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*Animal welfare is animal care.*



*“Animal Care Australia acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we reside, and pay our respects to their Elders past and present.”*



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in March 2024.

Click to read our [previous issues](#)



**Headline Article:**  
**An Office of Animal Welfare — inevitable change to animal welfare management?**



## *Animal welfare is animal care.*

Currently in Australia the Labor Party — both federal and state — along with the Greens and the Animal Justice Party all have the intention of introducing their own iterations of an Office of Animal Welfare/Rights/Protection. The latter two, strongly supported by most animal rights based organisations want an Independent Office, that being independent (separate) from any government or minister. They continue to target both federal and state/territory governments for this to be introduced, and if we are not careful, this will be influenced and infiltrated by animal rights ideologies.

Animal Care Australia implores our governments to start recognising the importance of our pets and animals in our lives. The continued enhancement of animal welfare must include the development of animal welfare departments within the Federal and State governments and not independent of.

On the 10th October 2023, Ms Abigail Boyd MLC of the NSW Greens introduced a Bill into NSW Parliament that could potentially introduce Australia's first Independent Office of Animal Welfare. The Bill: [Prevention Of Cruelty To](#)

[Animals Amendment \(Independent Office Of Animal Welfare\) Bill 2023](#) is riddled with multiple issues. The most telling or stark is the proposed membership of the Independent Office of Animal Welfare Advisory Committee (IOAWAC). The Bill proposes a total of 12 committee members plus the Chief Animal Welfare Officer.

During the second reading speech Ms Boyd claims each of the following are “all animal welfare organisations”.

- Humane Research Australia
- PETA Australia
- Animal Liberation
- Sentient: The Veterinary Institute for Animal Ethics
- Lawyers for Animals
- Animals Australia
- Voiceless
- World Animal Protection
- Australian Alliance for Animals
- Compassion in World Farming
- Four Paws

• Humane Society International Australia  
This is incorrect – misleading at best. Most are primarily animal rights-based organisations.  
The proposed IOAWAC is structured with an obvious bias towards Ms Boyd's claimed “animal welfare organisations”. In fact, there is just one position proposed for an organisation representing those who actually keep animals.

**This assumes people that keep and breed animals don't care or know about animal welfare!**

This is absolutely ludicrous that only one representative can provide appropriate and informed input relating to all sections of the animal keeping community. The pet industry, agriculture, animal sports industry, recreational keepers (hobbyists), breeders and individual pet owners are all very different, and cannot be reasonably represented a single representative.

60% of Australians are recreational animal keepers, yet there is no representative.

The fact this has been structured in this manner highlights the contempt and ideological interference those ‘consulted’ with and Ms

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Boyd herself have for animal keeper/owners.

Ms Boyd's "animal welfare organisations" could well fill 7 of the 12 organisation representative positions, possibly more.

**This will see a majority of members aiming to abolish all use of animals by people!**

Animal Care Australia is opposed to animal rights organisations having any role in the design, implementation or representation on any committee advising on animal welfare matters.

The Bill also enhances the power of the current enforcement agencies (the RSPCA and AWL) and introduces a new criteria for an 'approved charitable organisation' that would provide for greater third-party enforcement by a number of other charitable organisations. Yes, you guessed it - the new criteria opens the door for all 12 of the animal rights organisations to be appointed as new 'enforcement agencies'. The criteria is so broad that even Animal Care Australia would meet the criteria. Can you imagine PETA Australia as an enforcement agency?

**This is truly a frightening thought!**

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***"Can you imagine PETA Australia as an enforcement agency?"***  
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The Bill includes provisions that provide for any conflicts of interest to be ignored when determining a Committee decision. With two of the Committee positions being occupied by the RSPCA and AWL that is a power enhancing disaster waiting to happen.

The Objects of any iteration of an Office of Animal Welfare must include the promotion of animal keeping, for commercial and non-commercial purposes, whilst promoting the improvement of animal welfare outcomes.

**This Bill does nothing of the sort.**

The Committee makes the determination of what constitutes the regulations, within the animal welfare Act. Currently, that responsibility is undertaken by the department and reported to a Minister for approval. While the Minister may approve the regulations without parliamentary

involvement, that Minister is still subject to public opinion/ridicule. **Currently the NSW Department of Primary Industries consults stakeholders via public consultation – there is no inclusion of such a requirement here.**

The Bill provides to 'adopt guidelines' then goes on to make all sections of the regulations a mandatory provision. The proposed amendment is extreme - it aims to make the guidelines within Codes of Practice enforceable.

This amendment alone has the ability to mandate a series of provisions that are neither necessary for continued animal welfare outcomes nor are impractical for ALL animal keepers.

**Mandating these will instantly place thousands of animal keepers in breach of current POCTAA Regulations.**

Animal Care Australia feels that Ms Boyd may be deliberately blurring the distinction between Animal Welfare and Animal Rights/Animal Protection to mislead the public and the Parliament with disinformation. Animal Care Australia has had numerous discussions with Ms

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Boyd in both private meetings and through public inquiries correcting Ms Boyd's misuse of scientific nomenclature and have only seen Ms Boyd continue to knowingly misuse these terms in Parliament and in public statements on her website and social media.

Animal Care Australia is concerned by the level of disinformation by Ms Boyd as well as by the groups she works with, in a poor attempt to misrepresent Animal Rights as a solution to genuine issues in our society. We regularly see Animal Rights/Animal Protection groups and political parties (including the Animal Justice Party and the Greens) use the term 'Animal Welfare' only in a context as something to be fixed. This is not what 'Animal Welfare' means, and we believe this misuse of language is a very conscious and deliberate strategy.

This really must be challenged as false every time it arises.

### **Animal Care Australia strongly OPPOSES this Bill.**

You can read our full response to the Bill here:



Animal Care Australia strongly advocates for federal and state recognition and funding to ensure the development of consistent laws throughout Australia.

Far too long pets and animal welfare have been forgotten by our governments. Today Animal Care Australia implores our governments to start recognising the importance of our pets and animals in our lives. The continued enhancement of animal welfare must include the development of animal welfare departments within the Federal and State governments – not independent to, where they can be more easily infiltrated by animal rights ideologies.

Animal Care Australia would support an Office and Minister for Animal Welfare if:

- ⇒ the current Chief Animal Welfare Officers and their departmental staff were moved across under the new Office
- ⇒ all animal welfare legislation enforcement officers reported to and were held directly accountable by the Chief Animal Officer (or a similarly

specially designated senior staff position) and not a charitable or privately run organisation

- ⇒ the determination of whether a prosecution of an alleged offence of animal cruelty would only progress if assessed and approved by either the Department of Public Prosecutions or the Chief Animal Welfare Officer (or a similarly specially designated senior staff position)
- ⇒ a Minister for Animal Welfare and the Office must report annually via a Parliamentary Inquiry in order to ensure full transparency and accountability

With the implementation of an Office of Animal Welfare looking to be inevitable, the Animal Care Australia Committee has undertaken to produce a proposal for an Office of Animal Welfare and how we recommend it should be structured.

We will of course, provide that to you once it is completed in early 2024.

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## Submissions & Correspondence Reports



### ACA responds to Improving NSW rental laws

**August 2023:** Animal Care Australia responded to the consultation.

Part of ACA’s feedback includes :

\* Animal Care Australia opposes the use of a pet form as part of a tenancy application. a landlord SHOULD NOT be able to refuse a pet without going to the Tribunal.

\* Animal Care Australia cannot imagine situations where no animals at all could be kept on a specific property. It is more likely that specific persons will be prevented from keeping animals based on breaches of other legislation.

\* Animal Care Australia opposes special conditions requiring specific cleaning simply because pets are kept.

\* Any amendments to the Residential Tenancies Act 2010 should reflect the default position in favour of pet keeping that is now within the Strata Schemes Management Act 2015

You can read our full response here:



### ACA commends Port Adelaide Enfield Council on Companion Animal Project

**September 2023:** Animal Care Australia commends City of Port Adelaide Enfield on their initiative of 'People and Pets' companion animal project.

Animal Care Australia sees this as a wonderful community project to not only support pet owners that are in need of some assistance in meeting their animal's care and needs, it also gives volunteers who may not be able to have their own pet the opportunity to interact with animals, and enjoy some of the well-recognised mental health benefits this brings with it.

Find out more about the Project at:



You can read our letter of support here:



### ACA responds to Introduction of Wildlife Protection Areas in Lane Cove Shire

**September 2023:** Animal Care Australia has responded to the proposal from Lane Cove Council that would allow for the removal of cats from ‘newly designated wildlife protection areas’.



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Animal Care Australia supports cat containment that requires cats to remain on their owners property at all times as curfews have limited impact on the issues relating to roaming cats unless it is a 24/7 containment.

However, there are some items that need serious consideration and any changes to local animal management laws should provide an avenue for greater consultation and feedback.

\* Cats that have been allowed to roam need time to adjust to be confined and it may have detrimental welfare impacts if the cat is not allowed time to become accustomed to the changes

\* Costs of installing cat runs or other methods are expensive and this should be taken into consideration in the current cost of living crisis

\* Council should provide assistance for cat owners wishing to construct or install appropriate containment enclosures. Councils should recognise the need to consult with all residents in their catchment area and to provide assistance with approval processes for the construction of enclosures etc.

