cockatoos

Building of a secure and safe enclosure to allow young, endangered Black Cockatoos in care to be rehabilitated in a controlled outdoor enclosure with access to sun, wind and rain as well as a secure undercover refuge when required. The access to outside areas will support feather quality and growth along with strong bone development as well as flock bonding. The enclosure will be located in an area where Black Cockatoos naturally reside. Native Animal Rescue is partnering with Perth Zoo in the Black Cockatoo project and is the only registered wildlife hospital that supports the zoo's work in this area.

Black Cockatoo © Native Animal Rescue



"We are so buoyed by the outstanding work being done by people across this country to help our native animals. We are seeing innovative and practical solutions to address the multitude of challenges our animals face Australia-wide. As we roll out this program over the next five years, we are looking forward to seeing measurable positive impacts as a result of the grant recipients' hard work and collaboration."

WIRES CEO Leanne Taylor

More WIRES National Grants Program 2021 projects →

RESEARCH GRANTS PROGRAM

WIRES has committed \$1.5 million dollars to a three-year Research Grants Program to be rolled out from 2022–2024. The WIRES Research Grants Program is designed to address the significant knowledge gaps surrounding Australian wildlife and their habitats, to improve long-term outcomes nationally for all native species.

[View WIRES Research Grants Program overview](#) →

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SUCCESSFUL GRANTS PROJECTS ACROSS FIVE STATES IN 2022

STATE	RECIPIENT	PROJECTS
NSW	Charles Sturt University	Can plant volatiles and bedding material attract Australian birds and mammals to nest boxes and chainsaw hollows?
	Taronga Conservation Society Australia	Building an evidence-base to inform post-fire wildlife provisioning of food and water
	University of Newcastle	Koalas, genotyping, trackers, and drones: Using thermal imaging, novel VHF/GPS tracking technology and genotyping to enhance post-release outcomes for rehabilitated koalas and support the recovery of the Port Stephens koala population
	University of Sydney	Habitat restoration for threatened bats in critically endangered woodland
	University of Sydney	Eyes and ears on recovery: developing a smart sensor network for post-megafire biodiversity recovery
QLD	University of QLD	Reducing tick paralysis mortalities in the endangered spectacled flying-fox
	Currumbin Wildlife Hospital (LCI) & University of QLD	Development and Validation of a Loop-Mediated Isothermal Amplification (LAMP) Diagnostic Assay for Rapid Detection of the Chytrid Fungus <i>Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis</i> in Frogs
SA	Flinders University	Securing the health and viability of koala populations in post-fire landscapes
	University of Adelaide	Gastrointestinal microbiome changes with the onset and progression of the disease oxalate nephrosis in koalas
TAS	University of Tasmania	DNA demography for evidence-based seabird recovery
VIC	University of Melbourne	Quantifying harmful lead exposure in Australian raptors
	University of Melbourne	Rapid diagnostic testing for a severe lizard respiratory virus



Grey-headed Flying-fox



VET VACCINATION GRANT

The WIRES Vet Vaccination Grant was held in two rounds in 2020 and 2021, over \$73,000 was spent to increase capacity for bat treatment and rehabilitation across Australia. The program was designed to provide financial support to registered vets and vet nurses across Australia, to receive the lyssavirus rabies vaccine.

A total of 80 clinics were vaccinated across Australia, increasing the number of vaccinated vets and vet nurses by over 150. Each clinic that completed vaccinations under the program received a Bat Treatment Booklet created by WIRES Training Team.

"Fantastic program! Wouldn't have been able to be vaccinated without it"

Frenchs Forest Vet Hospital, NSW

"Certainly the ability to treat any animals but obviously bats in this program has empowered me to feel like I can actually help a wider range of wildlife and not push them away as I have had to do in the past."

Drouin Vet Clinic, VIC



GOVERNMENT SUBMISSIONS

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

- 1** Integrity of the NSW Biodiversity Offsets Scheme 2021
- 2** Draft National Recovery Plan for the Koala (combined populations of Queensland, New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory).
- 3** Chemical Review of Anticoagulant Rodenticides for APVMA 2021
- 4** Inquiry into the Health and Wellbeing of Kangaroos and Other Macropods in NewSouth Wales 2021
- 5** Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Amendment (Plastics Reduction) Bill 2021
- 6** National Emergency Declaration Act Review 2021
- 7** Castlereagh, Agnes Banks and Windsor Downs Nature Reserves Draft Amendment to the Plan of Management
- 8** Inquiry into the Long-Term Sustainability and Future of the Timber and Forest Products Industry
- 9** Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Amendment (Standards and Assurance) Bill 2021



CORPORATE PARTNERSHIPS

Our partnerships continue to go from strength to strength, growing our impact for native wildlife across Australia through collaboration.

WIRES could not create such extraordinary impact for native wildlife without the continued support of our Corporate Partners as well as the new partners we were excited to engage this year.

When floods devastated the east coast of Australia, WIRES was humbled by the support of new and existing Corporate Partners who quickly mobilised to support wildlife in crisis. Close to 50 corporates ran social media fundraising campaigns for WIRES during the flood emergency, raising more than \$80,000 in just a few weeks.

We extend our sincere gratitude to all our ongoing Corporate Partners and every business that has donated to support wildlife rescue, rehabilitation and recovery.

