

WILDLIFE TALES



December 2017



Wildlife Tales is the official newsletter of
Wildlife Animal Rescue & Care Society Inc.

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NEXT MEETINGS:

17 December 2017, 15 January 2018, 19 February 2018

*General Meetings will be held on the 3rd Sunday in the month at 10 am,
at Wyoming Community Centre, 147 Maiden Brush Rd, Wyoming*

BIRDS



With the rains, slugs and snails are re-emerging and it's not just our gardens in trouble. Tawny Frogmouths enjoy a slug or two which can sometimes be carrying the parasite 'rat lungworm'

In rats this worm completes its lifecycle however when it ends up in a dead-end host, like a Tawny, it travels to the brain and spine causing neurological problems.

Symptoms include weakness, inability to fly, inability to turn over if placed on back and worsening neurological issues as the immune system attempts to battle the worms in the bird's brain.

Fortunately, early treatment with medication can allow us to help the Tawny recover!

If you find a sick or injured Tawny Frogmouth around the NSW Central Coast please give our 24hr rescue line a call on 0243250666 Wildlife A.R.C

REPTILES



The weather is getting warm and snakes are starting to appear again as they search for food and mates. Often they will be seen on their travels moving through yards, sometimes getting stuck or trapped when they take a wrong turn.

If you find an injured snake, or a trapped one which needs a little help being evicted, please contact our 24hr rescue line 0243250666

Never attempt to handle or harm a wild snake, we have specially trained people available to assist.

Some nice Facebook reviews 😊



Animal Referral Hospital Gosford Facebook Page



Animal Referral Hospital Gosford added 7 new photos.

7 hrs · *

*** TURTLE MUM'S GIFT OF LIFE ***

It's an unfortunate fact that wildlife and our busy urban lifestyles don't always go hand in hand.

Recently a very kind member of the public brought an injured Eastern Longnecked Turtle in to us here at ARH Gosford. These are fresh water turtles that also go by the name of 'Snakeneck Turtle'.

Sadly this gorgeous lady had been hit by a car and had extensive irreparable damage to her shell

A radiograph (x-ray) revealed that she was gravid (pregnant) with 14 eggs which you can clearly see!

2-10 eggs is the usual number. Unfortunately due to her extensive injuries she had to be humanely euthanized.

However all was not lost!

Tristan from Wildlife ARC (Gosford) assisted us in saving her future babies.

He has incubated the eggs at the right temperature and humidity and we are all now hoping for a successful outcome.

We will keep you posted on that!

Meantime check out Wildlife Animal Rescue & Care here on the Central Coast - <http://www.wildlife-arc.org.au/>



ABC Central Coast Facebook page



ABC Central Coast

7 November at 09:35 · 🌐

This little possum held her carer's hand all night after being found with slug gun injuries at Woy Woy.

Listen here to Alison George from Wildlife Arc explain what happened as police investigate this cruel act.



A baby possum euthanised after being shot at Woy Woy

Police are seeking information after a baby possum dies after being shot by a slug gun at Woy Woy.

ABC.NET.AU

<http://www.abc.net.au/radio/centralcoast/programs/breakfast/a-baby-possum-euthanised-after-being-shot-at-woy-woy/9125120>

Central Coast Express Advocate

Wildlife ARC carer with young brushtail possum shot with air-rifle at Woy Woy.

CENTRAL COAST



Wildlife ARC carer with young brushtail possum shot with air-rifle at Woy Woy.

