



WILD TIMES

September 2018 Edition 61

The Grand Chauncellor

WILDCARE FRIENDS OF CHAUNCY VALE, story by Graham Green (President)



The finished building

The Chauncy Vale Caretaker Program is progressing well and is booked up until December.

A lot of work has been going on in the reserve to upgrade visitor facilities, walking tracks and signage. Grant funds supplied through the Government's Community Infrastructure Fund and Southern Midlands Council have been utilised to upgrade the main visitor facility now dubbed 'the Grand Chauncellor'.

The 'Chauncellor' has BBQ facilities for day visitors and a cosy meeting room with kitchenette which may be booked out for meetings and gatherings for a small fee.

Track work and new signage has greatly improved access to Brown's Caves area and to Guvy's Lagoon.

As part of Chauncy Vale Wildcare's goal to improve the environment,

protect facilities and keep visitors safe—ongoing rehabilitation works are being conducted to stabilise eroding stream banks.

Visitation to Chauncy Vale Wildlife Sanctuary is increasing as word spreads about the Caretaker program and improvements to facilities. Aside from day to day tasks in the reserve, the current caretaker has developed programs for Scout groups and schools—including night wildlife interpretation walks.

The Chauncy Vale web site is currently being upgraded—upcoming community programs will be posted once this is complete.

Chauncy Vale Wildcare is currently seeking expressions of interest from prospective caretakers to assist in looking after this fabulous reserve in 2019. Details on the Wildcare web site.

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Bridge and bush



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CEO report

This is my first report as newly appointed CEO of Wildcare. It is my privilege to link my passion and drive for supporting our wild places and creatures to the passion, drive and legacy of Wildcare. I've been blown away with the ethos of Wildcare and the commitment of many people to it, in some cases, volunteering for over 20 years. What better antidote to the sometimes depressing, short sighted aspects of the modern world than inspiring, long sighted 'wild' missions.

So what does it mean to be 'Wild'? Dictionaries refer to things 'untamed' or 'natural'. Personally I think that as well as relating to special flora, fauna and place it refers to a state of mind, a spirit that won't be squashed. Bringing these things together epitomises the belief and fierce commitment in respecting nature and heritage that is clearly the backbone of Wildcare.

This commitment is highlighted this year with the 20 year anniversary of Wildcare. For people with a down to earth 'just get on with it' mindsight these milestones can slip past without fanfare. However, it is important to reflect on the initiative of the people who set up Wildcare, and the volunteers and donors who have partnered to contribute to the amazing array of projects around Tasmania, some for over 20 years. So this edition of Wildtimes is a bumper edition to honour some of those stories.

All Branches will have received an invitation to acknowledge the 20 year Wildcare anniversary in a meaningful way in your own patch. Funds are available to help you organise an event or an activity. Please talk to the Wildcare office with your ideas.

What about the next 20 years—what is needed for success? Certainly 'wild' spirit and commitment ...

A continued great partnership with our State Government partners is core ... A focus on Wildcare business operations to ensure sustainability ... Using technology to improve how we do things ... Adapting to changing life-styles impacting volunteering ... What are your thoughts? ... There will be opportunities to contribute to this conversation in the future.

On a final note, I'm warmed by the generosity of donors who contribute to the Wildcare Gift Funds. If you do make a contribution rest assured that donations are carefully governed to ensure that funds are spent on worthy causes. Both Wildcare donations and Wildcare membership make a great gift for someone—the 'real impact' gift for the 21st century.



May mayhem

WILDCARE FRIENDS OF FREYCINET, story and photos by Adrian Sullivan (Secretary)

Wildcare Friends of Freycinet had a great time during their May Mayhem working bee. We worked on Bicheno's Whaler's Lookout collecting ute loads of rubbish and clearing garden plant escapees and other environmental weeds like sweet pittosporum, cotoneaster and agapanthus.

