

# RnR

Rehabilitate and Release

Issue 27  
March 2015

Keeping carers  
informed



*Lumholtz's tree kangaroo (Dendrolagus Lumholtzi)  
at Malanda Falls  
Photo courtesy of Greg Calvert*

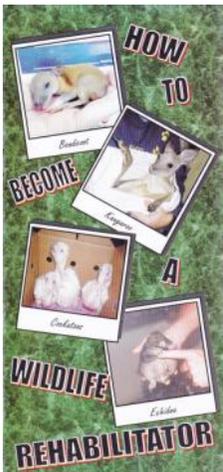
# QWRC Products



- ◆ Kids
- ◆ Never touch a bat
- ◆ Bats are Important
- ◆ Australian Bat Lyssavirus is preventable
- ◆ Mum and dad
- ◆ Hendra
- ◆ Fruit tree netting
- ◆ Barbed wire



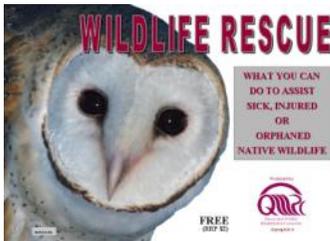
- ◆ Don't cats control rats and mice?
- ◆ Don't cats control snakes?
- ◆ Cats threaten the future survival of most wildlife
- ◆ Are you a responsible cat owner?
- ◆ Do cats harm wildlife?
- ◆ How can I protect cats and wildlife?



- ◆ So, you want to care for wildlife...
- ◆ Do you have enough time?
- ◆ Do you have the financial backing?
- ◆ Are you tough enough?
- ◆ Other ways to help wildlife...



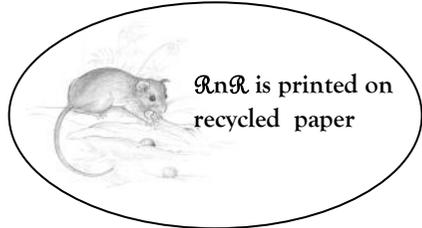
- ◆ Chasing wildlife
- ◆ Walking dogs in bushland
- ◆ Keep dogs and wildlife apart
- ◆ Barking at wildlife
- ◆ Keeping wildlife safe in your backyard
- ◆ If your dog attacks wildlife
- ◆ Are you a responsible dog owner?



***In this issue:***

- Hints and Tips
- Carer Profile - Dr Karen Coombes
- Tree roo rescue and conservation
- That's not a mouse
- Tiny Creature
- Leaf-nosed bat
- Blossom bat
- Golls Sweatshop
- Henry's long nails

**RnR** is produced by The Queensland Wildlife Rehabilitation Council twice a year. It is distributed free to all financial members of QWRC throughout Queensland. To ensure you continue to receive a copy, either by post or email, please ensure you maintain your correct contact details with QWRC to either secretary@qwrc.org.au. or PO Box 488 Archerfield Qld 4108.



**Illustrations  
by  
Louise Saunders**



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**Help save a tree or two**  
Choose to have your **RnR** delivered electronically.  
Email: secretary@qwrc.org.au.



**QWRC's Best Practice Guidelines** for wildlife rehabilitators are available in the member's section of our website [www.qwrc.org.au](http://www.qwrc.org.au). Please let us know if you can suggest further titles to add to this list:

Euthanasia of Native Wildlife in Queensland

Release of wildlife

Wildlife Autopsy by Rehabilitators in Queensland

Zoonosis

Hygiene Practices

Aviary and cage hygiene

What happens to animals that can't be released?

Display of wildlife

Care of Flying fox orphans outside their geographical range

Understanding your duty of care

Wildlife in the workplace

# From the Chair..

Welcome back to our past members and welcome aboard to any who have just joined QWRC for the first time. I hope you are all well and safe.

Please do take the time to visit our web site where there you will find lots of info of assistance to all rehabbers and via the members section [you received your username and password with the membership package/renewal] you have the opportunity to link up with other rehabbers across this huge state of ours.

We hope the disaster information we sent to groups and members at the end of last year was of some assistance pre and post disaster.

On the coastal fringe we have again had severe wet weather while the inland continues to suffer drought. Many of our members and rehabbers in general have again suffered the effects of storm damage. Please remember that, although the funds may be limited, QWRC does have a disaster relief fund and we welcome applications from all rehabbers who have suffered damage due to natural disasters. Please visit our web site and look under 'how can I help' for the information about both how to make a donation and how to claim assistance.

I live near Calliope, which is about 30 km west of Gladstone in Central Queensland; we were lucky that most of the effects of cyclone Marcia went west of us though family and friends in Rockhampton did not fare so well. We know of a few rehabbers who lost aviaries and

enclosures in the storm but the most wide spread effect has been the loss of habitat, browse and natural food for animals whether in the wild or in care.

It is sad when huge trees like the one on the next page are bought down and end up as scrap.