Baby possum shot at Woy Woy prompts call for information

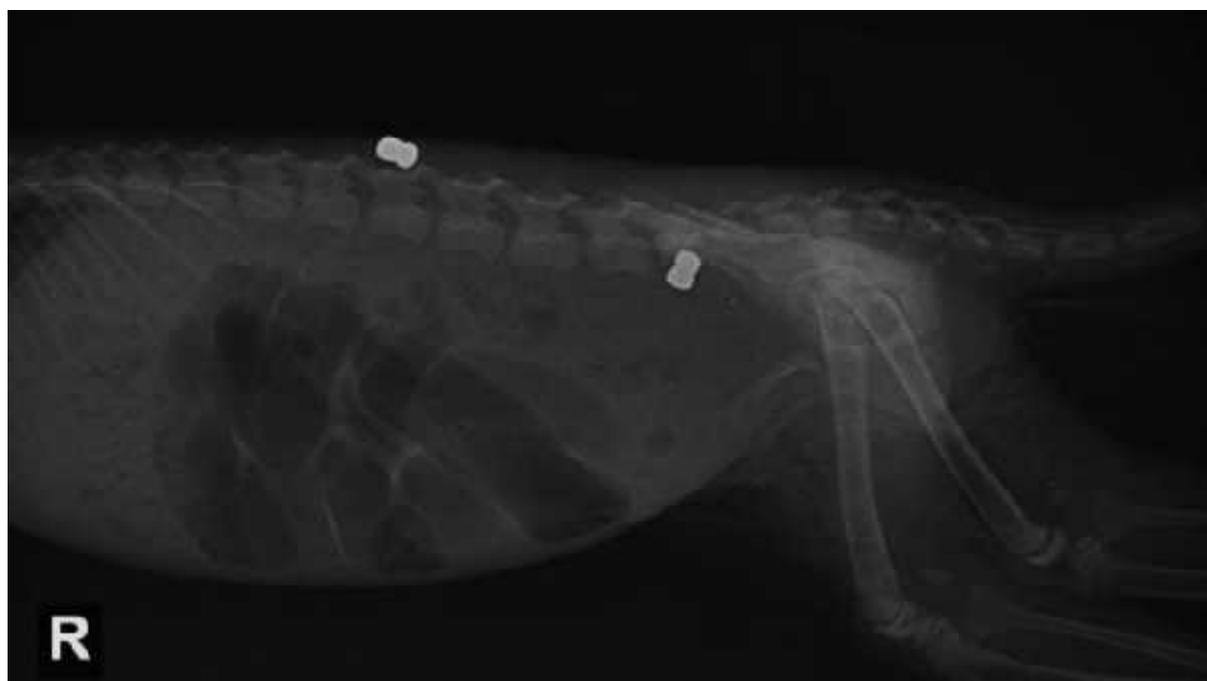
Cathy Stubbs, Central Coast Gosford Express Advocate

November 6, 2017 12:00am

WILDLIFE ARC rescuers have called for public help to find the person who shot a baby brushtail possum with an air-rifle at Woy Woy.

The young possum had to be put down after vets discovered it had been shot twice and one of the slugs had lodged near it's spine. The slug had perforated the animal's bowel before reaching the spine.

Wildlife ARC rescuer Andrew Crouch said vets at Petstock Vet Clinic at West Gosford felt there was a very high risk that trying to remove the slug would cause the animal to lose use of its legs and decided to euthanase it.



X-ray of a young brushtail possum shot with air-rifle at Woy Woy.

X-ray of a

young brushtail possum shot with air-rifle at Woy Woy.

Mr Crouch said he had been called out to rescue the animal in Vidler Avenue on Wednesday by a member of the public. He said he had found the possum unable to move and passed it onto a Wildlife ARC carer.

“It was a young possum — too big for the pouch — at the age where they are still riding on the mother's back,” Mr Crouch said.

“We thought it was a dog attack but when it didn't improve condition overnight the carer took it to the vet and that's when we discovered it had been shot,” he said.



Wildlife ARC Supervisor Andrew Crouch

“It’s very disappointing and depressing that people do this kind of thing.

“We do our best to protect and care for native Australian animals and get them to medical care when we can and eventually release them into the bush.

“It’s also very disturbing that someone is shooting a firearm in the middle of Woy Woy,” he said.

Mr Crouch said the slugs had been removed from the possum as evidence and handed to police with a full report.

A Good News Story



WHIPPER SNIPPED SNAKE STITCHED UP BY SUPER VET

Fiona Killman

ANAESTHETISING a venomous snake for surgery is no easy feat – but when veterinarian Marcus Poon heard about this 1.2m injured red belly black snake, he was keen to help.

The snake was rescued from a Tumbl Umbi property last week by Wildlife ARC head snake carer Sam

Chatfield and had sustained injuries from a suspected whipper snipper.

