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Annual Report 2023-2024



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OVERVIEW

On behalf of the Executive Committee of WA Wildlife (Native ARC Inc.), I am honoured to present WA Wildlife's 2023-2024 Annual Report, a year of transformative growth and significant accomplishments.

A key highlight was the completion of the Native ARC redevelopment project, a five-year, multimillion dollar initiative transforming WA Wildlife into a purpose-built facility for wildlife rescue, veterinary treatment, rehabilitation, education, and training. This project was made possible by the City of Cockburn, Lotterywest, the State NRM Program and bp Australia.

My last task as Chairperson is to present the 2023/2024 Annual Report. Recently a major leadership restructure was undertaken resulting in changes at the Executive Committee and senior management. As of 1 July 2024, I stepped down from the role as Chairperson however will continue to serve as a Member of the Committee. I have enjoyed the past eighteen years working with my colleagues, staff and volunteers to transition the organisation from a small operation in an old house to the exceptional organisation it is today and look forward to continuing to contribute towards WA Wildlife's ongoing success.

The Executive Committee welcomed Diane Munrowd to undertake the role of Chairperson. Her extensive experience at WA Wildlife as CEO and her strategic vision was a major factor in the growth and positioning of WA Wildlife as a leader in wildlife medicine and rehabilitation. It has been a privilege working with her and the WA Wildlife team to overcome many challenges and achieve incredible successes. I am confident with her leadership the organisation will continue to grow from strength to strength.

Supporting this transition was the appointment of Dean Huxley as the new Chief Executive Officer. Dean's commitment over the years has resulted in an extensive knowledge of wildlife along with significant management experience and qualifications equipping him with the necessary knowledge and skills to inspire, lead and manage the operations and future development of WA Wildlife.

In terms of operations, WA Wildlife admitted more than 6000 animals in 2023-2024, maintaining its position as Western Australia's busiest wildlife hospital. While generating \$1.3 million in revenue, largely from grants and capital works, operating expenses continue to rise. The current financial success is commendable and reinforces the importance of securing sustainable income generation beyond grants to cover core operational expenses.

Looking ahead, the economic climate, including inflation, adds complexity to financial planning, making it crucial to secure new income streams.

The Executive Committee is committed to continuing our exceptional service to both wildlife and the community, while also focusing on maintaining the organization's long-term sustainability.

With the support of our new Executive Committee and leadership team, I am confident that WA Wildlife will continue to grow and thrive, ensuring that we expand our impact on wildlife care and conservation.

Sincerely,



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Dunn", with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Robert Dunn
Chairperson
WA Wildlife

26 October 2024

CEO Forward

Stepping down as CEO as of 1 July 2024, I am very grateful for the support of the talented, enthusiastic and committed staff and volunteers of WA Wildlife. Working with the Executive Committee of WA Wildlife as CEO has been a rewarding experience and I would like to thank everyone over the last fifteen years for supporting me during a very challenging and exciting journey.

I would like to acknowledge our past Chairperson Bob Dunn for his wisdom and many years of exceptional service and look forward to his ongoing contribution as an Executive Committee Member.

Looking to the future, the Executive Committee will emphasize the importance of continuous improvement, identification of new areas of growth and the potential for innovation. A major factor underpinning operations is to maintain rigorous reporting requirements and build a strong financial base to support ongoing activities. Reflecting on the past achievements, I am confident WA Wildlife will continue to develop from strength to strength.

The 2023/2024 report highlights another year of great performance, and the Executive Committee is committed to consolidating and strengthening relationships to deliver necessary services.

There is no substitute for a strong management team, and I am confident the new CEO, Dean Huxley will maximise advantages and apply those strategies to achieving the primary objectives and the strategic vision of WA Wildlife.

Operating sustainably is an inherent part of our culture and aligns with expectations from the community, stakeholders and regulators. The impact of climate change and the current economy continues to affect all sectors including services to wildlife. Mitigating these effects is essential due to the profoundly important role of wildlife organisations in promoting the health and wellbeing of wildlife, providing a sense of connection with the public and the environment.

The Executive Committee will continue to support WA Wildlife's role in effective advocacy for wildlife and champion quality outcomes.



Diane Munrowd
CEO
WA Wildlife

HIGHLIGHTS

Leadership Transition and Succession

After eighteen years of dedicated service, Robert Dunn stepped down as Chairperson and Diane Munrowd transitioned to Chairperson after fifteen years as CEO. Diane's leadership was instrumental in growing WA Wildlife into the organisation it is today.

Dean Huxley was appointed as CEO on 1 July 2024, bringing extensive experience in wildlife management, governance, organisational and operational management, policy, project management and strategic planning. His leadership, combined with Diane's continued strategic oversight, ensures that WA Wildlife will continue to grow.



