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THE TABLELANDS TAILS

NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTHERN
TABLELANDS WILDLIFE CARERS

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Ultrasound used as latest weapon to combat Chlamydia in koala population

New diagnosis tool for disease that causes blindness and infertility and affects up to 90% of koalas in some locations is quicker than conventional testing methods Staff at Featherdale Wildlife Park using



ultrasound to detect the symptoms of infection in a koala. Photograph: Featherdale Wildlife Park

Medical imaging equipment designed for humans is being used to help combat the spread of chlamydia in koalas, with wildlife workers hopeful the equipment could be used to aid conservation efforts with other species.

Scientists working on a potential vaccine have expressed concern about the spread of chlamydia in koalas, which is a different strain of the infection that can affect humans.

The Featherdale Wildlife Park in New South Wales has started using ultrasound technology to detect

the symptoms of the infection in its population of 33 koalas.

A special perch has been constructed for the koalas to be assessed by the ultrasound, with wildlife staff looking out for signs of “fungal balls” or thickened walls in the bladder or reproductive system.

The diagnostic tool is quicker than the conventional method of testing for the infection via a swab, leading to prompt treatment of antibiotics. Koalas have to spend 28 days on antibiotics before being fully clear of chlamydia.

“We’ve started including the ultrasound in our monthly protocols with the koalas to see what’s going on inside,” Chad Staples, chief curator of Featherdale Wildlife Park, said.

“If we see any urinary tract or reproductive system problems, we don’t have to wait for a true positive test. We can start treatment straight away, which is really important given the time factor. The ultrasound isn’t intrusive or painful for the koalas, so we can just give them a few leaves and they are happy.”

Staples said chlamydia is now “rampant” among the wild population of koalas, but that imaging could be used more widely in wildlife hospitals to help reduce the disease.

“Unfortunately, it can spread very quickly,” he said. “We can help keep a lid on it, but the difficult factor in wildlife hospitals is time, given that koalas need a long course of antibiotics.”

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Wildlife rescue call 0408-555719

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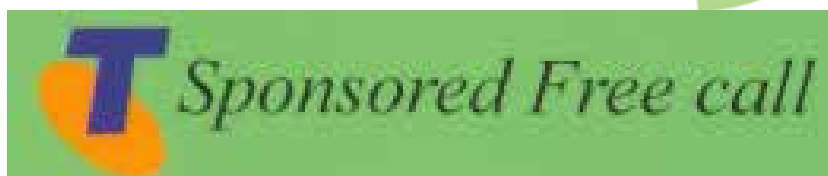
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Staples said that he has used the ultrasounds on other species. Analysis of the ovaries of endangered female broad-headed snakes can indicate when they are ready for mating. Meanwhile, work on chicken embryos suggests the technology could be used to monitor different bird species while they are still in their eggs.

Fiona Mildren from GE Healthcare Systems, which supplied the equipment, said: "This is really exciting because we can prevent koala populations becoming sterile. We had one koala, Skye, which had a huge fungal ball in her bladder. After 16 days, it was gone."

Demand justice for 150 wombats buried alive by a logging company

A logging company in New South Wales, Australia has buried at least 150 bare-nosed wombats while they were still alive.

About 150 burrows were marked with GPS co-ordinates in bright paint by the Wombat Protection



Society in the Glenbog State Forest, so loggers could avoid the burrows. The NSW Environment Protection Authority confirmed the Forestry Corporation had agreed to ensure entrances to the burrows weren't obstructed.

However, the contractors ignored the markings, with some observers alleging they deliberately removed them, and buried the wombats alive by allowing debris to cover their burrows.



Wombat Protection volunteers found nine collapsed burrows, as well as four burrows that had been so

compacted by machinery and logs that they couldn't be re-opened. They also found a burrow where a road had been built right over the entrance.

Logging interests have tried to argue that bare-nosed wombats make various entrances to their burrows, however, wildlife experts say they just have one entrance in and out, so if it is ploughed over the wombats are subject to a slow death due to lack of food and water.