We are always on the lookout for stories about wildlife rehabilitation to share with our members. I know rehabbers often think their stories or ideas do not matter but it often also the case that the small hint they have found works may just be the thing which saves the life of an animal in someone else's care. Please send us your thoughts, suggestions and stories of the animals which have been or are in your care. We all like to read stories of others experiences, hints and suggestions so we look forward to hearing from you. Send your information to either :

[secretary@qwrc.org.au](mailto:secretary@qwrc.org.au) or  
[editor@qwrc.org.au](mailto:editor@qwrc.org.au)

We wish you all the best for what we hope will be a quieter and cooler few months.

*Till next time*  
*Annie*



*Continued on page 5*



*Major Tom Whale, from the Australian Defence Force, worked to clear massive trees which fell in the Rockhampton Botanic Gardens after Cyclone Marcia. Photo Rachael Conaghan/The Morning Bulletin*

## Editorial..

I hope that you all think that this issue was worth waiting for. Major problems trying to get a faulty solar battery replaced was a challenge resulting in us ‘glamping’ at home for several weeks.

It is very sad when very little is ever reported about the loss of wildlife following natural disasters. I hope the carers who were badly affected by the latest cyclone are able to get the assistance they need to restore their properties so they can continue to care for our wonderful wildlife.

I expect, like me, many of you set your alarm clocks to be able to feed babies in the night. Turn to page 20 to read about a lovely lady who regularly gets out of bed at 3am to help carers.

QWRC was hoping to again be able to supply the popular Wildlife Rescue booklets to members. Unfortunately their latest grant application was not successful. Groups can however have access to this booklet with their own details on the back cover if they wish to get some printed themselves. Simply email [secretary@qwrc.org.au](mailto:secretary@qwrc.org.au) if interested.

Topic for the next RnR is ‘cold-blooded critters’ so lets hear from all the reptile and amphibian carers please.

**Please send any articles/photos (min 1MB) for the next issue, deadline is 17 July 2015:**

Email: [editor@qwrc.org.au](mailto:editor@qwrc.org.au)



*Judy Elliott*

I look forward to hearing from you.

## QWRC Products

Please see the colour pictures on the inside front cover of this issue.

### Brochures

These are currently:

- Dogs and Wildlife
- Bats
- Protect your Cat Protect our Wildlife
- How to become a Wildlife Rehabilitator
- Wildlife rescue booklet

These are available free to QWRC members for the cost of postage. Bulk requests may need to be limited. It may be possible to collect from your local councillor. Please advise us if you would like to see any others produced.

### Safety Vests

These have been donated by the Qld Mains Road department in the past and, due to dwindling stock, we are attempting to find a new sponsor. There are two Velcro fasteners on the front. There is an application form on our website. One vest per member while stocks last, for postage costs please contact secretary@qwrc.org.au.

### Carcase Tags

A small supply of these is sent with your membership card together with the dataform that must be completed and returned before any more are issued. Data is supplied to the Qld Mains Road department.



**"Another New Product"  
from  
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**The  
"Heartbeat Simulator"**

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**Wildlife Carers**

(Permit number required)

Please call: **03 9544 1471**

OR [wildlifeproducts@warmapet.com.au](mailto:wildlifeproducts@warmapet.com.au)

**"Like" us on Facebook**

(Members of the public check your local pet store or internet re-seller and ask for **Warm.A.Pet** heat pads for your pet)

## “That’s not a Mouse”

The Brown antechinus (*Antechinus stuartii*) belongs to the dasyuridae family and are often mistakenly called a marsupial mouse. They are one of the most frenetic and carnivorous creatures I have reared to date, but also one of the most endearing. They have a mouthful of razor sharp teeth, feet with pads that help them cling to things and their back feet can rotate at ninety degree angles to help them climb up walls!!



The female Brown antechinus can have eight to ten nipples and has a small slit on her underside rather than a pouch. The babies are therefore dragged around under her belly hanging on for dear life to her nipple for approximately five weeks. When they are too big to carry the mother deposits them in a nest and continues to feed them for another two weeks.

Brown antechinus are very unusual because they experience ‘semelparity’ which simply means they die after

mating. The females all come into oestrous at the same time (in winter). The males are approximately eleven months old and become so obsessed with mating that they stop eating during this period.

Mating lasts for up to twelve hours and the female may mate with many different males in this two week period after which all the males die. Their immune system shuts down and they can experience internal bleeding, gangrene and other infections. The female stores the sperm from each mating for two weeks in her oviduct. When fertilisation occurs it can be from four different fathers but it will be sperm from the strongest males. The babies are born four weeks later in line with the prime insect population explosions in summer.

Antechinus babies often come into care when their mothers are killed by cats or mouse traps and people find the babies left behind in nests. Orphaned babies are fed marsupial milk with a high protein mix added to it. They are weaned at about one hundred days. They will eat such things as moths, mealworms, crickets and are even known to skin and eat the domestic house mouse.