Wildlife ARC Supervisor Andrew Crouch then brought the snake to West Gosford Veterinary Clinic where life-saving surgery could be performed.

Like most of us, he was not keen for surgery and did everything in his power to escape. In fact, he thrashed around and fought as hard

as he could for some 20 minutes before the anaesthesia took hold.

"We can't place anything in the snake's mouth while he is awake," Dr Poon said. "So we look for any movement."

The surgery was a success, taking almost three hours to clean and stitch all the snake's wounds.

Dr Poon said if the snake survived the next two weeks, he

had a good chance of full recovery and release.

He is now in the safe hands of Ms Chatfield who said he was "grumpy", however slowly recovering and sleeping soundly under his heat lamp. She said the plan was to nurse him back to health and release him so he can enjoy the remainder of the breeding season.

Consider Becoming a Phonie



Without the phonies ... I would not have come into care

Please consider becoming a Phonie

It only means a few hours – once a week, once a fortnight or even once a month it all helps.

Situation report – American corn snake response

Sitrep no. (version no.1)

Date of issue – 2 November 2017

Time period of Sitrep (Weekly)

1. **Situation to date** (what has happened)

- The American corn snake, *Pantherophis guttatus*, is a non-venomous small to medium-sized, slender snake which originates from the United States of America and Mexico. Adult snakes can grow up to 180 cm long. Colouration in the corn snake species is highly variable however the most common form is orange or brownish-yellow with large black-edged red blotches down the middle of its back (see fig 1.). The belly is usually a black and white checkerboard pattern, though orange may also be present. More information on the American corn snake is available at the [following link](#).
- American corn snakes are considered a serious invasive species and are listed as prohibited dealings under the NSW *Biosecurity Act 2015*. It is an offence to deal with an American corn snake unless authorised by DPI.
- During 2017, a number of American corn snakes have been detected in the open environment within the Greater Sydney Local Land Services region. During September and October as seasonal temperatures have increased, reports of American corn snakes have increased (see attached table for details).
- Three snakes detected NSW Central Coast, (Kincumber, Rocky Point, Holgate). The snakes reported at Kincumber and Rocky Point were collected and euthanised. The snake reported at Holgate remained at large.
- Four snakes detected in the South Coast area (Dapto, Bomaderry, Nowra). All four snakes were collected and euthanised.
- Two snakes detected in the Sydney area (Elderslie, Cremorne). The snake reported at Cremorne was collected and euthanised. The snake reported at Elderslie remained at large.
- Two snakes detected in the Blue Mountains area (Glenbrook, Newnes). The snake reported at Glenbrook was collected and euthanised. The snake reported at Newnes remained at large.

2. **Actions to date** (what has been done)

- Through the actions of members of the community, wildlife carer groups, snake handlers and veterinarians, etc. where possible, the American corn snakes reported to DPI have been collected, positively identified, humanely euthanised and screened for biosecurity issues at the State Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory. No exotic animal diseases have been detected at this point.

3. **Actions to be completed** (what will be done)

- American corn snake sitrep to be distributed to relevant contacts in DPI, Office of Environment and Heritage, Local Land Services, Local Government Areas and wildlife care groups requesting that staff be on the look-out for American corn snakes.
- If it is considered safe to do so, competent people should attempt to capture any American corn snakes detected in the open environment. If considered unsafe, people should try to keep track of the animal, photograph it and report it to DPI so that a competent person can be arranged to collect the animal.
- Any information on American corn snakes detected in NSW can be reported to NSW DPI through:
 - [The DPI Unusual animal sighting reporting form](#)
 - Email: invasive.species@dpi.nsw.gov.au

