

Minton Farm

ANIMAL RESCUE CENTRE
www.mintonfarm.com.au

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

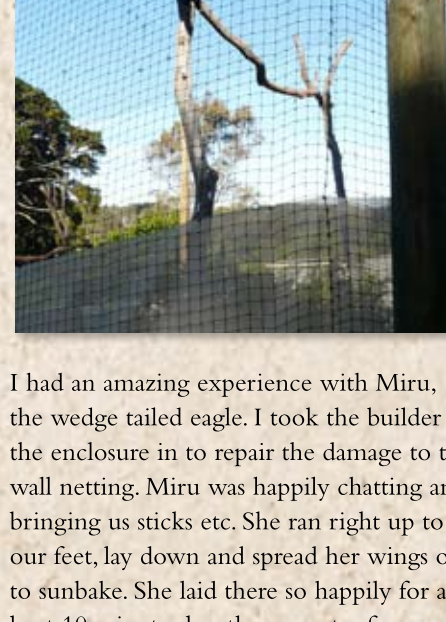
NEWSLETTER: MAY 2012

Minton Farm is a not for profit, native animal rescue centre in Cherry Gardens, South Australia. The aim of the centre is to rescue, rehabilitate and release injured and orphaned native animals and birds as a free community service. It is operated with the involvement of volunteers who assist in the maintenance of the Centre and with caring for the animals. There is no funding for the work which has rescued over 8,600 creatures in the onsite Intensive Care Unit, with equally as many offsite via email and phone rescue advice throughout Australasia and beyond. There are 300 animals housed within 6 acres of fox and cat proofed fencing in species specific enclosures. Species assisted include kangaroos, possums, wombats, koalas, emu, eagles, kookaburras, tawny frogmouths, and a myriad of parrots and lorikeets. In addition to this there are the farm animals ranging from ducks, geese and peacocks through to donkey, ponies, pigs, deer and sea lions. Well, ok... no sea lions - yet!

So what's been happening...

This year we have achieved our permit to keep koalas and we helped many people with sick and injured adults as well as helping three joey koalas ranging from 380 grams to 1800 grams. We had a 20' x 22' enclosure donated for koala rehabilitation. The volunteers and Green Jobs Corp dismantled and delivered it on a car trailer courtesy of Peter Frith. The roof was added courtesy of our local back hoe driver, Jeff Burton. It was bolted together by the volunteers and was ready to go within a week! Amazing stuff and a credit to the goodwill towards the rescue work. Dear little Paddy's Mum (koala) was hit by a train, amputating 2 legs at midnight, but this dear little man was thrown into the weeds. He has clung to life on the back of his substitute teddy bear, munching leaves happily. He has gained 1 kg in the last couple of weeks within the new enclosure. I bought an extension pole for \$350 that extends to 4 meters so I can cut the juiciest gum tips for him. It was the best investment I've made! Little Shamus Koala weighed only 380 grams and was found on a bitumen road, having fallen several times from a tree,

orphaned by his first time Mum when threatened by a large boisterous male. He is feeding well and gaining weight so cross your fingers for this little bundle of cuteness! The contacts that I made at the Australia Zoo's Wildlife Hospital have been a comfort, giving advice instantly about the medical management of these joeys. He loves to climb up onto the back of my head after his bottle and stays there happily hanging onto my hair while I eat breakfast or water the gum trees I have planted as a future food source for him. So tiny and so cute, but he won't be able to do that when he's 2kgs!



I had an amazing experience with Miru, the wedge tailed eagle. I took the builder of the enclosure in to repair the damage to the wall netting. Miru was happily chatting and bringing us sticks etc. She ran right up to our feet, lay down and spread her wings out to sunbake. She laid there so happily for at least 10 minutes less than a metre from our feet, and we were riveted to the spot. When she stood up, I gently stroked her head, neck and back (that were burning hot) and she just stood there so relaxed. I think she was thanking us for her wonderful new enclosure and her new life with all of the other animals around and the two wild visiting eagles that are her friends now.

Another two wedge tailed eagles chased down a young tawny frogmouth chick at Kangarilla. It flew into a tree trunk, bounced off and onto a car bonnet. The driver rescued the chick from the eagles and brought it here. Unfortunately it died in the incubator from internal damage. Just demonstrates how hard it is to survive in the 'real' world. Life sure can be short and sweet. No wonder baby birds grow so quickly to fledge a.s.a.p. to be self-sufficient within weeks, unlike humans.

