Ballarat Wildlife Rehabilitation & Conservation Inc

29 NOVEMBER 2025



ILLUSTRATION BY BENNE HARRISON

ANNUAL REPORT

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land, the Wadawurrung people and pay our respects to Elders past and present.

In recognition of the Traditional Owners we will attempt to respect their connection to Country, including our wildlife cousins and hope that they will be present and watch over the work we are doing.

BALLARAT WILDLIFE REHABILITATION & CONSERVATION INC (BWRAC)

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RINGTAIL POSSUM: GEORGIA MACGUIRE

"A voice for our wildlife"

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01 Our Story

Ballarat Wildlife Rehabilitation & Conservation Inc (BWRAC) was established as a charity in July 2022 by Ballarat wildlife carers and veterinary professionals to respond to the growing need for specialised care of sick and injured wildlife in Ballarat and surrounding areas.

What we do

BWRAC rehabilitates native wildlife that has experienced injury or trauma and advocates to influence and protect Australia's wildlife habitat and biodiversity. We do this by providing specialised care, lobbying for policy and industry reform, undertaking research and educating the public.

Purposes of the association:

CHARITABLE PURPOSE: To advance the natural environment:

- provide a wholistic approach to rescue and rehabilitation for orphaned or injured native wildlife
- · establish a locally based not-for-profit wildlife hospital.
- provide training opportunities for wildlife rescuers, carers and veterinary staff to support the wellbeing and conservation of wildlife.
- provide education and research opportunities for students in the fields of veterinary, wildlife, ecology and life sciences.
- collaborate with local like-minded organisations to promote biodiversity through re-introducing indigenous plant and tree species to areas in which they are no longer found or are no longer abundant.
- undertake projects and activities to advocate for the protection of wildlife habitat in Victoria and Australia-wide.
- utilise our database of samples to participate in disease surveillance and One Health research.

CHARITABLE PURPOSE: other purposes beneficial to the public:

- providing ways for members of the public to learn about the conservation and importance of protecting indigenous plants and animals, especially Koalas, for future generations.
- working with government and regulation authorities at all levels to ensure that the interests of the Koala (and other relevant native wildlife) are represented in the decision-making process.
- creating partnerships with other organisations involved in koala protection, habitat creation and environment protection;
- holding fundraising events to raise money to be used for the treatment and rehabilitation of wildlife
 and to provide a forum for the community to access resources and training for the benefit of our
 wildlife.
- undertake research projects to better understand wildlife needs and wildlife habitat requirements to inform conservation and preservation of biodiversity for Australian wildlife, particularly the Koala.

02 President's Report

It is a great privilege to present this year's Annual Report. It is a reflection of our collective achievements and the impact we've made in protecting our vulnerable wildlife / natural habitats and supporting our local wildlife carers.

We were devastated when we heard about the Budj Bim koala massacre in April. The justification, provided by DEECA for shooting over 1,000 koalas from helicopter, that this was a humane response to bushfire injuries, raises serious ethical, scientific and procedural questions, particularly given the time elapsed since the fire and the method of euthanasia employed.

Our numerous letters outlined the inconsistencies between their action and the Victorian Koala Management Plan, as well as the significant concerns raised by independent experts regarding the humaneness of aerial shooting under such conditions. We find the lack of appropriate response from government to our questions and the mismanagement of koalas in Victoria is deplorable.

This has ignited our passion and will guide the direction of our organisation moving forward. It aligns perfectly with the insightful discussions we've had with author and ecologist Simon Mustoe and ecologist Dr Danushka Wickramarathne, as we work together to develop our approach to leading the community through meaningful koala projects.

We cannot afford to wait for government change: immediate and positive action is required now. This imperative will guide and strengthen our advocacy efforts in the coming years.

This year, we have found a balance between providing support for wildlife shelters, carers, rescuers and engaging the community in all the work that we do. We have developed a relationship with environmental expert, Ray Draper, who delivered several workshops as part of our Landcare project.

Conservation Achievements This year we continued our conservation efforts by successfully receiving a \$20,000 Landcare Victoria grant. We worked with a private landowner to recreate a vital habitat corridor on their Durham Lead property. Most excitingly: we conducted workshops that helped share the knowledge and 'how to' of revegetation and dam preservation with other landowners. They return to their properties inspired, ready to implement their knowledge and start their own revegetation projects.

Wildlife Carer Support Initiatives since the program's inception at the 2024 AGM, we have continued our wildlife carer reimbursement program, by reimbursing \$5,961.65 to our member wildlife carers/shelters. This money comes mostly from donations, so this is a tremendous effort. We invite businesses to join us as partners in supporting our local wildlife warriors and protecting biodiversity. We also assisted members with nine grant submissions during the past 12 months. Our volunteer carers and shelters desperately need for funding and support. Together, we can achieve a more sustainable future for our carers and wildlife.

Community Engagement and Education We are continuing to build support within our local community and develop ongoing relationships that will support our vision for long-term conservation and longevity. We have continued to work with Mount Clear College year nine students on our habitat revegetation project. This is a great opportunity to connect with the younger generation, inspire their interest in our local wildlife and engage them in the steps needed to help secure a desirable future for our wildlife.

We will continue to engage and educate members of our community in basic wildlife first aid, rescue and, support our carers to improve their technical knowledge. This outreach will help educate the local community about the importance of wildlife conservation and hopefully inspire shifts in attitudes and behaviors towards wildlife. We look forward to rolling out more training and education in 2026.

02 President's Report cont'd

Research and Innovation: Partnering with institutions remains an important link in us achieving vital koala and other wildlife research. While we continue to work with Federation University on our Koala Research Project, we have expanded our research efforts and are in the early stages of rolling out our Ngambulmum (Koala) Protection Project. This protection project sees us implement virtual fencing in the Ballarat area, as a method of testing if this will decrease koala and other wildlife road strike injuries and deaths.

Financial Overview and Fundraising: We saw an increase in our income, thanks to generous private donations, grants and our membership payments. These funds are vital to enable us to operate and support our wildlife carers. Projects are funded through grants from DEECA, Landcare and the Community Bank Buninyong, with three new projects in 2025. The Koala Research Project funds will extend for another year too, thanks to a grant from DEECA. We would also like to thank Kwik Kopy and Mega Merch for their ongoing support, hosting a donation money box for us. Thank you to Bunnings, Ballarat Community Nursery and our members who have contributed to make 2025 a success.

Our vision is ambitious, but with the support of our donors, partners, members and a passionate team, we will grow and learn to face the challenges ahead.