Closer to Coles Bay we pulled 2403 stubbies from the tea tree bushes next to the carpark on Flacks Road. Someone must have had a problem taking their empties with them. It took 8 of us crawling on hands and knees under the bushes to pass the stubbies out to fill 80 garbage bags. It's a pity we don't have a drink bottle deposit scheme, as we might have earned a little from our volunteer labour or the perpetrators may not have so readily discarded the stubbies. Check out the Wildcare's Facebook page for a little movie of this work and another of us going to work. We picked up glass in the sand and rubbish at River and Rocks camp grounds and pulled weeds from the surrounding areas to fill a ute.

At the northern end of the Douglas Apsley National Park we pulled the road side proliferation of the weed Spanish Heath and repainted the Parks sign at the turn off to the car park.

In Freycinet National Park the group pulled scotch thistles from Richardson Beach, picked up rubbish along the Wineglass Bay lookout track and laid new mulch at that carpark amongst many other tasks. Group members could pick the task to suit themselves and time available.

Best of all, the volunteers keep coming back for more as they have such a great time over the week and enjoy the sense of making a difference to our much loved Park and beyond.



Fishy business at Melaleuca

WILDCARE FRIENDS OF MELALEUCA, story by Janet Fenton (President)

Ever wanted to smell like cod-liver oil? Your chance may yet come if you join a Friends of Melaleuca working bee!

Rust-busters Mel Jack and David Butler got through about 9 litres of the lovely stuff during two days when the sun shone at Friends of Melaleuca's Wildcare funded March 2018 working bee.

High humidity, high rainfall and acid peaty soil contribute to excessive rust corrosion at Melaleuca. Without regular applications of fish-oil, many objects from Melaleuca's tin mining heritage risk disintegration. Friends of Melaleuca began a fish-oiling program in 2010. We keep an Excel spreadsheet to keep track of when each object received treatment. This is a work in progress, as photographs of each object and a map have yet to be collated so that volunteers can readily locate the objects to be oiled.

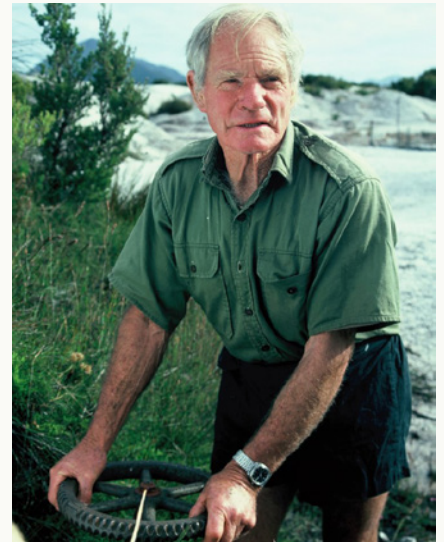
The technique just involves elbow-grease, old clothes and patience. Before the oil is applied by brush, loose rust is removed using wire brushes, scrapers and pokey things like old screwdrivers for those annoying crevices. Volunteers have reported that oiling is becoming a lot easier with repeated applications. Now hardly any surface rust needs to be removed

each time. Annual treatment is ideal, and applications work best in warm dry weather when the oil is more fluid and soaks nicely into the warm surface. It's a pleasant job really, out there in the sun with striated field wrens chirping in the bushes nearby...

Some of the objects on the fish-oiling program will feature in a Mining Heritage Trail. Planning for this began during the March 2018 working bee. Standing machinery on the trail will include a water-monitor nozzle made by Launceston's Salisbury Foundry. The nozzle was used by tin miners at Melaleuca in the 1930s and 40s (Eric Brock, then Charlie King) using the hydraulicking method. Other features demonstrate later phases of mechanisation, culminating in Peter and Barbara Willson's Rallinga Mine tin smelter.

Fish oil, and the volunteers who apply the good stuff, make all the difference in preserving these relics for interest and future interpretation.