At the Centre's hospital during the hot spell, in one day we received 2 rainbow lorikeets, 2 musk lorikeets, a cormorant found at a nursing home, a rosella chick, an adult ringtail attacked by a cat, a tiny ringtail orphan, a tiny galah nestling, a blue tongue lizard with a crushed jaw, a fledgling long billed corella hit by a car, and a tiny welcome swallow. Another hot day and it was on again!

A young kookaburra was trapped inside a swimming pool skimmer box for quite some time. It was freezing cold; water logged and had broken many of its tail feathers off. After a night in the humidicrib he was most indignant about his embarrassing predicament. He ate well from the word go without regurgitating his feeds, so we got him home once we'd observed him flying well in the flight enclosure. Another young kookaburra chick was found listless on a road but after a rest here started flying strongly and eating like a horse. Both kookaburras went home, much fatter, healthier prospects in the big world, fulfilling their role in our wonderfully biodiverse world.

One little kookaburra came into Minton Farm Animal Rescue Centre covered in mud, unable to fly having been fed on the ground by his parents. After a warm bath & a big feed he was a new man! We released him on a post in the back yard he was hatched in, and even the bronze wings came to welcome him home.

We returned a Nankeen Kestrel to Eagle on the Hill where he flew off beautifully into the sky. He came in with concussion after hitting the window of a recently constructed, large, building that had appeared in his territory. That weekend Glenn and I also released a baby kookaburra back to her family at Upper Sturt; returned a magpie, galah, brushtail possum and baby, and a knob tailed gecko to their home territories. Exhilarating!

There is a certain 25kg bundle that oversees the farm activities both day and night. Wilma, is a Southern Hairy Nosed Wombat, but don't tell her so, as she thinks she is human.

Her mother was dug up and eaten at Yalata on the Nullabor Plains. She was barely 1kg in weight at the time, still in her mother's pouch. Her captors unfortunately fed her cow's milk in a bowl, which she inhaled, causing her to have pneumonia and enteritis as well as Salmonella. She was brought to Minton Farm by a woman from the Aboriginal tribe in the District. The Vets at the Adelaide Zoo assisted me to medicate her correctly to get on top of all her infections. It was a long road, but today she weighs in at a healthy 25 kgs at 2 years old, sporting the silkiest coat of smooth, satiny fur. Wilma has never been confined to an enclosure. She has the run of our home, as well as the house paddock. She is proficient at opening the kitchen door by laying sideways and hooking one of her claws from her short, fat little arms into the edge of the security door, and with one deft swoop, she can fling it open like a piece of tin foil. She spends her days sleeping outside in the dog bedroom or the large kennel soaking up the sunshine with the Jack Russell and the Chihuahua, or if it's too warm a day, she retires to the cool room in the old dairy where the milk vat was housed. Our house is consequently not the 'norm'.

It is in fact a wombat burrow. There's a baby proof gate across the bedroom doors to prevent her from dragging all of the sheets off of the beds and ripping the carpets up to the hessian base. There are spirals of plastic tubing around all accessible power cords to prevent her from chewing through the insulation and getting electrocuted. There's a plastic sheet under a blanket covering the lounge suite to catch any wet puddles she may leave after cuddling into the pillows and blankets strewn over it for her. There's the crunch of muesli, chaff and Weetbix that sticks to your shoes as you walk across the vinyl flooring where she has sorted through her evening feast for her favourite foods, and the slippery patches where she has devoured a cob of corn and left a silvery trail like a snail's trail. There are narrow bare patches striped along the kitchen vinyl floor where she has chewed near the fridge to get my attention to open the fridge door so she can have a cob of corn or a sweet potato. There are piles of disposable nappies placed in strategic positions to catch the ebb and flow of wee if she is caught short.

