FAUNA RESCUE
WHITSUNDAYS

WILD TIMES

CHRISTMAS 2025

New chapter and exciting times ahead

Fauna Rescue Whitsundays is entering an exciting new chapter, with former Vice President Ailen Lord stepping into the role of President.

Outgoing President Kerry Aspland will now serve as Vice President. Kerry has given many hours to FRW, and we are deeply grateful for her service.

Ailen has been a familiar face across every part of FRW – from hands-on rescues to training, fundraising, advocacy, and behind-the-scenes organisation.

Stepping into the presidency is a significant responsibility, especially in a region as active as the Whitsundays, where rescue needs can change in an instant.

Leadership works best when supported by a community. As volunteers, carers, and supporters, we all play a vital role in ensuring Ailen has the assistance she needs to thrive in her new position.

While Ailen will bring fresh momentum, the heart of FRW remains unchanged. **Our collective goal is to protect, rescue, and rehabilitate native wildlife across the Whitsundays.** We all have a part to play in achieving that vision.

We extend our deepest thanks to Kerry for her dedicated service and warmly congratulate Ailen as she begins this new journey. With the support of the entire FRW family, we know she will lead with the same passion and determination she has always shown.

New president, Ailen Lord

Ergon and FRW join forces to protect local wildlife

Ergon Energy Network crews in the Whitsundays have begun installing aluminium tags along barbed wire fences at local substations and a depot as part of a new wildlife-protection trial.

Barbed wire was responsible for 38% of flying fox rescues in the region over a 16-month period.

Flying foxes play a vital role in forest health through seed dispersal and pollination, but can be injured when barbed wire isn't visible at night.

These simple visibility aids are a small step with a big impact.

Fauna Rescue Whitsundays bat specialist Suzette Pelt said unlike microbats, megabats rely on eyesight when they're flying at night, so having metallic tags on the top barb will alert them to the hazard.

"Without flying foxes, we won't have our beautiful, lush rainforests, so every single one that we save is important.

"We can't thank the Ergon crews enough for their help with wildlife rescues and these lifesaving preventative measures," she said.

Ergon's Tyson Ballard said the reflective markers were a simple, cost-effective solution to protect birds and bats, while safeguarding critical infrastructure.

"It only takes seconds for us to install each tag and the cost of materials for all sites across the Whitsundays is around $500, so it makes economic and environmental sense".

The pilot will be reviewed and could become a model for similar measures across other regions.

Paint & Sip fundraiser a colourful success!

Fauna Rescue Whitsundays is thrilled to share the wonderful success of our Paint & Sip Fundraiser, held in November at the welcoming Merinda Village Hotel.

The event was a sell-out, with every seat filled by enthusiastic supporters ready to unleash their creativity for a great cause.

Guests enjoyed an evening of painting, laughs, raffles, and connection, all while supporting our ongoing wildlife rescue efforts. Participants proudly created their own artwork, guided by local talent and fuelled by good company.

Thanks to the incredible generosity of everyone who attended—and the support of Merinda Village Hotel—we successfully raised $700.

These funds will help provide essential supplies for the care and rehabilitation of sick, injured, and orphaned native wildlife across the Whitsundays.

Thanks to everyone who came along, donated, or contributed to making the night such a memorable success. Your support directly helps vulnerable wildlife get a second chance.

Stay tuned for our next community event!

Chekaya Bickey, Fundraising Coordinator

Residents rally against wind farm

Residents of Crystal Brook, Kelsey Creek and the Mt Challenger/Mt McGuire districts are rallying against Alinta Energy's proposal for a 30-turbine industrial wind farm.

The 240-metre turbineswould be built as close as 1,500 metres from homes.

For FRW carer Kelly, the issue is deeply personal. Her regular bird surveys have recorded active Sea Eagle and Wedge-tailed Eagle nests near the proposed sites. Both species are highly vulnerable to turbine strikes, particularly from the newer 200–240m turbine class, which international studies show carry increased collision risks for large-bodied birds.

The valley between Peter Faust Dam and the Goorganga wetlands forms a key wildlife corridor, home to Australian Bustards, Brolgas, Red-tailed Black Cockatoos, Magpie Geese, Jabirus, pelicans and migratory waders. The region also supports resident emus and the Endangered Proserpine Rock-wallaby.

