

Minton Farm

ANIMAL RESCUE CENTRE

www.mintonfarm.com.au

NEWSLETTER: AUGUST 2012

We have been fortunate to secure a Grant from Seaworld and Busch Gardens Conservation Fund US, for our Koala rescue, rehabilitation and release program. The funds will be used to purchase equipment, medical supplies, housing facilities and revegetation work at the Centre. We are very grateful and humbled to be honoured with their support, amongst world-wide conservation programs from sea turtle rehab to gorilla protection. The city of Onkaparinga have recently approved a grant to establish and maintain indigenous eucalypt species from local providence for local wildlife populations as a food source, to improve urban biodiversity as a community led project, to increase community participation and improve local knowledge of koala habitat.

We are constantly planting suitable eucalypt species as future food sources for koalas with the help Coromandel Natives, and Growing Bush providing koala fodder species. We owe a huge debt of gratitude to you.

Little Shamus koala has grown from 380 grams to 2000 grams, but is suffering with kidney failure. He is receiving two medications daily and is once again thriving, weighing in at just over 2 kgs now, we are giving him the best quality of life for as long as he can survive. Having obtained our koala rescue permit, and having had our koala release management plan approved

by DENR we have completed our outdoor enclosure and our large outdoor holding facility. Having received many tiny koalas from 270 grams we need to build a "koala nursery" room, where the babies will be close to us 24/7 and will be kept at optimum room temperature. Shamus is still in our Dining room and constantly pulls books down from my shelves each night when he becomes very active. Being so very cold over the past few months we have been unable to force him into the outdoor enclosure, even though we installed a wall heater and café blinds within it for him!! We concreted the floor of our verandah so it doesn't flood, and Glenn has been enclosing the walls. We need insulation, windows, doors ceiling yet, but we are getting there!

We have been fund raising at Fairs, displays, public speaking, and Bunnings BBQ's to continue our free service to the community. We have had a myriad of students attending to volunteer and learn about wildlife rescue procedures as part of their education programs from Primary, Secondary and Tertiary levels. Many of our volunteers have gone around Australia and overseas at this time of year, and we have had several fresh new faces in the mob that always keeps it interesting and fun! Our program runs Tuesdays or Thursdays 10am to 2pm, so if you are interested in joining in, give me a call. 0422 938439

Thank you to those who have donated teddies, blankets, & baby sleeping bags to use with koala rehab. They have come from as far away as Pt Pirie, and have been very useful. We look forward to receiving donations from you, as they are invaluable and make such a difference to the burden of running costs.

Miru our wedge tail eagle escaped once again!!! The \$4,500 spent on netting from Advanced Nets and Ropes has been a dismal failure, as Miru chewed through the netting immediately. We lined the complete enclosure with 6' high shade cloth which kept her in until a windy day lifted the sides and off she went! I was lying on the ground on my back "connecting to Country" and photographing the two wild eagles overhead when I saw a flash of a brown massive





wingspan rise up into our pine trees. My heart sank as I thought "That looks like Miru!" And sure enough, there was a dead duck and a laying hen with its bones picked clean by my own eagle! She had landed in our bottom paddock and was throwing balls of donkey poo into the air and playing with sticks and chatting away, looking up very nervously at the two wild eagles menacing her. I walked down the paddock, talking to her and she came 'running' up to me. We discussed what the best thing to do was, and I decided that she wouldn't survive too long on the ground. I held her by her shoulders then pulled my jacket over her head to stop her being able to bite me, and grasped her talons before they grabbed me! She wrapped her massive 3' wing around my body as I carried her up the hill, saying "Thank you God, Thankyou God" all the way!!! It was another miracle to save her again from certain death. We are now rebuilding her enclosure with panels of iron and wire mesh!

I attended the Australian Wildlife Rehabilitation conference in Townsville in July, where all sorts of up to the minute information, displays, research, projects, and knowledge was shared from around Australia. I spent a day at the James Cook University to attend a Parasitology Course, to learn about microscopes, bacteria, parasites, etc, etc. I was able to purchase some CSIRO books about wildlife and pathology also, so I have a good start to helping koalas with kidney failure, disease, and parasites once we obtain a microscope. We have been donated a centrifuge from a neighbour to assist with urine analysis already. Should you know where a microscope may be available to us, please let me know (0422938439).

Our tree plantations are quite mature having been planted some 25 years ago for the wild koalas when we first arrived. Now that we have been approved to rescue, rehabilitate and release injured and orphaned koalas, we need fresh gum tips to feed koalas. We

have begun to coppice the mature trees to encourage them to produce new growth. In addition to this we are ripping rows in a paddock with a ripper attachment I bought for our little tractor. It is marvellous, and has enabled volunteers and students to plant efficiently. We are planning a working bee with 30 students from Scotch College in order to get a mass planting for koala fodder completed shortly.