First remove loose rust. Judy Boon at work 2015. Photo: Janet Fenton



Deny King opening a gate-valve to let water from his dam into pipes for his sluicing operation, 1979. Photo: Karen Alexander

Below (from top to bottom):
Tools of the trade. 'De-odorised' fish oil — don't believe it! Photo: Janet Fenton
Trommel in use at Deny King's tin mine, 1970 Photo: Geoff Fenton
Charlie King working the water-monitor nozzle, 1940s. Photo: King collection
Water-monitor nozzle today. Photo: Mel Jack



Film captures connection to Tasmania's environment

GET OUTSIDE, story by Sonia Chirgwin, photos by Jobi Starick

'Get Outside' hosted our annual leadership camp in April, where we had glorious weather to explore the Hartz Mountain National Park, Hastings Cave, and numerous hidden places along the way. Nine intrepid new leaders and three experienced ones joined us to learn how to plan and run safe and enjoyable bushwalks. The camps are unique, providing opportunities to connect with breathtaking natural landscapes, form and deepen friendships, and step up into leadership roles. The aim is that the leaders, all from a refugee or new migrant background, then go on to plan and lead walks in the following season. The new leaders are from the Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network (MYAN), and are ready for challenges. It is such a pleasure to work with these inspiring young people.

An added element this year was a partnership with two young filmmakers from BigHart. Jobi Starick and Ginger Rankin worked with the group to capture the essence of connection to place, and the importance of the Tasmanian landscape in forming a sense of home. The experience of learning about film making and story-

telling enriched our time together, and produced a very beautiful end result.

We launched the film in July, with a walk on the Rivulet Track, and a screening at Wide Angle Tasmania. We received some media coverage with an ABC News story and an online feature. See <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-07-07/young-migrants-at-home-in-tasmanian-wilderness/9948334>

This attention to the programme is well timed, as we are currently working on an evaluation and consultation process, aiming to increase the impacts of the Get Outside programme and secure funding for a sustainable future. We know the programme has considerable benefits to mental and physical health and well-being. It also strengthens a sense of belonging, and builds enthusiastic conservation ambassadors for Tasmania. The film captures this beautifully, show-casing this unique Wildcare Branch.



Deal Island volunteer recognised

On Monday 21st May 2018, Shirley and Dallas Baker OAM attended the Presentations of the Tasmanian Volunteer Awards at Government House, Tasmania.

Dallas was the first finalist to ever be selected in two separate categories of volunteering.

Dallas was nominated by the Lachlan Volunteer Fire Brigade in the Emergencies Services Award and the Arts, Heritage and Tourist Award. He was recognised for his untiring work as a member of the Tasmania Fire Service and his major contribution to the conservation and preservation of the Deal Island lighthouse and lightstation as a member of the Friends of Deal Island Wildcare Inc.

Dallas was presented his finalist awards from Her Excellency Professor The Honourable Kate Warner AC, Governor of Tasmania.



larapuna community weekend 2018

Having pulled thousands of sea spurge plants on the beaches throughout the day, fifty participants convened for afternoon tea and some 'snappy talks' at *larapuna*/Eddystone Point on Saturday 13th July for the annual *larapuna* Community Weekend. Over the three day event 140 participants walked 35km to remove thousands upon thousands of sea spurge plants from this very special coastline. They also collected and classified 30kg of marine debris, adding this data to Tangaroa Blue's Australian Marine Debris Database.

Sam Cuff, Community Engagement Officer for the PWS said "this year's event was particularly special as it fell during NAIDOC Week. PWS Aboriginal Rangers welcomed walkers to country through dance, smoke and ceremony. We were fortunate to also have the Heart Foundation on board this year who recognise the health and wellbeing benefits that the event provides to the community."

This year's highlights include engaging activities delivered by not only members of the Tasmanian Aboriginal community but also PWS Discovery

Rangers, the son of the last lighthouse keeper, and marine debris scientists from the Institute of Marine and Antarctic Studies. Dinner at the award-winning Bay of Fires Lodge on the Saturday night was also feature. Participants spent each day walking along stunning beaches, working together to pull up voracious coastal sea spurge and relieve the area of marine debris. By night, stories were shared, feet rested, and ties between nature, culture and community bound tighter.

Now in its fifth year, the event is run by the PWS with support from Break O'Day Council, the Tasmanian Walking Company, IMAS, NRM North, Aboriginal Land Council of Tasmania, Friends of Eddystone Point, Birdlife Tasmania, Wildcare and the Heart Foundation.





