

The Animal Care Expert

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



In this issue:

- ACA gives testimony at Inquiry in animal cruelty
- QANTAS review of snub-nosed dogs & cats
- *Plus lots more.*



General Meetings

Held bi-monthly

Our next General Meeting is Monday March 9th, 7.30pm, in the Upstairs Lounge at the Commercial Hotel Parramatta—2 Hassall St Parramatta.

General Enquiries:

aca@animalcareaustralia.org.au



President's Report

By: Michael Donnelly

Welcome to a new year. It saddens us to know some members have been impacted by the bushfires. We have heard of losses of aviaries, enclosures and sadly animals and beloved pets.

To all of those affected—our deepest sympathies to you and your families.

New Project

In response to the catastrophic impact the bushfires have had in Australia **Animal Care Australia** and **The Mammal Society of NSW** have jointly founded **Habitat Care**. I invite you to check out the article in this newsletter and we hope to see many of you volunteering over the coming months.

Development of Policies

Over the past couple of months — ACA has been busy developing, approving and implementing new policies. The most important of those already implemented are:

- ACA Organisational Code Of Ethics
- Anti-discrimination & Harassment Policy and
- Responsible Breeders Policy
- Conflicts Of Interest Policy

In addition we have developed an Operations Manual which includes a Statement of Responsibilities for all Animal Group Delegates — ensuring your delegates will act in the best interests of our members and organisation.

Currently we are working on the final stages of the ACA Animal Welfare Policy & Position Statement, which will be made available in the coming month.

All of this while still communicating with Ministers, Local Councils, and appearing before Parliamentary Inquiries.

For more on all that please enjoy this edition of the **Animal Care Expert**.

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Select Committee Inquiry into Animal Cruelty

By Michael Donnelly

On Thursday 13th February 2020, Michael Donnelly (President) and Sam, Davis (Vice President) appeared as witnesses to provide testimony to the Select Committee on Animal Cruelty Laws in New South Wales. This is the first time ACA has received such high acknowledgement and recognition. In their opening statement the representatives from the Pet Industry Association of Australia (PIAA) Mr Barry Codling (PIAA President) and Mr John Parker (Membership Manager, PIAA) deferred to and supported the content and recommendations made by ACA in our submission. Those recommendations include:

- ⇒ RSPCA NSW/AWL to be more accountable and transparent in their actions and investigations with that accountability being overseen by the NSW Ombudsman Office or equivalent.
- ⇒ A review of the powers for enforcement focused on natural justice and the protection of the presumption of innocence until proven guilty. Animals are being seized and held for long periods of time on the presumption of guilt – this is not in the animal's best interest and often legal counsel recommends guilty pleas to avoid excessive fees, rather than on the merits of the case.
- ⇒ The prosecutorial stage of an investigation transferred to the Department of Public Prosecutions perhaps with a full time

funded police prosecutor working within RSPCA NSW and/or AWL.

- ⇒ ACA supports the need for more sustainable funding – but does not support this process being a fully government funded organisation - as this is contradictory to the term 'independent'.
- ⇒ With the current review of POCTAA - ACA recommends streamlining the Act ensuring a better stakeholder understanding of the Standards & Guidelines and with a stronger focus on education and welfare over prosecution. Having stated that, we equally support the strengthening of fines and sentencing terms of those found guilty of aggravated or intentional abuse.
- ⇒ To be clear, ACA opposes the implementation/creation of an Independent Welfare Organisation.

The Animal Justice Party called for this Inquiry as they would like to see the inspectorate functions of both RSPCA NSW and Animal Welfare League (AWL) removed to the above mentioned Independent Welfare Organisation.

This would not be the best interests of the animals or those of us who keep animals. A government department established by and potentially run by an animal rights political party is something we must avoid .



Habitat Care Project



Habitat Care is a project jointly founded by Animal Care Australia and the Mammal Society of NSW.

The recent catastrophic fires across Australia have resulted in the loss of a billion or more animals, along with the many varieties of flora that may take decades to recover.

Habitat Care is seeking volunteers who want to be involved in the recovery of our environment by doing more than just donating money. Recovery will require a long term project that will see habitats regenerated, rejuvenated and in time providing a place for wildlife to return home.