As we look to the future, one of our primary goals is to continue to build resilience and capacity within BWRAC. To ensure we continue to support wildlife carers, educate the community and advocate to protect wildlife and habitats effectively. Even in the face of unpredictable environmental and economic changes, we are focusing on strengthening our operational foundation. This includes increasing our team and enhancing our partnerships with research and other relevant local organisations. By future-proofing BWRAC, we aim to secure a legacy that will enable us to continue our mission for generations to come, adapting to meet new challenges, while staying true to our mission and values.

On behalf of BWRAC, I extend my thanks to everyone who has contributed to our cause during the past twelve months. Together, we are creating an environment where our local wildlife and humanity can thrive in harmony. Thank you for standing with us in this important journey to preserve our local wildlife and biodiversity.



BWRAC President

03 Secretary's Report

It has been another busy year in the life of wildlife rescue and rehabilitation. This year held four official executive and subcommittee meetings in February, May, August and October. We have implemented an executive and a combined executive and subcommittee What's App groups to enable quick decision making between our official meetings. This has helped keep things moving, enabling us to make decisions in a timely manner to maintain effective action of tasks and governance issues.

We have complied with statutory and regulatory provisions by lodging our Annual Return with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission (ACNC) in January.

We have built on the foundations we set down in 2024 by continuing to offer wildlife first aid and

wildlife rescue and transport training. In 2024, we trained 100 people and, in 2025, we trained a further 87 people across not only Microbat & Flying Fox Rescues, Wildlife 1st Aid & Basic Rescue training, but also how to grow mealworms for our wildlife shelters and foster carers. By adding this new workshop, it will directly help supply our volunteer wildlife shelters and foster carers with a much-needed food source for the wildlife in their care. We are also collaborating with a team of passionate volunteers, who are making pouches on an ongoing basis for our carers.

Our Facebook presence continues to grow: now almost double in twelve months, up to 811 followers. We are definitely reaching more people. This is evidenced by the enquiries we are receiving from other not only more individuals, but also community organisations and schools to work with us on our various projects.

BWRAC was in the unfortunate position of having to instigate legal action, via VCAT, to seek the return of a BWRAC owned asset, that a previous member failed to return. This asset, funded through a grant, was provided to enable members of BWRAC to provide essential rehabilitation to koalas.

We continue to develop our systems and documenting our processes will always be an ongoing task. As a small team, we achieved a huge amount in twelve months. We are seeking dedicated individuals to join our committee and help us drive our mission to protect wildlife and conserve our local habitats—your skills and ideas can make a real impact!

We must ensure that the organisation is future proofed, so it can continue long into the future, as there is much that we need to do to achieve to secure a future for our local wildlife. Join us in making a real difference for wildlife—bring your passion and skills to our team and help protect our local wildlife and preserve natural habitats for future generations!

MELISSA MOREY

BWRAC Secretary



ADULT TAWNY FROGMOUTH JEN GREEHALGH



MICHAELA NEVILLE'S DARKLING BEETLE AND PUPA



BRUSHTALIL POSSUM GEORGIA MACGUIRE

04 Our Impact

In BWRAC's short history, we have had a positive impact in advocating for wildlife and their habitats. The need to advocate for wildlife is a never-ending challenge. The urgency increases, due to ongoing habitat loss and fragmentation and attack or predation by cats and dogs.

We acknowledge there are ongoing challenges associated with advocating for wildlife and supporting those who care for them. We hope that by working together, we can overcome some of these challenges. In 2025, we developed our media and communications activities to support our advocacy efforts. More mentions in local media, a growing online social media presence and stronger digital communications processes all help to tell the stories of and illuminate the challenges faced by our local wildlife. A summary of the major projects that we have undertaken in the last twelve months is included below.

Advocacy

Advocacy for wildlife is essential for raising awareness, protecting biodiversity, and influencing policies that support the conservation of ecosystems and endangered species. With human activities, such as deforestation, pollution, and climate change, threatening wildlife, advocacy plays a crucial role in highlighting the urgent need for action. It helps inform the public about the consequences of biodiversity loss and mobilises individuals and communities to support conservation efforts. Advocacy also puts pressure on policymakers to enact and enforce laws that protect habitats and prevent exploitation of natural resources. By giving a voice to those who cannot speak for themselves, wildlife advocates create a platform that drives meaningful change, safeguarding ecosystems that are vital for our local wildlife populations.





THE COURIER AUGUST 2025

BASIC WILDLIE TRAINING BEAUFORT, MARCH 2025

Parliamentary inquiry into wildlife road strikes

BWRAC put together a detailed submission for the recent Parliamentary Inquiry into Wildlife Road Strike - https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/wildliferoadstrike. Many of our fellow volunteer rescuers also contributed to this inquiry by writing submissions and appearing before the panel. Submissions for this inquiry have been reviewed, with recommendations made to the Victorian Government to review and decide what, if any, recommendations will be implemented. Information on the outcomes of the inquiry will be communicated through our newsletter and social media channels when available.

Budj Bim koala massacre

Following a government sanctioned cull of (reportedly) over 1,000 koalas in the Budj Bim national park area in April 2025, BWRAC responded with a statement on social media condemning the use of aerial shooters and calling for a review into koala emergency management procedures. A formal letter was sent to the State Minister for the Environment in protest at the use of aerial shooters and calling for a review into native wildlife management at a state level. This letter was copied to other ministers and associated organisations, to raise awareness of the need for a review of such practice and condemnation of the manner in which the killings were conducted.

Although we received a response from the Minister's office, it was less than satisfactory and did not give any clarification of the reasoning behind the decision to employ aerial shooters. BWRAC will continue to call for strict conditions around the deployment of aerial shooters and for a thorough, evidence-based review of native animal management practices in the State of Victoria.

Cat and dog attacks on wildlife in Ballarat

BWRAC continues to liaise with the Ballarat City Council regarding cat and dog attacks and also on injuries to wildlife, especially at Lake Wendouree. The draft Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) 2026-2029 was recently open for community feedback. This plan included a review of the curfew for cats in the Ballarat region and a tightening of the leash and containment laws for dogs. More information on changes to this plan will be advised through our newsletter and event updates in 2026.

Members are welcome to join our Cat Campaign Committee which focuses on community education around keeping cats safe through







containment measures and ensuring that we can enjoy life with domestic pets and still have wild-life-friendly suburbs and townships.

Wildlife conservation through storytelling

In early September, we held an internal event introducing Dr Danushka Wickramarathna, a new volunteer with BWRAC. The doctor has credentials in environmental management from Sri Lanka. It was illuminating to hear about Danushka's approach to engaging community in conservation through storytelling. Plans for BWRAC community activities and resources in 2026 will be informed

by this adaptive method of engagement.

