

TALES FROM *the* WILD NEWSLETTER



Senior Veterinarian Dr Benn Bryan at the Taronga Western Plains Zoo Wildlife Hospital treating one of the many koalas affected by the bushfires and drought.
Photo by Rick Stevens

ROAD *to* RECOVERY

In the midst of a heartbreaking crisis you have brought hope to Australian Wildlife.

This summer Australia was hit by its worst ever bushfire season. We lost huge areas of habitat

and estimates suggest that we could have lost up to one billion Australian animals.

Your support could not have come at a more important time.

With your amazing gifts we were able to create a Wildlife Crisis Response Task Force to help treat and care for

wildlife affected by the bushfires and drought. We provided emergency shelter, medical care and rehabilitation for koalas, platypus, wallabies, bats and critically endangered frogs and fish.

Because of you we have been able to help in many other ways too such as sending

relief funds to the Port Macquarie Koala Hospital to aid in the efforts to save as many Koalas as possible.

Your support also enabled Taronga to

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team up with our partner, Science for Wildlife and rescue 12 Koalas from Kanangra-Boyd National Park, which were directly in the line of bushfire.

With your help we were also able to house 43 endangered Booroolong frogs rescued near Tamworth, rescue seven Platypus from disappearing ponds in ACT and nurse back to health various wildlife

such as wombats and wallabies.

As a result of the drought and fires, both our Wildlife Hospitals in Sydney and Dubbo have seen an unprecedented amount of wildlife in the recent months. Since Nov 2019 Taronga Western Plains Zoo has treated 22 koalas – more than normally seen in a year.

After such a trying time, it's heartwarming to

see the outpouring of community support for our wildlife.

The road to recovery is long and there will be hard work for many month and years to restore lost habitat and repopulate wildlife.

Together with you our generous supporters, we will do everything we can to ensure that unique Australian wildlife will once again flourish.

You made all this possible! At Taronga we thank you!



YOUR GIFTS

Your generous support has already provided urgent care to animals affected by the Wildlife Crisis. As we continue recovery efforts, your kind gift will help towards:



VET & VET NURSES



MEDICAL CARE



REHABILITATION



HABITAT RESTORATION

THANK YOU!

BACK *to* THE WILD

Back in late 2019 as the bushfires ravaged our country, you may remember that Taronga together with Science for Wildlife worked together to rescue 12 Koalas from the path of fire in the Blue Mountains.

The 12 Koalas were placed in care at our Taronga Wildlife Hospital and have been cared for round the clock by vets and keepers.

Laura our Koala keeper says: "A few have adjusted to life at

Taronga, feeding and behaving like normal relaxed koalas. A couple are a little more wary and prefer to stay up high and away from us and feed overnight. We are monitoring their leaf consumption."

These 12 Koalas are crucial to the future of the species in Australia. The crisis facing koalas today is enormous with bushfires in the Northern NSW alone estimated to have burned 30% of koala habitat.

Today because of your support I can share some good news, Taronga is proud to announce that

the Koalas have been released back to the wild! Four adult Koalas and a one new baby Joey were released on the 25th March back into their home in the Blue Mountains. And we couldn't have achieved this without you!

Your kind and generous donations helped us

care for these 12 Koalas who are vital to the future of the species in our country. They represent the fighting chance Koalas have and because of you and your wonderful support they are beginning to thrive.

Thank you!





The very first Bilby joey to be independent of her mother at TWPZ

BILBY BABIES ARE HERE!

You've given bilbies a whole new lease of life. Thank you.

Back in September we asked you to help us with a very special project. We asked for your support for our most ambitious project to date - the release of 9 Greater bilbies into our Sanctuary in Dubbo.

As you know this iconic marsupial is a threatened species and has been extinct in the wild in NSW for many years. Our last 1,000 or so bilbies are clinging to survival in remote and arid areas of the Northern Territory, Western Australia and Queensland.

That is why your generous support for the Sanctuary is important and has helped turn things around for bilbies!