Despite all this I love rearing these little guys as they are most endearing and have very large personalities.

*Madonna O’Brien*

## Henry's Long Nails

Henry was raised with a mob of seven other joeys. They were all treated exactly the same, fed the same formula and had access to the same grasses in the enclosure etc.



Henry was the only one who grew these exceptionally long nails. I have been raising greys for nearly ten years now and this is the first time I have seen nails like this. I have been informed that this is usually due to a nutritional deficiency.

Henry was five and half months old when I noticed his nails looked unusual and very long (first picture). I spoke to numerous people and a couple of vets and was informed that the nails can be cut but above the 'floor' of the nail. I felt I would have to cut Henry's nails as you can see they are so long they are curling and he would not have been able to scratch himself properly, even holding

things was a bit difficult. I asked another carer if she would come and help me cut his nails but one thing led to another and each time something came up and we couldn't do it. It wasn't a life threatening situation, so I was not too concerned about it.

About one month ago I thought I should check his nails and to my surprise, he seems to have grown into them. I also think that, as he is bigger and scratching around more, he has worn them down. Henry is now sixteen months old and you can see from the photos that there is a big difference.



I am glad now that, the way things turned out, we didn't cut his nails. He was able to grow into them and is now a perfectly happy semi-released kangaroo.

*Denise McLean*

## Macropod Husbandry, Healthcare & Medicinals

Lynda Staker's updated Macropod Husbandry manual is now available. This is an amazing two volume publication that is a must-have for all serious macropod carers. Veterinary practices that treat macropods would also benefit greatly from the numerous pages on assessment, drugs and treatment agents that are covered in great detail. It is great value at \$290 because it is jam-packed with information for all macropod carers. This manual should also be in all carer groups' libraries.

To contact Lynda - email: [macropology@optusnet.com.au](mailto:macropology@optusnet.com.au)

*Ed: My local group has recently obtained a grant to purchase a copy.*



**HEADS UP!**

*"Where do you get all your wildlife, bird, reptile and small animal supplies?"*

**AUSTRALIAN WILDLIFE SUPPLIES**  
**[www.wildlifesupplies.com.au](http://www.wildlifesupplies.com.au)**  
**E: [info@wildlifesupplies.com.au](mailto:info@wildlifesupplies.com.au)**  
**P: 0417 749 501**

## Harmony the Blossom Bat

On a Sunday morning in January I was, as usual, up early to feed and clean up the enormous mess that four Flying-foxes in care can make. They always get particularly rowdy and active just before first light. All were almost ready for crèche with all four flying well. I could hear their loud chatter and wing flapping from my bedroom and there was no sleeping in for me.

I had made a playground for them on my screened in front verandah, complete with tree, clothes airers, fishing net runways and a climbing frame. By 6.30am, having completed the cleaning and feeding I was out in the veggie patch with plans for gardening and housework for the rest of the day. Then the phone rang and I am sure all carers feel that same anxiety at early morning phone calls, fearing they are rescue calls. My caller explained there was a Flying-fox caught on a barbed wire fence in her front yard. She had already covered it with a towel. I advised her not to touch the bat or get too close and asked her to lightly spray the bat with water as it was going to be a 37degree day and it was already hot. On hanging up the receiver I quickly made another call to a fellow carer to see if she could meet me at the property. It took another hour to arrive at the property about sixty five km from home. As rescues go this was a straight forward one and we quickly had the animal off the wire and untangled from the lethal barbs. We were both relieved to see that her injuries were not

extensive. We gave her a nice long drink from a dropper and placed her in a small hanging pouch in a rescue basket.

This was my first encounter with a Qld Blossom bat, *Syconycteris australis* who are found along the east coast from mid-New South Wales to Cape York. She had light to reddish brown fur, slightly lighter on her belly, large forward pointing eyes, rounded ears and a pointed muzzle, her face resembling a fox. A Blossom bat's diet in this southern part of its rang is mainly nectar from *Banksia*, *Melaleuca* and *Callistemon* and certain eucalypts such as the Swamp mahogany and *Eucalyptus robusta*. On the way home I stopped quickly at the supermarket to buy some nectivore and watched the roadsides carefully for potential blossom.

I named this little girl Harmony and from the start she fed well for me but would only take nectivore and not the banana shake recipes I had found on the internet. I housed her in a cube cage with a choice of hanging pouches and hankies along with some flowering bottle brush, grevillea and lilly pillly. I consulted Trish Wimberley from the Australian Bat Hospital and sent her photos of Harmony's injured wing. It was decided to hold her for just three days as Blossom bats do not do well in captivity and have a habit of dropping dead. Harmony was a dear, sweet little creature and very cooperative with my inept handling.