In conjunction with Landcare Australia, Intrepid Care, Greening Australia, and wildlife rescue groups, Habitat Care volunteers will be able to assist in:

- ◆ Re-planting projects – in both fire-affected and drought-affected areas

- ◆ Seed collection – join groups collecting the native seeds needed to grow replacement regeneration programs.
- ◆ Pest removal – help remove pest plant-life that occupies the soil and is destroying the chances of native regrowth.
- ◆ Wildlife feed and water assistance.
- ◆ Nest building – many areas need temporary homes for wildlife – help build them.
- ◆ Volunteer drivers – drivers are needed to transport food, water & medical supplies to wildlife caring groups.
- ◆ Plus more one-off projects as needed.

Donating money is great but for those who want to do more – to feel like you are doing something on the ground – helping our environment to recover - join us and help make a difference.

SIGN-UP <https://habitatcare.wufoo.com/forms/habitat-care-volunteer/>

JOIN: Habitat Care on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/habitatcare/>

FOLLOW: <https://www.facebook.com/habitatcare/>



Bird Report

By Sam Davis

Emma Hurst AJP meeting 3/12/19

ACA President Michael Donnelly and I met with Animal Justice Party (AJP) MP Emma Hurst on 3/12/19 to try to find common ground. Currently AJP policy is that birds should not be in cages of any type and this remains the case. I described a range of different aviary and cage setups from large planted aviaries housing threatened species through to highly domesticated setups for Budgerigars and Canaries and at all times animal welfare is a priority. Emma (and her NSW Director) expressed some sympathy for threatened species programs and they did make it clear that well managed bird collections were not a current priority, nevertheless Emma, just as we rose to leave did make it clear their policy of no birds in cages of any type will remain. It is my view, and I think Emma's, that we are best to keep the communication open despite our obvious and significant disagreement on central issues.

Victorian Animal Welfare legislation review

In December I spoke with the Manager of the review process. She is currently interviewing staff to build her team who will manage the review process. CCBFA will lead this process on behalf of our Victorian affiliate clubs. We already have a commitment from the head of animal welfare Victoria that we are major stakeholders who will be included in preliminary meetings to set the general direction of the review process. I will contact the VAC to ensure aviculture throughout Victoria is united.

NSW Native Animal Licensing Update.

The contract for the manager of the NSW licensing reforms process Robert Oliver, and his team concluded at the end of December 2019. I spoke with Rob before his work concluded and he made it clear everything was in place to implement the new system very rapidly once the Minister approves.

Speaking with Richard Kingswood, the Director Conservation, who is close to the top of the tree, indicates the reform package will be implemented. When this happens continues to remain unclear,



however it will occur under the management of the new wildlife licensing leader Brendan Neilly. Richard is aware implementation could occur rapidly once approval is obtained. Brendan Neilly has recently been appointed as the team leader of the wildlife licensing team within NPWS. Brendan most recently worked for RSPCA NSW and prior had worked in various capacities at NPWS and NSW DPI. He has often expressed opinions that wildlife licensing should be more tightly regulated which conflicts with the general nature of the current reforms package. I'm currently awaiting a return call from Brendan. We are currently waiting for meetings with Minister Matt Kean and Atticus Fleming who is now at the top of the chain as Executive Director. Everything remains ready for implementation.

Qld Native Animal Licensing Update.

We continue to be advised the new Qld licensing reforms, which largely mirror NSW proposed reforms, will be implemented in April this year.

WA Avicultural Consultative Committee Update.

Minister Dawson most recently in a letter to me dated September 2019 renewed his commitment to forming the committee. I recently (4/2/20) had a productive conversation with the manager of WA licensing, Ryan Parker. He indicated a new online licensing system is due to be implemented around July this year. After this system is operational, we can expect the Avicultural

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Consultative Committee to form and commence meetings. Some other areas discussed included improving efficiency of identifying imports at the border, streamlining the addition of new species to species lists, trialling the new online system via clubs, etc.

NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into Animal Cruelty

Michael Donnelly (ACA President) and I have been asked to speak at the Select Committee on Animal Cruelty Laws in New South Wales on Thursday 13 February.

