




**WANTED:
A LOVING NEW FAMILY**

Zack was surrendered to Animal Welfare League NSW (AWL) as his owners were unable to care for him. Zack is now looking for a new family where he can share his affection and love for life!

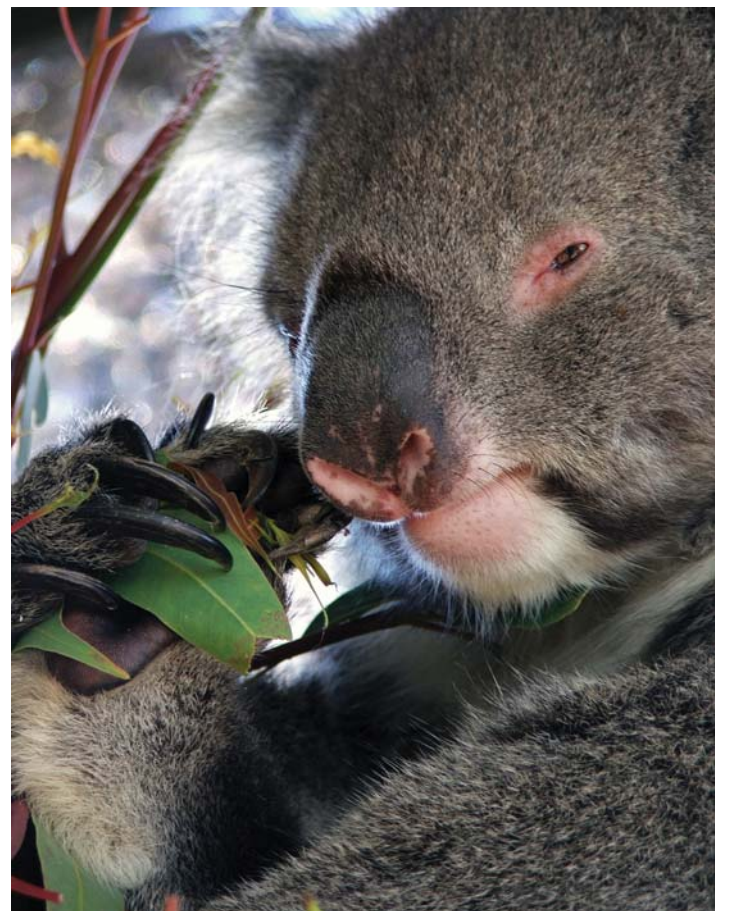
We pride ourselves in our success in matching companion animals with the right family.

If you would like to help Zack or his friends, please contact us on **1800 880 190**.

AWL cares for surrendered, neglected and abandoned animals and we have a team of Inspectors who investigate animal cruelty.

www.animalwelfareleague.com.au

Ian's many challenges have included working with orchardists who've had problems with large colonies of grey-headed flying foxes chowing down on crops. As Ian explains, "The grey-headed flying fox has been listed nationally as a threatened species. When it causes extensive damage in orchards, one of the usual methods we have to manage damage to fruit crops is net the orchard so as to exclude the flying foxes. Netting isn't a cheap option but is effective in preventing damage."



Curious Cockatoos can also cause a range of problems in both rural and urban areas. Unfortunately shooting is often the option that primary producers choose. Partly it's seen as being quick and effective but it often doesn't resolve the problems. In rural areas Cockatoos can often be seen attacking grain and nut crops at the sowing stage and they can cause major damage. In urban areas, Sulphur Crested Cockatoos can cause significant damage to houses when they're attracted by some well-meaning person providing food. Cockies spend pretty much all day foraging for food. When food is provided for them they're able to fill up pretty quickly and therefore have more idle time in which they can play and chew—often causing damage to your most expensive asset.

Ian's work in dealing with wildlife led him to write a book on the problems we're often faced with co-habiting with our native neighbours and some of the solutions available. "The biggest complaints and conflict I see in urban areas are from snakes and possums. Often, people just need to accept the wildlife and learn to live with our wild neighbours. For instance people want to get rid of possums in their backyard and relocating them is not a humane or practical solution—nor is it legal. Possums are very territorial and moving them to another area is basically a death sentence. It's not practical because you're likely to get another possum moving in and taking over that territory." Perhaps that's why there's an urban myth about possums returning to a habitat even after being driven miles away and released by a well intentioned, yet misguided human.

As our urban areas continue to sprawl, we're confronted by problem neighbours like snakes. But as Ian explains it's often our living habits that attract these unwelcome and often dangerous guests. "It's quite easy to avoid attracting snakes and so if you live near a snake habitat you should follow some simple rules to ensure you don't get any nasty snake surprises. There are ways to reduce the attraction of snakes around your house like minimising things that attract rats and mice. So keep compost heaps far away from the house. Keep grass short and mowed and don't have piles of wood or sheets of tin lying around snakes can make homes of these. The main thing is to avoid snakes and don't try to catch or kill them because that puts you at risk of being bitten."

It's not just humans that impact on our wildlife but also our pets, and responsible pet owners should always keep a close eye on domesticated cats and dogs. Increasingly in Sydney, new housing developments border on Koala habitat. If dogs are allowed to roam in these areas, it is likely that they will naturally come across these slow moving and dozy neighbours. It's a horrible thought that even the most placid and good-natured canine companions find Koalas as game, but that's what is happening in our own backyards.

Ian sees the most carnage from both feral and domestic cats and is an advocate of cat enclosures. "Cats are superb and highly efficient predators and I think we have a long way to go to change people's ideas on cat ownership and management. A large number of cats are allowed to roam through neighbourhoods free during the day and through the night. Ultimately this is potentially harmful for the cat and impacts on wildlife. I've seen them kill anything—from lizards, birds, bats and possums—there's really nothing much that they won't kill.

Cat enclosures are an excellent idea. Many are designed with a tunnel from the cat door to the enclosure and they can come and go as they please. The great thing about these enclosures is that they keep cats safe from wandering and harm and they keep wildlife safe from cats. It's a concept that is relatively new but I think these enclosures are a wonderful idea."

Ian's book 'Wild Neighbours – The humane approach to living with wildlife' is available now. The aim of the book is to show people how we can co-exist with wildlife by spelling out some of the problems that can be avoided.

Your neighbours are Wild!

By Michelle Heald



Got a possum in your roof, snake in your sandpit, cockatoos chomping your roof tiles, Bluetongue at the bottom of the garden or bats in the belfry? Australia is home to an amazing array of wildlife even in urban areas. Sometimes co-existing with our wild neighbours can cause problems and lead to conflict.

Ian Temby is a Wildlife Control Officer for the Department of Sustainability and Environment and is based in Victoria. It's a long job title but his basic duties involve developing policy and administering advice to people experiencing problems with wildlife. It covers the gamut from kangaroos on farms, snakes in backyards, possums in gardens, parrots in commercial orchards and surprise visits from animals at airports. His job is to ensure that when conflicts arise with native animals, humane solutions are implemented.



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