Therefore, how will Council protect owned cats with non-functioning microchips? Will cats automatically be deemed 'feral' if no microchip reading can be ascertained, regardless of the behaviour of the cat?

You can read our full response here:



**ACA responds to Vincent City Council's Draft Animal Amendment Local Law 2023**

**September 2023:** Animal Care Australia has responded to the proposal from Vincent City Council that would see the removal of cat containment rules from current Local Law.

Animal Care Australia does not support this removal as it places greater animal welfare risks on the cats that will be able to free roam.

Animal Care Australia supports s cat containment laws that require cats to remain

on their owners property at all times as curfews have limited impact on the issues relating to roaming cats unless it is a 24/7 containment.

Serious considerations to changes to local animal management laws should provide an avenue for greater consultation and feedback than a simple yes/no survey.

Animal welfare concerns MUST be placed ahead of red-tape based legislative changes.

Animal Care Australia believes the decision by the Joint Standing Committee on Delegated Legislation stating there is no supporting definition for 'effective control' and therefore instructing Council to remove their containment provision is irresponsible, and lazy.

Community consultation on the development of a suitable definition would have been more beneficial to cat owners, their cats and the native wildlife within the Shire.

You can read our full response here:



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**ACA Responds to Wyndham City Council Community Amenity Local Law (CALL) 2023**

**September 2023:** Following information received that a Local Law effectively restricting the numbers of birds and small mammals able to be kept by residents within the City Council shire.

ACA asked Council to consider Section 162 of the CALL :

*“Council or an Authorised Officer, may exempt any person or class of persons from the operation of any provision of this Local Law.”*

Animal Care Australia requested consideration be implemented that would allow an exception for residents that are members of animal keeping associations to continue with greater numbers without the need for a permit.

Animal Care Australia reminded Council that animal welfare outcomes are impacted when imposing number restrictions on colony species.

You can read our full response here:



amendment being provided, therefore Animal Care Australia does not support Amendment 1 and 2, at this time.

- Animal Care Australia opposes Amendment 3 until a head count of horses in Kosciuszko National Park is completed, as assured by the Hon. Penny Sharpe MLC



**ACA responds to Amending the Kosciuszko National Park Wild Horse Heritage Management Plan**

**September 2023:** Animal Care Australia submitted to the consultation.

Animal Care Australia supports the protection of native flora and fauna above that of introduced species – including humans. However, Animal Care Australia does not support the proposed amendments to reintroduce aerial culling into Kosciuszko National Park.

- Animal Care Australia cannot support amendment changes without the proposed

- Animal Care Australia does NOT oppose ground shooting; but does oppose the removal of safe implementation of ground shooting.

Animal Care Australia proposes the NSW Government adopts a One Welfare model - recognising that animal welfare, biodiversity and environment are connected to human wellbeing– and assist in the establishment of a multi-faceted environmental centre, brumby sanctuary and outdoor adventure activities - all open to the public.

You can read our full response here:



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**ACA responds to Blue Mountains National Park and Kanangra-Boyd National Park Draft Plan of Management**

**September 2023:** Safe, off-road horse riding opportunities around Sydney are declining, and those available are becoming less safe. It is vitally important the NPWS take responsibility to ensure that safe, off road access for horse riding is kept accessible.

ACA made the following recommendations:

**Recommendation 1:**

No existing trails are closed or restricted to exclude horse riders. This includes creating suitable creek crossings (bridges or weirs) where required to prevent damage to, or pollution of waterways.

**Recommendation 2:**

Existing easements via freehold land are maintained, and kept open, to ensure trails are kept clear and are fire safe, and where this is genuinely not possible, an alternative

access route is created nearby from a public road or crown land.

**Recommendation 3:**

All Blue Mountains National Park and Kanangra-Boyd National Park trails that are suitable for vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians be made accessible to horse riders, seven days a week without a booking (unless there is a valid reason to temporarily close access – such as for booked events, trail maintenance, or following bad weather).

Our full response can be found here:



**ACA responds to Developing a Biosecurity Bill for South Australia**

**September 2023:** Animal Care Australia supports the new Draft Biosecurity Bill for South Australia, and we are pleased to see that our previous concerns have been addressed with sensible solutions.

**Additional feedback:**

Animal Care Australia has concerns that the definition of a pest in Section 10 could be interpreted broadly to include captive animals just in case they escape, when the intent is for them to only become pests once they escape captivity. In addition, animal rights activists could claim that livestock are pests under the current draft pest definition.

Animal Care Australia does not support the continuation of the Dog Fence Act 1946. It is disappointing that the department and the Minister have continued to prioritise the exaggerated claims made by the agriculture and farming industry rather than prioritising the animal welfare of a native species.

Animal Care Australia again calls on the government to actually recognise the dingo as a native species and re-define the definition of a ‘wild dog’ to exclude the dingo.

You can view our full response here:



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**ACA submits Supplementary Submission to the NSW Inquiry into the veterinary industry workforce shortage.**

**September 2023:** Animal Care Australia submitted additional information to the Inquiry.

While testifying ACA was asked to respond to the 16 recommendations made by the Australian Veterinary Association.

On the whole ACA supports the recommendations however we do feel this was a lost opportunity to provide specific suggestions to changes of legislation.

Accordingly, ACA has now provided some additional recommendations for the Committee to consider.

ACA has also responded to questions asked by the Committee, outlining our structure, whether ACA is opposed to Veticare, how we see native wildlife care being better funded, and defining the difference between animal

welfare, animal rights and animal protection.

You can view our full response here:



**ACA commends Coorong District Council’s Animal Management Plan**

**September 2023:** Animal Care Australia wrote to Council to commend their approach when so many other councils are believing the animal rights rhetoric that animal restrictions are the best way to improve animal welfare and protect neighbour-hood amenity.

The mission statement and vision of the Plan has a terrific balance between supporting and encouraging pet ownership, education and responsibility for animals and compliance as the very last option.

Community education and support of each other is often lacking in many councils across Australia, and we applaud Council for

recognising the importance of pet ownership and setting a Plan that allows residents to keep pets.

Animal Care Australia does wish more councils would follow Coorong District Council’s lead when it comes to developing, implementing, and maintaining animal management plans.



You can read our full response here:



**ACA repeats our opposition to Moreton Bay Regional Council’s Animal Management Plan.**

**September 2023:** Animal Care Australia wrote to Council to follow-up on Council’s continued lack of understanding of the needs of some species.

Council recently released it’s report from the consultation process and it is clear to us that expert opinion is not heard by Council who seem to prefer to utilise ‘neighbourhood

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amenity’ as an excuse to justify their need to over-regulate.

While Council did make some concessions on the ability to keep a dog or cat, as well as implementing ACA’s advice for bird keeping - there is doubt as to the ability of residents to keep parrots without a permit.

Council also ignored advice on removing restrictions for the keeping of small mammals and only permitting one horse on smaller land sizes while permitting 2 cows on the same land size. It is completely nonsensical.

You can read our full response here:



**ACA responds to Tasmanian draft Racing Regulation and Integrity Bill**

**October 2023:** Animal Care Australia submitted to the draft Bill.

For the purpose of this submission, Animal

Care Australia only responded to the sections relating to animal welfare.

Animal Care Australia commended the government on its review of the racing regulations Act 2004, and the use of an independent expert in this process.

In relation to the recommendations put forward by Mr Montheith:

- Animal Care Australia agrees with creating a Tasmanian Racing Integrity Commissioner role which would bring Tasmanian Racing into alignment with other states such as Victoria and New South Wales.
- Animal Care Australia agrees with the enhancement of Integrity Governance and the responsibility of the codes of racing as well as race management and daily animal welfare falling under this enhancement.
- Animal Care Australia strongly supports the inclusion of a welfare position on the Integrity and Animal Welfare Advisory Committee, we strongly oppose the RSPCA TAS holding this position.

You can read our full response here:



**ACA responds to NSW Inquiry into the proposed aerial shooting of brumbies in Kosciuszko National Park**

**October 2023:** Animal Care Australia submitted to the Inquiry.

Animal Care Australia supports the protection of native flora and fauna above that of introduced species – including humans. However, Animal Care Australia believes that good animal welfare must always be prioritised before cost and convenience, and we therefore oppose aerial culling of horses, and do not support the reintroduction of aerial culling into Kosciuszko National Park.

- Animal Care Australia strongly supports a new independent head count of horses in Kosciuszko National Park, as assured by the Hon. Penny Sharpe MLC

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- Animal Care Australia objects to aerial culling as a method of dispatching animals
- Animal Care Australia does NOT oppose ground shooting; but does oppose the removal of safe implementation of ground shooting or aerial shooting

However, Animal Care Australia does not believe that nothing should be done. Animal Care Australia have concerns that little to no attempt has ever been made to appropriately manage the brumbies in Kosciuszko National Park.

Animal Care Australia proposes a One Welfare model - recognising that animal welfare, biodiversity and environment are connected to human wellbeing.

You can view our full submission here:



### ACA responds to Tablelands Regional Council’s proposed Local Law amendments

**October 2023:** Animal Care Australia responded to the Amendment To Local Law No. 1 (Administration) 2019 & Subordinate Local Law No. 2 (Animal Management) 2019.

