



WILDLIFE PRESERVATION SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA INC.

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ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2005

Another very busy and successful year

2005 has been a particularly busy and successful year for the Society. The Council has worked hard to actively preserve our unique Australian wildlife in all its forms across our nation and has made numerous submissions to all levels of government to achieve added protection. Members of council have travelled widely throughout Australia on this special mission to engage with local conservation groups in our task of supporting similar organisations in their efforts.

We are now embarked on a very positive course of action to promote and market the Society and its vital work for Australian wildlife. Our quest for a permanent national office is under way and hopefully will reach an agreed solution in 2006.

Membership is essential for our long term success and it is vital that all existing members continue to encourage family and friends to join us. The membership leaflets are freely available from the National Office.

Our Society is extremely grateful for the wonderful support received from all our elected Councillors. They contribute tirelessly behind the scenes to make the Society function.

Mission Statement

The Wildlife Preservation Society is an independent, voluntary, non-profit organisation, formed in 1909, and is committed to the preservation of Australia's precious flora and fauna. We act as a watchdog and provide advice to government agencies and institutions regarding environmental and conservation issues concerning all aspects of wildlife preservation. Our mission is to conserve Australia's fauna and flora through education and involvement of the community. We are dedicated to the conservation of our unique Australian wildlife in all its forms through national environmental education programs, political lobbying, advocacy and hands on conservation work.

Our Society's two environment principles are:

1. We never lose a battle, since we gain new friends for the next. Never be discouraged.

2. In a democracy until the win is enshrined in legislation, it is never a complete victory. We learned that lesson from sad experience. Promises can be forgotten. Laws are harder to overturn.

96th Annual General Meeting and Luncheon

Richard Morecroft, who is best known for his two decades as the principal new presenter for ABC Television in New South Wales and the ACT, was our Guest Speaker at the 2005 annual luncheon.

The Hon Graham West MP, Member for Campbelltown and Parliamentary Secretary, was our host.

A large audience of 150 members and friends enjoyed the fine food and celebrated a great occasion to mark the 96th anniversary of our Society's foundation in 1909.



Richard Morecroft

Serventy Conservation Award

Wayne Reynolds of Sutherland was the winner of the Serventy Conservation Award for 2004. Wayne has an inspirational love for Australia's wildlife and has been responsible for the success of the Cape Solander Whale Migration Study carried out on the coast line of the Royal National Park, Sydney. The study takes place during June-July each year. He was the original volunteer for this project twelve years ago when he began his seven-day, 84-hour weeks, braving the winter weather to provide scientists and researchers with invaluable written and photographic records of the migrating whales along our coastline.



Wayne Reynolds with the Serventy Conservation Medal

Community Wildlife Conservation Award

The winner of the Community Wildlife Conservation Award for 2004 was Waterfall Springs Conservation Association Incorporated of Kulnorra near Gosford, NSW.

Waterfall Springs is an outstanding example of a dedicated community group working to save some of the rarest and most vulnerable species of wildlife in Australia. Their mission statement is to co-ordinate and unite with the community and organisations to conduct recovery projects for endangered native species at Waterfall Springs Wildlife Park, which constitutes 33 acres of freehold land purchased by Lloyd Oldfield and his wife in 1990. Part of the property has been registered as a licensed sanctuary and part is zoned conservation and preserved as a Nature Park for flora and fauna. Their objective is to provide responsible community education relevant to the plight of endangered species.

They focus on the need for wild habitat preservation as the primary means of ensuring the long-term survival of Australia's vitally important native species, as well as managed breeding programs and habitat regeneration initiatives for currently endangered species.



Clive Williams, Debbie Breen and Richard Morecroft

Runner-up

The standard of the entries in the Serventy Conservation Award for 2004 were so high, that a runner-up's award was made to Elizabeth Hartnell. Elizabeth's greatest contribution to Australian wildlife has been in relation to the preservation of habitat for the endangered grey-headed flying fox.



Elizabeth Hartnell receives her Award Certificate from Richard Morecroft

Visit to Waterfall Springs

In early June, members and friends visited Waterfall Springs, which is home to four endangered species of wallabies - brush-tailed rock wallaby, yellow-footed rock wallaby, bridled nail-tailed wallaby, and tamar wallaby. We experienced a unique behind-the-scenes tour of the Sanctuary and enjoyed morning tea and lunch afterwards with the manager, Debbie Breen, Lloyd Oldfield and the volunteer staff.

Our Society's President of Honour

Dr Vincent Serventy AM is still very active in our wildlife preservation programs. He is in constant touch with the media, mainly through Letters to the Editor, and has many of his informative letters published on wildlife and conservation issues.

Strategic Planning Day

The Society's annual Strategic Planning Day was held on 11 May 2005. The direction for the future work of the Society was decided, including the development of our environmental education program and the new ECOWORLD GARDENS wetland education project. This day was chosen to mark the Foundation Day of the Society on 11 May 1909.

Wildlife Animal Expo

The Society again staged a major display at the 2005 Wildlife Animal Expo at Rosehill Gardens, attracting large crowds of visitors interested in all aspects of wildlife and animal management.