*Continued on page 11*

I treated her injured wing with a homeopathic product called Traumeel which is brilliant for healing soft tissue injury and it retards membrane dieback in wing injuries. Harmony was clearly much stronger by late Tuesday evening and I drove back to where I rescued her just before dark. I had fed her before leaving home and she accepted another feed in the car at our destination. I am sure she knew she was back home as she perked up considerably and her little nostrils twitched and eyes brightened. I took her down into a stand of Melaleucas and held her up hanging from her pouch. She stayed there for about ten minutes just looking around. I could feel her little body trembling just before she launched

herself into the air and flew swiftly to a tree about twenty metres away. In the rapidly dwindling light she looked for all the world just like a dead leaf hanging on the branch. She then began to groom herself and nearby I heard another Blossom bat call. As I drove down the drive my headlights picked out a tiny bat that flew over the roof of my car and out of sight. Not Harmony but maybe the same species. I had a warm feeling in my heart and tears in my eyes as I wished Harmony a long and healthy life.



*Anne-Marie Dineen*

*Old Blossom bat by Louise Saunders*

## Hints and Tips



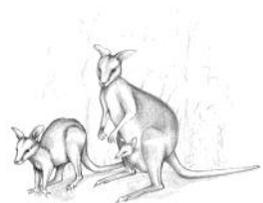
Are you running out of storage space for all your wildlife stuff? You may find lots of unused space lurking inside cupboard doors.

I just used recycled shelves from an old fridge but any suitably sized plastic containers could be used. Fix securely with heavy duty double sided adhesive tabs as used for mirrors. This idea could also be used to house other household items such as small herb containers in the kitchen or bathroom bits and pieces.

*Editor*

You may not be aware that WIRES (NSW carer group) has asked their members to stop using Divetelact as possible nutrient problems are being investigated. There may be a link to bone fractures in macropods .

*Editor*



## **News ..... News ..... News**

### **New QWRC Website**

We are pleased to announce that a new re-vamped website is now available. This is very user friendly with lots of new information so please check it out on **[www.qwrc.org.au](http://www.qwrc.org.au)**.

### **Permits - Permits - Permits**

Please note that the Queensland Wildlife Rehabilitation Council is **NOT** a wildlife carer group and **DOES NOT ISSUE PERMITS** to wildlife carers so being a member does not entitle you to care for wildlife. Permits are available either from the Qld Department of Environment and Heritage Protection or wildlife rehabilitation groups if they hold a group permit. Please ensure that you have a piece of paper that says you have a permit. It will be dated, list the species and number of animals you are permitted to care for.

For more information please internet search for ‘qld wildlife rehabilitation permit ‘

### **QWRC Group Insurance**

Public Liability insurance is available to groups when all their members are also members of QWRC. A request must be sent to QWRC together with their membership list so that the insurance certificate can be issued to them.

### **Administration Request**

Sadly some members are not receiving all the information that is being sent to them either by snailmail or email. We get a lot of return to senders some of which is due to their application forms being scribbled which results in information being incorrectly recorded on our database. Incomplete forms also cause problems and is time consuming to sort out. Please remember that we are all volunteers with busy lives doing our best to assist wildlife rehabilitators. Please help us to help you.

**CONTACTING QWRC**

**POSTAL ADDRESS:**

PO Box 488, ARCHERFIELD 4108

**TELEPHONE:**

Refer to local representative list

**EMAIL:**

secretary@qwrc.org.au

editor@qwrc.org.au

**WEBSITE:**

www.qwrc.org.au

**Please address all correspondence to the Secretary.**

We receive a number of Return to Sender RnRs after each mailing. Numerous emails also bounce which would indicate that our mailing list is not being kept up to date. Please ensure you tell us when ever you change your contact details.

Remember that DEHP are unable (due to privacy laws) to advise us of any carer details. It is therefore vital that **YOU** tell **US** of any changes. **Groups please note.**

**MOVING HOUSE**

**or**

**changing your email address**

**Remember to advise QWRC**

**Your local representatives:**

District 1— Cape York/Dry Tropics/Gulf  
**Kristy Philliskirk**  
Phone : 0427 799748

District 2— Wet Tropics/Cairns Marine  
**Tami Moffat**  
Phone: 0467 045590

District 3 — Savannah/Townsville Marine  
**Janelle Gilmore**  
Phone: 4724 4725

District 4 — Mackay/Whitsundays  
**Jacqui Webb**  
Phone: 4947 3308

District 5 — Capricorn/Gladstone  
**Annie Saunders**  
Phone: 4975 6281

District 6— Longreach  
**VACANT**

District 7 — Wide Bay Burnett/Great Sandy  
**Judy Elliott**  
Phone: 4156 5382

District 8— South West  
**VACANT**

District 9 — Toowoomba  
**Trish Lee Hong**  
Phone: 4630 5208

District 10 — Sunshine Coast/Southern Marine  
**Glendell Appleford**  
Phone: 0413 453722

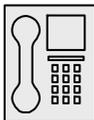
District 11— Southeast/Moreton Bay  
**Eleanor Pollock**  
Phone: 3420 0406