Animal Care Australia strongly opposes the amendments. Restrictions on the number of animals on a property is not supported by Animal Care Australia without full consideration of the animal welfare impacts on the individual species, particularly on land greater than 1 acre – regardless of its zoning.

Animal Care Australia questions the validity of the proposed number restrictions and the method of ascertaining specific numbers for each species. There are no scientific facts to support the proposed restrictions.

This does appear to be a case of an uneducated, ill-informed Council responding to a minority of animal rights influenced complaints. Council has stated publicly that these changes are as a result of complaints but has failed to state the circumstances or basis of the complaints.

Animal Care Australia requested a meeting with Council to discuss this matter.

You can view our full response here:



### ACA responds to NSW Invasive Species Management Review

**October 2023:** Animal Care Australia submitted the following to the Review:

As a nationally recognised animal welfare organisation most of the reforms outlined within the discussion paper remain outside of our purview, however, we provide feedback relevant to animal welfare; to pets

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and companion animals and the correlation to invasive species.

Animal Care Australia recommends consideration is given to regular review of the species lists with a focus on ensuring animals able to be kept in captivity are done so legally and not released, in addition to the following recommendations:

- \* Animal Care Australia recommends the creation of a new committee, similar to the Nonindigenous Animals Advisory Committee (NIACC) and welcomes the opportunity to advise on suitable members.
- \* Implement a clear definition that excludes pets as pests until they are no longer under an owners care AND are having an environmental impact.
- \* Education on responsible pet ownership is needed to develop a greater understanding of the impacts invasive species have.
- \* Government needs to monitor invasive species and develop achievable management plans rather than relying on quick cost effective – short-term measures.

Animal Care Australia feels it is important Animal Welfare is acknowledged and high standards legislated within the Biosecurity Act 2015.

You can read our full submission here:



### ACA responds to Western Australian Stop Puppy Farming consultation 2023

**November 2023:** Animal Care Australia submitted the following to the Western Australian Stop Puppy Farming consultation 2023:

As a nationally recognised animal welfare organisation sections of the consultation remain outside of our purview, however, we provided feedback relevant to animal welfare and to the impact’s regulations may have on dog (and cat) breeders. .

Due to the high number of questions and points of concern raised, please see our submission for a full breakdown.

Animal Care Australia finds the purpose of some of the questions to be confusing and/or totally unnecessary in achieving the outcome of Regulation review, and accordingly did not complete the survey, as the results will be misleading and not an accurate response.

Animal Care Australia requested a meeting with the department to discuss the matter.

The department immediately responded to our submission confirming their willingness to meet.

You can read our full submission here:



### ACA a key stakeholder in NSW strata and community land reforms

November 2023: Animal Care Australia is proud to have been a key stakeholder in the drafting of the new reforms.

*“... as you know the Government has been looking to implement the findings of the 2021*

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*statutory review of strata laws. The Strata Legislation Amendment Bill 2023 implements the first tranche of strata reforms and was introduced into NSW Parliament on October 2023.*

*Feedback on this Bill has been considered including Animal Care Australia's (ACA's) support for the keeping of animals (and assistance animals) in strata and community schemes.*

*The government is looking to introduce further reforms requiring further policy development in 2024. Proposed amendments to Model By-laws will be considered ... and I look forward to ACA's contributions to this next tranche of reforms.*

*Anoulack Chanthivong MP  
Minister for Better Regulation and Fair Trading."*

The reforms implement 31 recommendations from the 2021 Report on the Statutory Review of the Strata Schemes Development Act 2015 and Strata Schemes Management Act 2015 and align community land laws with

strata laws. The Report's recommendations were informed by public consultation on the strata laws.

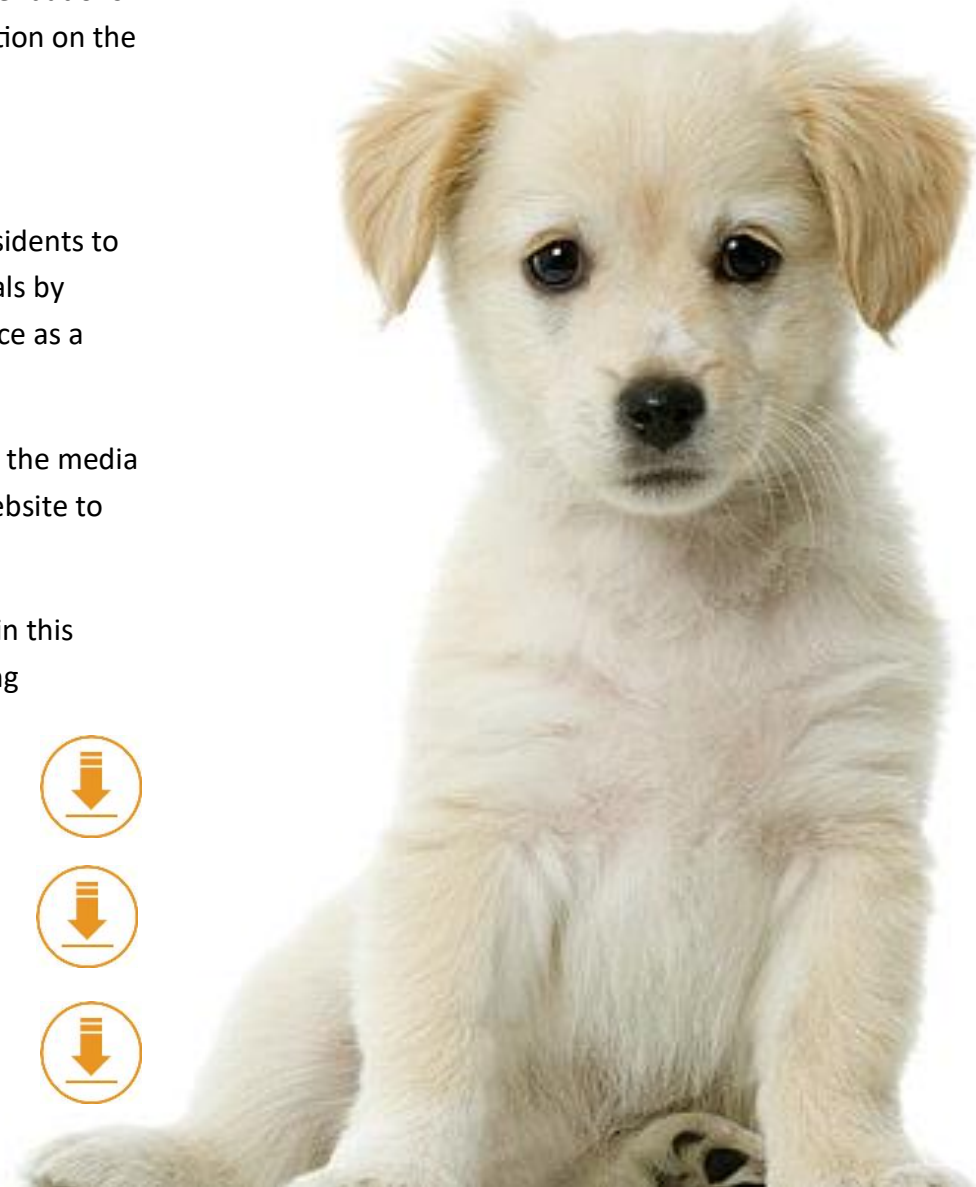
Some of the key changes:

- make it easier and fairer for residents to keep pets and assistance animals by banning fees, bonds or insurance as a condition of having a pet

You can visit [nsw.gov.au](http://nsw.gov.au) to access the media release or the NSW Parliament website to access the Bill.

To see our ongoing consultations in this process, you can read the following submissions:

- Improving NSW rental laws:
- Keeping Pets in Residential Tenancies :
- Draft Strata Legislation Amendment Bill:





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## Meetings with Governments and Politicians

- 4th September: Office of Roy Butler MP — NSW Independent
- 12th September: Dr Joe McGirr MP — NSW Independent
- 12th September: John Ruddick MLC — NSW Liberal Democrat Party
- 13th October: Office of Emma Hurst MLC — NSW Animal Justice Party
- 16th November: Penny Sharpe MLC — NSW Environment Minister
- 21st November: Office of Ros Spence MP — VIC Agriculture Minister



## ACA Annual Report — 2023

Animal Care Australia's 2023 Annual Report is available for download:  
The Annual Report includes all of the usual information including how we have advocated for you across Australia.  
We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your ongoing support.



# ANNUAL REPORT 2023



**Animal Care Australia Inc**

Version 3 — July 2023

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## Brumby Wonderland - there has to be a middle ground!

*By Karri Nadazdy — ACA Horse & Livestock Representative*



## *Animal welfare is animal care.*

Brumby Wonderland is a proposed environmental rewilding centre that would aim to unite environmentalists as well as horse lovers by providing a safe sanctuary for the wild horses, or brumbies, that live in Kosciuszko National Park. The centre would also offer conservation, education, tourism and outdoor adventure activities, as well as a wildlife hospital and a brumby rehoming centre.