The callous disregard of the loggers is nothing



less than animal cruelty – all of them must be prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

Please sign and share the petition to demand justice for 150 wombats buried alive by a logging company.

http://www.thepetitionsite.com/247/207/821/demand-justice-for-150-wombats-buried-alive-by-a-logging-company/?cid=FB_TAF

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Next Meeting 23rd November. 1.30
Tree Group MannSt Armidale General
Meeting and informal forum and discussion with tea coffee and nibbles,

Bunny

By Rebecca Evenden

Bunny came in as a 310gram pinky. She now weighs 2.5 kgs. As you can see with her left wrist it is swollen & red. Dr Craig Bailey inspected it & said it was broken but will heal. It has! You can't even tell it was broken. She is one confident little girl & even jumps on my head when I'm on the lounge. A real jumper



Adopting birds by foster parent

By Julia Rose

Many birds will adopt orphaned chicks which is brilliant, saves our time and they have parents!

Here are photographs of a maned duck collecting a 'rescued' duckling .

After putting in the water the mother duck came over & collected the orphans seen in these pics.

This works for many birds and is best if they are a similar age, fingers crossed this one can keep up.

Magpies will feed a begging chick just to stop the noise, place them in a hanging plant basket in a tree close to where adult birds are feeding their young.

There are huge benefits doing this especially with territorial magpies. "



Animal Welfare

(Population Control Programs) Bill 2014

Bill introduced on motion by Mr Alex Greenwich,

The Animal Welfare (Population Control Programs) bill will ensure that trap-neuter-return [TNR] and management programs are lawful. I will refer to these programs as TNR programs, as they are widely known; however, they can also be called trap-de-sex-return or capture-de-sex- return programs.



TNR programs primarily involve desexing a large proportion of a specific population of un-owned, stray, feral or pest animals and returning them to the place where they were found. The animals can no longer produce new offspring.

This helps to stabilise the population and potentially reduces it through natural attrition. Animals are also given veterinary treatment before being returned – such as vaccination, deworming and flea treatment – and those animals that can be are rehomed. For the program to work, new animals that join the group need to be desexed. Generally TNR programs are carried out on urban cat colonies. Cats are provided with food and water, monitored for any need for veterinary care and can be provided with shelter.

TNR programs are also increasingly being used to control rabbit populations and there is interest in trialling programs on other introduced species. TNR programs exist around the world, particularly in the United States, as a humane alternative to euthanasia, which often involves cruel methods, such as baiting, that cause slow and painful deaths and can kill other non-target animals.

A number of TNR programs are being run in Australia by volunteers. In Sydney the volunteer non- profit organisation the Campus Cat Coalition manages a population of homeless cats and kittens living on University of New South Wales property. The coalition comprises staff, students, residents and community volunteers. Cats and kittens are humanely trapped, spayed or neutered, vaccinated and either rehomed or returned back onto campus territory, where they are fed and monitored. Before the coalition began I understand the colony was rapidly expanding, but since implementing the program the population has stabilised. TNR programs are also run at Callan Park, in Marrickville and across the metropolitan area. The University of Victoria has entered into a pilot project agreement for a long-term management plan for a feral rabbit population on campus.

The swimming Koala

contributed by Carol & Alan Rose

This was sent to me by a koala friend holidaying recently on Stradbroke Island, with the statement "our furry friends never cease to surprise me".



A fair walk along Flinders Beach on North-West side of Straddie a couple of days ago.

Koalas seem fairly tame over here.

Passed two sitting in she-oaks each about 2M off the ground.

Not spooked at all be attention.

Then, about half way along the beach we saw this young fellow actually running up and down

the beach, and playing around the kids like a puppy.

Then, he decides to go into the water for a tub!

Then the little chap went about 20m into the sea, swam around for a good half hour fascinating onlookers, before coming back to the beach.

Where he was interrogated by Constable Brian, and then released without charge. The little chap took a while to recover from his swim.