Mark Richmond from Crocodile Encounters joined us with an animated public display featuring live wildlife, which always attracts great interest. The conservation stories behind wildlife and their environment has a strong appeal to the public and assists in our public education program for wildlife preservation.



John Clarke, Suzanne Medway, Carol Nolder, Ralph Campbell and John Robertson

Visits to the Warrumbungles

Our Society organised a members' visit to another interesting part of Australia in September – the Warrumbungles in New South Wales, visiting many of the natural sites and national parks in the area. Special thanks to Carol Nolder and Mike Augee for their outstanding efforts.

Seminars with Birds Australia

For some years this Society has sponsored seminars conducted by Birds Australia and this year we provided this support again. The seminars have been of high quality in the past and this year's program was no exception.

NSW Pest Animal Control Council

Our Society's President, Patrick Medway, continued as representative on the NSW State Pest Animal Control Council. The Council was pro-active in reducing the number of feral animals across the State.

Increased funding allowed a wider range of programs to be activated to reduce feral animals' impact on the agriculture industry and native fauna. We have applied for increased funding to be allocated to prevent the cane toad from entering NSW.

"Australian Wildlife" magazine

Our magazine continues to be widely acclaimed by our members and the wider community. Our Editor, Suzanne Medway, works tirelessly to gather articles and photographs for each edition and has raised the standards high in reporting on our conservation work across Australia. More articles are always welcome to assist in making the magazine interesting and worthwhile.

Conferences and wildlife seminars

Councillors attended and contributed to a number of important wildlife meetings throughout the year and assisted in promoting the work of the Society across Australia.

Our Society was represented at the Australian Wildlife Management Society conference in Hobart in December 2005. We were delighted to see a number of our new members attending this important national annual wildlife conference.

Quoll Research Advisory Committee

As we have been outspoken about our concern at the loss of habitat and the decline in numbers of native quoll, our Society was again represented on the NPWS Northern Region's Quoll Research Advisory Committee.

New book launch

Conservation Victories and Battles Yet to Win

Dr Vincent Serventy AM launched this new book which chronicles many successful conservation battles to protect and save the Australian environment across a wide range of controversial issues.



Dr Vincent Serventy AM launches his new book

Written by Dr Vincent Serventy AM, who as President of Honour of our Society is still a prominent conservation and environmental activist, and Patrick W Medway AM, this book covers conservation battles ranging from the campaign to extend the protection zone of the Great Barrier Reef to the restoration of the Towra Beach RAMSAR site. Examples of conservation victories achieved by some of the actual people who were on the ground at the time of these conservation battles are faithfully recorded in great personal detail.

Financial Report - summary

The Society's Councillors continue to exercise effective control over our finances and reviewed and adjusted the investment portfolio during the year to take advantage of higher interest rates.

Donations, bequests and gifts

During the year we received many generous donations from our members, who continue to support the work of the Society in the preservation of Australia's precious wildlife. We are most grateful for the generosity of these special members. All donations to our Society are applied directly to our projects and saving wildlife.

Donation to help save the Gouldian finch

Our Society made a cash donation to the Australian Wildlife Conservancy to be allocated to their Gouldian finch research project on Mornington Wildlife Sanctuary in the Kimberley Region of Western Australia. The Sanctuary is one of northern Australia's most important nature reserves and provides wonderful habitat for Gouldian finches.

Whale watching donation

Our Society recently purchased a small Wildlife Caravan to be based at the Cape Solander Whale Watching Platform at Kurnell for use by the team of volunteers who work on the Cape Solander Whale Migration Study that is being carried out on the coastline of the Botany Bay National Park, Sydney. The study takes place during June-July each year. In previous years the volunteers have hired a caravan but this year they did not have sufficient funds and approached our Society for help and assistance.



Wayne Reynolds, whale watching volunteer, Patrick Medway, and Vanessa Wilson, National Parks Ranger in charge of the volunteers at the hand over of the donation of the caravan

University Student Grants Scheme

Our Society was delighted to announce the inaugural winners of the five annual grants of \$1,000 each to honours or postgraduate students conducting research that will contribute to the conservation of Australian wildlife. The winners for 2005 were Anja Divljan for her project on 'Age determination and age structure in Australian flying foxes'; Shelly Lachish for her project on 'Managing Tasmanian Devil populations affected by the devil facial tumour disease'; Justine Murray for her project on 'Spatially-explicit habitat modelling of the brush-tailed rock wallaby in eastern Australia'; Monica Ruibal for her study to investigate the social ecology of the spotted-tailed quoll using faecal DNA; and Michelle Stockwell for her project to investigate the role of chytridiomycosis in the decline of the green and golden bell frogs. By awarding the grants our Society aims to benefit the preservation of Australian wildlife by supporting applied scientific research with a conservation focus and to further the Society's commitment to environmental education by supporting students with a research interest in conservation.

I extend my sincere appreciation to the volunteers, especially Suzanne, who assists and runs the National Office and the various projects and activities on behalf of the Society.

My sincere thanks to everyone concerned for their hard work and commitment.

Patrick W Medway AM
NATIONAL PRESIDENT