Friendly viewing

New viewing platform for Friendly Beaches—a successful Tasmanian Community Fund Grant

Friends of Freycinet and Freycinet's Parks and Wildlife Service staff have been successful in applying for a TCF grant to build a viewing platform at the lookout near the weather station for Friendly Beaches. The viewing platform will protect the underlying area that was becoming degraded by increased use. Parks approached the Friends of Freycinet with the plans and costing for the viewing platform and it will become a project for the "vollies" to work jointly with PWS to build it at a future working bee.

The project was supported by the Glamorgan Spring Bay Council's NRM branch through Mel Kelly and Rosalie Jackson and the Coles Bay Community Men's Shed who will assist with on-going maintenance of the structure.

Many thanks to PWS Rangers Alena Hrasky and Dom Nyland for their thorough preparation and costings.

We are looking forward to enhancing the visitor experience at one of our great Tasmanian lookouts.

Photo: Alena Hrasky



Photo competition

At the heart of Wildcare

Annual Craig Saunders Photo Competition Open

We are pleased to announce the opening of the 2018 Craig Saunders Photo Competition, in memory of one of Wildcare's finest past contributors.

Craig was a passionate and committed Wildcarer and member of the Wildcare Board. His vitality inspired many and his legacy of influence on volunteering and nature conservation lives on.

In this 20th Anniversary year, the theme 'At the Heart of Wildcare' invites you to explore who and what is at the heart of Wildcare. The panel will be open to all 'heartfelt' interpretations. How would you capture the heart of Wildcare's purpose, pursuits, people, places and partnerships? Photos must be submitted with the photographer's name, contact details and up to 100 words describing your interpretation of 'the heart of Wildcare'.

Send in your images, captions and personal details (name, phone number and email address) to: socialmedia@wildcarea.org.au

Images are to be of print-quality resolution—a good guide is 300 dpi and at least 2 MB.

Entries close 31 October, 2018.

Winners (Judges' Choice and Peoples' Choice) will be personally contacted and announced on our website in November. The prize pool is valued at \$700.

Further details on the Wildcare website.

Windy Moor crossing—top quality, on time, on budget

WILDCARE FRIENDS OF MOUNT FIELD, story by Adrian Blackman (Secretary), photos by Peter Franklin (President)

Mount Field National Park is Tasmania's 3rd most visited national park and attracts almost 200,000 visitors annually. Mount Field East is a popular alpine day walk destination in the park and visitors there can experience extensive views with varying landscapes of glacial lakes, high peaks, snow gum woodland, alpine moorlands and herb fields. Deciduous beech (*Fagus*), Australia's only native deciduous tree, occurs in the area. The Mount Field East Track starts at Lake Fenton and involves a gradual uphill climb and then across Windy Moor. A final steep section leads to the summit of Mount Field East (1274 metres). Windy Moor, an alpine moorland with several endemic plant species including cushion plants, is fragile and easily harmed by walkers. In recent years the track had become seriously degraded by its increasing use. Erosion by water (rain and snow-fall) had exacerbated the problem. Walkers made the destruction even worse by widening the track (braiding) in their attempts to avoid water and mud.

The Friends of Mount Field (FOMF) and Parks and Wildlife Service (PWS), have long had an ambition to protect Windy Moor with a boardwalk, preventing further damage and allowing the region to rehabilitate itself. In total the moorland crossing extends for over one kilometre and the plan was to construct an approximately 900 metre all-weather wooden boardwalk raised above the worst of the degraded track. In late 2016, a Tasmanian Community Fund grant was awarded. Vital contributions were also obtained from (listed alphabetically) the Australian Plants Society, Hobart Walking Club, Gregory Kidd, NRM South, Pandani Bushwalking Club, Parks and Wildlife Service, Phyl and Bob Wyatt and Wildcare Inc. The funds were to be used to purchase material, finance helicopter

transportation and pay contractors to do much of the construction.