Kelly has already noticed rising wildlife injuries from increased traffic on Crystal Brook Road. She fears the heavy haulage required for turbine construction will worsen roadkill and further threaten wildlife in this sensitive landscape.

More information: www.wwfag.org

Proserpine Rock Wallaby Festival

Creative Connections Whitsunday delivered a fantastic Proserpine Rock Wallaby Festival, bringing the community together to celebrate this unique local species.

Their morning tea fundraiser raised around $1,300, generously donated to FRW to help purchase food for wildlife in care. We're thrilled they have selected FRW again to support for 2026.

A huge 'thank you' to FRW members Gingi, Sandy, Suzette, Amy and Adrian for creating beautiful Freya the Proserpine Rock Wallaby (who is threatened by a proposed gold mine).

Thanks also to our volunteers who staffed the information trailer. Your efforts helped make the event a warm and successful celebration of our region's wildlife.

The Hotline – our first line of defence for wildlife

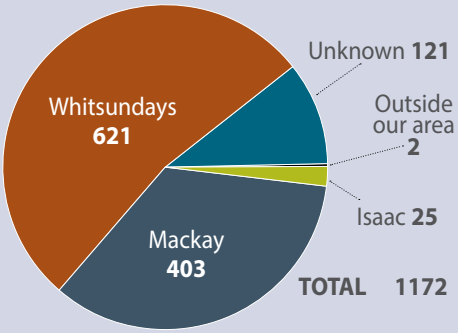
Our Hotline volunteers are the first responders for wildlife in our region. Their calm advice and quick actions often mean the difference between life and death for injured, orphaned or distressed animals.

FRW operates a vital 24/7 emergency hotline that provides immediate assistance. When someone calls for help, our trained volunteers step in to offer guidance, coordinate rescues, and arrange safe transport to carers or veterinary treatment.

The Hotline receives between 80 to 150 calls each month, totalling up to 1,500 calls a year.

Each call involves gathering important details — species identification, exact location, access points, and the circumstances that led to the emergency. With this info, operators work closely with species coordinators, rescuers, and members of the public to ensure animals receive the care they need as quickly as possible.

NUMBER OF CALLS BY REGION



On average, each call takes between five and ten minutes, amounting to around 860 minutes of volunteer time every month — over 10,000 minutes each year dedicated solely to frontline wildlife support.

This lifeline is made possible through the dedication of our volunteers and the generous support of businesses, organisations, levels of government and members of the public. Their contributions help us maintain this critical service and continue saving the lives of countless native animals.

Animal	No. of calls
Bats	76
Bandicoots	5
Birds	827
Dasyurids	2
Echidnas	9
Frogs	4
Gliders	7
Kangaroos	14
Koalas	4
Mice	8
Possums	77
Rats	6
Reptiles Exc Snakes	13
Snakes	25
Turtles	16
Wallabies	72
Unknown	2
TOTAL	**1172**

This young botulism pelican has made a significant recovery in care. From wobbly on his feet and not being able to hold his head up, look at him now!

Every year FRW receive first-year immature pelicans needing a helping hand. These young birds are learning how to fish, fly long distances, and navigate their environment without the guidance of their parents.

Sometimes they end up weak, or injured after storms, entanglement, or simply not yet mastering the art of survival. That's where our teams step in.

With proper care, hydration, and nutrition, many of these juveniles make a full recovery and are released back into the wild, ready to try again with a stronger start.

Mackay food distribution point

To better support carers in the Mackay and Sarina regions, a dedicated food distribution point has been established at Mount Ossa.

This initiative was designed to make it easier for volunteers in the southern part of our network to access free wildlife formulas and supplements.

Ten carers are now regular users of the Mackay service.

Bulk orders for all formulas and supplements continue to be made through Airlie Beach. Supplies for Mackay carers are then collected by the distributor during work trips to the Whitsundays.

Food enquiries:
Mackay: Tom Curtis 0427 826677
Other areas: Ailen Lord 0439 926 521

Hotliners needed

Many hands make light work – if you are able to contribute even a small amount of time then it helps ease the pressure on our volunteers.

Hotline operators get **full training,** and take calls from the public and organise a rescuer/carer for the animal needing help. The hotline is transferred to your mobile. **Email hotline@frw.org.au**

Barbed wire can be deadly

Barbed wire might be a familiar part of rural fencing, but for many of our native animals it can be life-threatening. Gliders, bats, owls, wallabies and other nocturnal species often don't see the wire at night and can become caught. The injuries are usually severe and, tragically, many animals don't survive.