Gillies Street swan support

BWRAC sub-committee member, Laura Guest, led a connection and awareness activity with businesses and organisations on Gillies Street near Lake Wendouree in response to increased swan activity in the area. Challenging weather events over winter caused change in food availability, so swans were increasingly crossing over Gillies Street in the area between Sturt Street and Lake Gardens Avenue. There were many near-misses with vehicles and an elevated level of interaction with humans, including school children, in the area. Although the swan activity has decreased since the start of spring, this issue remains in discussion and there may be a need for action including a review of the speed limit in the area, to help keep everyone safe.

Training and education

Throughout 2025 BWRAC provided training and education opportunities in wildlife care and management. Our Basic Rescue and Transport training course is now fully recognised by Wildlife Victoria and provides a pathway into their advanced care workshops. Development of a nationally accredited training program in native wildlife care and rescue remains an ongoing goal.

2025 Training activities included:

- March Beaufort wildlife first aid workshop
- March Beaufort basic wildlife rescue and transport training day
- July growing mealworms for wildlife in care workshop
- · July Microbat and flying fox specialist care workshop
- November Buninyong basic wildlife rescue and transport training day



BEAUFORT BASIC WILDLIFE RESCUE WORKSHOP MAR 2025



MICRO BAT & FLYING FOX WORKSHOP JULY 2025



FIONA WILLIAMSON: BASIC WILDLIFE RESCUE WORKSHOP NOV 2025

Community Engagement

The opportunity to engage with our local community is invaluable. We had some wonderful opportunities to meet new people from across the Ballarat region in 2025. We recruited over 120 new mailing list members and connected with key community organisations, including the Women's Shed, Ballarat Library maker's space and Friends of Canadian Corridor. Our key objectives for 2025 engagement were building awareness of BWRAC, recruiting new volunteers and providing opportunities to discuss wildlife conservation in a community context.

Seed bomb workshop – 8 February

In early February, community members and BWRAC volunteers came together for a seed bomb workshop in Scarsdale. It was a fun and casual way for our members and supporters to help us prepare a saleable item ready for the Sustainability Expo later that month. We were able to sell half-a-dozen seed bombs in a recycled egg carton for \$5. This small gesture adds to a collective impact to our fundraising efforts.

Buninyong Sustainable Living Festival – 23 February

In February 2025, BWRAC participated at the Bendigo Bank's Smart Living Expo with a stall that included information, examples of nest boxes and pouches, a flyer promoting the Landcare activities and seedlings and seed bombs for sale as fundraisers. The Expo was well attended. More than 20 people joined our mailing list. We had lots of lovely chats with community members about how they could support wildlife in their area.

Berry Street School – 5 May and throughout 2025

In February, at the Smart Living Expo a facilitator from Berry Street school made contact with BWRAC and organised for a presentation on wildlife volunteering at the school. Following the presentation, the students were engaged in further activities, including growing native plant seedlings, building and painting nest boxes and making seed bombs and seed paper. It was great to inspire these students and for them to undertake tasks with real world value.



IMAGES: ANISSA LENON & DANIELA BISHOP AT SUSTAINANILITY EXPO; SEED BOMBS

Ballarat Volunteers Expo – 21 May

BWRAC hosted an information and engagement stall at the 2025 expo, held in St Patrick's church hall in Ballarat Central. Many people dropped by the stall to chat about how they could support wildlife in the Ballarat area, including a couple of school groups interested in how they could be involved with BWRAC. During the expo, we also had the opportunity to meet and connect with other organisations hosting stalls at the event, including the Women's Shed and the CFA.

Mealworm workshop – 11 July

This mid-winter workshop was for people of all ages to learn the basics of growing mealworms as food for wildlife in care. President, Melissa Morey, gathered buckets, mesh and food sources for starter kits for the attendees. Thanks to Maxine Wilkinson who delivered the workshop. Mealworm farmers are still needed. More workshops will be held in 2026.

Urban Ripple Planting activity – 13 July

Working with Friends of Canadian Corridor, BWRAC members participated in the Urban Ripple planting activity. This is a project that is working to restore 13 sites along Ballarat waterways, with extensive weed control, then replanting with local species. Plant selection is based upon the meticulous work of Ballarat ecologist, Tim D'Ombrain, who has mapped native plant communities in the Ballarat region.

BWRAC Volunteers meet-up – 19 July

A coffee catch-up for volunteers was held at the Golden City Hotel, (BWRAC sponsors). This small, but lively, gathering was an opportunity to meet and greet other volunteers and to discuss activities and events that would help to achieve BWRAC's aims of community education, support for carers and public advocacy for wildlife. Several items from the discussion have since been incorporated into the "I Heart Ballarat Wildlife" project and have informed our development of educational materials and approaches to community.

Habitat Corridor planting (Durham Lead) - 2 August

Anissa and Bill Lenon volunteered their smallholding in Durham Lead as the site for our Landcarefunded Wildlife Habitat Corridor planting activity. The day was very well attended by other private landowner and caretakers from around the region, including a contingent from the Wat Thai Bhavana





IMAGES: MEALWORM WORKSHOP 2025

meditation retreat in Mount Helen. Ray Draper shared his extensive knowledge of plant selection and planting techniques. Participants received seedlings to take home and begin their revegetation activities.

Ballarat Library Pouch Making Workshops – September / October / November

Working in collaboration with Ballarat Library's Makers Space, BWRAC held a series of three pouch making workshops across three months. The sessions were all fully booked and everyone was highly engaged. Participants, ranging in age from 13 to 85, learnt the basics of wildlife care pouch pattern making and construction. As a result of these workshops, it is likely that an ongoing volunteer pouch making group will be established by participants, and other groups, including U3A and Ballarat Neighbourhood House, will help us to supply carers with pouches and slings. Many thanks to Benne, Tamara, Jenny and Dani for their efforts in helping to make these workshops so successful.

Mount Clear College tree planting – 18 September

An enthusiastic group of Year Nine students and their teachers helped us plant tube stock at Durham Lead. We had them do a vegetation survey. One student even identified a native sundew that was not already included on our template.



POUCH MAKING WORKSHOP SEPT 2025



POUCH MAKING WORKSHOP NOV 2025

LANDCARE PROJECT: HABITAT PLANTING AUG 2025

Dam revegetation workshop (Durham Lead) - 20 September

Another successful gathering of private landholders was held at the Lenon property in Durham Lead, with Ray Draper once again providing detailed knowledge and insight into aquatic planting techniques, even for dam areas that have limited water due to drought conditions. The day included plant identification, site assessment and remediation, and hands-on planting activities. This event was also funded by Landcare and the Victorian State Government.