This inquiry is largely a dig at RSPCA NSW by the AJP. They would like to see the inspectorate functions of both RSPCA NSW and Animal Welfare League (AWL) removed to a government run department. This would have disastrous consequences for all who keep animals if it were to occur under the AJP's reins.

We are meeting with RSPCA NSW CEO and senior staff tomorrow (Feb 6th) and are in contact with other groups who are also presenting to prepare. This inquiry is Chaired by Mark Pearson who is the other NSW AJP upper house member. The recommendations of this inquiry will affect the review of animal welfare laws that is just warming up in NSW.

Inquiry into Exhibition of exotic animals in circuses and exhibition of cetaceans in NSW

In addition to the parliamentary inquiry into Animal Cruelty, ACA will also be giving evidence to the inquiry into Exhibition of exotic animals in circuses and exhibition of cetaceans in New South Wales. This inquiry was at the behest of AJP's Emma Hurst, however the committee is chaired by the Shooters Fishers Farmers Party MP Mark Banasiak. This inquiry has potential ramifications for all public exhibition of animals, including bird shows and sales together with agricultural shows. Michael and I will give evidence on behalf of ACA at one of the hearings in April.

Our CCBFA and ACA submissions are on the inquiries website, submissions 74 and 76 -

<https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/.../animal-cruelty-laws...>

ACA's submission (sub 178) and other details of this inquiry is here -

<https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/.../inquiry-details.aspx>

Membership Renewal Time

Membership Renewals will be hitting your email inbox or letterbox in the coming weeks. If you have any questions, please get in contact with our secretary - secretary@animalcareaustralia.org.au

Membership forms can be downloaded from <http://animalcareaustralia.org.au/files/aca-membership-application.pdf>



Rabbit RHDV Vaccine Update



By Rachel Sydneham

In January 2020 on behalf of ACA I contacted the Department of Primary Industries, (DPI), for an update on the new RHDV vaccine status.

Animal Care Australia have been informed by the DPI that the RHDV multi valent vaccine has moved into its final stages with paper work now in the hands of the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Association (APVMA), awaiting processing. This may take up to 6 months or longer before the vaccine is cleared for a pharmaceutical to pick up the registration for manufacture and release.

It is still recommended by veterinarians that all pet rabbits are vaccinated with the current Cylap® to protect against RHDV. Though the Cylap® is not fully effective against the RHDV2, it will protect rabbits from RHDV1 K5 strain as well as any other circulating RHDV1 strains.

For more information on the protection of pet rabbits against RHDV1, RHDV1 K5 and RHDV2, click on the link below;

<https://www.vetvoice.com.au/ec/diseases/rabbit-calicivirus/>

Exhibited Report

By Noeline Cassettari

In response to growing animal rights extremists (ARE) against the existence of mobile & petting zoos, along with animals used for entertainment, the ACA Committee has recently approved the expansion of this representative position to cover all exhibited animals. This can now include Marine Parks, zoos, circus, wildlife parks, mobile zoos, petting zoos and other groups that fall with the Exhibited Animals Protection Act. This Act will also be reviewed in the upcoming Department of Primary Industries' Animal Welfare Action Plan and ACA has been invited to participate in this review. ACA recognises the huge benefit close up interaction with animals has on inspiring future generations to care for and conserve all species. If you would like to join the Exhibited Animals Advisory Group please contact me on: farm@animalcareaustralia.org.au





Horse Report

By Karri Nadazdy

2019 was a big year for the horse industry and ACA's Horse Advisory Group, and this year already looks set to be even bigger and very positive. In recent weeks we reviewed the amalgamated Northern Beaches Council (NSW) new Animals Policy. A misprint on the initial proposal led to a social media frenzy of backlash to the council regarding the keeping of horses on large residential lots. When the correction was made, we were pleased to see that no changes were made that affected keeping horses in the council, including on large residential lots.

The Inquiry into the National Horse Traceability Register final report was formally accepted this month, and is now moving on to the next steps in the process. An industry working group panel is currently being formed, and ACA is keen to gain a seat at that table to represent recreational horse owners.