The idea of Brumby Wonderland was suggested by Animal Care Australia's Horse & Livestock Members, in response to the NSW government's plan to cull thousands of brumbies from the park to protect the native flora and fauna. Animal Care Australia opposes aerial culling of horses due to welfare concerns but supports an improvement to management of the horses. A One Welfare model recognises the connection between animal welfare, biodiversity, environment and human wellbeing, and could be a model to follow to find middle ground solutions that protect the environment and native animals as well as the heritage of Australia's wild horses.

Neglecting animals and then mass culling them cannot honestly be called "animal management". The previous failures to oversee these horses appropriately has led us to this current situation. The NSW government now has an opportunity to address this with viable, long term, higher welfare solutions – for all of the animals involved.

Animal Care Australia proposes the NSW Government urgently adopts a One Welfare model: recognising that animal welfare, biodiversity and environment are connected to human wellbeing. To achieve this, Animal Care Australia calls on the NSW Government to oversee the establishment of a multi-faceted environmental centre, with a brumby sanctuary and outdoor adventure activities - all open to the public.

This centre would manage nature conservation through planned re-wilding, with a wildlife hospital, veterinary clinic and an animal care educational facility, a brumby rehoming centre, museum, tourism and

include outdoor adventure activities offering interactive experiences with trained brumbies, as well as accommodation and dining. The centre would provide a contained space for the brumbies to continue to exist, be cared for and appreciated, as well as engage with community outreach programs on a multitude of levels.

Brumby Wonderland is not yet a reality, but a vision that hopes to solve the current conflict between environmentalists and brumby advocates by bringing both sides together to work towards a common goal. Animal Care Australia has a broad model for how this could be funded and established, and how it would become self-sufficient into the future, to the benefit of the community as well as all of the animals involved, both native and introduced.

Animal Care Australia has submitted to a review by the NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service and a NSW Parliamentary Inquiry. Both submissions can be download here:

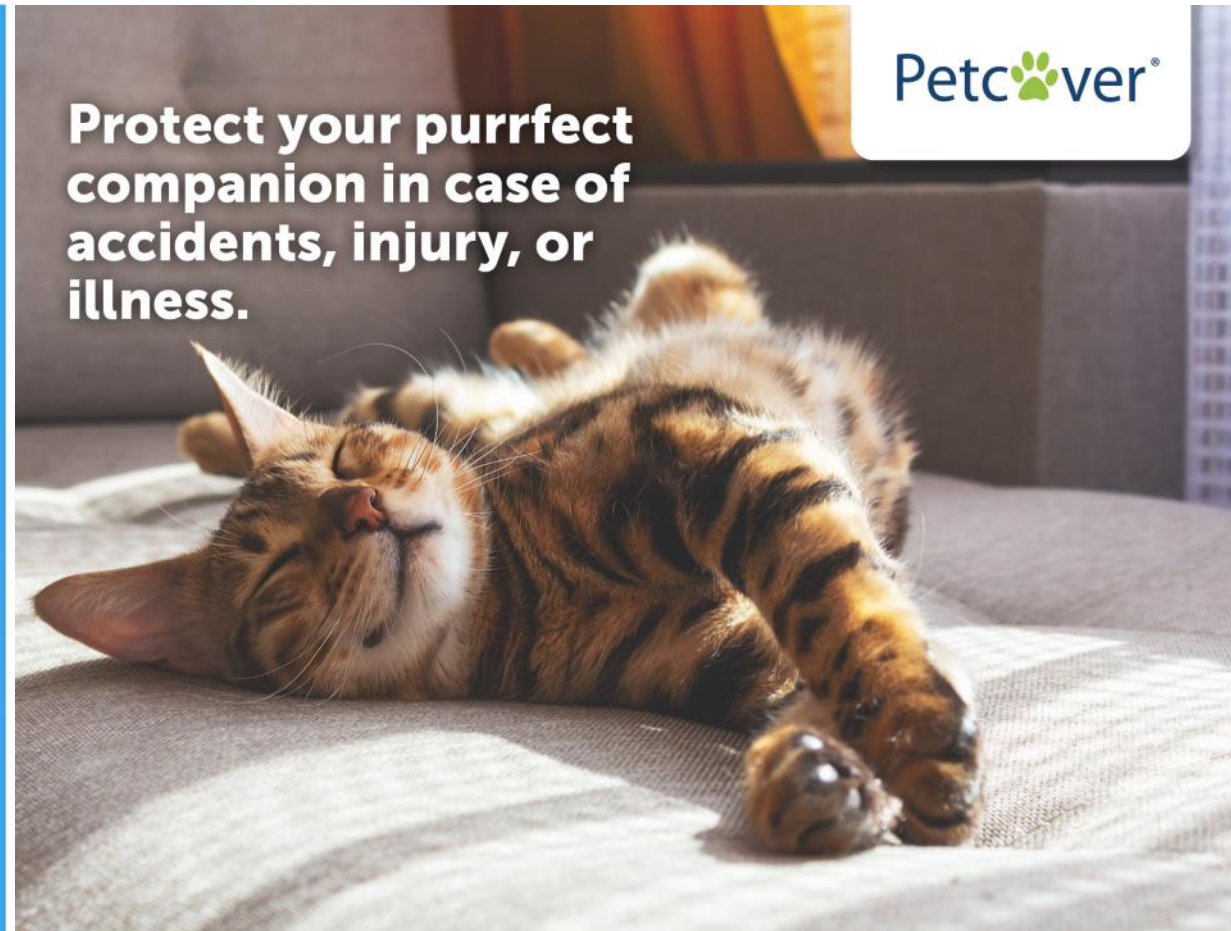


NPWS



Inquiry

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## *Reptile Societies: Essential for the hobby and conservation*

*By Joanne Payne — ACA Reptile & Amphibian Representative*

In the vast and diverse world of wildlife, reptiles often take a backseat to more popular and charismatic creatures. However, behind the scenes, reptile societies are quietly making a significant impact on conservation efforts, education, and community outreach.

Let's delve into the fascinating realm of these scaly ambassadors and explore the good they do for our planet. Reptile societies play a crucial role in conserving endangered species and their habitats. By collaborating with scientists, conservationists, and government agencies, these societies contribute to research and breeding programs aimed at preserving threatened reptile populations. Whether it's the increasingly endangered reptile species or the ever-expanding hobby trade, these organizations work tirelessly to ensure a future where these creatures can thrive.

One of the primary missions of reptile societies is to dispel myths and misconceptions surrounding



reptiles. Through educational programs, workshops, and outreach events, they strive to foster a deeper understanding and appreciation for these often-misunderstood creatures.

By showcasing the beauty, diversity, and importance of reptiles in ecosystems, these societies empower communities to become stewards of the environment.

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### *Animal welfare is animal care.*

Reptile societies actively engage with communities to promote responsible pet ownership and ethical reptile keeping practices. Through workshops, seminars, shows and online resources, they provide valuable information on proper care, nutrition, and housing for pet reptiles. This not only ensures the well-being of individual animals but also helps prevent the release of non-native species into the wild, safeguarding local ecosystems.

Scientific research on reptiles is essential for a comprehensive understanding of their biology, behaviour, and ecological roles. Reptile societies often fund and support research initiatives, contributing to our knowledge of these incredible creatures.



This research not only aids in conservation efforts but also enhances our understanding of broader ecological systems. Reptile societies serve as hubs for collaboration among researchers, hobbyists, and conservationists. By fostering a sense of community, these organisations create a network that shares knowledge, resources, and best practices.

This collaborative approach strengthens the collective impact of individuals and groups working towards a common goal – the well-

being and conservation of reptiles.

Reptile societies stand as unsung heroes in the realm of conservation and education. Their dedication to the well-being of reptiles, commitment to community engagement, and contribution to scientific advancements make them invaluable partners in the effort to protect our planet's biodiversity.

As we continue to uncover the mysteries of the reptilian world, let's celebrate and support these organizations for the vital role they play in building a harmonious coexistence between humans and reptiles.



**REMINDER — HAVE YOU RENEWED?**

**ACA needs you!**



# IT'S TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

So we can support you and  
your pets!



**"Animal welfare is animal care"**

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

Animal welfare by the experts — those who keep, care for and breed animals



## Re-appointment of ACA Committee

ACA's AGM was held on Monday 13th November 2023 via Zoom.

All end of term Committee members (Species representatives) were returned to their positions un-opposed.

Committee positions re-elected are:

- ⇒ Birds (Sam Davis)
- ⇒ Exhibited Animals (Tracey Dierikx)
- ⇒ Small Mammals (Rachel Sydenham)

Vacant Committee positions still available

- ⇒ Fish & Aquatic Species Representative
- ⇒ Insects & Arachnid Species Representative

Office-bearers position for Vice President was elected by the newly elected Committee. Sam Davis was returned to this position un-opposed.

If you know of anyone or you may be interested in filling the two vacant Species Representatives positions please email me at:

[secretary@animalcareaustralia.org.au](mailto:secretary@animalcareaustralia.org.au)

Michelle Grayson

Secretary

ACA is currently seeking funding support

*"Animal Care Australia has grown. We have formed new subcommittees of volunteers to help keep pace with the ever-increasing workload.*

*Our membership and supporter base continues to increase, and yet this still does not feel strong enough to take on the ever-increasing rhetoric of animal rights extremists.*

*Being a small team of unpaid volunteers is a huge challenge, and without substantial funding will remain so. Animal Care Australia would benefit from a kind, animal loving benefactor, with some funding support."*



You can donate here:

<https://www.animalcareaustralia.org.au/donate-to-aca/>



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### Snake awareness Info –

Excerpt from article by [Nature4U](#)

The warmer weather has resulted in seeing a lot of snakes on the move.