The result of all of this activity is that Windy Moor is now more easily crossed and is protected from damage by an excellent, professionally made all-weather boardwalk 912 metres long and two planks wide. Furthermore this project was completed on time and within the budget constraints. The total cost of the project was \$77,122 (grant, donations and in-kind support). Included in this is \$19,350 generated from the 645 hours of work contributed by FOMF volunteers (worth \$30 per hour). In addition PWS staff often worked alongside FOMF volunteers, contributing 455 hours to logistical and on ground support for the project. PWS also made a financial contribution of \$5000 to the project.

The FOMF gratefully acknowledge financial support from the Tasmanian Community Fund, PWS and the other donors mentioned earlier. We also thank the contractors (especially Snapper Hughes), Helicopter

Resources, Bo Pritchard Earthmoving, Statewide Earthworks Pty. Ltd and Timber Growers Direct. The project would not have been possible without contributions from FOMF volunteers, two of whom are worth special mention—Peter Franklin and Greg Kidd. Peter, President of FOMF, was the driving force behind this project and he worked tirelessly both with the numerous administrative tasks and doing fieldwork. Greg unstintingly worked for many hours over many days alongside the paid contractors, but without remuneration, on the main construction work, often under unfavourable weather conditions. Greg also made a financial contribution!

More detail on this project can be found on the Wildcare website.

Planking on the misty moor.



Farewell feral oysters

WILDCARE FRIENDS OF LUMEAH POINT, photos by Garry Hulme



Top: Greg and Trevor stapling wire
Above: Greg and Mat fitting a plank

Wildcare Friends of Lumeah Point was formed in early 2014 to ensure both residents and community groups can work together with Crown Land Services (CLS) to protect and enhance the foreshore which is managed by CLS. It has always been maintained by individual residents who looked after their patch outside the fence but gradually, feral oysters, dust, weeds and access have become issues to be dealt with. The committee works within a five year Management Plan which they submitted to Crown Lands for authority so that the community can participate in regular working bees to initially remove feral oysters and do basic track work and signage. The plan also incorporates weed management, appropriate planting and feral animal control.

Recently the group has been working with the Pipeclay Lagoon Oyster Growers Association (PLOGA) who have resumed the removal of feral oysters from Pipeclay Lagoon after a two-year break. With the Pacific Oyster Mortality Syndrome (POMS) virus now well established in the lagoon PLOGA has an incentive to remove the feral oysters

as these constitute a large repository for POMS. (The ban on disturbing oysters remains in place over summer when the virus is reactivated by the warmer water).

Wildcare Friends of Lumeah Point hope that their work will lead to the strengthening of a vibrant and co-operative community where many more generations will have the opportunity to live and grow.

Ferals ready for collection—not counting Frank!



7.30am Fri 13th April—no bad luck with the weather!





Working-bee volunteers outside Quarters 3 April

Tasman Is

WILDCARE FRIENDS OF TASMAN ISLAND,
story and photo by Erika Shankley

Twelve years have passed since the Friends of Tasman Island (FoTI) held their first working bee in April 2006 with volunteers celebrating the 100th anniversary of the lighthouse as they worked.

FoTI's Strategic Plan outlines our aim to work towards the preservation, protection and enhancement of the natural and cultural values of Tasman Island for current and future generations. However, finance has always been an issue. After years of remedial work to overcome the ravages of time since keepers were withdrawn in 1977, money raised through our first crowd-funding programme in 2017 enabled volunteers to do major work to restore the sunroom and verandah of Quarters 2.

Work on the lightstation buildings is enhanced by our team of weeders and through their efforts, the native vegetation is again getting a foothold.

FoTI plans another crowd-funding campaign in November this year so we can do similar restoration work on the sunroom and verandah of Quarters 3.

We have far exceeded the expectations of a few naysayers who earlier thought we'd just be a flash in the pan. FoTI's work is followed world-wide, through social media with volunteers from mainland States and overseas participating in our working bees.

There is still a lot more to be done and we have working bees planned for November 2018 and April 2019.