Senior's Festival Golden City Hotel event – 10 October

A small, but mighty, gathering of folks at the Golden City Hotel, was as part of the 2025 Ballarat Senior's Festival. Participants proved quite knowledgeable in our Wildlife Identification game and were adept at helping to put together first aid kits from donated materials. It was a lovely opportunity to connect with enthusiastic and like minded individuals.

Senior's Festival Community Expo at Ballarat Showgrounds - 22 October

An icy, rainy blast didn't stop folks from attending the Expo, held in the recently refurbished showgrounds hall. The BWRAC table was right next to the Friends of Canadian Corridor stall. Both stalls had plenty of interest, which was great to see. We signed up more mailing list members, met a few potential pouch and nest box makers, talked to more than 50 wildlife lovers about ways they can





MT CLEAR COLLEGE STUDENTS SEPT 2025

SENIORS FESTIVAL GOLDEN CITY HOTEL OCT 2025



LANDCARE PROJECT: DAM PLANTING SEPT 2025

support native wildlife in the Ballarat region.

Sound recording workshop – 25 October

The final event in our Landcare project was a sound recorder workshop. Ray Draper lead us through the different species of wildlife that we might encounter and what sounds they make. The youngest attendee was able to identify the most bird sounds! Landowner attendees are able to host a sound recorder on their property, to help them identify their local native wildlife residents. If you were not able to attend the workshop, and you are interested in discovering what wildlife may be on your property, we invite you to reach out to BWRAC to host the sound recorder on loan free of charge.

Media

There was increased media coverage of BWRAC activities, following our development of a press release and media communications process. Thank you to Benne Harrison, our volunteer communications expert, who identified these opportunities for BWRAC. Notably, the Ballarat Courier and Power FM/ 3BA picked up on the displaced wildlife notification and produced independent coverage prompted by a BWRAC media release. Our president, Melissa, made several appearances on both community and commercial radio, including ABC Ballarat, promoting the Landcare activities, the recycling donation scheme, and BWRAC's core activities of supporting wildlife rehabilitation and conservation. Media coverage included:

Print / online

The Courier (Ballarat)

- 10/08/2025 Displaced koala, quotes from Melissa Morey, BWRAC president The Courier Community Noticeboard (digital/ online)
- 29/07/2025 Durham Lead revegetation event notice
- 06/08/2025 displaced koala alert
- 12/09/2025 Dam planting workshop notice
- 03/10/2025 Seniors' activity at Golden City Hotel notice

Workshops to help wildlife

BALLARAT Library is hosting two free community workshops to teach people how to make wildlife pouches and rescue lots.

Ballarat Wildlife Rehabilitation and Conservation will be leading the upcoming workshops on Saturdays 4 October and 1 November.

The group's Beane Harrison said the need for pouches for rescued or orphaned wildlife young increases, space with a lot of demand for the items particularly coming into Spring and place from 10am to 12pm, and

"If you can sow a straight line you can sow a pouch," Ms Harrison said.

"It's fairly easy and even if you can't sow or are not yet a sower, it's really helpful just to cut out the blanks so others can sow them.

"We encourage people of all abilities to attend and the library has been absolutely fantastic in supporting us with overlockers and sewing machines in their makers*

participants don't need to stay for

"We welcome people of all ages and abilities but if you're under 12 for us. We have a really hig call for then you need to be accompanied by pouches."

making pouches for the young of Making Workshops are available different types of rescued native through the Ballarut Library website. animals including the joeys of

kangaroos, possums, and koalas. The pouches will then be supplied

More details and bookings for Participants will learn about the Wildlife Fouch and Rescue Kat

Helping paw: Wighte rescuer Nikk to qualified wildlife rescuers and Shanahan with a young wombat jony The free workshops will be taking curers throughout the wider region. In care at Shanhasan Wittiffe sneter in "We had a lady at our last Bunning Photo SUPPLIED



- 18/10/2025 Sound recording workshop notice
 The Ballarat Times
- 03/10/2025 article on pouch making workshops Page 9

Radio

ABC Ballarat

- 18/07/2025 Melissa Morey, with Steve Martin, 8:45am Durham Lead Landcare workshop
- 28/07/2025 Jude Szalontai, with Steve Martin, 6:40am World Conservation Day

Power FM/3BA

- 23/07/2025 Melissa Morey, with Brett MacDonald, 10:30am TOMRA Cleanaway recycling donations
- August Community Noticeboard mention for dam planting workshop
- September Community Noticeboard mention for Seniors' Festival event 10 Oct

Voice FM

- 26/08/2025 Melissa Morey, with Fliss Goldstein, 9:25am
 BWRAC activities inc. Durham Lead workshops
- 14/10/2025 Benne Harrison, with Valdi Cham, 9:00am BWRAC activities, spring and help for wildlife

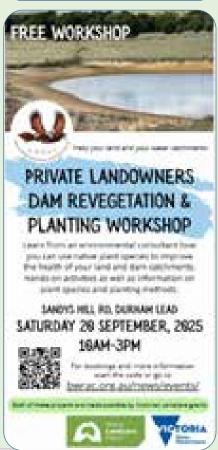
Communications

In 2025, the focus for communications has been to build on our 'brand' identity and be more visible in the community through use of consistent signage, branded materials and engaging visuals. To assist people with lower English literacy levels to be able to engage with our organisation, our communications materials have also had a focus on use of plain English and an open layout. Our key message of 2025 has been that "everyone can do something to support our native wildlife."

Graphic design development

In late 2025, we welcomed Tegan Henderson as our graphic design volunteer, lending a hand to streamline our visual messaging and to update our graphics and produce logos for the I Heart Ballarat Wildlife Campaign. This work is ongoing into 2026. We aim to have a cohesive and recognisable visual style established that support our advocacy work and help to promote our training activities and events.





Social and digital media

In 2025, increasing our branded presence on social media has been a focus of our communications work, including our official response to the mass koala killing at Budj Bim on our Facebook page. In September 2025 we started our Instagram account. We are now connected with wildlife advocacy and conservation groups around the world by hashtags and account links. Our posts, on both Facebook and Instagram, maintain a local focus, and include notifications of weather events, promotion of training and community engagement. Our communications now also include WhatsApp groups and messaging. We hope that, with additional volunteer involvement in 2026, we can further improve our reach and engagement through social media.

In the realm of digital media, we have developed and updated our presentations for training workshops and community information sessions and have made small improvements to our website functionality. A full website review and update is scheduled for January 2026 and will include updating logos and visual messaging.

Basic Wildlife



Signage

Thanks to the CCMA Landcare grant, we have been able to produce some new large-scale signage for outdoor events. We have developed additional signage for festivals and expo events, including a suite of signs relating to volunteer committee positions. Our poor pull-up banner has been a bit battered by use at many events, both indoor and outdoor. That is next on our upgrade list.