In October we were finally able to release our first nine Bilbies into the 110ha breeding sanctuary in Dubbo, with a second group released in December.

The first health checks were made in late December. All checks have been positive with reports that the Bilbies are very healthy. They are adapting incredibly well and thriving in their new environment.

Then more good news, we had 2 bilbies expecting in December and as of February a total of 6 confirmed Bilby Joeys in the sanctuary!

Did you know you can become a Zoo Parent by adopting one of our amazing animals?

There is no better way to show your support for the wild!

From just \$48, animal adoption also makes the perfect gift for friends, family and loved ones. You can choose to sponsor Koalas, Sumatran Tigers, Tasmanian Devils, Asian Elephants, Meerkats and Bilbies.

Your adoption will fund Taronga's work with endangered species in Australia and around the world.

Visit taronga.org.au/zooparent today for your quick and easy purchase. Your adoptive animal is waiting!



Holly the Koala
Photo by Mark O'Riordan

Here at Taronga we are very incredibly proud of this breeding success and you should be too as this would not have been possible without you, our wonderful supporters.

Together we are on the way to bringing bilby populations back to NSW.

The road to this incredibly exciting project has been long. It took almost three years to get from concept to release, with a huge amount of effort from so many here at Taronga, our partners and of course from our ever-amazing supporters.

The Sanctuary is already showing signs of success

and will play a huge role in bilby recovery for decades to come.

Over the coming months and years, we will continue to monitor and track the Bilbies ensuring they are adapting and have enough resources to provide for their growing families, with the ultimate goal of releasing them into a NSW National Park.

Wildlife needs people like you and you have made that difference! You have made real change and positive progress in the future of the Bilby, at Taronga we thank you.

ALL HANDS ON DECK *to* SAVE *the* PLAINS-WANDERER

It's been a year since we asked for your support in giving these critically endangered birds a fighting chance. Since then Australia has seen ferocious fires, extreme drought and sudden floods. But how has the Plains Wanderer coped?

The Plains-wanderer is a very unique bird. Scientists think this small, flightless, ground-dwelling bird has been around for a staggering 60 million years. That's almost back to the time of the dinosaurs.

As part of the National Recovery Plan project for Plains-wanderer, we reached out to you and asked for your help and you responded to the call, thank you!

Thanks to your kind support, today at Taronga Western Plains Zoo in Dubbo, a conservation-breeding program has begun in an effort to bring these unique birds back from the brink.

With your wonderful support we have been able to create a housing facility which aims to establish a sustainable insurance population that can support the reintroduction of wild populations.

Andrew Elphinstone, our Conservation and Recovery Manager said that the initial group of founder birds collected in NSW have settled into the Dubbo aviaries and introductions have occurred.

"The male birds settled in very quickly, and whilst it took the females a little longer, we now have two settled breeding pairs. Keepers have observed one pair demonstrating breeding behaviour."

Given their shy disposition, Keepers monitor the birds primarily via camera, only entering the aviaries when necessary.

The hard work has paid off! We are proud to announce that two of our wild birds have laid a clutch of eggs and we have two baby Plains Wanderer chicks!

These new births are vitally important as no wild birds have been seen in NSW in the last 6 months, the breed and release program is a fantastic sign that these birds can have a future. And this would not have happened without



The Plains-Wanderer, a unique and beautiful ground-dwelling bird.
Photo by Mark O'Riordan

your generous gifts and wonderful support.

At Taronga we are thankful to have supporters like yourself who know how important wildlife is and understand that together we can secure a future for people and wildlife.



Your ongoing support allows us to charge ahead with our vital conservation work, while we continue to look after all the animals in our care.

While our zoos are temporarily closed due to COVID-19, we'll keep you updated through Taronga TV. We'll be featuring all your favourite animals, including live cams, keeper talks and special behind the scenes footage.

Tune in daily at taronga.org.au/taronga-tv

DO YOU WANT *to* DO MORE *to* HELP?

Become a **Wildlife Defender** and stand alongside Taronga to protect and save threatened and vulnerable species today.

Call us now on
1300 369 116