QWRC's patron is Dr Jim Pollock  
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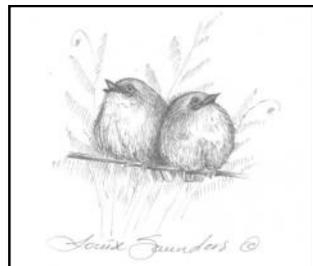
## MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

- ◆ Membership of the State representative body.
- ◆ A collective voice for rehabilitation.
- ◆ Access to a network of carers across the State.
- ◆ Financial membership offers cover under QWRC's Public Liability (\$20M) and Volunteer Workers Insurance policies.
- ◆ Support with wildlife rehabilitation and welfare.
- ◆ Access to QWRC brochures.
- ◆ Access to professional advice, information and data.
- ◆ Access to Best Practice Guidelines.
- ◆ RnR newsletter twice a year (March and September).
- ◆ QWRC Quotes member's update (January and June).
- ◆ Eligibility to nominate for a position as a QWRC District representative.
- ◆ Eligibility to vote at all QWRC elections.
- ◆ Help to build a strong council to advocate on your behalf.



**Would you like to contact  
other carers in your area?**

All members of QWRC have their name, phone number and email details listed in District order in the members area of the QWRC website **[www.qwrc.org.au](http://www.qwrc.org.au)**.





## Tree Roo Rescue and Conservation Centre Ltd (TRRACC)

Dr Karen Coombes is the Director and Chair for an organisation dedicated to the rescue, care, rehabilitation and release of one of Australia's most unique and mysterious animals – Lumholtz's tree kangaroo (*Dendrolagus lumholtzi*).

In 1998, Karen and her husband Neil decided to sell up and move from Darwin to the Atherton Tablelands in far north Queensland, her reason jokingly: “to study tree-kangaroos in my back yard”. Though this was intended as a tongue in cheek statement (the truth actually being that Darwin was getting too hot) it turned out to be a self-fulfilling prophecy. Neil and Karen purchased a beautiful 65 ha rainforest block just south of Malanda in an area called Jaggan, and in the process saved the mature and wildlife rich rainforest on the property from being completely cleared as was a real possibility given the intentions of other perspective buyers.

A number of conspiring factors extended Karen's passion for wildlife to encompass the elusive tree-kangaroo. The first influence was the rainforest on their block being home to a healthy population of Lumholtz's tree-kangaroo (LTK), one of two tree-kangaroo species endemic to tropical north Queensland. Secondly, they met wildlife carer Margit Cianelli through a local conservation organisation – the Tree Kangaroo and Mammal Group (TKMG). Margit has been helping and caring for sick, orphaned and injured

animals including LTK's for over thirty years.

The final hint from the heavens came about at a TKMG meeting, where they met Lisa Dabek, a tree-kangaroo researcher from America who studies the Matschies tree-kangaroo (*Dendrolagus matschiei*) in Papua New Guinea. Whilst taking a walk through the rainforest at Karen and Neil's property, they spotted four wild Lumholtz's tree-kangaroos, prompting Lisa to say “this would make a great research site”. Karen had already been considering undertaking a PhD on the LTK's as she had noticed gaping holes in the available information about the species and conveniently had them in her backyard, but it was this statement that galvanised her thoughts into action. She spent the next five years following wild and released animals through the rainforest, using radio collars to track them. Her work included performing postmortems on road kill, studying the anatomy of LTK's, investigating their diet, and determining their age based on tooth wear. She also studied how they interacted with their environment, specifically, how they utilised and spread themselves out in the forest. Her thesis is called “*The ecology and habitat utilisation of Lumholtz's tree-kangaroo Dendrolagus lumholtzi on the Atherton tablelands, Far North Queensland*” and it is available online at <http://researchonline.jcu.edu.au/40/1/01front.pdf> if you are up for some light bedtime reading!

*Continued on page 17*

As if she didn't have enough on her plate with her PhD studies, during this time she also began to care for sick, orphaned, and injured LTK's. It was such an ideal location that when her orphaned babies were ready to leave home Karen literally opened the front door and let them wander off into the rainforest. LTK's are said to be among the smartest of the macropods and they came back every day for food and a cuddle. One particular animal, a male named Willie became part of Karen and Neil's extended family after Karen found him abandoned by his mother. He grew to over 11 kgs - a truly impressive and powerful animal. Tree-kangaroos have massive forearms and long, curved, sharp front claws for climbing and manoeuvring through their



*Willie and Issy eating sweet potato, side by side on the lounge*

tree dominated home, so they had to be very careful around him. Willie remained very gentle with them and kept going back and forth from the wild to the soft life in the house.

Another favourite was a female called Isabelle (Issy), who came in as a very tiny 360gm joey. Issy's story is both fascinating and very sad. She developed a very special relationship with Karen, Neil and Willie (the big male LTK). Issy and Willie became so close that one day Karen noticed Issy was carrying Willie's baby in her pouch. The baby grew beautifully and both Willie and Issy lived their double lives with one foot in the human world and one foot in the wild.