Winning over boxthorn at Roydon Island

WILDCARE FRIENDS OF BASS STRAIT ISLANDS, story by Karen Ziegler (President)

Roydon Island is a dramatic Island of 37 hectares with a granite peak and white quartz beach off the west coast of Flinders Island. Like many of the offshore islands in Bass Strait it has boxthorn present. However, on Roydon Island the boxthorn was seriously threatening to take over the entire island primarily due to a history of ill-conceived grazing with cattle. The grazing had stopped over two decades ago and the island is now a Conservation Area.

This year sees the tenth year and fifteenth working-bee by Friends of Bass Strait Islands (FoBSI) to undertake primary control of boxthorn anprogressive follow-up on previously managed areas. This work has built on what had been started by the Furneaux Landcare Group a few years before. More than 90% of Roydon Island has now received primary treatment and annual follow up of the earlier treated areas (see map). It is anticipated that it will require 2 to 3 more working bees of approximately 12 days to

finish the primary control followed by regular annual follow-up to prevent regeneration from re-establishing. Seeing this project through from the start has been incredibly rewarding by seeing the native vegetation regenerating so well.

Anyone interested in joining us on future trips can register their interest in FoBSI through the Wildcare website and our secretary will include them in our mail outs.

John French has captured some great photos of the project here.



Anyone seen Dave? Illustration: Nick Cartwright

Rolling is a group activity featuring Dave MacDonald, Alison Warwarek, Suzie Donkers and Craig Hedge.
Photo: John French



Friends of Steppes

WILDCARE FRIENDS OF THE STEPPES, story by Anne Thwaites (Secretary)

Friends of The Steppes, with the help of a Wildcare Grant, are replacing the picket fence surrounding the front garden of the Steppes Homestead. The project has involved three onsite working bees to date, with one more scheduled in Spring.

Shaping of the timber posts and pickets, together with two pedestrian gates was undertaken off-site. The original fence rails had been inserted into the verandah end posts, resulting in the posts rotting within the joints. The joining rail sections were carefully removed and new timber inserted.

The remaining front fence section facing the Highland Lakes Rd, including the centre pedestrian gate will complete the total renovation of the exterior of the Homestead and its surrounds during 2017-18.

The first house built at The Steppes in 1864 was for James Wilson who was appointed the Chief Police Constable and Stock Inspector for the South Longford Police District. His meticulous stock reports were highly regarded— in 1886 he recorded 90,574 sheep,

2,970 cattle and 142 horses, together with their owners and property names. In 1930 the Steppes Police Reserve became the Animal and Bird Protection Reserve—with added land, it now comes under the control of the Parks and Wildlife.

In early May, visitors to The Steppes witnessed the annual movement of sheep from 'up country' grazing areas to 'down country' properties. Initially, 3,200 sheep passed the Homestead in one mob, followed a few days later by two smaller flocks. The main flock had walked from Split Rock, spending each night in an accommodation paddock enroute.



In memorium



Trauti Reynolds, a Wildcare volunteer extraordinaire, passed away on Saturday 23 June after a long illness.

Wife of David, mother of Gavin (deceased) and Mark, was an admired and loved friend of all who were fortunate enough to know her.

Trauti was an artist and craftswoman, producing the most intricate woven pictures depicting some of the places she had been. She was also a photographer with an eye for nature, a bushwalker, and an inspired gardener. As a young woman she left Switzerland and travelled widely, visiting and falling in love with Tasmania, later meeting David in South Africa. They decided to live here and volunteering became their *raison d'être*.

Together they worked locally and on more Tasmanian and Australian islands than most of us can name, helping to bring derelict historic buildings back to life and to restore and regenerate neglected bushland. Trauti & David volunteered at Friends of Tasman Island's first working bee in 2006 and again in 2007, 2008 & 2009. Their time was spent between a number of other Wildcare groups—Friends of Melaleuca, Friends of Deal Island, Friends of Schouten Island, Friends of Woodvine and Friends of Maria Island were among those groups who also benefited from their generosity.

The colloquially named Trauti's Rock on Tasman's ZigZag track evokes memories of her.