While it is impossible to totally snake proof your yard there are some things you can do to minimise the amount of snakes that you may potentially encounter.

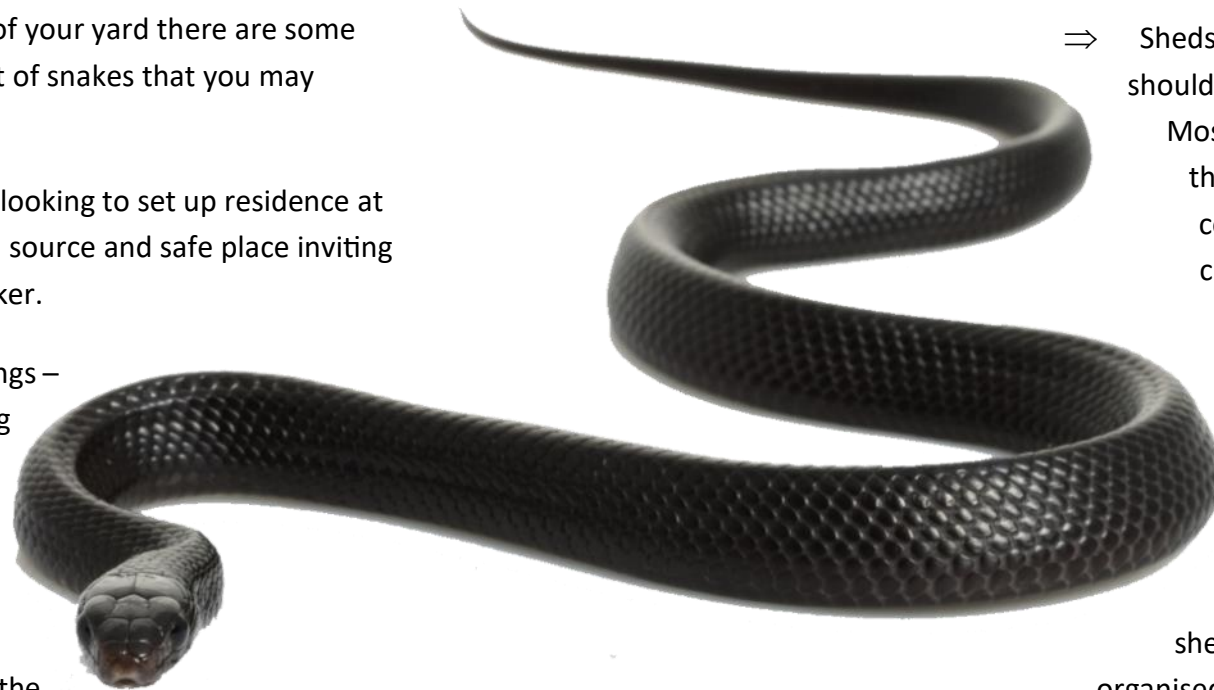
Snakes pass through – they usually aren't looking to set up residence at your place but if there is no constant food source and safe place inviting them to stay, they will move on a lot quicker.

Right now they will be looking for two things – food and a mate to breed with. By keeping a tidy yard you will cut down the food option.

⇒ Keep yards mowed as low as possible. Long grass provides somewhere for not only snakes but the animals and amphibians they prey upon somewhere to hide. If it is not possible to keep grass as short as possible wear closed in shoes and long pants. If you are worried about your four-legged friend and snakes, train your dogs to stay beside you in these areas.

⇒ Don't leave rubbish lying around. If it doesn't fit in the bin take it to the tip. Like long grass, rubbish will provide protection for both snakes and rodents alike.

⇒ Make sure any retaining walls are complete – holes in the walls are perfect hides for snakes.



⇒ Sheds and garages should be clutter free. Most of the time they are not completely closed in like houses, so it is extremely common for pythons to seek shelter in garages and sheds. If they are organised it is easier to

see if you have a visitor. (things will be moved, objects that were stored higher up may suddenly appear on the floor, and you may find excrement on the floor)

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- ⇒ A high fence is not a guarantee that you will not have visitors. There is an old wives tale that venomous snakes don't climb only pythons do. Not true. Venomous snakes may prefer to utilise the ground but won't hesitate to climb a tree or fence if they are able to find food.
- ⇒ \*Always wear closed in shoes, especially at night. Whilst thongs are a lot more comfortable to wear in summer, they provide no protection should strike toward you.
- ⇒ Don't put your hands where you cannot see them. Snakes don't go out of their way to bite people, but when startled it is their mode of defence.
- ⇒ \*If you have outside pets make sure their feeding area is always clean and preferably away from the house. Food attracts rodents. Rodents attract snakes.
- ⇒ Wiring on cages and enclosures should be as small as possible. A snake won't differentiate that the guinea pig is a pet, not a rodent.

There are some "repellers" on the market. They don't work. Please don't use glue traps either.

If you are worried about your dog and live near bush, or a vacant property etc, look into some snake aversion courses.

Keep the name of your local snake catcher handy. A business card on the

fridge for both a snake catcher and your vet will help out anyone whilst you're not home, and save the snake catchers number in your phone. Save it under snake catcher so you don't need to remember their name in a hurry!

Familiarise yourself with the species of snakes that are in your area, and with their appearance.

If you are unable to confidently identify a snake you spot, from a safe distance take a photo and send it to your local snake catcher. They should offer a free identification service.



Photo: [Townsville Snake Catchers](#)

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## ACA presenting an International Circus Award

Animal Care Australia was invited by Jasmine Straga, Director World Circus Federation and the Australian Circus Festival to assist in providing an Award at the **1st International Circus Festival Golden Horse, Bulgaria Awards**.

Jasmine suggested a recipient that she had seen doing wonderful work with Macaws, and strongly believed people should be congratulated for their high standards. Animal Care Australia could not agree more.

On behalf of Animal Care Australia, Jasmine Straga presented **Benjamin Pfeiffer** with the award for **'Excellence with the human animal bond'**.

So often those who work with an care for animals within the entertainment industry are either overlooked or accused of being cruel to animals when that simply isn't the case. Animal Care Australia strongly supports those within the community who train and care for the animals with the highest welfare and who develop fantastic human to animal bonds.

It was our pleasure to recognise Ben as one of those outstanding individuals.



If you know someone who works with, trains, or cares for animals and has an excellent work ethic that has built a strong human animal bond, we'd love to hear about them.

Throughout 2024 Animal Care Australia will be looking to present awards of excellence and change the narrative back to one of caring and responsible ownership.

You can email us at: [aca@animalcareaustralia.org.au](mailto:aca@animalcareaustralia.org.au) and tell us who you think we should consider.

Photos: [francois-dehurtevent.com](http://francois-dehurtevent.com)







## **Please Don't Feed the Horses!**

*By Karri Nadazdy— ACA Horse & Livestock Representative*

### Animal welfare is animal care.

Feeding horses over the fence might seem like a harmless and friendly gesture, there are several reasons why it's best to avoid doing so:

1. **It Can Be Deadly:** Some foods can be toxic for horses, and have serious consequences. The horse may not become sick for some hours after you have fed it, and the owner will not know what has happened to inform the vet. Some horses have food intolerances and allergies too, and the owner will not why their management is not working.
2. **Diets:** Many horse owners carefully manage their horses' diets. They might have restricted or special feeds for specific health conditions, be monitoring calorie intake to increase or reduce weight, or be on a strict diet to resolve a vitamin or mineral imbalance. Unplanned treats can disrupt this careful balance.
3. **Sudden Dietary Changes:** Any dietary changes for horses should be made very gradually over a week or more to prevent serious, and sometimes sudden health issues. Horses have a symbiotic relationship with the good bacteria in their digestive system to help them digest starchy foods, and it's the bacteria that cannot handle sudden changes. Things like fresh lawn clippings ferment in the horse's stomach, killing the helpful microbiome that the horse depends on. Without healthy bacteria, horses can suffer painful colic. As horses are unable to vomit, colic can be fatal, even with the best veterinary treatment.
4. **It's not safe for the horse:** Horse owners try to minimize

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### Animal welfare is animal care.

their horse's contact with perimeter fencing. This is especially true if its barbed wire or another structure that could injure the horse. So it is not helpful to encourage horses to approach, touch, lean on or against fences, as those fences will eventually give way. The fences are there to keep the horse safely contained and off roads and out of other properties. This could result in unnecessary injury to the horse, along with a big vet bill. Damage to fencing because horses are trying to reach snacks they shouldn't be having is very costly to the owner too.

5. **It's not safe for you:** Horses can react unpredictably, especially if they're startled, protective or fighting their friend to get the treats you are offering. It can also teach them to nip, bite or snatch at fingers – putting the owner or their children at risk too.

While the idea of feeding horses is heartwarming for you, and might make the horse happy in the short term, try to appreciate the owners' care and responsibility for the horse and do not feed them over the fence. If you really can't help yourself, ask the horse owner first to ensure you are not causing any harm. It's not enough to know what's safe for most horses, each horse is an individual. Don't be upset if the owner says no to snacks over the fence. They are just being a responsible horse owner!