Print collateral

Apart from posters, our key piece of print material in 2025 has been our trifold brochure, developed for the Sustainability Expo in February. This brochure is being updated for 2026, to include more information on BWRAC's broader aims and advocacy work.

Specific promotional flyers were also developed for the Landcare workshops. These were distributed as letterbox drops and through local businesses, such as feed stores in the southern Ballarat, Buninyong and Durham Lead areas.

Flyers and posters for volunteering have also been a part of our presence at community events throughout the year. Development work began on a wallet-friendly information card for drivers to refer to in the event of road strike. Once refined, it will be printed and distributed as part of our I Heart Ballarat Wildlife campaign, funded by the City of Ballarat.





MT CLEAR COLLEGE STUDENTS SEPT 2025

BRANDING FUNDED BY LANDCARE PROJECT



Other materials

Ahead of our submission to the City of Ballarat for the Community Impact Grant, BWRAC produced a promotional magnet aimed at raising our profile in the community. These magnets were well-received at events and festivals. A revised version will be produced as part of the I Heart Ballarat Wildlife campaign. In addition to the magnets, we have received funding to produce a limited number of promotional items, such as t-shirts and tote bags. Designs for these items are underway and production will begin in late 2025, for distribution from early 2026.

Be assured that promotional materials and communication items are produced using allocated funds from grant submissions. Your membership and donation funds go directly toward wildlife care.



WALLET-FRIENDLY INFO CARD FOR DRIVERS



BWRAC GENERAL INFO BROCHURE

05 Grants + Research

Grants are essential to charities, as they provide critical funding that enables organisations like BWRAC to expand our programs, reach more people and sustainably support our mission.

Being able to apply for and win grants is an integral part in how BWRAC obtains funding to carry out our valuable work, that we would otherwise not be able to do.

The Ballarat Koala Research Project 2022 - CURRENT

Funded by DEECA

The Ballarat Koala Research Project is funded by a grant from the Department of Environment, Energy and Climate Action (DEECA, formerly DWELP).

It is a research project that is a longitudinal study on City of Ballarat Koalas; their abundance, genetics and health status. It aims to provide veterinary treatment and care to injured, sick or orphaned koalas in and around Ballarat; support carers within BWRAC to rehabilitate sick, injured and orphaned koalas so animals can be released back to the wild and to undertake targeted research to determine the existing koala health, abundance and their habitat in and around the City of Ballarat. This is one part of a larger project involving other native animals. BWRAC's involvement only focus is koalas.

BWRAC aims to leverage the knowledge and skill of local carers and veterinary professionals, trained in wildlife care, to provide a holistic approach to care and rehabilitation of not only the koala, but all native wildlife.

There has been no evidenced based research to determine the health of Ballarat Koalas, or any monitoring to determine Koalas numbers in the last 30 years. Due to the lack of current knowledge about Koalas in the region, there is a critical need for targeted research to determine existing Koala health, abundance and their habitat.



IMAGE: FEDERATION UNIVERSITY

IMAGE: KOALA SAKO, SHANHAVEN SHELTER

In March 2020, Dr Adrienne Lavinia formed a collaboration with Federation University to undertake wildlife research long-term. Their flag-ship research project is a longitudinal study on City of Ballarat Koalas: their abundance, genetics and health status. The research group comprises Dr Adrienne Lavinia, research fellows who have been working on koala abundance, genetics and health for over 20 years, and lecturers and researchers in biology, animal science and IT across 3 campuses, their students. More recently passionate citizen science groups have joined.

The grant funding enabled the purchase of koala tracking collars and associated equipment and paid for the costs associated for tests and medications for Koalas during their care and recovery. Three purpose-built koala enclosures, to allow for the proper care and rehabilitation of the koalas, were also purchased. Carers work closely with the wildlife veterinary professionals to treat and monitor koalas while in care. BWRAC is also working with Federation University researchers to contribute to research on Koala health.

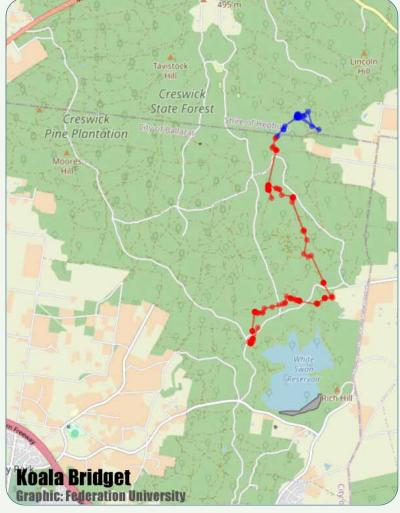


IMAGE: FEDERATION UNIVERSITY

Ballarat Ngaambulmum (Koala) Protection Project 2024 - CURRENT

Funded by DEECA

We would like to thank the Georgie Purcell and the Animal Justice Party (AJP) for their support in inviting BWRAC to submit a grant application last December for a Ballarat Ngaambulmum (Koala) Protection Project. We had three days to put together a proposal, complete with costings, that would seek to have a positive impact on our local ngaambulmums (koalas).

Unfortunately most of our Ngaambulmums that come into care, have died due to the seriousness of their injuries. Most of these have been caused by vehicle collisions in a rapidly depleting natural wildlife corridor.

With Lillian Gattuso's assistance, BWRAC reviewed several options for funding. We settled on a virtual fencing option, as being affordable and achievable. There is no one solution that will be perfect, as each option has its own limitations.

Ngaambulmums are coming into more frequent contact with humans and our built environment, due to the ongoing and increasing loss and fragmentation of their natural habitat. We need to employ some Ngaambulmum protection strategies to mitigate any further losses of our local Ngaambulmums. The virtual fencing option has proven to reduce wildlife fatalities in the areas where it has been installed. The devices are placed at 25-metre intervals, on alternating sides of the road. They are triggered in sequence by the vehicle's headlight, as a car approaches along the road, emitting a sound and signal, thereby warning any approaching wildlife.

We are starting to collaborate with other local likeminded and supportive organisations to contribute to the project: a great opportunity to collaborate with the City of Ballarat who are very supportive of the project and are assisting us in the implementation of the fencing.

Connecting landowners to wildlife through habitat restoration 2024 - 2025

Funded by Community Bank Buninyong

BWRAC has been successful in obtaining a Community Bank Buninyong grant, that has enabled the purchase of a trailer, aviary and sound recorder device.

This project aims to educate landowners, in Ballarat and the region, about wildlife cohabitating on their land and how to restore degraded vegetation. Displaced native wildlife travel greater distances in search of food and habitat, exposing them to greater risk of attack, death and disease. This project mitigates these challenges, by promoting habitat restoration through community engagement in conservation.