This unique situation allowed Karen in on "the secret life of tree-roos" - a rare opportunity that pure scientific study does not traditionally provide. Then tragedy struck... Issy was killed by wild dogs. Some good news did come from the tragedy of Issy's life and death, however, her beautiful joey, Phoebe, survived the attack and continued to come home periodically and even had her own joey, though she eventually stopped coming home when her joey was big enough to emerge from the pouch. This is the reward that helps counterbalance the painful and difficult times - to see all of their dedication and hard work paying off with a hand raised joey having a joey in the wild, and then that joey also having her own baby. This is what keeps them going.

*Continued on page 18*



*Issy and Phoebe (Issy's grown up joey), and Ricky, Issy's new joey in her pouch – all home for a visit, and some good human tucker.*

Karen has witnessed a drastic increase in mortality and injury of LTK's in the last decade and she believes that an increase in wild dog numbers, relaxation of domestic dog control, habitat fragmentation and increasing traffic on local roads are the dominant catalysts for this unprecedented rise. Karen maintains that the LTK population is by no means stable or abundant as the State legislation (classed as *Least Concern*) declares. Who else but people in the thick of it like Karen and Neil can better have such intimate knowledge of what the population and individual animals are undergoing? Animals have ended up in the middle of towns in the area, on busy roads, in isolated street trees, or in people's backyards cornered by dogs.

On top of an increasing rescue and mortality rate, there has also been an increase in eye problems within the rescued LTK population, with many animals presenting blind upon rescue. An interested and kind veterinarian ophthalmologist from Adelaide, Dr Tony

Read, adds the tree roos to his schedule when he sees domestic animals in Cairns. He has assessed all of the LTK's that have recently come into care with sight issues and agrees with Karen that it doesn't appear to be related to disease as they are all come from a variety of separate localities and are otherwise healthy – but they all share similar injuries, possibly the victims of car strikes. Each animal has varying degrees of eye problems ranging from cataracts, dislocated lens (definitely trauma resulting from a vehicle strike), to neurological damage; all consistent with trauma and probably vehicle strike. Karen is undertaking research into other possible causes for these neurological problems, one of which may be a correlation between consecutive dry years and the increasing blind tree-kangaroos coming into care – perhaps the weather affects the species of trees that they are eating at the time.

The unreleasable LTK's whose only option is a safe and comfortable life in a suitable zoo or fauna sanctuary play an essential role in the education of the public. Australia's tree-kangaroo species do not occur anywhere else in the world and it is amazing how many people, including locals, know nothing about them. In particular, it is critical that the reality facing the Lumholtz's tree kangaroo is brought to the public's awareness as they are in serious danger from habitat fragmentation, dog and cars.

*Continued on page 19*

Over the years, facilities at Karen and Neil’s home were stretched to breaking point – it was a triage clinic, a vet clinic and an intensive care centre. In the middle of this very busy period Karen suffered a heart attack. After intensive medical tests her condition was stabilised with a stent and specialised treatment, and she was (and is) able to continue her work but not with the same energy as before, and only with ongoing medications and checkups.

In 2012, Karen decided that if she was going to be able to cope then she needed help. Funds were required for food, fuel, vet fees, medicines, enclosures, surgical operations, etc. She started a “not for profit” charity to help with these operational costs. In-kind support was provided from Dreamworld’s Wildlife Foundation, enabling Karen to establish the Tree Roo Rescue and Conservation Centre Ltd (TRRACC). Donations thankfully started to slowly trickle in. Karen also developed and designed a

range of TRRACC merchandise, including postcards, t-shirts, soft toys, photos, stickers, stubby coolers, shopping bags, and bookmarks. These items are sold at the local Malanda Markets and online through the TRRACC facebook page.

The organisation was also a recipient of a Gambling Community Benefit Fund grant in 2014 and, with the generous support of Dreamworld once again, enabling the construction of a state of the art Intensive Care and holding facility – built almost entirely by Neil. Due to be finalised in April 2015, the facility will give Karen and Neil their home back (hopefully!) and will be the first of its kind specifically for the care and rehabilitation of tree kangaroos. Stay tuned to the TRRACC website and facebook page for updates. Numbers in care at the Centre currently stand at seven animals (though at one time last year there were fourteen!).

*Lisa Pulman*



*The almost complete Intensive Care facility and holding facility*

## Golls Sweatshop

Agnes Water locals Golls and offsider Doug, the label maker, have been making bags and liners for wildlife carers in their local area and beyond.



Agnes Water local vet Susannah convinced Golls to sew bags and liners for wildlife carers because carers just don't have the time.

At 3am, with offsider Bundy the dog, Golls gets in and sews on an industrial machine using upholstery cottons to ensure longevity of the products. Currently the bags are used for wallabies, kangaroos, wombats and soon to be added to the list is snakes.