We have never heard of or seen this behaviour before: a koala who likes to "play" with humans, and swim in the ocean.

A big thanks to all who volunteered on our street stall in Uralla recently. We raised in excess of \$400 in the week.

Snakes Alive ??

Colin Wood

We all like to keep our slivering friends alive, but

there has been a spate of emergencies for our scaled friends, not always successful. A couple of them rescued from drink cans and three from netting so please try and advise people to crush and recycle cans and keep or dispose of netting on and around gardens. I have rescued two from cans and one from netting (unfortunately it had chocked itself

to death) Carla and Scott have rescued three from netting. See photos.



A successful rescue by Carla

New Study Shows Bee Research Tainted by Corporate Funding

By Dr. Mercola

Since 2006, US beekeepers have lost 10 million beehives, worth an estimated \$2 billion. The monetary loss is staggering, but the losses to the food supply, which could soon be disastrous if bees keep disappearing, is beyond words.



There is no price that can be put upon the work of bees, which pollinate one-third of the food we eat. Just about every fruit and vegetable you can imagine is dependent on the pollinating services of bees. Apple orchards, for instance, require one colony of bees per acre in order to be adequately pollinated. Almond growers must have two hives per acre.

So far there have been enough bees to keep up with production... but just barely. Those in the industry describe an increasingly dire situation in which finding enough bees to pollinate crops is "chaos."

Many growers are now booking contracts with beekeepers, which migrate in from other parts of the country, far earlier than ever before. Beekeeper Jeff Anderson told the *Star Tribune*, "We are close to the tipping point, where the bee industry cannot respond to the needs."

The Battle Over Insecticide Use Grows

While no one is debating the fact that bees are in trouble, intense controversy has risen over *why*. There are basically two primary sides to this debate: those who believe insecticides are to blame and those who do not. As you might suspect, championing the pro-insecticides camp are their makers, including Monsanto and Bayer.

Monsanto, which is the world leader in genetically modified (GM) crops (and the pesticides and herbicides that go along with them), bought Beeologics in 2013, a company whose primary goal is finding a solution to the colony collapse disorder (CCD, the widely used term to describe bee die-offs).

Bayer is a leading manufacturer of the neonicotinoid pesticides at the heart of the debate. They opened the North American Bee Care Center in 2013, where they are conducting "bee health research" and promoting "bee-responsible use of Bayer products."

Clearly, the research coming out of Beeologics and the North American Bee Care Center are likely to be tainted with regard to these companies' products and their impact on bee populations. Monsanto and Bayer are going to stop at nothing to make sure their insecticides and GM crops are completely cleared of any wrongdoing.

Already, in 2010 a study by Montana bee researcher Dr. Jerry Bromenshenk found that CCD was not caused by pesticides but rather a combination of fungus and virus, found in all collapsed colonies, may be the culprit...

What was not widely reported in the media, however, was that Dr. Bromenshenk received a significant research grant from Bayer to study bee pollination – a massive conflict of interest that is likely to be carried over into any upcoming research from Bayer and Monsanto.

Recognizing this obvious conflict of interest, the UK's Environmental Audit Committee (EAC) has reacted to a new government report, calling for unbiased bee research.

Neonicotinoids Are Contaminating Water, Too

The environmental concerns of neonicotinoids have focused on their role in pollinator health, although new research in Environmental Pollution identified another route of harm: waterways. After sampling nine Midwestern stream sites during the 2013 growing season, neonicotinoids were detected at all sites sampled. At different times of the growing season, levels of the insecticides peaked. For instance, after spring planting, levels spiked well above what would be considered toxic for aquatic organisms. Furthermore, reduced levels were detected in the waterways even before planting, which indicates that they can "persist from applications in prior years." As reported by Mother Jones:

Read more at http://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2014/08/12/neonicotinoids-bee-deaths.aspx?e_cid=20140812Z1_DNL_art_2&utm_source=dnl&utm_medium=email&utm_content=art2&utm_campaign=20140812Z1&et_cid=DM53610&et_rid=619118457

Have you registered?