The Senate Committee has given the racing industry the responsibility of drafting the initial National Horse Register, or NHR. We have been following the racing industry's response to the

media exposure of their failed racehorse tracing programs, where they already have similar systems in place, and it has not filled us with confidence for the future of the NHR. It's critical that we see the diversity of the horse industry represented in the working group to guarantee improved welfare conditions for all horses in our community. ACA was invited to speak at the hearings for the Inquiry into Animal Cruelty Laws in NSW last week. Our President and Vice President impressed the Senate Committee with ACA's fair and unbiased stance on the issues. But we were also pleased to see other non-commercial horse community representatives, speaking up for horse owners as well as brumbies.

Horse owners are often a silent voice in these issues, as horses are not only pushed out of companion animal discussions, but also from livestock and the commercial horse industry discussions, leaving us with no voice at all. ACA includes horse representation largely for this reason. ACA's Horse Advisory Group is currently drafting policy positions on various current horse issues including high profile topics, and we invite more equestrian clubs from around Australia to join ACA as voting members to help develop these policies.

Behavioural testing of dogs, are we setting them up to fail?

By Kylie Gilbert

In recent times there has been numerous stories around the temperament testing of dogs for re-homing, in recent weeks we have been alerted to the story of Franklin a greyhound who unfortunately found his way to a Victorian shelter after his owner was no longer able to care for him, there were offers from a greyhound shelter to take him in but the Lost Dogs home would not release him until he had undergone a "GRV temperament test" this was a dog who had previously been a well known canine member of his community and lived happily with another dog. But now he was to undergo a test of his temperament to be undertaken in an unfamiliar environment, with unfamiliar noises, all of this after going from living on a couch in a home to a kennel block with lots of unknown dogs.

So, what is involved in this testing? well according to the GAP page it involves:

Your greyhound must stay at the GAP kennels for several days to allow for temperament assessments to take place.

Your greyhound must pass a 'small dog' reaction test – ensuring that the greyhound would not show an excessive or dangerous reaction if encountering a small, active dog.



I would like to say that I have seen some of the training that goes into these dogs and a lot of time does go into attempting to re-train dogs to do such things as walk up stairs and other unfamiliar situations as any dog involved in re-homing should be.

In this example the dog is not in a GAP facility it is in a Shelter environment, and the question must be asked if these dogs are receiving the same level of training prior to their assessments?

In this instance a dog is put into a situation where it encounters a small active dog and if it reacts chances are it fails, it has been taken from the place it has called home and then tested against things it has probably never encountered before in the same context, greyhounds for example are sighthounds so like to chase things, if a saluki was to be temperament tested for re-homing do they face this same testing method? I wouldn't think so.

We then have to look at the temperament testing of other dog breeds, there has been many times that we have seen footage and read stories that involve dogs that have been taken for example from factory farming

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situations, they are placed into a kennel environment in some instances with their puppies, we have then seen “behaviourists” watching these dogs from outside of their enclosure staring them down, and then entering to be met with reactions such as hiding and growling, these dogs are usually found unsuitable for re-homing.

We need to break this down and think about a dog's natural behaviour to take the fight or flight option when under stress, so you have a dog that has been taken from appalling situations where they have probably not had human contact except to feed and take their babies away, now we have

people everywhere, new unfamiliar sounds and smells, people staring them down and then entering “their space” how do we expect them to react?

Are we setting these dogs up to fail? Is there a better way to undertake this testing? What are the real fail rates regarding euthanasia due to behavioural issues, organisations such as the RSPCA release their euthanasia rates in a very generic pie chart format without any real accompanying data, why? Why will large organisations such as this not release numbers?

Society understands that not every dog is suitable for re-homing but having a better idea around the reason for euthanasia is something that needs to be analysed and discussed, it will allow us to better understand where we are letting our canine society members down, is it overbreeding or purely under-socialising? Where do we have to ensure there is further education and legislation to reduce these numbers.

Why do we love to hate vegans?



By Karri Nadazdy

Why are Vegans so universally maligned and ridiculed? Why do we not see their efforts as commendable, and even aspirational? Surely the diet someone chooses is not worthy of such contempt, whether or not we choose to follow it as well.