Before Christmas Golls and Doug supplied Tina from Mt Larcom's Safe Haven for Wombats with a range of bags. Paula Rowlands from the Gympie Wildlife Group has been benefiting from Golls handywork as well. Denise from Horizons in Agnes Water designs her own bags and Golls sews them for her.

Doug, Golls trusty offsider was airlifted to Brisbane after having a slight heart attack and in true spirit he continued writing up labels for the bags in between

angiograms. Each bag and liner size has a name so that ordering is easy, "ingenious".

Material for the bags and liners are purchased by Golls and Doug from the local Op shop or alternatively donations of material are given directly to them. Bedspreads are used for the bags and sheets for straps and liners.

Bags and liners get sent to carers in Sapphire, Gympie and everywhere in between. Orders (postage payable) can be placed by phoning Yvonne on 07 4974 9362.



*Yvonne Thompson*

*Ed: I have been the lucky recipient of lots of liners and smaller hanging pouches to keep my wallabies happy. They are all beautifully made.*

### Animal Intensive Care Units



**NEW Vetario units arriving end of Aug 2014!**

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A selection of Intensive Care units are shown, all are thermostatically controlled and accessories are available.

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## Carer Profile

### ***Meet Dr Karen Coombes Phd - Director and Chair of Tree Roo Rescue and Conservation Centre Ltd***



*Photo by Sarah Scragg*

Imagine finding yourself in Atherton Tablelands, new to the area, just purchasing 179 acres of rainforest, ready to build a house. Are you interested in wildlife and nature? Yes, why else would you buy rainforest?

Whilst building your dream home, you notice that your rainforest has these sweet little creatures. Are they kangaroos? Yes, but special kangaroos – the Lumholtz tree kangaroo. One of Australia's truly unique species, which is found nowhere else in the World.

The average person would say wow we've got tree kangaroos on our block and leave it at that but the average

person is not Karen Coombes.

A woman who has worked with animals for most of her life, through wildlife care for the past twenty five years, veterinary nursing and scientific research as the Collections Manager with the Northern Territory Museum.

Karen's dilemma was – what to do to help this threatened species? Preserve your rainforest; become a member of the local Tree Kangaroo Group to learn more about this species? This was not good enough for Karen.

Karen went back to university and completed a PHD (2005) in a cryptic species which most researchers have put into the too hard basket (there were only two people before Karen who have done such studies and none since) – the ecology of the Lumholtz tree kangaroo. Research which involved five years of transects through thick rainforest, catching and tracking animals which live over twenty metres in the canopy.

The majority of PHD candidates would be content to achieve such a task. However Karen Coombes has taken this one step beyond by becoming the spokesperson for the preservation of this unique species.

Karen has not only undertaken her PHD in the ecology of the Lumholtz tree kangaroo but she also cares for orphaned and injured tree kangaroos.

*Continued on Page 23*

She has also established, with the help of her partner Neil McLauchlan, Australia's first Tree Kangaroo Rescue Centre, possibly the first in the world .

She educates the public of their plight, writes books to educate our children, gives lectures to our scientific community and the general public, and creates a public awareness of the plight of these threatened native animals in our urban environment, with habitat fragmentation, cars and dogs being their major threats. The majority of these activities have been undertaken at her and her partner's own expenses over the past fifteen years.

Her ongoing pursuit in the protection of these animals is unsurpassed by the efforts and energy Karen finds on a daily basis to promote community awareness of an almost unknown Australian Threatened Species (unfortunately only listed as Least Concerned by the QLD government currently). The result of this will only further benefit the protection of this species and their environment for future generations to come.

Crucial funding will need to be obtained to support and advance the understanding and preservation of this threatened Species. Without funding the likelihood that our children will continue to enjoy this threatened species is grave.

So Karen and Neil have now set up their Rescue Centre as a non-profit charity to help them pay for the rescue, rehabilitation and care of injured Lumholtz tree kangaroos into the future. It is called Tree Roo Rescue and Conservation Centre Ltd.

*Ed: see article starting on page 16.*

For more information about the Centre and Karen and Neil's work please visit their website at:

[www.treeroorecue.org.au](http://www.treeroorecue.org.au)

Or on facebook <https://www.facebook.com/TreeRooRescue?ref=bookmarks>



Karen would like to add that people should not try to rescue and care for tree roos themselves as they are highly specialised and you cannot only kill the animal from not knowing what to do or more importantly what NOT to do, like giving the wrong antibiotics etc but you could get seriously injured trying to capture one if you have not been shown the correct way. **Please phone them for advice.**

*Ed: A vet clinic in Bundaberg recently asked a rescuer to collect a just furring Brushtail possum. It was a big surprise when it turned out to be a tree kangaroo that unfortunately was very sick and died shortly afterwards. It would have taken several days to drive from Atherton presumably without proper care, very sad.*