There are the little 'fruitchoes' dropped in lines across the carpet leaving a tell-tale trail of which direction she has wandered off. There are the 40 minutes spent twice a day feeding her bottle to her while her solid weight lays across your chest in absolute blissful contentment. There's the morning chase to jump on the bed and get your socks on before she nips your toes. There is the flurry of fur racing across the kitchen as the Burmese cat plays chase with the wombat in hot pursuit, until he collapses in a purring heap with the wombat writhing on top, and the conical antics of the Jack Russell riding on top of the wombat that rolls over in delight. Visitors and volunteers need to be aware of her fetish for bare skin at her level - ankles, shins or her particular delight, bare toes. It is quite entertaining when Wilma enters the volunteer kitchen at lunchtime to say g'day, and a wave of legs rise into the air as she waddles past each of the volunteers' chairs. "Is it worth it?" you may say. Yes! 100% wombat joy spiced with her devilish sense of humour abounds in our home and we wouldn't have it any other way!

Moving on from Wilma, I had a man bring a clutch of rosella eggs that he removed from his roof, which he did not want to take back. I put them into an incubator for about 10 days, turning them twice a day, just like the mother would. This morning I kept hearing a chick cheeping in the hospital and thought I must have overlooked feeding something. To my surprise, the eggs in the incubator were chirping!!! Throughout the morning the eggs were pipped (a hole pecked in them by the chicks egg tooth on their beak), and when I looked again an hour later, there was a tiny little rosella chick lying in the incubator! The second egg was pipped, but the chick struggled all day and was stuck. I carefully peeled the eggshell away to expose the chick and moistened the membranes with water to loosen the stuck chick. It managed to free itself without bleeding (which they sometimes do if they are not ready to hatch). They are feeding about .2ml three hourly so far, so we will see what the future brings. Amazing resilience!

We have assisted many University students from Adelaide and Flinders Universities and Roseworthy Vet students to fulfil their practical experience at the centre. We are also assisting Roseworthy to obtain wildlife for the students to learn how to anaesthetise, medicate, diagnose etc... in an effort to help improve the future availability of Vets trained in wildlife care.

Any of our members who utilize our friends at WHO Adelaide Real Estate to sell their home will have 10% of the commission donated back to us. The girls have been a big support with printing and postage over the years and this is a substantial offer so please keep your ears open when people are selling and refer them. This is a great opportunity for us. Please join their facebook page and show your support, they are big animal lovers like all of us.

As part of our rehabilitation work we are constantly looking for supplies. We desperately need freshly picked, juicy green leaf shoots from the top ends of gum branches daily for koalas firstly, as well as the kangaroos and possums. It's quality, not quantity that we need - they waste any leaf that's too dry or mature, and then it needs to be disposed of. Thanks to David and Liz Hope and Sheryl Glassmith for delivering delicious morsels for Paddy. Species suitable include: Manna Gum, River Red Gum, Pink Gum, SA Blue Gum, Brown Stringybark, Cup Gum, Swamp Gum, Messmate Stringybark, Tasmanian Blue Gum, Moort, Candle Bark, Grey Ironbark, Woollybutt and Yellow and White Stringybark. We also need large teddies/bunnies for the koala joeys to cling to in various sizes from approx. 20cms up to approx. 50cms. Koala joeys are kept in cane baskets with a handle over the top so that it can be hung in a tree with their teddy for security, whilst they learn to navigate branches and munch on leaves. If you have any that you would like to donate for koala rehabilitation we would be deeply grateful. Cotton bunny rugs, baby sleeping bags are excellent for koala joeys to sleep in, so if you don't need yours any more, they would be put to good use. You can put any of the above into the cages on the road if the front gate is closed when you deliver them.

We are dependent upon some very old freezers that don't stop running and consume huge amounts of electricity to store food for the birds of prey, and also to assist Roseworthy Vet Science students. We have entered into an agreement to store native animal specimens that pass away for the students to practice their Vet skills on. If any of you have or know of an energy efficient freezer (about taker box size) that is no longer needed by the owner, we would be exceptionally grateful for the use of it. Call 0422 938 439 if you would like us to come and collect it.

And sincere thanks to Dr Rachel Westcott for offering to auspice our future grant applications, which is a huge help.

Until next time, all the best, Bev xx

Sponsor an Animal
Annual sponsorship of an animal costs just \$35. Please send your contact details, cheque or money order and the type of animal you wish to sponsor to:
Minton Farm Animal Rescue
455 Cherry Gardens Road
Cherry Gardens SA 5157
m: 0422 938 439
p: 8270 1169

Hospital fund donations can be made to Bank SA:
BSB: 105 078
Account number: 056 591 840
Account name:
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