Yes, Veganism is a diet. It's a diet devoid of animal products, and a Vegan Lifestyle extends to exclude all animal products in the person's life and environment (where possible. The modern world actually makes a 100% vegan lifestyle impossible, but that's not the point

here). Many people are vegan for purely dietary reasons, sometimes involuntarily for health conditions, or weight loss, and sometimes in the pursuit of living a more sustainable lifestyle. Most vegans who do it for animal welfare reasons, do so for their own peace of mind, to resolve their own cognitive dissonance, not to force it onto others.

What's to ridicule about that?

Well, of course, the ridicule is not really about veganism at all, but the sub culture of vegans who are **Animal Rights Extremists (ARE)**.

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Most are just noisy keyboard warriors, but some do utilise terrorist style tactics to intimidate others and force societal change. Now this is a whole different ball game to veganism. The hate directed at extremists is often quite justified.

Trespassing and stealing people's animals is not okay, in any context. Paying fake whistle-blowers to fake footage of animal cruelty to close down industries is not okay. Trying to close animal events and exhibits by trying to frighten the animals involved is never okay. The ends do not justify the means, and the police and courts get involved in these incidences, and more recently, even parliament. But that is not what "veganism" is about, and its unfortunate that the average vegan is being attacked in the process, when they are not the problem, but the scapegoat.

“All Animal Rights Extremists are Vegans. But not all Vegans are Animal Rights Extremists.”

All Animal Rights Extremists are vegans. But not all vegans are Animal Rights Extremists.

We need to stop maligning vegans, and call it out when we see it. Not just because the behaviour is discrimination or cyberbullying (and it is!). But because we SHOULD make a clear distinction between Vegans and ARE. If we don't, we are actually helping ARE win.

Have you ever wondered why ARE want to be called Vegans?

By mislabelling someone a "Vegan" instead of an "Animal Rights Extremist" we artificially increase their numbers. ARE have hijacked the term Vegan for too long already in their attempts to appear more credible and numerous than they actually are. The smaller a group they are, the less significant they are, and the less power they have.

We also shouldn't malign the people who are considering veganism for legitimate reasons by lowering ourselves to a level where we will ridicule them for things they haven't done. The genuine people who just can't reconcile saying they love animals and also eating them are not people we, as animal owners and carers, need to fight, and we lose out by making enemies of them.

With climate change activism increasing, we WILL be seeing a sharp increase in veganism as people try to reduce their personal carbon footprint. For these vegans, its not about saving animals, but saving the planet through resource conservation. They are not the problem either, and there's a lot of them already.

We should not allow the small, but loud, handfuls of ARE to hijack those statistics to artificially inflate the validity of their cause. And they absolutely will if we let them, they already do this now. We are already seeing the number of Vegans in Australia being used as support for ARE views to push for societal change and laws. Perhaps we really should be calling them **Animal Rights Societal Extremists?**

Whatever we call them, Veganism isn't the problem.

So I'm calling on all the people who care about the good welfare of animals in our community: animal owners, keepers, breeders, exhibitors, and farmers, to get on board, and stop calling ARE "Vegans". Stop helping them by using the word Vegan when you really mean ARE. Strip them of their hijacked title, even while they squeal about it, and you will begin to see how powerless and insignificant they really are.



By Rachel Sydenham

Synopsis of meeting with Louise Kerr held on Tuesday 7th January 2020.

On 24th November 2019, a submission was sent to Northern Beaches Council by Animal Care Australia's (ACA) Small Mammals Representative, Rachel Sydenham, in response to the Northern Beaches Council's proposed Draft Keeping Animals Policy.

Within this submission ACA was seeking changes to the following proposals:

- Maximum number of small animals kept as pets. How this would affect hobbyist/breeders, especially those who are active members of the animal communities, (clubs, societies and associations). How this would affect natural colony animals that normally thrive in large social groups.
- Minimum distance of 3 metres for small animals to be kept from nearest dwelling, public hall, school, hospital, premises used to manufacture, preparation, sale or storage of food or any building listed. How this would affect pet owners, and hobbyists, who live in smaller properties and/or condensed dwellings.

ACA's submission was aimed at securing the following desired outcomes:

1. To have the cap on numbers of any individual small mammal species removed from the draft policy.
2. To have the minimum distance of 3 metres from the nearest dwelling to be removed from the draft policy.