## Wildlife Refuge for Sale

### \$795,000



**How would you like to own your own wildlife sanctuary?**

**This private, tranquil property could be what you are looking for.**

270 acres,(109.7ha) situated at the end of a quiet no through road, 42k NW of Gympie in the Oakview area. Set up for wildlife caring with 2.5 acre pre-release pen, 6' chain link mesh and gates allowing it to be divided into 3 separate pens when needed. **Oakview Nature Refuge** is home to a myriad of species including Eastern Grey kangaroos, Whiptail, Redneck, and Blackstripe wallabies. Bettongs, Bandicoots, Echidnas, Koalas, Possums, Greater Gliders, Platypus and numerous bird species. The unique mud-brick home is spectacular with 3 brm/2 bathrooms. The main bedroom has a walk-in-robe, huge ensuite and spa, with a view over the property and nearby hills. Enormous hexagonal kitchen, leadlight windows featuring wildlife. Gas cooking and hot water. Screened outdoor breakfast room. Wood heater in living room, large screened front verandah, animal tile mosaics, recycled timbers. 18m fully enclosed veg patch/animal enclosure. Creek frontage but house is flood free. Dams, 7 Bay shed, 5 with concrete floor, 3 phase power.

**Check out the video <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kNsLs83UJ4k>**

**Contact Anne-Marie – 07 5484 7354 – [anmacropod@bigpond.com](mailto:anmacropod@bigpond.com)**

# Anne-Marie's Wildlife Supplies

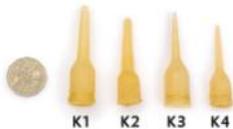
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## Tiny Creature

It is a year now since Tiny died. She came into care after being found by some people digging a causeway. She was partly furred and weighed just 4gms. It took us weeks to properly identify her. After sending photos away to wildlife parks and museums, we found out she was a Common Planigale—the largest of her species of the smallest marsupials in the world!



There are three types of Planigale. She was just so little, it was hard to imagine how small she must have been when born. Planigales usually have around ten babies, which they carry in a pouch under their tiny bellies.

After doing a bit of research we discovered that Planigales usually only live for about one year, and are carnivores in the same family (Dasyurid) as Quolls and Tasmanian Devils. Tiny was with us for almost exactly five years

– not bad for an animal that lives only one year.

Her staple diet was mealworms. No matter how many different insects we tried her with, no way would she touch them. We caught moths, grasshoppers, bought crickets etc., but she wouldn't touch them. I had to feed the mealworms insectivore so she got enough nourishment. She was just a baby when we got her and was given Divetelact via a 1ml syringe for the first few months.

When she came into care I noticed a small twist in her neck. It was not enough to cause her any discomfort, but as she was so small we thought it best not to release her as it would slow her down just enough to compromise her safety. I spoke to Parks and Wildlife regarding her being placed in a nocturnal house at a sanctuary, however they said that by the time she was vet assessed and ranger assessed for suitability, she would have to go up for tender. This was not a speedy process, so I was advised that as she would have such a short life by the time all the processes were in place, she would be at the end of her lifespan (little did they know she would live so long!), and they advised us to do what we felt best for her.

We bought a large wooden cage, lined it with fine security mesh and set her up nicely in it. She hated it!!! Every time I put her food in she was so stressed she would just run around and around in circles. We brought her in for a run in the house- which was fine the first few times until she got her confidence up, then she

*Continued on Page 27*

vanished! It took days to find her, she was hiding under the lounge. She was really hungry by this time, even though I left dishes of mealworms around the house, she left them untouched. We moved her into a special baby box which we have, it was originally made as a mouse cage I believe, and she was really happy and settled in there.

She still stuck to her mealworm diet, and would eat up to twenty a day sometimes, a lot for such a little girl. She went off her mealworms a lot at the end, only eating around seven each day, until she died. She was always very elusive, but would let me pick her up and take her for walks, sitting in my hand. We miss you Tiny!!

She weighed 7 grams and was an adult.

*Trish Mathers*

## Diadem Leaf-nosed bat



The Diadem Leaf-nosed bat (*Hipposideros diadema*) is endemic to far north Queensland. She is a magnificent microbat, mean weight 44gms, with distinctive white shoulder patches and a fabulous nose leaf. This female was caught on a barbed wire fence near Lake Eacham. Unfortunately she has too much wing damage to be released. She, a Nyctimene (Tube-nosed bat) and a small Freetail have wowed our tourists for the last six months. *Hipposideros* have extremely small eyes and seem to prefer to use echolocation

for all their vision. We bought a bat detector (Echo Meter Touch that plugs into an iPad or iPhone) and when she obligingly looks at us, we can see and hear the echolocation calls on the detector. Her nose leaf and ears “twitch” when this is happening. This individual has always been quite placid and delightful in care, though Sue Churchill, author of *Australian Bats*, describes the species as having an ‘unpleasant and tenacious disposition’. Perhaps this is only after being caught in a net?

*Jenny Maclean*



*QLD Tube-nosed bat*

*Photo by Jenny Maclean*