- The Invasive Plants and Animals Inquiry Line – 1800 680 244

4. Issue

- The American corn snake is recognised as a successful invasive species that has been introduced throughout the Caribbean, to parts of Europe, Hawaii and some mainland US states. All known introductions are via stowaways in cargo and pet trade invasion pathways.
- The species represents a potential host for foreign pests and diseases, which could threaten native Australian and domestic animals. For example, some reptiles can potentially carry ticks that spread the bacterium *Cowdria ruminantium* that, although not lethal to reptiles, can kill grazing animals. American corn snakes are also a vector of cryptosporosis, a diarrhoeal disease.
- The American corn snake has the potential to reduce limited or small populations of native wildlife species by preying upon them or competing for habitat or food. The main ecological impacts where the American corn snake has been introduced are on native animals that may be consumed as prey, including mammals, birds, frogs and lizards.
- The American corn snake is primarily active at night and is both a terrestrial burrower and extremely good climber. It only preys on nests at night, which is potentially dangerous to adult birds on the nest.
- Breeding occurs in spring and 3–40 eggs are laid during the summer. Individuals can live for up to 32 years in captivity.
- Because the American corn snake species is small and agile it is readily able to escape from keeper's enclosures. Once liberated through escape or deliberate release, corn snakes are able to survive in a diverse range of habitats including open grassland, forest, agricultural land and semi-urban areas. These characteristics and the ability of the species to hide under objects, burrow underground and to climb trees make detection of the snake in an open environment difficult. Because the corn snake is difficult to detect, eradication once established in the wild is difficult.

Table 1: Reports of American corn snakes detected in the open environment in 2017

Date of detection	Location of Detection 1 (town)	Detection category	Address	Fate of animal/s
dd/mm/yyyy	free text	drop down	free text	drop down
23/01/2017	Dapto	At_large	Bannister St, Dapto	Euthanased at seizure
31/01/2017	Dapto	At_large	Tallowong Crescent, Dapto	Euthanased at later stage
2/03/2017	Glenbrook	At_large	Lucasville Rd, Glenbrook	Euthanased at seizure
27/04/2017	Elderslie	At_large	Bruchhauser Cr, Elderslie	Remained at Large
22/07/2017	Bomaderry	At_large	Birriley St, Bomaderry 2541	Euthanised
14/09/2017	Cremorne	At_large	Oaks Ave, Cremorne NSW 2090	Euthanased at later stage
19/09/2017	Nowra	At_large	Gateway Caravan Park Pleasant Way, Nowra NSE 2541	Euthanased at later stage
6/10/2017	Kincumber	At_large	The Scenic Road, Kincumber	Euthanased at later stage
6/10/2017	Rocky Point	At_large	Marine Pde, Rocky Point	Euthanased at a later stage
18/10/2017	Holgate	At_large	Wattle Tree Road, Holgate	Remained at Large
29/10/2017	Newnes	At_large	Wolgan Valley Rd, Newnes NSW 2790	Remained at Large

Figure 1. Image of American corn snake detected 29 October 2017, Wolgan Valley Rd, Newnes.



Completed by Nathan Cutter, Technical Specialist Vertebrate Pests
Approved by Quentin Hart, Manager Invasive Species Strategy and Planning
Date: 2 November 2017

Sitrep Number 1 – American corn snake response
15

Version date: 1 November 2017

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Below is also a photo of a Corn snake which Sam Chatfield rescued and has gone to DPI for genetic research then the Australian Museum for use in a new presentation they are putting together on invasive species.



Possum and Glider Report

Our section is still extremely busy with over 130 possums and gliders in care. We have been busy releasing our now young adult possies from last seasons baby intake.

A few weeks ago we had a juvenile back rider brushtail possum come into care that was a suspected dog attack. Upon vet examination and xray it was discovered that this little possum had been shot and the 2 slug gun bullets had perforated her bowel and lodged in her pelvis and spine. With systemic infection and spinal nerve injury it was decided to let her RIP whilst she was still under anaesthetic.

The past two weeks we have seen too many rat bait poisonings. We have had a few fatalities with possums and gliders bleeding out within minutes after rescue. I have been working on one-on-one training with senior carers in different areas of the coast educating them and teaching them the procedure of injecting coagulan (Vit k).

Slowly I am getting these carers the equipment required. For first dose injectable is preferable as it is more rapidly absorbed than oral. Oral vit k is then administered for a number of weeks.

Last Sunday 12th November we held a beginner training session, we had a really great turnout and it was nice to welcome some new rescuer/carers too our section.

With babies in pouch at the moment we are heading for another season in Dec.

Thankyou everyone for all your great work.

Alison George HC
Possums and Gliders