PLATINUM



GOLD



SILVER



Apostle Birds © Terry Wratten



WOOLWORTHS

Beginning in early 2020 as a collaborative response to a series of unprecedented emergency events, WIRES and Woolworths' partnership has evolved over time to strengthen our national emergency response and provide Food for Wildlife across three core initiatives.

FOOD FOR WILDLIFE

Rescue Food: As part of Woolworths' commitment to its 2025 sustainability plan, the company aims to redistribute 100% of its edible unsold food to those who need it most before it reaches the bin. The WIRES x Woolworths Rescue Food program generates double the impact for our environment, reducing waste and working with wildlife rescuers to divert food to animals. The initiative has been incredibly successful with over 152 Woolworths stores across Australia currently involved.

Wildlife Food Support: WIRES and Woolworths have developed a national food program to help support authorised wildlife carers and rescue organisations nationally, with access to specialised wildlife food for native animals in care. WIRES are partnering with key wildlife food suppliers to ensure the best quality food can be delivered direct to volunteers around the country. With the generous support of Woolworths, WIRES is providing wildlife volunteers nationally with food subsidies. To find out more about our food support programs in partnership with Woolworths, visit our website.

Emergency Support: Woolworths funds help WIRES to act in the immediate aftermath of wildlife emergencies, such as enabling the purchase and distribution of food and rescue supplies.

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

"Being a 100% volunteer organisation that supports itself, this kind of assistance is invaluable for us to continue our work. We are very grateful."

Heather, Mandurah Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre

"The formula has provided weeks of support for the joeys we have in care, saving us hundreds of dollars that will now go towards surgery for our boys and our Juliette with her broken arm. Thank you, thank you, thank you."

Adelaide Hills Kangaroo Rescue



Tasmanian devil © Sandra Shepherd

MORE WIRES X WOOLWORTHS INITIATIVES

Spring Support: In spring 2021, Woolworths launched a new range of native Australian Spring Garden Ornaments to help create a welcoming garden environment, designed to encourage people to create more natural spaces that wildlife can share. For each garden ornament and Woolworths Koala or Wombat Scourer sold, Woolworths donated 50 cents to WIRES to support the rescue, care and feeding of sick, injured and orphaned native wildlife.

Reindeer carrots: 10 cents from the sale of each packet of Reindeer Carrots is donated to WIRES to help support the rescue and care of our native Australian wildlife. Funds were distributed via WIRES Wildlife Network corresponding to the percentage raised by Woolworths in each state. WIRES collaborated with several specialist wildlife suppliers to provide over 150 groups and individuals with wildlife food.



SODASTREAM

WIRES is proud to be partnering with Silver partner SodaStream to further our efforts to protect our wildlife locally. In partnership with WIRES, SodaStream has released an exclusive wildlife bottle range to raise awareness of the impact of plastic pollution on local ecosystems.

The native fauna-inspired bottles are raising awareness of the impact that single-use plastics pollution has on local ecosystems. \$1 from every twin pack sold goes to WIRES' education, rescue and rehabilitation programs.

"We are strong believers that you should protect what you love. We hope these beautifully designed and limited-edition bottles are a reminder to Aussies to continue to protect our environment and an opportunity for us to help save our endangered wildlife."

SodaStream Australia Marketing Manager, Holly Walker

"Our Australian animals are already vulnerable due to climate change and the threat to our environment is only getting worse. Eliminating single-use plastic is a great grassroots action consumers can take to protect our environment and favourite wildlife."

WIRES Chief Operating Officer Kyla Shelley

CONNECT YOUR COMPANY TO WILDLIFE

Corporate partnership with WIRES could deliver long-term advantages for your business and for the wildlife we serve. WIRES can work with you to develop a mutually beneficial partnership that provides your organisation the opportunity to align your Environmental, Social and Governmental (ESG) objectives with our work with wildlife, enabling your organisation to have an enduring positive impact on the environment and the lives of Australian native animals.

Chat to us about your partnership goals at partnership@wires.org.au →

Spotted-tailed Quoll, Tasmania

Koala





SPECIAL THANKS

Thank you to all who generously supported WIRES this year. Your support helps us continue our work to rehabilitate and care for sick, injured and orphaned Australian native animals, now and into the future. Special thanks to the following:

- NSW Government Department of Planning and Environment
- NSW Government Department of Primary Industries
- Goldman Sachs Gives
- Re:wild (formerly Global Wildlife Conservation)
- Club Blacktown
- The Australian Community

PHILANTHROPY

WIRES acknowledge the generous support of the Topham family. As founding donors of WIRES' NSW Rehabilitation Facilities program, their generosity will protect our wildlife for generations to come.

One of our very generous major donors from Western Australia donated an incredible \$240,000 in May 2022.

"I have donated to WIRES since 2002. I have a love for all animals and worry for them now, but especially for their future."

When Cindy* sold a rental house she decided to use the proceeds to really make a difference to native animals. After chatting to our fundraising team, Cindy decided to offer the money as a matched gift in our EOFY Matched Giving Appeal - effectively doubling the impact of her gift within a couple of weeks!

*Name changed to respect our donor's privacy.

Echidna © Sharron Marks



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:



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[Leave a lasting legacy with a gift in your will](#) →

[Become a wildlife rescuer](#) →



NSW Wildlife Information,
Rescue and Education Service Inc.

Wildlife Rescue Line
13 000 WIRES

wires.org.au