Providing advice to landowners about the wildlife on their properties and how best to support their habitat, is essential. Loaning the sound recorder to landowners will help identify what native wildlife is on their land. This innovative approach ensures that habitat restoration efforts are precisely targeted, creating thriving ecosystems that support and enhance local wildlife and flora.

Carers observe that rehabilitated animals often face fatal territorial conflicts, when reintroduced to

their habitats, as vacated territory is fiercely defended. The 'soft release trailer' is a mobile enclosure that allows for gradual reintroduction. This process aims to reduce conflict and increase the survival rates of released animals. If you are a landowner who would love to have some rehabilitated native animals released onto your property, please register your interest via email to secretary@bwrac.org. au so we can add you to our database of available properties.

Habitat Wildlife Havens: Engaging Private Landholders in Habitat Restoration Nov 2024 - Feb 2026

Funded by Landcare Victoria

Since European settlement, the Corangamite region has witnessed a significant decline in native vegetation and biodiversity. over 75% of remnant vegetation is now cleared or degraded. This loss has fragmented wildlife habitats, displaced wildlife and places them at greater risk of territorial conflict, sickness, injury and death, as they travel between habitats. Urgent restoration is needed to support local fauna and flora. BWRAC proposed a pilot project to empower private landholders with the knowledge and skills to enhance biodiversity on their land by restoring ecosystems tailored to local wildlife needs. This initiative saw us establish a wildlife corridor connecting the Yarrowee River to Durham Lead Conservation Reserve, providing vital habitat for native species, including koalas.

The project involved ecological restoration, including revegetation with indigenous species and installation of protective fencing. Community engagement, through field days has focussed on handson restoration skills, wildlife survey techniques and environmental education. Capacity building by training local landholders, school groups and BWRAC members, to maintain and expand habitat restoration efforts independently.

The project aims are: Enhance biodiversity through the planting of indigenous species tailored to local wildlife needs. Demonstrate effective restoration practices that can be replicated throughout the region, contributing to the broader goals of the Corangamite Regional Catchment Strategy and BWRAC wildlife corridor goals. This initiative not only addresses the urgent need for habitat restoration, but also fosters a community- oriented approach to conservation, ensuring sustainable management and enhancement of the region's natural assets.



IMAGES: DAM REVEGERATION WORKSHOP AND LANDCARE CERTIFICATE

I Heart Ballarat Wildlife Project 2025 - June 2026

Funded by Ballarat City Council

'I Heart Ballarat Wildlife' project is a community action project with three main goals: education, involvement and empowerment for community members within the Ballarat region. We want to inspire and connect our local community with nature, through hands-on, practical opportunities and training sessions and workshops. All activities are designed to be inclusive, to reflect our motto that "everyone can do some-thing."

Community capacity building will occur through the training sessions, participation in inclusive practical workshops and by encouraging people to join BWRAC as volunteers in our other activities such as habitat planting, wildlife tracking and recording and fundraising activities.

Planning for the project includes opportunities for young people, over-65s and people from diverse backgrounds in care and conservation activities. The project also seeks to empower community members to take the skills and knowledge they learn and to share it with others, for the benefit of wildlife in Ballarat and beyond.

Perhaps most importantly, the Ballarat community as a whole will benefit from having community members who know more about how to support and care for wildlife and their environments and who are willing to share that knowledge with others in the community. By working together to learn about, support and care for our local wildlife, we are ensuring that the Ballarat community will be able to enjoy the natural elements that make this region so special for generations to come.





IMAGES: POUCH MAKING WORKSHOPS

Browse App 2025 - 2026

In collaboration with Federation University

During 2025 BWRAC worked with Federation University students to create a 'Browse App'. Our problem is: volunteers who want to collect flora species as food for wildlife in care, don't always know what they are collecting, or where to find it.

The app will benefit wildlife carers, rehabilitators and the wider public with the identification of flora species as food for wildlife. While we are focusing on our local Ballarat region, the app can have a broader state and even whole of country focus.

The app will connect wildlife carers to landowners who have browse available for collection with a volunteer who can go and pick the browse. This app allows the carer to specify where the browse needs to be collected from. This is important when wildlife are getting ready to return to their home range. They need to be eating flora from that specific area, so their gut flora is ready to cope with the species found in their home range.

Other grants: Microsoft 365 Business Premium Grant & NetSuite Accounting & CRM software





IMAGES: VARIOUS BROWSE SPECIES

06 Our People

People, especially volunteers make an organisation. BWRAC would like to acknowledge our founding members, without their contribution the establishment of BWRAC would not have been possible.

Executive committee

Melissa Morey (President & Secretary)

20 July 2022 - Current

Melissa is a commercial photographer with over 27 years' experience in the corporate environment, where she has worked in various companies that were ISO quality accredited. Previously, she was the Secretariat for the Australian Federation of Medical Women (AFMW) for about 10 years. She designed and implemented various systems and processes to improve the AFMW's governance and compliance. Melissa was instrumental in getting the organisation accredited with the United Nations as a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO), acquired Her Excellency, Ms Quentin Bryce, as Patron, introduced the first annual report publication and managed the successful award nomination of Dr Desiree Yap, who received an Australia Medal (AM) in 2020. She was a founding member and the inaugural Secretary & Treasurer of BWRAC, responsible for getting BWRAC incorporated and registered as a charity.

Lillian Gattuso (Vice President)

6 May 2023 - Current

Lillian is an independent researcher, with a background in compliance. Her extensive investigative experience has seen her researching and analysing complex policies and practices, scientific journal articles and legal documents in the pursuit of unpacking them to provide evidence-based information that has informed BWRAC campaign material, when part of the pre-BWRAC advocacy team in 2022 before stepping into an executive committee member role as Vice President. Liaising with politicians, lawyers, barristers and government officials as she navigates through the space of policy change for wildlife welfare.

As a passionate protecter of native wildlife, Lillian is also currently an active committee member with Victorian Kangaroo Alliance, and the Strzelecki Koala Action Team (SKAT), a collective of Friends of the Earth Melbourne, participating in citizen science projects collecting koala scat to assist in genome research of the Strzelecki koala. The aim is to have this unique colony recognised and protected under the federal EPBC Act (Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act).

Lillian has experience in helping rehabilitate macropods as a volunteer at Little Urchins Wildlife Sanctuary, particularly enjoying the little joeys! She has recently attained her Certificate IV in Conservation and Ecosystem Management.