At FRW, rescue and rehabilitation are only part of what we do—we're also committed to helping the community understand how simple changes can protect our wildlife.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- **Make fences more visible:** Add white tape, plastic garden tape or old feed bags to the top strands of barbed wire. White is easiest for wildlife to see at night.
- **Mark high-risk areas:** Flag or tape fence lines near trees, waterholes or open flight paths—these are hotspots for collisions.
- **Swap the top strand:** Where possible, replace the top strand of barbed wire with plain wire in problem zones.

Even small adjustments can prevent injuries and save lives. Thank you for helping create safer, wildlife-friendly fences across our region.

Wildlife dating service

Looking for a flatmate with the same bedtime?

Need a partner who shares your taste in tree sap or flying style?

You're not alone—and in the wild, pairing up can be the difference between surviving and thriving!

At Fauna Rescue Whitsundays, we play matchmaker—not for romance, but for resilience.

Before releasing animals back into the wild, we carefully group compatible individuals so they're not going it alone. Whether it's sugar gliders needing a colony, birds forming lifelong bonds, or joeys learning to bounce with a buddy, companionship means better outcomes in the wild.

Because in nature, it's not just survival of the fittest—it's survival of the connected.

Volunteers – Stay up-to-date with FRW volunteers' Facebook page! *"FRW Volunteers Connect"*

Bugsy the baby possum's lucky day

For info on becoming a possum carer email membershipsecretary@frw.org.au

Meet Bugsy, a tiny new arrival to come into care with Zy this month — and already a little character.

Our story with Bugsy began with a dog attack, with no sign of injuries and no mother nearby. Realising the little one needed help, a member of the public rang the Hotline, and Bugsy soon found his way into Zy's experienced and caring hands.

At just 134 grams, Bugsy is still very young, but he's settling beautifully into care. Zy has been monitoring him closely, and he's already showing progress — bright-eyed, steady, and curious about the big world.

And like all youngsters, Bugsy is keen to try new things! Zy captured this moment of him tasting sweet potato baby food for the very first time. It didn't take him long to decide it was pretty delicious.

Bugsy now has the best chance to grow strong, healthy, and confident until he's ready to return to the bush where he belongs.

Another little life saved, thanks to quick thinking, kindness, and dedicated care.

A handy tool for carers: calculating medication dosages made easy

Working out medication dosages can feel like a mental workout at the best of times, especially when you're juggling rescues, feeds, and everything else that comes with wildlife care.

Carer Kelly Dalling Fallon, has shared a brilliant online tool that makes dosage calculations quicker, clearer, and far less stressful.

This simple calculator lets you enter the animal's weight, dosage rate, and medication concentration—and it works out the correct dose for you instantly. If you'd like to give it a try or save it for future use, you can find it here:

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

1. Accurate weight measured in kilograms

For example, a 500g bird = 0.5 kg.

Getting the weight right is essential for safe and effective dosing.

2. Dosage rate

Listed as mg/kg or mL/kg, depending on the medication.

Dosage rates for birds and other wildlife can often be found in the index sections of Anne Fowler's reference books.

3. Medication concentration

This appears on the label as mg/mL and tells you how much active ingredient is contained in each millilitre of the product.

Kelly has included an example below from one of her recent cases—a Baytril calculation for a curlew currently in care—to show just how helpful the tool can be.

This resource is well worth bookmarking for anyone who works with wildlife. It's a real time-saver and helps ensure our animals receive accurate, consistent treatment every time.

Online Drug Dose Calculator:
https://www.vet-ebooks.com/vetdrugslist/drug-dose-calculator/

Drug Dosage Calculator

Animal Weight (kg):

0.5

Drug Dose (mg/kg):

15

Drug Concentration (mg/mL or mg/tablet):

25

Calculate

You Should Give: 0.30 mL or tablet

Manee's mighty comeback

Everyone loves a success story, and Manee the Chestnut-breasted Mannikin has certainly earned his. After a run-in with a cat in Eton, he arrived at Mystique's Retreat with a badly injured wing and a leg he couldn't use at all.

Thankfully, there were no puncture wounds — just heavy grazing and plenty of blood — and with antibiotics, anti-inflammatories, and daily betadine care, he began to rally quickly.