On Tuesday 7th January 2020, Rachel Sydenham and Michael Donnelly (President) met with Council representatives, Louise Kerr and her associate.

The Draft Keeping Animals Policy was a result of the amalgamation of local councils into the one Northern Beaches Council.

Both Council representatives were extremely willing to receive our feedback and additional advice.

The meeting ended very positively with ACA achieving both desired outcomes. Louise stated the Draft Keeping Animal Policy would have to be re-written in entirety, which would take some time and in the meantime the existing policies of the old local governments are still in place for residents.

ACA offered a copy of the ACA Responsible Breeders Policy, so that the Council could use it as a reference and also to understand our welfare expectations of our members.

The policy has been sent along with a recommendation that council include a statement "Council recommends you join an animal keepers group for the species you keep", within the new Draft Keeping Animals Policy. We received assurances that we would be contacted to review the revised policy once it was completed.



Importance of Reptile Expos & Shows

By Joanne Payne

Well show season is upon us! The time of the year when all avid keepers wait patiently for the first expo which signals a couple of months of pure bliss as they peruse the aisles, picking up much needed supplies and hopefully a new pet or 5! Not to mention the social aspect of mingling with like-minded people to discuss what's new in the hobby or maybe have a grumble how the licensing review process is taking way too long.

The focus of the shows is predominantly educating the public about the hobby but also educating the experienced keeper on improved methods for keeping. The social factor that is shown between the keepers is another way in which knowledge is shared. The keepers definitely take this time as a great way to catch up and talk about the finer details with keeping and breeding, furthering their knowledge. This is also the best place for a first time-keeper to attend and acquire their new animal plus take the time to chat with the keeper about the best welfare for their new scaly friend. I find that people that have been keeping for a while but are having a couple of problems, will attend to chat with people that they know will have the best information for them to rectify their problems. Once they have all of the correct information they need there is always a retail area on site where an owner can go and find their new, or old animal friend their home.

In Australia, we are lucky where that most people will encounter a reptile at one time in their life. Be it a little skink running up their



Illawarra REPTILE SOCIETY Inc.

REPTILE SHOW

19TH APR 2020

10 AM - 3 PM

ILLAWARRA SPORTS STADIUM
Hooka Creek Rd, Berkeley

ADMISSION

ADULTS	\$10
CHILDREN (Under 16)	\$5
FAMILY (2 Adults, 2 kids)	\$25

ATTRACTIONS

- RETAIL & REPTILE MARKETPLACE
- REPTILE SHOW
- SYMBIO ZOO
- FOOD & DRINKS
- SHOALHAVEN ZOO
- ATM ONSITE

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Enquiries to Jo on 0433 064 460
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www.illawarrareptilesociety.com.au

walls to maybe encountering a snake on a bushwalk. Unfortunately, some of these encounters can be unpleasant and the shows aim to educate so that people can understand these encounters and therefore, be better prepared for them. All of the shows have a show person in attendance. These educators have an enclosed pit where they take the reptiles out, in a controlled environment, to show the public reptile behaviour and how to deal with a situation that is not ideal. These shows are incredibly popular and the people running the show are often stay around to talk with the public long after the show has ended.

You can also talk to the local reptile societies at these events. These groups are run voluntarily by reptile enthusiasts and offer education and an

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Hawkesbury Herpetological Society's 11th Annual

PENRITH REPTILE EXPO & Family Fun Day

Photo by Kristian Bell

Children \$5
5-12 years 4 and under - Free

Adults \$10
13 years and over

Family \$25
2 Adults & 2 Children 5-12 years

Tickets available at the door or order online through Eventbrite

Sunday 8th March 2020 - 9am - 4pm

Penrith Valley Regional Sports Centre, 30 Herbert St, Cambridge

International Guests:

Kenan Harkin
REPTILE ADVENTURES
BATTLE ON
YouTube: Day Kaufman

Brian Kusko

Licensed Reptiles For Sale
Best In Show Reptiles
Live Reptile Shows

Reptile Cages & Supplies
Thorny Devil on Display
Dinosaur Display

Extremepets
ABSOLUTE
KELLYVILLE PETS
PLATINUM
FIO

www.facebook.com/PenrithReptileExpo/

Email: hhs.expo@gmail.com

Central Coast Herpetological Society

REPTILE EXPO 2020

SUNDAY 17TH MAY 9am - 4pm

**Central Coast Grammar School, Arundel Road,
Erina Heights, N.S.W. 2260**

All enquiries to: centralcoastherpsociety@gmail.com

Adults \$10

Children (Under 16) \$5

Family (2x Adults + 2x Children) \$25

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access point for the public to the keepers. A couple of the societies run a 'best in show' competition. This is for their members to bring their reptiles in and display them in a controlled environment.