Trauti was also well known for the artistic journals which she wrote as souvenirs of the life she lived so fully. One of these, *Reflections*, follows their life on Deal Island, and was published as a book. Each adventure was meticulously recorded with her hand-written script, together with drawings and photos. Thanks to Trauti's generosity, these are now available on line through the Tasmania Archives & Heritage Office at: <http://search.archives.tas.gov.au/default.aspx?detail=1&type=A&id=NG03477>.

Trauti also produced a beautiful set of journals about their work on Schouten Island and restoration of the Cooks Beach Hut. The journals will go on display in a new set of panels celebrating Wildcare in the Visitors Centre at Freycinet later this year. It may have been one of the last items she finished as it has only been handed to Freycinet in March.

They will be a lasting memory of an extraordinary volunteer.

Story by Erika Shankley (FoTI) with input from Adrian Sullivan (Friends of Freycinet), photo by David Reynolds.



WILDCARE would like to say

thank you

to all donors who contributed to one of more of Wildcare's Gift Funds. Each fund has a specific purpose outlined on the Wildcare website.

WILDCARE Gift Fund –
General nature conservation

WILDCARE Tasmanian Coast Conservation Fund

WILDCARE World Heritage Wilderness Fund

WILDCARE Injured and Orphaned Wildlife Fund

WILDCARE Whale Rescue Fund

WILDCARE Save the Orange-bellied parrot Fund

WILDCARE Lighthouse Stations Fund

WILDCARE Raptor Rehabilitation and
Research Fund

WILDCARE WILDSC'OOO

WILDCARE Saffire Devil Fund

WILDCARE Bonorong Fund

WILDCARE Wallace Wildtrack Fund

**Would you like to support a cause
or a particular branch and the work
they do?**

Visit the donations area of the Wildcare website, choose one or more of the Gift Funds that relates to your preferred cause. Or, name a specific Branch when you make your donation and we will invite that Branch to submit a project that they see as a priority.

The Wildcare way is to apply 100% of donations through to the cause—there are no administration charges applied to donations.

Ramping up our Whale Rescue Program for 2018

At this time of the year, baleen whales are migrating to warmer waters to breed. Occasionally whale specialists might be called upon to help with an entangled humpback or a confused group of dolphins. With Spring and Summer comes the risk of a mass stranding of toothed whales such as pilot or sperm whales. These open ocean whales can come close to the shoreline when following fish and squid and it is here that they can get into trouble.

Many past mass strandings have been successfully dealt with by PWS staff and volunteers with the help of regionally distributed whale trailers and rescue mats. A 3 ton pilot whale needs more than 10 trained volunteers to move it. Consider how many people we need if 100 or more whales end up on our beaches!

It's been around 10 years since we had a really big stranding and it is very important that we don't become complacent. Luckily we have a keen group of previously trained volunteers and staff who have worked tirelessly to set up a state-wide Wildcare branch of first response volunteers. The group run whale displays, raise money for new equipment (so we are ready for any big events wherever they occur) and play a role in public education.

Last month a training session was held at Seven Mile Beach. It was an opportunity to upskill both Parks and Wildlife staff and the Wildcare First Response Branch and it was quite a team effort! Kris Carlyon from the

Wildlife Management Branch of PWS provided the latest rescue information. Guilia Roncon, a volunteer and also a PhD candidate at IMAS provided a short session on overseas learning, whilst other volunteers Cory Young, Andrew Bassom and Riss Giddings helped set up the inflatable whale.

Working On Country Aboriginal Trainee Ranger Dayne Langdon was soon putting what he learnt into practice when four bottle-nosed dolphins became beached at Pipe Clay Lagoon. Dayne commented that having trained volunteers and staff really made the process run smoothly and it was wonderful to see them successfully released at Roches Beach.

Upcoming training open to all current and new interested volunteers: 30 August in Ulverstone. Another is planned for the East coast later this year. The program will be listed on the Wildcare Calendar of events or interested people can contact Ingrid Albion directly at Ingrid.Albion@parks.tas.gov.au

Share your story

Send your submissions to wildtimes@wildcaretas.org.au



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