Anita Kane (Acting Treasurer)

21 March 2025 - Current

Anita has a passion for volunteering and is also involved with Gardens for Wildlife Ballarat, the Mount Blowhard Primary School Parents & Friends Group and the former the Australian Fibre Collective. She is passionate about helping educate the community on the benefits of including suitable flora habitat for the benefit of both our wildlife and humans.

Brita Goodwin (Secretary)

12 December 2024 – 16 March 2025

Brita is an HR Executive, with twenty plus years' experience leading local and international HR teams with in fast paced, results driven organisations within the retail and hospitality Industry. We thank Brita for her contribution during her time with us.

Lisa Paliaga (Ordinary Committee Member)

25 November 2023 - Current

Lisa is a keen advocate of our native wildlife and an active member of the wildlife rehabilitation and care community.

Her first experience with the wider rehabilitation community was with Tehree Gordon at Jirrahlinga wildlife sanctuary, in the early 1990's and again in 1999-2000. Here Lisa learnt about the care of many species, especially koala rehabilitation.

After moving to Ballarat she held wildlife carer positions under two reputable shelter operators and attended a Diploma in Natural Resource Management. Lisa also has hands-on experience with landscape management issues including weed control, pest animal management and companion and target species habitat restoration.

She has a passion for the conservation and expansion of wildlife areas and the species that inhabit them and the urban conservation of species forced to cohabit our city areas. Lisa seeks to enrich the environments available to our wildlife where possible and better facilitate the care of injured, or displaced wildlife. She enthusiastically encourages members to approach her about improvements and ideas they may have, which may lead to a positive futuristic outcome for our native species. She hopes we can be a progressive and helpful force in the care and management of this changing environment, to have the best outcome available for all our native species.

Laura Guest (Advocacy Sub Committee Member)

22 December 2023 - Ongoing

Laura is a passionate advocate for wildlife and nature. This shows throughout her dedication to wildlife and educating the community about what they can do to help wildlife and the environment.

Laura's indigenous culture plays a big part in her passion for preserving the land and educating people on how they can do the same and looking out for wildlife. Her devotion to wildlife continues in many ways, from collecting donations to share amongst other rescuers and attending working bees to assist wildlife and conservation etc. She hopes we can work together, assisting wildlife, addressing issues and addressing the land management issues.

Maxine Wilkinson (Education Sub Committee Member)

20 July 2024 - Current

Maxine is a retired veterinary nurse and a registered wildlife rescuer with Wildlife Victoria. She also volunteers with Riding for the Disabled and has a passion for helping our native wildlife. Maxine has her Certificate 4 in Training and Presenting and is passionate about helping to educate the community on various issues facing our native wildlife.

Benita (Benne) Harrison (Communications Sub Committee Member)

20 July 2024 - Current

Benne has a background in community engagement, education and communications and is invested in helping people know more about how to support local native wildlife. She is a very big fan of wombats and has aspirations to become a wombat carer, when she is no longer working full time. Benne can often be found in her garden, planting native flora and making bee hotels, or behind a sewing machine making pouches and baskets for wildlife in care.

Monika Fowler (Admin)

4 June 2024 – 8 October 2025

Monika has a background in business administration, bookkeeping and compliance. She has a wide range of interests, which have helped her build a broad and adaptable skillset, especially in areas that blend creativity and digital tools. She's a lifelong learner and always looking for ways to grow and contribute meaningfully. We thank Monika for her contribution during her time with us.

Members and Volunteers

Volunteers are essential to the success of many not-for-profit organisations> BWRAC is no exception. We deeply appreciate the support and energy our volunteers contribute to the work we do.

We are grateful for the support and enthusiasm that our volunteers bring to the running of BWRAC. Many hands make light work. In time as we grow and mature to become an established charity, we hope to continue and expand our membership base and volunteer engagement. Thank you to everyone who has volunteered to help run a stall at a community event, designed artwork, planted trees, networked with other organisations, undertaken fundraising activities, secured donations and made donations to BWRAC. Your input is greatly appreciated.





BWRAC MEALWORM WORKSHOP 2025

BWRAC VOLUNTEER RESCUERS WITH KANGAROO 2025

We need to continue to attract new members and, most importantly, new committee members. Welcoming new people to BWRAC will bring fresh ideas, diverse perspectives and renewed energy, helping to strengthen its mission and expand its impact.

Member Engagement

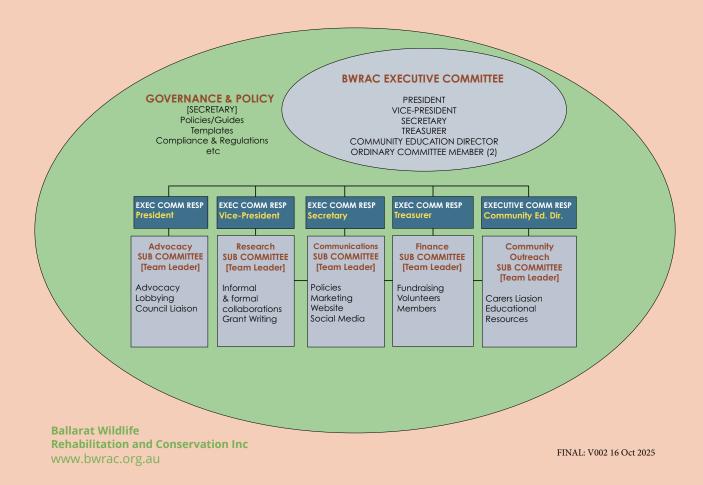
How you can help

There are many ways that you can contribute to the successful running of BWRAC. You might want to join as a member, donate items or money or get involved in a project or committee. We have a role to suit everyone! We appreciate that not everyone has a large amount of time to volunteer. We can offer short time commitment tasks for those who are time poor:

- · become a member
- · share our posts on social media
- · volunteer your time on a committee or project
- make a donation / corporate partner / regular donor
- · support an event or fundraising activity
- join our mailing list to keep informed of our work
- leave a bequest

Please contact the BWRAC Secretary if you would like to discuss any of the opportunities listed here.

Email: secretary@bwrac.org.au



07 Our Community

BWRAC values the support of our supporters and donors over the last twelve months. As a charity and not-for-profit organisation, we rely on developing enduring relationships with our community to support our mission to help wildlife and their habitats.

Supporters

UBC Web Design

UBC Web Design strives to be a leader in web design and development and takes pride in working with businesses of all sizes, as well as individuals and organisations. Their focus is on small to medium businesses, especially those in regional areas, who otherwise might miss out.

UBC Web Design expertly designed and host our BWRAC website. They seamlessly integrated all our necessary information into a modern website, with ease of functionality.