Dean Huxley was appointed Chief Executive Officer 1 July 2024

Karen Clarkson and Dr Meg Rodgers have been promoted to Senior management roles. Together, they oversee the day-to-day management of the WA Wildlife Hospital, rehabilitation facilities and education spaces, providing strong leadership to both staff and volunteers.

Completion of Redevelopment Project

The completion of the Marine Turtle Rehabilitation Facility and Reptile Discovery Centre marks the final chapter of a multi-million dollar redevelopment project. These facilities, to be launched on 31 October 2024, were made possible with the support of the City of Cockburn, Lotterywest, the State NRM Program and bp Australia.

Growth in Wildlife Admissions

WA Wildlife admitted 6009 animals in 2023-2024, maintaining its status as the busiest wildlife rehabilitation facility in Western Australia.

Educational Programs Expansion

Over 900 students participated in WA Wildlife's educational programs, enhanced by the introduction of new ambassador animals such as koalas and reptiles.

Wildlife Call and Rescue Services

From 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024, WA Wildlife logged over 9500 phone calls regarding wildlife issues and conducted 953 animal rescues.

ZAA Accreditation Application

WA Wildlife submitted its application for Zoological Association of Australasia (ZAA) accreditation, with an inspection for later this year.

Oiled Pelican Response

From July to October 2023, WA Wildlife successfully treated 55 oiled pelicans, managing a large oil spill incident involving pelicans. In kind volunteer labour, donations of medications, consumables and detergent received were cost at \$120,000 with an additional \$30,000 paid directly from WA Wildlife financial reserves.

Wildcare Helpline

The Wildcare Helpline provides a service for the public who find sick or injured native wildlife and are seeking advice on where to access care for the animal. The Helpline is owned by the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions and managed and operated by WA Wildlife (since 2022). Volunteer operators answer calls (approximately 12,000 in 2023-2024) and connect members of the public with their nearest licensed wildlife rehabilitator. The DBCA provides funding to WA Wildlife to employ a full-time coordinator to manage the Helpline.

OPERATIONAL REVIEW

WA Wildlife Hospital Veterinary Advisory Group

WA Wildlife operates year-round, supported by a dedicated team of staff and volunteers. 70% of staff salaries are covered by grants. These positions are dependent on continued grant funding.

The organisation includes:

- 2 full-time employees (CEO and Wildcare Helpline Coordinator)
- 2 part-time managers
- 6 part-time veterinarians
- 9 casual education and training officers
- 3 part-time wildlife rescue officers
- 1 contracted accountant and 1 bookkeeper
- 450+ volunteers, contributing more than 85,000 hours, valued at \$4,896,900

“70% of staff salaries are covered by grants. These positions are dependent on continued grant funding.”

Wildlife Hospital and Patient Care

WA Wildlife admitted 6009 animals in the 2023-2024 financial year.

Species breakdown:

- **73% birds**
- **11% mammals**
- **11% reptiles**
- **2.5% amphibians**
- **2.5% turtles**

Sustainability and Environmental Initiatives ‘

WA Wildlife secured \$70,000 from Atco (\$10K) and Deloitte (\$60K) to develop a five year sustainability strategy. This strategy will guide future operations, focusing on environmental impact, operational efficiency and reducing the existing carbon footprint. Understanding the impact on the environmental is crucial in aligning our mission with the global need for conservation and sustainability. Tracking and reducing the carbon footprint, will demonstrate the role the wildlife conservation sector can play in this space.

This undertaking positions WA Wildlife as a leader in environmental best practices, ensuring future generations inherit a healthier planet. Our long-term vision is one where both people and wildlife thrive in harmony.



Financial Overview

WA Wildlife generated \$1.3 million in income for the 2023-2024 financial year. While this figure represents a successful year on paper, it's important to note much of this income was tied to specific grants and capital projects, which rarely if ever cover operational costs. Operating expenses exceeded \$900,000.

Running costs for the Hospital and core operations are primarily supported by donations, fundraisers, income from op shops and fee-for-service programs. These revenue streams are critical, as grants and project funding typically do not cover the day-to-day expenses that keep the hospital running.

When reviewing the financial and audited reports for Native ARC Incorporated, it's crucial to understand that the operating surplus (net asset position) is limited. Once grants and other project funds are factored out, our cash reserves are modest. This emphasises the importance of increasing this reserve to ensure long-term sustainability and emergency preparedness.

“Once grants and other project funds are factored out, our cash reserves are modest.”