You can be a good friend to horses by admiring them from a respectful distance.



## Protect your purrfect companion in case of accidents, injury, or illness.

### Cover benefits:

- ✓ Eligible vet fees up to \$15,000
- ✓ Range of plans to suit all budgets
- ✓ Easy claims process
- ✓ No waiting period for injury

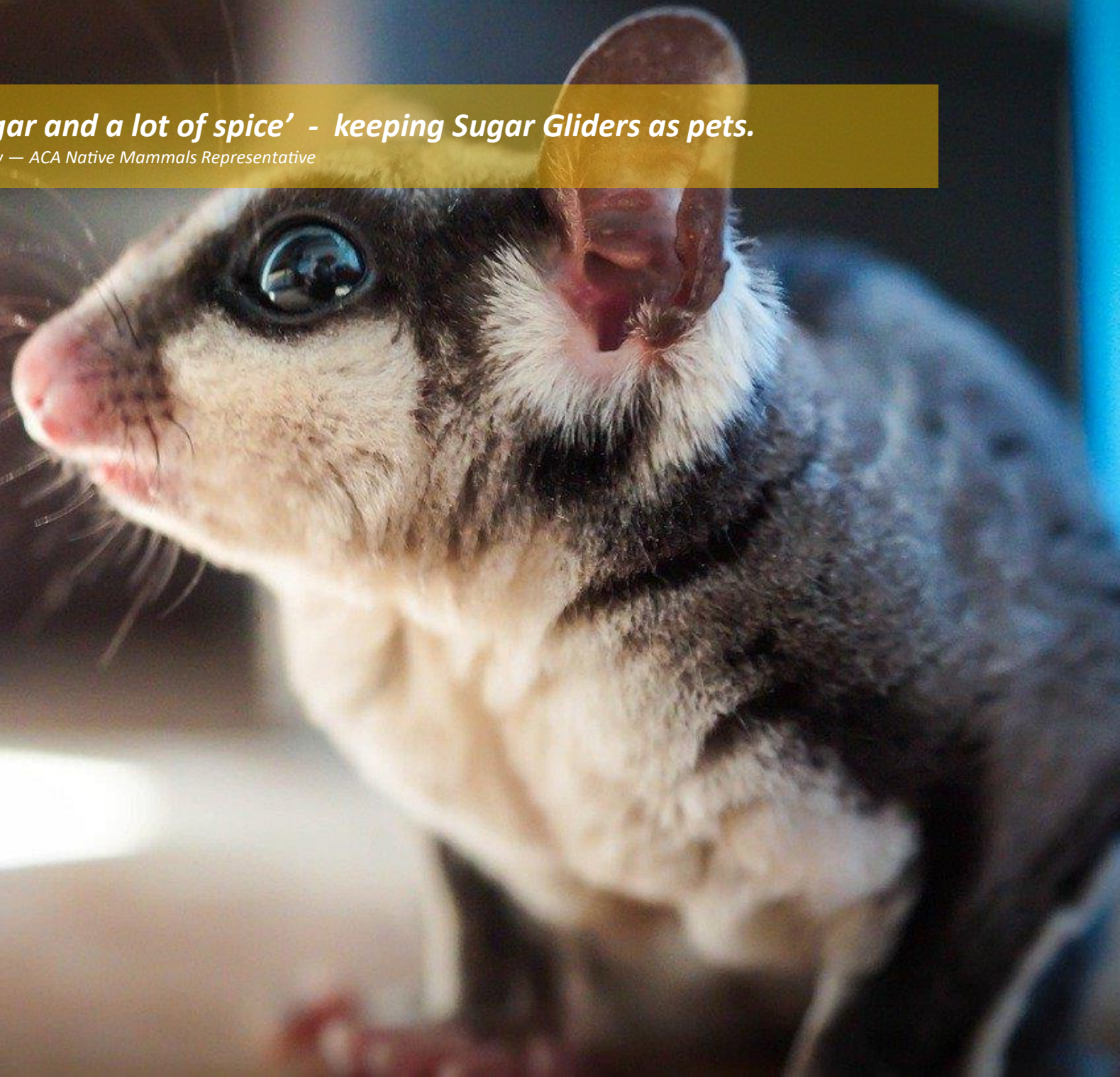
For peace of mind cover for your cat, visit [petcovergroup.com/au](https://petcovergroup.com/au) or call **1300 731 324**.

\* Terms and conditions apply. Cover is subject to terms and conditions, and eligibility criteria, excludes pre-existing conditions, excesses, and waiting periods apply. Please consider the PDS and TMD available on our website, before deciding to purchase the product. Issued by Sovereign Insurance Australia (ABN 85 138 079 286 AFS License Number 342516).



***'A little sugar and a lot of spice' - keeping Sugar Gliders as pets.***

*By Michael Donnelly — ACA Native Mammals Representative*





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Sugar gliders are small, cute, and unique little marsupials that are native to Australia and parts of Indonesia. They have grey fur and black markings.

Sugar gliders make for playful, curious, and social pets, but they are not for beginner pet owners. Here are some things to consider before acquiring a sugar glider:

- ◆ Sugar gliders are legal to own as pets in Victoria, South Australia, and the Northern Territory. However, they are not permitted to be kept as pets in Western Australia, New South Wales, the Australian Capital Territory, Queensland, or Tasmania.
- ◆ Sugar gliders require a large, escape-proof enclosure or aviary with branches, vines, enrichment toys, and hiding places. You should line the bottom of the inside cage with newspaper or other recycled paper product that is non-toxic if ingested and avoid shavings that are not native to Australia (such as cedar, pine, etc). Regular cleaning of the cage is necessary.

- ◆ Sugar gliders require a balanced diet of bugs, fruits, vegetables, and sugar glider food pellets twice daily and unlimited access to fresh water
- ◆ Sugar gliders are very social and do best when they live in pairs. Having two sugar gliders will keep your pets happy and reduce the amount of time you need to spend



socialising with them each day. If you do not have a second sugar glider to socialise as a pair, you will need to spend time every day handling and interacting with it. If you own other pets, bear in mind that a sugar glider may not be a good choice as an addition to your home and family, as they often do not do well with pets such as dogs or cats.

- ◆ Sugar gliders are impeccably clean, never require bathing, and are known to bond strongly to their human family when kept as domestic pets.
- ◆ When cared for correctly, sugar gliders have an average lifespan of between 12-15 years

The cost of keeping a sugar glider as a pet in Australia can vary depending on several factors, such as the initial purchase price, cage and setup, monthly food and supplies, and annual veterinary costs. Here are things to consider when determining if you can afford to keep a sugar glider:

- **Purchasing/Adopting:** The cost of purchasing or adopting a sugar glider varies in different

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states and with different sellers. It is important you research costs from multiple sellers and you contact each seller to ask as many questions as possible. Knowing that the seller has a great understanding and knowledge of keeping sugar gliders will help ensure your potential new Glider has been well cared for. Infants typically cost more than adults because they are easier to train and settle in to their new environment.

- **Enclosure and Setup:** Sugar gliders require a large, escape-proof enclosure or better still – an aviary. Research and shop around for the right sized enclosure/cage. Regardless of the cage or an aviary - native branches should be provided with varying thickness to ensure proper exercise of their muscles and tendons. The ability to glide regularly (daily) is also important to physical fitness. Ask other Glider owners what they have and work out what suits your circumstances the best when deciding whether to keep your gliders inside or outside.
- **Annual Veterinary Costs:** Factoring in

veterinary costs for sugar gliders can be difficult – but should count on ensuring your glider has a regular (annual) checkup. Contact your nearest vet to first see if they have the necessary knowledge about gliders, and will be willing to treat your glider/s. If not, ask them to refer you to a specialist vet. Once you have a vet, check out the costs a standard visit/exam etc and try to put some money aside each month as a saving fund in the event you glider/s requires further treatments.

- **Monthly Food and Supplies:** Sugar gliders require a balanced diet of bugs, fruits, and vegetables, along with protein from various sources (primarily insects). These should be twice daily and they must have unlimited access to fresh water. Fresh native flowers should be provided when in bloom.

Sugar Gliders are often labelled as ‘pocket pets’ which I personally do not support as it gives the wrong impression of the requirements and level of commitment required to keep these adorable animals. While will enjoy snuggling with you



(even in a pocket) they really are not pets that you should consider having if you do not have the time, finances or willingness to devote full care to. They cannot just be thrown into a cage and be fed when you feel like it, or left for days on end without proper interaction—this is particularly true for those kept indoors. There is a tad more leeway when they are outdoors in a large aviary and in pairs.

Having said that, it would be wonderful if more people could in fact keep Gliders and other native animals as pets. With the ever increasing destruction of the environment, pet owners may end up being the saviours of genetic diversity and it is high time government stopped listening to the ideological ramblings of animal rights influencers.

## Meet the Members — NSW Cat Fanciers' Association Inc

*By Michelle Grayson — ACA Cat Representative*



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NSW Cat Fanciers' Association Inc

Known colloquially as NSW CFA, we are one of the largest and most active Feline Registering Bodies in the Southern Hemisphere with a professional administration office processing thousands of registrations each year.