Each year we get a great boost from the Community Mutual by each person registering with the credit union their Community Partnership Account. Go to <http://www.communitymutual.com.au/cpa.html>. This year we received \$1147.26. Please register and get more money for our group.



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a shot of the Yellow Robin (sitting on 2 eggs). The nest is only about 30 cm from the ground, in a Cassinia shrub. From Jenni Drewit

Kelly Paul has four orphans.

Anzac came to me as a pinky; an adorable male



swampy who loves his banana.

Duncan, male with true Wallaroo attitude.

And my 2 female Eastern Greys - Little Lauren (a feisty wildling) and Abby, of the gentle nature.



Prey at risk of extinction as fussy felines maul species' numbers

Nicky Phillips

Science

Some cat owners may have noticed their kitty has particular tastes when it comes to the half-eaten presents left on the doorstep.

Be it mouse, rat, bird or lizard, a survey of house cats living in Sydney's eastern suburbs has found a good proportion focus their hunts on specific targets.

Research leader Chris Dickman, of the University of Sydney, said some felines were such determined killers they would hunt their prey of choice until they had vanished from the area.

This obsessive behaviour, also documented in feral cats, was having a noticeable effect on prey populations, Professor Dickman said.

"It's quite likely that we'll get localised extinction of native small mammals," he said.

It was unclear how cats developed their dietary preferences but observations of tigers, jaguars and other cats have noticed similar behaviours.

Professor Dickman suggested kittens could be taught what to kill by their mothers or they may have had a chance encounter with an easy kill early in their life.

In the ACT, residents who live in defined cat containment areas are required to ensure their pets do

conservative estimates suggest there are about 15 million killing an estimated 75 million native animals every night.

not stray from their property or face a \$1400 fine. Professor Dickman said studying house cats helped scientists understand some of the behaviours

that feral cats used to devastate populations of native animals across the country.

His latest results are published in the journal Applied Animal Behaviour Science.

While no one has calculated the number of feral cats in Australia, conservative estimates suggest there are about 15 million killing an estimated 75 million native animals every night.

When it comes to managing the impact of cats, Professor Dickman said unless the specialists were caught, the survival chances of rare and endangered animals was unlikely to improve.

The Victorian Department of Environment and Primary Industries' website says about 80 endangered and threatened species are at risk from feral cats.

Meeting Dates

Meeting at the Tree Group in Mann st
23rd November

General meeting at 1.30 and a forum
and discussions after, with tea coffee
and nibbles.

Articles for newsletter

Articles are most welcome from any
member. Email all photos separate and
as a JPG image and stories as word file
to newsletter@ntwc.org.au

Special Announcements

We are still selling raffle tickets for the
beautiful native animal quilt for tickets
contact committee@bigpond.com



We made over
\$400 from pro-
ceeds from the
movie "Healing"



Sender - Northern Tablelands Wildlife Carers
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Glen Innes Area Update - Kelly Stumbles

In the last 3 months there has been about 60 wildlife calls, the first month was a bit quiet still but the last 2 have been crazy. The number of joeys coming in has increased a lot with Julie & Gary full to the brim, thanks goes to Di for taking on a number of them as well as Carmell. There's also been a number of calls about injuries adult macropods as well.

The warm weather has brought out the snakes with calls coming in since the beginning of October, many turtles are also out & about on the roads unfortunately. Echidnas are also on the move around town with everyone calling about them - it's amazing as to how many people don't realise that Echidnas live in Glen Innes! Birds of all sorts & ages have also been coming in left, right & centre.

Some of the more unusual animals that have come in are a Koala, a Little Eagle, a Black-shouldered Kite, an Australian Owlet-nightjar.

In care there is 14 macropods with Julie & Gary with some soon to be released & I currently have 2 baby Wood Ducks, a baby Plover, a juv Butcherbird, 2 Juv Brushtail Possums, a Turtle, a Wallaroo joey, the Carpet Python & a Magpie.