This is fantastic for the public, as often, you will get to see animals that are not on display in zoos and a wide range of animals are displayed. From animals that you can see in the wild, through to the designer 'morphs' that the breeders have spent years of hard work

developing. The breeders will display their best animals and they will be judged by a panel of experts in the field. Often this panel includes a vet and an experienced keeper.

There is a black cloud hovering over these educational shows though. There is an upcoming Inquiry into exhibited animals. This inquiry has used the face of circus animals and dolphins in a marine park in Coffs Harbour to gain momentum and pull at the heart strings of the public. This inquiry has the potential to ignite further debate on the 'use of animals for entertainment' which could see the end all educational shows.

Interactions with animals by the public, is proven to increase sentiment toward animals and provide protection and conservation for their wild counterparts. If we do not have the educational shows, how does a person know how to interact with animals when they encounter them in the wild? In this time where so many of our animals have suffered and lost habitat through bushfire, drought and the governments seemingly incessant land clearing efforts, they need us more than ever before to educate and conserve both them and their homes.

So, get along and support a reptile show this year. You will learn something new and you can send a strong message to the animal rights extremists (ARE's), that we need these outlets to show the public how to live with animals harmoniously and how to conserve their natural environments.

This year, the reptile societies have spread themselves out a little bit with about a month in between the expos and shows. Hawkesbury has moved to an all new venue in March, Illawarra's show will be in April and Central Coast is back this year in May after a year off due to renovations at their venue.

Hope to see you there!

Liverpool Council Animal Facility To Close

By Michelle Grayson

It has come to our attention this week that the Liverpool Council Animal Facility located in Austral NSW will close on 19 March 2020.

From what we know, the land that it operates on has been sold and the Council was unable to secure another location or negotiate an extension of its lease.

This means that any animals that would normally be taken to this shelter will now be taken to the Blacktown City Animal Holding Facility under a 5 year deal.

The impact to lost animals is unknown at this time, but what it means is that the Blacktown facility is at least 25km away from the Liverpool site and is now the holding facility for a number of Council's across Sydney. Some may say that 26km isn't a huge distance, but when owners are visiting animal shelters in their area in the search for their lost pet, it is a massive impact.

The Blacktown facility currently houses 72 dogs and 50 cats & we ask you, is the facility big enough to cater for additional animals coming from a large council area like Liverpool? Liverpool Council intend to employ an extra



ranger to help reunite animals with their owners and say that "every effort will be made to get them back to their owner as quickly as possible". This situation highlights how vitally important it is to ensure your pet's microchip information is up to date at all times.

It is also so important that you talk to your friends, family, neighbours and your community network to become aware of these types of changes occurring and to contact us BEFORE decisions are made.

It is far better to be proactive than reactive. We need you to be our eyes & ears on the ground in your local communities and let us know what's

ACA to advise at QANTAS Review

ACA has been invited to contribute to the current review into transporting brachycephalic/snub-nosed dogs and cats.

There are 123,000 animals transported by QANTAS every year nearly all fly safely and arrive at their destination with little or no issues.

But with the continued 'in-breeding' and poor decision making by some breeders, more animals are now being bred with respiratory issues, flat-faces, flat-noses, and snub-noses.

This is having an impact and the outcome can be detrimental to the animals and their owners.

ACA will be developing an education package for the public and our members to ensure people know what they should be aware of when transporting animals - example: acclimatising your dog/cat to the cage it will be transported in so as to reduce the anxiety/stress of being caged for the first time in its life on the very same day it is then subjected to separation anxiety from its owner.

That package will be released following our participation in the review—so stay tuned to our Facebook page.

Watch out for our next
issue in June 2020.

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