Challenges and Future Goals

As we look to the future, WA Wildlife faces ongoing challenges such as increasing operational costs and an unpredictable economy. Securing diverse funding streams to support core operations and maintain high standards of wildlife care is key.

One major goal is to strengthen research initiatives, particularly in areas such as disease surveillance and post-release monitoring, essential for long-term conservation success.

Additionally, focus will be on further enhancing educational programs and public outreach to foster deeper community engagement in conservation efforts.

Public Engagement and Events

WA Wildlife has made significant strides in engaging the public through a variety of educational programs, events and tours. Interactive educational programs have reached over 900 students in the past year, providing hands-on wildlife learning experiences that focus on conservation. Tours which include behind-the-scenes opportunities have proven to be an effective tool for raising awareness about wildlife conservation.

A series of public awareness campaigns around responsible wildlife care have been launched aiming to reduce human impact on native species through education and advocacy.



Daily tours include the Reptile Discovery Centre

Sponsors and Supporters

WA Wildlife extends its deepest thanks to all our sponsors and supporters, whose generosity ensures we can continue our work in wildlife rescue, treatment, rehabilitation, research and education.

Platinum Sponsors

- **City of Cockburn** – Our longest-standing partner, providing critical funding for the construction of the WA Wildlife Hospital and Education and Training Centre.
- **Lotterywest** – Has funded multiple projects, including hospital fit-outs, rehabilitation enclosures and educational initiatives.
- **State NRM Program** – Supported critical infrastructure development, including seabird, mammal and marine turtle facilities.
- **WWF Australia** – Funded vital training programs for veterinary staff, contributing to state-wide improvements in wildlife care.

Gold Sponsors

- **IFAW (International Fund for Animal Welfare)** – Supports veterinary programs and emergency wildlife response initiatives.
- **SPCA International** – Provides funding for WA Wildlife's ambulance service, ensuring fast response to wildlife emergencies.
- **bp Australia** – Long-time supporter of rehabilitation enclosures, educational programs and veterinary infrastructure.

Bronze Sponsors

- Costa
- Minara Resources
- Marley Spoon
- Animalius
- Zoetis

Supporters

- Fremantle Ports
- Castledex

We also extend thanks to our many **Friends of WA Wildlife**, whose ongoing support can be found on our website.

SUMMARY

Acknowledgements

WA Wildlife extends its deepest gratitude to our Patron the Hon Melissa Parke, who has been an unwavering supporter for 15 years. Melissa's extensive experience, including her time as Federal Member for Fremantle and Minister for International Development, as well as her work with the United Nations, continues to inspire us. She currently serves as the Executive Director of ICAN and remains a steadfast advocate for wildlife.

The Executive Committee has guided WA Wildlife through significant growth and transformation with Members providing support to staff and volunteers throughout the year. We are grateful for their vision, support and camaraderie throughout the year.

Special recognition goes to Diane Munrowd, whose many years of leadership ensured WA Wildlife's growth from a grassroots initiative into the leading wildlife institution it is today.

Dean Huxley, who worked closely with Diane, has also been instrumental in WA Wildlife's growth as well as maintaining operational efficiency, expanding programs and securing financial sustainability.

We also acknowledge Karen Clarkson and Dr Meg Rodgers for their countless volunteer hours and dedication. Their leadership ensures smooth day-to-day management of the WA Wildlife Hospital, rehabilitation facilities and education spaces, providing strong guidance for both staff and volunteers.

Lastly, we thank our staff, volunteers, donors and sponsors for their continued support and commitment, which enables us to carry on our mission of helping wild lives live.

Way Forward

Moving forward WA Wildlife is well-positioned to continue advancing improvements in wildlife care, rehabilitation, research, and education. With the completion of major redevelopment projects, solid infrastructure is in place to support increasing demands.

Maintaining and establishing new partnerships is a priority in the coming year including exploring new initiatives and consolidate existing services. Under the Executive Committee's guidance, the leadership team, along with the dedicated staff and volunteers can investigate new opportunities for growth and innovative approaches to veterinary and rehabilitation care.

Strengthening research programs, in areas such as post-release monitoring and disease surveillance, is critical to the long-term success of wildlife rehabilitation initiatives. These efforts will enhance conservation impacts and position WA Wildlife as a major contributor in wildlife research.

Expanding educational programs will encourage increasing numbers of students and the public to engage in wildlife conservation. The new education spaces, and the introduction of new wildlife education ambassadors, will play a crucial role in fostering a deeper understanding of conserving the natural world.

WA Wildlife remains steadfast in its mission of “helping wild lives live” and as the organisation moves into the future, we are committed to ensuring that actions today create a better tomorrow for wildlife and the environment.