Should you have access to fresh gum leaf tips (the end 60cm of branches) please consider collecting them and placing them immediately into a bucket of fresh water. You can deliver them to Minton Farm 24/7 as there is a bin of water placed in front of our letter box for you to place them in. Your assistance makes such a difference to the health and vitality of our rescued koalas. There is no substitute food for them and they rely on fresh leaf twice a day to survive. We can't possibly source enough from our property to keep them going without your help. A koala eats 30 entire, mature gum trees in a year!!

We obtained a burning permit from council to burn up the branches left from animal browse, housing, & fire prevention clearing carried out throughout the year. Every day the koala, possum, and roo branches are removed and replaced with fresh ones, leaving a large amount of burning to do. I have purchased an electric mulcher and use it every morning to turn these left over branches into lovely fresh mulch, which I place around the gum seedlings planted throughout the property for koala browse, thereby completing the full circle without producing any pollution and fostering new plant growth!

There has been an increase in rabbit numbers again this year similar to 20 years ago. I have been forced to use tree guards and stakes around all new gum seedlings to protect them from rabbits. This has caused another increase in costs to ensure a food source for rescued koalas. If you have any



contacts to obtain tree guards and stakes, or wish to donate some, new or used, we would be happy to hear from you please!

We attended the Aberfoyle Park animal rescue fair where we did some face painting and made lots of kids happy with the lucky dips, games and prizes, raising a bit of money for Minton Farm Native Animal Rescue.

Wilma wombat has amazed us with her engineering skills around her enclosure. She has moved tons of soil to build a 'moat' around her nest box in a shelter shed. It was flooded out when the heavy rains followed her excavations into the area. Ollie the euro has benefited from her warm nest box, sleeping next to her in the entrance to her box, enjoying the heat she radiates from underneath her doona!

The Mareema dogs have been keeping foxes out of our poultry enclosures. I found one of the eggs laid by Ernie emu, carried into a paddock several paddocks away from the emu enclosure. A fox had tried to eat it, but the shell was too thick and the teeth could only scratched the surface!

If you would like to support our rescue work with donations of goods, we gratefully accept nectar mix(Wombaroo, Harvest etc), dry dog food, muesli, budgie seed, sunflower seed, breakfast cereals including weetbix and rolled oats, carrots, corn, grapes, celery, apples, meal worms. These items are invaluable for our rescued birds, bettongs, kangaroos, possums, gliders, parrots, lorikeets, honey eaters and wombats.

Dear little Shamus is at his happiest when nestled onto my shoulder. He has been attending School educational talks much to the delight of the students, and to the amusement of Shamus who gratefully devours gum tips the children tempt him with! He has been a regular in the volunteer shed at lunchtimes for the past 6 months, and I think this has given him confidence with groups of people, causing him no stress as long as "Mum" has him!

Channel 10 made a live broadcast from Minton Farm on 1st August for the news, as we were a part of the People's Choice Community lottery to raise funds for our rescue centre.



Quiz Night

The Beta Sigma Fi group are kindly hosting a quiz night at the Somerton Park Bowling Club on FRIDAY 31 AUGUST 2012. We are trying to raise money to build a shed to store the kangaroo hay bales. It costs only \$8 for Adults and \$5 for children. Please consider coming along and contact me for further details or donate to Minton Farm if you can't attend on the night to help us to achieve our target. You can order tickets by phoning me on 82701169.

Our aim is to assist the conservation of the natural diversity of life on Earth

Sponsor an animal

**ANIMAL SPONSORSHIP:
\$35 ANNUALLY**

You can elect to receive newsletter electronically or by mail.

Donations may be made to Bank SA

To Minton Farm Rescue Centre,
BSB 105 078, Acc 056 591 840

You can also donate via PayPal on our website sponsorship page.

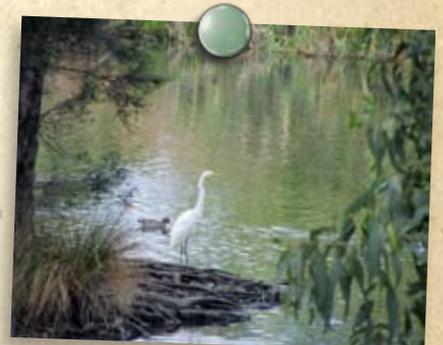
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We have a new webmaster, Mick Shaw, who is designing an interactive updated website soon to go live. Thanks Mick. Thanks so much to Simone Linehan & Andy Scott for compiling this newsletter and Joanne Lemmer for printing it. You are invaluable to Minton Farm and very much appreciated.