Kwik Kopy

Kwik Kopy empowers entrepreneurs to make their mark on the world by offering high quality, end-to-end solutions in design, print and signage services. Whether it's expert branding advice, custom business cards, sophisticated graphic design, or large format signage, they have the expertise to turn your vision into reality.

KwikKopy have supported us with printing and hosting a donation box. We thank them for their ongoing support of our work.

Bunnings

Bunnings, a generous supporter has donated tools to help our tree planting projects now and into the future. They have also donated PVC pipe fittings for our soft release possum trailer and items for our Christmas raffle.

Anaconda

Anaconda Ballarat has donated a pair of binoculars for our end of year raffle.

Corey's Creations

Corey's Creations has donated a nesting box for our end of year raffle.

Mt Clear College

We would like to thank the year nine students and their teacher for enthusiastically coming and helping us prepare and plant over 440 plants for our revegetation project. We hope we have given them an insight into the world of wildlife and inspired them to continue to support wildlife and the environment.

07 Our Community cont'd

Ballarat Community Nursery

Thanks to the team for growing such great tube stock and providing them to not-for-profit organisations like BWRAC. Being able to access free stock makes a huge positive impact on our project bottom-line, and allows us to direct more funds towards wildlife care.

Golden City Hotel

Thank you to Paul and the team at Golden City Hotel, Sturt St, Ballarat Central. They provide their venue to us, free of charge for volunteer and community events.

Grill'd Ballarat

Thanks to Grill'd Ballarat for featuring us as one of their three community organisations as part of their ongoing 'Local Matters'. In Australia, Grill'd is part of Local Matters, a way of giving back to the community. Every month, each restaurant splits \$500 between three groups doing amazing work in the community. In June 2025, BWRAC received \$300. We would also like to thank everyone who voted for us.

Central Highlands Water (CHW)

Thanks to CHW for working with us on collecting 'browse', native eucalypt leaves, for some of our koalas who find themselves in care. It can be tricky finding the right balance of koala food trees for our fussy eaters, especially when they are in rehabilitation and not in their own home territory. If you are a landowner with koala preferred food trees, and you would like to join our register of 'browse providers', then please let know via email to secretary@bwrac.org.au.



IMAGES: GOLDEN CITY HOTEL VENUE HOSTING BWRAC EVENT & GRILL'D \$300 DONATION TO BWRAC

07 Our Community cont'd

Members of our local community

Throughout the year, BWRAC has been contacted by numerous members of the public offering to donate items such as towels, hand towels, pillowcases, flannelette sheets and blankets. We have also had landowners reach out when they have had trees fall down to offer us timber and 'browse'. Browse is the gum leaves that many of our native wildlife eat.

Thank you to everyone who has contacted us with the offer of something to donate. Wildlife carers and shelters are not paid: they are volunteers. Caring for and rehabilitating our native wildlife is a time consuming and a costly exercise, with little opportunity to seek funding to cover all the costs.

BWRAC and our members, thank the community for their generosity, helping to support our carers and wildlife.



IMAGES: DONATED TOWELS & POUCHES ETC; POUCH MAKING WORKSHOP ATTENDEES SEPT 2025

08 Our Success Story

Hatchlings – small but with a colorful future

Tiny chicks come to us at all stages and, due to some circumstances, the species is unknown until they grow feathers to identify what they are.

When a tree or nest falls, the parent birds are often nowhere to be seen. Most parrot species look the same, or very similar, as hatchlings, like this motley crew.

This season, Lisa had three hatchlings from the Gong area and two from Creswick State Forest, unable to be reunited with their parents, so they had to be hand-reared. After weeks of feeding and care, we were able to identify the chicks as Red Rumped Parrots and Rosellas. They were all successfully released once they were big enough.



"Pursue something so important that even if you fail, the world is better off with you having tried."



IMAGE: LISA PALIAGA BEYOND THE FUR WILDLIFE SHELTER

— Tim O'Reilly

09 Treasurer's Report

Profit and Loss

Ballarat Wildlife Rehabilitation and Conservation For the year ended 30 June 2025

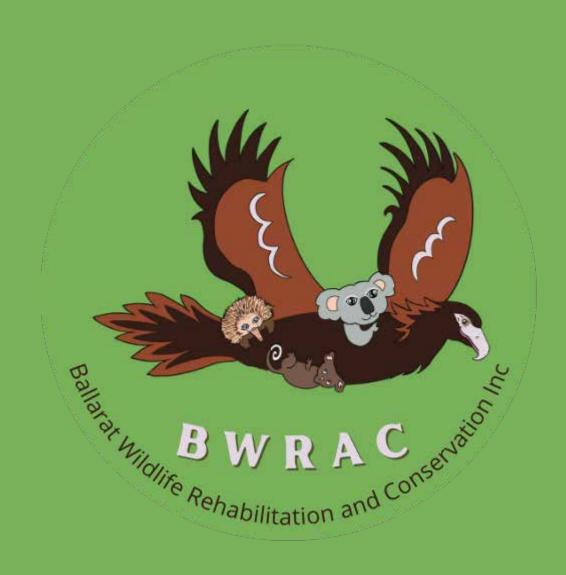
	2025
Trading Income	
Donations - Business	2,170.70
Donations - Individuals	4,659.74
Event attendance fees	1,225.00
Fundraising Income	456.87
Government Grants - State	52,424.00
Grants - non Government	4,566.23
Interest Income	645.64
Membership	850.00
Total Trading Income	66,998.18
Gross Profit	66,998.18
Operating Expenses Advertising	50.00
Bank Fees	133.29
Catering	236.12
General Expenses	237.59
Insurance	786.60
Printing & Stationery	565.97
Project Costs - Speakers	920.00
Project Expenses - Consumables	5,463.31
Project Expenses - Other	198.00
Wildlife Carer Reimbursement	2,742.55
Wildlife Vet Costs	5,876.00
Total Operating Expenses	17,209.43
Net Profit	49,788.75

09 Treasurer's Report cont'd

Balance Sheet

Ballarat Wildlife Rehabilitation and Conservation As at 30 June 2025

Account	30 June 2025
Assets	
Bank	
General Fundraising	4,759.45
Grant 3	2,449.03
Koala Care	8,244.49
Koala Protection	6,273.22
Landcare Grant	11,737.42
Petty Cash	3,412.60
Reimbursement account	2,101.42
Total Bank	38,977.63
Current Assets	
Accounts Receivable	0.00
Total Current Assets	0.00
Fixed Assets	
BWRAC owned Wildlife Equipment	39,971.41
Total Fixed Assets	39,971.41
Total Assets	78,949.04
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Total Liabilities	0.00
Net Assets	78,949.04
Equity	
Current Year Earnings	49,788.75
Retained Earnings	28,685.72
Total Equity	78,474.47



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