NSW CFA has 15 Affiliated Cat Clubs who hold annual cat shows allowing exhibitors of registered pedigree to promote their breed. We also have a Companion Cats class for those cats who aren't pure bred pedigree cats. Judging criteria is different with pure bred cats having to meet a set of breed standards, and a companion cat is judging mainly on personality.

We also work with 6 Agricultural Societies "Ag Shows" where there is a cat show held.

Our mission is:

- To promote and raise the standards of breeding of pure bred cats;
- To promote and encourage the breeding of pure bred cats;
- To promote and encourage the showing of pure bred and companion cats;
- To educate the members and the general public in all aspects of cat ownership

- To promote, encourage and assist feline veterinary research.

Our Philosophy is to facilitate enjoyment and promote responsible cat ownership.

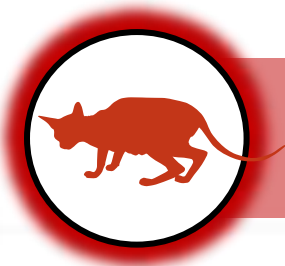
In 2020, we returned to a partnership with the Royal Agricultural Society in NSW (RAS) and have run a cat competition on Easter Saturday, and attended the Breed Display Days. In 2023, we partnered with the Cat Lovers Festival to hold a cat competition as part of the expo.

Our membership consists of pet owners and breeders, and all are held to a Code of Ethics which upholds animal welfare standards.

NSW CFA has a management committee of between 9 to 12 members, and all financial members are able eligible to nominate for the vacancies that occur each year.

More information about NSW Cat Fanciers' Association Inc can be found on our website – [www.nswcfa.asn.au](http://www.nswcfa.asn.au)





## *Declawing of Cats in Australia*

*By Michelle Grayson — ACA Cat Representative*



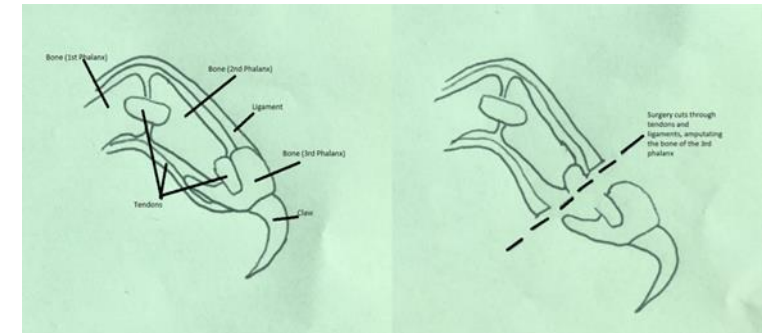
## Animal welfare is animal care.

The practice of declawing, known as onychectomy, is viewed as inhumane and has been illegal in Australia since 2007. Under Australian law, anyone performing a declawing procedure can be fined up to \$44,000 or up to 12 months in prison.

Declawing is a painful and invasive procedure for cats. The procedure involves the amputation of the last bone, including the nail bed and claw, of each toe.

Cat's claws are closely attached to the bone and cutting them off involves not just removing the claw itself but also the attached bone, tendons, and ligaments. This can lead to a variety of physical and behavioral issues, including:

- ◇ Pain: Cats may experience acute pain after the surgery, and the pain can persist during the recovery period.
- ◇ Nerve Damage: Declawing may result in damage to nerves in the paws. This can lead to long-term discomfort, altered sensation, and changes in behavior.
- ◇ Behavioral Changes: Declawing can lead to behavioral changes such as increased aggression, biting, and reluctance to use the litter box due to pain associated with scratching.
- ◇ Gait Abnormalities: Cats may develop an altered way of walking as a result of the surgery, which can lead to long-term discomfort.
- ◇ Complications: Complications, including infection, nerve damage, and prolonged healing, can occur after the surgery.
- ◇ Emotional Impact: The procedure can cause stress and anxiety for the cat, leading to changes in temperament and potential long-term psychological effects.
- ◇ Difficulty in Balance and Climbing: Cats rely on their claws for balance and climbing. Declawing can interfere with these natural behaviors, leading to difficulties in balancing and climbing.



Nail care is an essential part of any cat's health and welfare. Regular nail trimming is important to help keep cats' nails healthy and from growing too

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long. Additionally, there are several products available that can help protect your furniture (and your body!) from a cat's claws.

Scratching Posts

Scratching posts come in many different varieties and types. Some are designed to hang from any door handle or wall hook, making it convenient and easy for cats to use, while others are just placed on the floor. Some also come with catnip, which encourages cats to scratch the post instead of furniture. Scratching posts can also be made from many different textures, including sisal rope and even carpet. Many of them also have platforms and condos on top or underneath to give your cat space to rest and play.



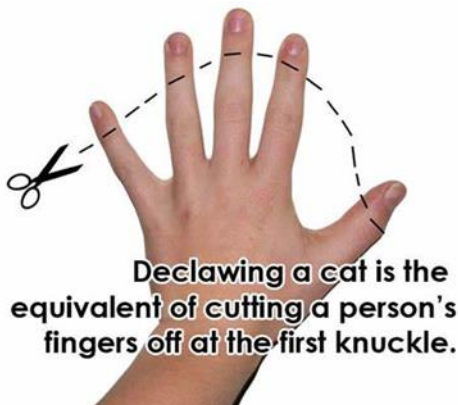
Cat Claw Scissors

These scissors are designed specifically for cats, making it easier to trim their nails without accidentally cutting too deep. They're easy to hold and grip, and they're sharp enough to cut quickly without cracking or splitting the nail.

Cat Deterrent Sprays

These sprays are formulated to discourage cats from scratching furniture and other surfaces. Many are made with natural ingredients, and don't contain any harsh chemicals or toxins.

And finally, for those of you who aren't familiar with feline anatomy, declawing a cat is comparable to amputating a human finger at the last joint.....





## ***Encouraging “youth” (under, say 50) participation in aviculture***

*By: Sam Davis — ACA Bird Representative*





## *Animal welfare is animal care.*

Do you know what relieves the stress of daily life most for me? Yes, it's sitting watching my birds do their thing, and I'm guessing this is the same for many readers. I have a large planted aviary where I can sit, have a coffee, or beer (only after midday of course) and just wind down. Watching finches, wrens, etc. going about their business clears my head, such a peaceful experience – many of you know what I mean. It's a very individual time being alone watching aviary birds is such a valuable part of the whole avicultural experience and it must be good for one's mental and probably physical health.

For avid bird watchers or twitchers, I'm sure the motivation is similar. To experience, observe and appreciate nature, birds in our case, is what motivates us and is likely why we got involved in aviculture in the first place. I often describe myself as a lazy twitcher – in my aviaries I'm guaranteed to see a whole range of species, whilst in the field the effort is significant and not always fruitful. Some years ago, I attended a number of Birdlife events in Sydney, it was notable just how many older Birdlife member's interest was initially sparked due to a pet bird, often budgerigar, or a backyard aviary with a few finches, diamond doves and king quail. They understood birds from a young age and that interest continued throughout life.

Sadly, the number of children keeping birds is declining, although I understand there was a positive surge of interest during COVID which has now abated. Many clubs have programs aiming to attract or encourage young bird keepers. Queensland Finch Society sponsors young keepers with donated aviaries and complimentary conference packages,

and I know many other clubs have a range of terrific programs and initiatives in place. Sadly, the reality is that few youngsters take up these initiatives.

So what is going wrong? There is no shortage of young people interested in nature and conservation, in fact it's an area that is exploding. More and more students go on to study ecology, conservation, environmental science and related disciplines at tertiary level. Are these the same people that in decades past would have kept birds? I believe it is likely. A thought - is there a way we can help merge aviculture with these disciplines?

Ornithology is generally defined as the scientific study of birds, the branch of zoology concerned with the study of birds. In the past ornithology included conservation, it included bird watching and ornithology also included aviculture – conservation, bird watching and aviculture were completely entwined, and nobody thought otherwise.

Over time - the last 50 years or so – aviculture has, for some reason separated from ornithology in the minds of many. Aviculture has been relegated, in many conservation and even bird watching circles, to a hobby activity with consequent ignorance of our



## *Animal welfare is animal care.*

expertise and knowledge base. There is a significant number who see aviculture as a negative - keeping birds in cages against their will. They may accept aviculture as part of threatened species captive breed and release programs, but do not support the practice of aviculture as a valid private pursuit. A growing number oppose pet birds, and more and more oppose the competitive side of aviculture where birds are bred to show standards.

So what can we as aviculturists do to improve the public perception of aviculture in conservation circles, and maybe encourage more young people to enjoy and appreciate the benefits of aviculture?

I don't have any easy answers, and I'd say a range of strategies is the way forward. Here's a few thoughts and a bit of a ramble to consider...

Increasing use of internet technologies must be encouraged. In previous editions of ABK, I discussed new delivery methods for meetings and sharing information via a range of internet-based technologies. YouTube, Facebook, Instagram and other social media platforms are critical to getting our message out. A few notable clubs are now streaming meetings online using video conferencing applications such as Zoom and Microsoft's Teams. Those under 50 years of age communicate using such internet technologies almost exclusively, so we must adapt and integrate such technologies into



all we do. I plan creating a technical guide to setting up Zoom for use at bird club meetings in a future ABK issue.