A week on, Manee is perching properly again, even managing a semi-grip, which is more than we could have hoped for this early. He's now building strength on seed and mini mealworms before his planned return to Eton next Sunday.

Here's to a safe release — and to Manee looking his best when he's back amongst the local flock!

For info on becoming a bird carer email membershipsecretary@frw.org.au

Another great way to help our wildlife

Give FRW's Scheme ID number C10443127 when returning containers at Containers for Change and the amount will be transferred to the bank account of FRW.

CONTAINERS FOR CHANGE
ID: C10443127

You can use it by yourself or give the number to your friends and relatives so they can also donate from anywhere in Queensland.

A little kindness goes a long way

Behind every rescued joey, every fledgling bird, every injured animal — there's a wildlife rescuer and carer pouring their heart into saving lives.

It's rewarding, but it's also emotionally and physically draining work. Long nights (and days!). Hard goodbyes. Moments of doubt and sheer heartbreak.
Be kind. Check in. Say thank you. Share a smile.

If you're a rescuer or carer — know that your community sees you, appreciates you, and you're never alone.

If you're struggling, please reach out. Talk to a mate, a fellow carer, or a professional.

WildTalk provides counselling assistance to wildlife rescuers and carers. If you need support, they are there for you.

WILDTALK
1300 945 382
wildtalk.org.au

Thank you to our kind Whitsundays vets

The wisdom and free time that our vets provide to Fauna Rescue when attending to our wildlife is one of the reasons our organisation is successful. Thank you to the Whitsunday practices and to the surrounding area vets including Mackay and Bowen.

Trent goes under ground

Residents in Jubilee Pocket became concerned after spotting a baby curlew trapped in a storm drain — unable to escape and alone for two days!

But thanks to the incredible efforts of our dedicated wildlife volunteer Trent, this little one was safely rescued and returned to it's parents after a very hot and cramped crawl through the drain!

These are the moments that remind us just how dedicated our community of wildlife heroes truly is!

116 ACTIVE MEMBERS

104 MEMBERS
66 INDIVIDUAL,
38 FAMILY
+ 12 HONORARY/LIFE MEMBERS

This time last year, we reported 106 active members.

We need rescue drivers

Do you have a car and are able to be on the list to help rescue and deliver injured wildlife?

Many hands make light work. It's a great way to help - and you can work your own hours, whichever days suit you!

If you can help please email membershipsecretary@frw.org.au

If you've got a soft spot for birds, and let's face it, who could resist this head?

Would you like to help co-ordinate their rescue and care? Even if you can only help occasionally it would take a lot of pressure of carers. If you can help, please email membershipsecretary@frw.org.au

Be vigilant to protect our frogs

The wet season is almost here, and with it our native frogs are out calling and breeding. Unfortunately this means cane toads are too – we can all do our part to help protect our frog species.

Please take a few minutes to familiarise yourself with the appearance of cane toad eggs. They are laid in long jelly strings as pictured, and are unlike any native frog eggs.

If you see any cane toad eggs laid in water bodies please remove them immediately as the tadpoles can hatch in 24 hours. This is one of the easiest ways to help lower cane toad populations in the Whitsundays!

How to Identify Cane Toad Tadpoles from Frog Tadpoles: www.frogsafe.org.au/cane_toads/cane_frog.shtml

Sammi's second chance

Sammi, a tiny bush stone-curlew chick, arrived after a caring Beaconsfield resident rescued her and contacted Fauna Rescue Whitsundays Hotline.

With no parents located and several adoption attempts unsuccessful, she was admitted to Rodd's for care, a full belly, and a well-earned rest.

But Sammi's story took a beautiful turn. As Rodd prepared to take her to Queens Park to find a suitable adoptive family, her calls caught the attention of Mr Curly — their local resident male curlew. Without hesitation, he approached, standing guard and signalling his acceptance of her.

What began as a rescue ended as a reunion of sorts, with Sammi welcomed into the Curly family and safely returned to a life in the wild. It was a lovely reminder that sometimes nature steps in exactly when needed.

"Where did you find me?" — It's more important than you think!

When rescuing wildlife, one of the most important questions we ask is: *Exactly where was the animal found?*

Because when it's time to release, that's where it needs to go home.