The zoo community in Australia (and in many countries internationally) continues the link between conservation and aviculture and they do it well. In addition, zoos have greatly improved animal welfare in recent decades. Can we learn from their work?

There was a period, 1980s, when zoos were in real trouble from animal rights influences. The claim was that animals in zoos were not treated well, and to be fair animal welfare in many zoos was poor, particularly by today's standards. Zoos responded – they reinvented themselves as conservation organisations but they also ensured animal welfare is front and centre of all they do.

The commonly quoted five domains of animal welfare (Refer ACA graphic - <https://www.animalcareaustralia.org.au/aca-welfare-policies/?> ) are now all critical to the management of all animals in zoo exhibits and aviculture in all its guises must do the same. It is no longer acceptable to simply ensure the survival of animals through nutrition, disease and shelter management. Now quality of life matters, behavioural and mental aspects of animal management are integral to the management of all we do. Aviculture has lifted its game substantially in all five of the animal welfare domains, now we must promote our credentials in these areas, including denouncing those in our ranks who do not comply.

We must celebrate our high animal welfare standards widely. The

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general public should just know that birds in our homes and aviaries are receiving the best care, both physically, behaviourally and mentally.

In terms of conservation, zoos reinvented themselves as conservation organisations rather than animal collections or zoological parks. Rows of concrete floored barren cages each holding a different species are out in favour of habitat enclosures and sustainable breeding programs. It is no longer acceptable to take from the wild simply to restock cages. Animals performing human-like tricks are out and educational presentations that show natural

behaviours are now the norm. Threatened species captive breeding programs are now central to the efforts of most zoos, rather than an indulgence. Zoos are now viewed positively by all but the most extreme animal rights activists.

Can private aviculture learn from these lessons?

Our biggest advantage is our numbers. There are many magnitudes more birds kept in private aviculture compared to in zoos. Our detailed knowledge of individual species, in particular breeding expertise is impressive – if we can just get the message out to the conservation and wider community.

Many of our relatively common species are threatened in the wild, a number are critically endangered, and some are close to extinct in the wild. Aviculture is preserving species for the long term. Common aviary species, like the Swift Parrot, Golden-shouldered Parrot. Gouldian Finch and Southern Black-throated Finch are just a few of our threatened native species. Java Sparrows, Sun Conures and Red Siskins are just some exotic threatened species whose population is secure in aviculture.

There are a number of flagship conservation programs led by or significantly supported by aviculture.:

- ◇ The Save the Gouldian Fund and its work both in the Wyndham region with wild birds and at previously at its research facility.

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[www.savethegouldian.net](http://www.savethegouldian.net)

- ◇ The Association for the Conservation of Threatened Parrots (ACTP) based out of Berlin has a range of flagship programs including the recent return of the Spix's Macaw to the wild.

[www.act-parrots.org](http://www.act-parrots.org)

- ◇ The Red Siskin Initiative led by the Smithsonian institute is currently working with the remnant populations in Venezuela including establishing a captive population for release.

[www.redsiskin.org](http://www.redsiskin.org)

- ◇ Work on conserving Golden-shouldered Parrots continues at Artemis Station in far North Queensland.

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

- ◇ The recent program to find the Black-throated Finch in NSW led by the Australian Society for Avian Preservation Limited.

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

We should support all the above programs and others like them. At the same time, we should celebrate the

preservation of avian species within aviculture. Sadly, many wild populations, in the medium to long term, are unlikely to survive the human onslaught of development, industry, and climate change. Aviculture preserves these species for future generations whether or not habitat rehabilitation and release to the wild is ever a possibility.

Conservation, preservation, and animal welfare are high on the list of issues regularly identified by surveys of young people, and are matters aviculture addresses well. We need to explain these issues but we must also describe the essence of bird keeping to young people - the enjoyment of observation, the satisfaction of mastering the husbandry and breeding of a species, together with the value in terms of conservation and preservation of species.

We must get on the front foot if aviculture is to continue. There are pressures from animal rights groups all over the world that are shutting down many aspects of bird keeping. Now is not the time to put our head in the sand and pretend all will be okay, it is not okay. These animal rights groups intend to shut down all captive animal keeping, and they are winning. We must motivate the younger generation. Some will participate directly in aviculture, but having the bulk understand and support aviculture would be a game changer.

**Can I encourage all to promote aviculture to ensure the future of aviculture.**



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## President's Roundup

By Michael Donnelly

### Another year over!

Once again the Animal Care Australia Committee have gone above and beyond in this past year.

The commitment displayed by the Committee — all volunteers — to meet and manage the workload and expansion of issues directly affecting animal welfare outcomes in Australia has been met phenomenal.

I've said it before and it is warranted again, it is truly an honour to be the President of Animal Care Australia where I get to not only work alongside these wonderful people. Unless you do what we do, it is hard to comprehend the level of professionalism, experience and dedication they bring to the table.

For that I am deeply thankful to each and every member: Sam, Michelle, Sue, Joanne, Karri, Kylie, Rachel and Tracey.

I would also like to acknowledge the assistance from the members of our State & Territory Advisory Team.

ACA continued to respond to animal welfare Act reviews in New

South Wales, Victoria, Queensland South Australia and Tasmania.

Our consultations have covered the gauntlet of animal based topics. Everything from pets in strata, pet victims of domestic violence, animal rescues & shelters, participation in Impound Act, Cat Management Strategy, Pet Census, Veterinary, Biosecurity and Conservation Act reviews, proposed amendments to enshrine sentience into legislation, banning of training tools such as prong collars, and other forms of restraints, to prohibition for convicted animal cruelty criminals, local council Animal Management Plan reviews, pet registry consultations and last but by no means least stop puppy farming legislation in NSW, that will not stop puppy farms, but will reduce the number of responsible breeders, as what has occurred in Victoria.

As per every year, Animal Care Australia's largest battle continued with the ever growing influence of the animal rights extremist movement. A movement that this past year spread from no longer just the Animal Justice Party but to include the Greens Party. So many of their pre-election policies in both Victoria and New South Wales included a substantially higher number of animal rights agenda-based policies. This change is impacting on all levels, in all states.

The insistence from the Animal Justice Party to change their language from 'animal welfare' to 'animal protection' has continued to infiltrate the animal welfare Act reviews in some states and we have not been successful in

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convincing government to drop the changes.

Success or not, Animal Care Australia is having a direct impact on the approach by animal rights political parties — with notable changes in language, policy pages being re-worded and approaches to issues becoming increasingly public-friendly. It could be argued this is to our own detriment as now the devil is purely hidden in the details and it is no longer as easy to highlight the true agendas to the public.

On the political front Animal Care Australia has continued to secure working relationships with the majority of parties.

Despite elections in Victoria and New South Wales that resulted in a change of Government in one state and new ministers in both states, we are consulting regularly with state governments and their opposition in NSW, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia. In New South Wales our collaboration with the Shooters, Fishers & Farmers Party continues strongly and we now have standing agreements of continued collaboration with the Liberal Democrat, and One Nation. as well as the majority of Independents in the Legislative Assembly.

In Queensland we continued our working relationships with the Katter Party, and on a Federal level with One Nation. Our strong relationship with the Victorian Shooters, Fishers & Farmers Party also continues following their return during the election.

Animal Care Australia has also strengthened our focus on pursuing greater accountability and transparency of the RSPCA (in all states) and we have been collating the feedback from our members on their experiences with the inspectorates in order to respond to upcoming Inquiries. Animal Care Australia will continually strive to have the prosecutorial powers removed from the RSPCA and inspectorates under the direct responsibility of government. We will continue to advocate for change.

Finally, I thank everyone for all of the support we have received and would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a safe and happy Holiday Season and New Year.

See you all in 2024!



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**FAMILY**



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**Executive**



**Michael Donnelly**  
President



**Sam Davis**  
Vice-President



**Michelle Grayson**  
Secretary



**Sue Kowalczyk**  
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## MISSION STATEMENT

**“Animal Care Australia (ACA) is the Peak Animal Welfare Body representing the keepers and breeders of pet and companion animals in Australia”.**

ACA encourages continued development of animal welfare standards and Codes of Practice for animal husbandry, breeding, training, sale and sporting exhibitions for a wide range of animal species. Our goal is to promote and encourage high standards in all interactions with the animals in our care. To encourage responsible pet ownership, and the respectful treatment of all animals in our community ACA continues to promote welfare education over regulation



## OBJECTIVES

- To represent Animal Care Groups as the peak animal welfare body
- To engage and advise Government and legislators on welfare issues relating to pets and companion animals.
- To protect the rights of ethical hobbyists & animal keepers to breed and keep pets and companion animals.
- To clarify the difference between animal rights and animal welfare
- To promote higher animal welfare outcomes



## ACA GENERAL MEETINGS 2024

**7.30 to 8.30pm**

**MARCH 11th**

**MAY 13th**

**JULY 8th**

**SEPTEMBER 9th**

**NOVEMBER 11th — AGM**

**Meetings in 2024 will continue via Zoom to ensure members nationwide can attend.**

Any member wishing to join a meeting will need to RSVP by no later than 5pm on that Monday via email: [aca@animalcareaustralia.org.au](mailto:aca@animalcareaustralia.org.au) with your details. A link for the meeting will be emailed to you.



**Animal Care Australia Inc.**

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