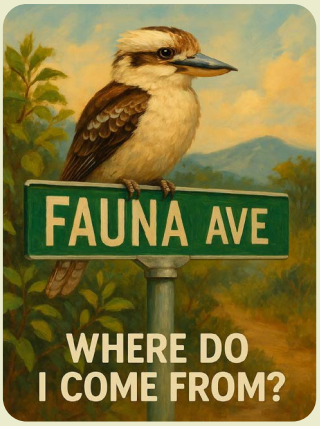
Most native animals have a territory — an area they know, with familiar food sources, shelter, and social structure. If released too far away, they can become lost, stressed, or unable to survive.

And for some species, like magpies and kookaburras, it's even more serious — these birds are highly territorial, and if released into another bird's patch, they may be attacked or chased off.

That's why we ask for:

- Exact road names or addresses
- Landmarks or GPS pins
- Photos or dropped pins
- Local directions if you're unsure

It might seem like a small detail at the time, but your info helps give rescued animals the best possible chance at life back in the wild.



Adult birds chip-in to help care for baby blue-faced honeyeater

A tiny blue-faced honeyeater nestling came into care thanks to the quick action of an arborist.

It was a wonderful reminder of just how vital community support is in wildlife rescue.

From the moment this little character arrived, the local honeyeater flock wasted no time stepping up. Within hours, several adults began visiting, calling out, and even feeding him!

Their enthusiasm didn't slow either. Four adults came and went throughout the day, taking turns to keep him well fed and feeling secure.

And if his bold personality is anything to go by, it seems the attitude of these beautiful birds develops very early!

After about a week, the wild honeyeaters encouraged him up into the trees and welcomed him back into their flock. They've done this many times before with other nestlings in care.

It's hard not to be in awe of our beautiful wildlife!

Based on Rodd Jensen Facebook post

Australia Zoo Hospital & Nursery is a great contact for advice and information. Email them on: hospital@wildlifewarriors.org.au

Andi finds his forever flock

Andi, an orphaned Bush Stone-Curlew, didn't take long to find the perfect adopted family.

Rescuer Rodd took him to Iluka Park to meet three possible pairs. The first couple was occupied with their own nest, and the second showed no interest — but the third pair immediately responded to Andi's soft calls. Their protective behaviour made it clear their instincts had kicked in.

The release was smooth and heartwarming, and Andi quickly settled in with his new foster parents — right where he belongs.

A barbed-wire rescue with success!

Recently Kelly Fallon Dalling spotted a flying fox caught on barbed wire and in obvious distress.

She immediately contacted Suzette and Neil, and Neil was soon on the road. Following advice, Kelly kept the bat protected with a damp cloth until help arrived.

Working with skill and care, Neil carefully freed the adult female Little Red Flying Fox — a species not often seen in care. Thanks to the quick response and gentle handling, Suzette later confirmed she is expected to make a full recovery and be released back into the wild.

Kelly noted that this is the third animal she has helped remove from barbed wire recently. It's a timely reminder of how dangerous barbed wire can be for wildlife.

Two black kites treated for poisoning

They weren't the target — but they are paying the price!

Every year in Australia, countless native animals like owls, quolls, eagles, kites, and goannas suffer slow, silent deaths after eating poisoned rodents.

Rodenticides don't stop at killing rats. They move up the food chain — harming our most iconic native wildlife!

Second-generation rodenticides are deadly long after the bait is gone. There are safer alternatives.

SAFER RODENT BAITS (Lower Risk to Wildlife)

First-Generation Anticoagulants (Less Persistent):
- Warfarin
- Coumatetralyl (e.g. Racumin)

These still require care but break down faster in the food chain, reducing risk to predators like owls, eagles, and quolls.

NON-ANTICOAGULANT RODENTICIDES

- Cholecalciferol (Vitamin D3-based, e.g. MouseOff)
  - Less risk of secondary poisoning
  - Still effective, especially for mice
  - Requires cautious use around pets

NON-TOXIC ALTERNATIVES

- Mechanical traps (snap traps or humane traps)
- Electric traps
- Rodent-proofing (sealing entry points, removing attractants)
- Eco-friendly deterrents like peppermint oil sprays

AVOID THESE (High Risk to Wildlife)

Second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides (SGARs):
- Brodifacoum
- Bromadiolone
- Difethialone
- Difenacoum
- Flocoumafen

These are extremely toxic to native predators.

Fauna Rescue Whitsundays

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