

MAMMAL MAIL

Newsletter #3

November 1998

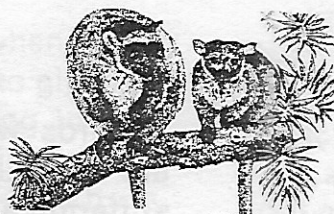
Tree Kangaroo and Mammal Group Inc.
PO Box 1409 Atherton. 4883

Funding

Our submission to the Natural Heritage Trust has been successful. We have been offered \$51,038 to undertake the "Protecting and enhancing rainforest remnants as wildlife habitat" project. This amount is subject to conditions which will be negotiated with the State Government.

Want to know more? Next meeting, 7.30, Malanda Hotel lounge on the evening of Thursday 5th

Feature inside:



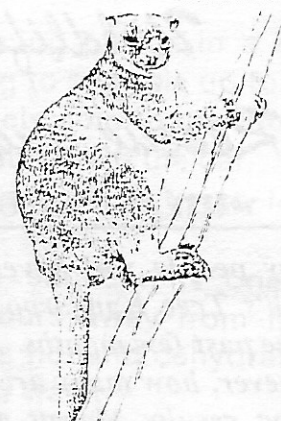
Glass-eyed Tree Kangas in Tazali?

Shirley Hamilton attended the October meeting to inform us of a proposal by a group of Tazali residents to build an icon in front of the new block of shops. It's intended as a tourist attraction and would consist of a slightly larger than life sized family of Tree Kangaroos in a tree.

We have been asked to consider contributing to an information board to accompany this statue.

Shirley and Co have been to Margit Cianellis' home, examining and measuring her frozen TK's and utilizing the valuable data she's collected over the years.

The hard working artists have been putting the finishing touches to a fibreglass specimen, ready for show at the next meeting. The group are to meet this week. Watch this space for an update.



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DISPLAYS
Gloria Anderson

Newsletter Editor
Robyn Gobert

Closing date for
contributions
to Newsletter #4 ~ 20th Jan
'99

Ph: 4096 5684

Offers of assistance
welcomed

Wildlife-

Rescue and care

with Margit Cianelli

Many people will have admired Margit Cianelli's Tree Kangaroo joey at meetings over the past few months.

However, how many are familiar with the amazing results Margit achieves with her volunteer work in the rescue and care of sick, orphaned and injured animals?

In 1994 the Department of Heritage asked Margit to become a Co-ordinator of the Far North Queensland Wildlife Rescue Group Inc on the Tableland and, with the help of a number of animal carers across the region, she continues to champion the cause.

I wonder who among us would drag ourselves out of bed on a wet, cold night to go and remove a snake from it's unwelcome possie in someone's house? Or be woken repeatedly through the night by the feeding demands of a motherless babe?

Margit has generously taken time from her hectic schedule to contribute this piece for our newsletter. She has offered some basic information which will serve to remind us of how much we can do to assist in the immediate care of injured animals, as well as some of the things we must NOT do.
Robyn Gobert.

Most animals are brought in by motorists.

I am always anxious to advise people to put their own safety first in any situation where there is an animal in danger of being attacked by a dog or hit by a car.

If you find an injured animal and stop to pick it up, be aware of it's capabilities.

If the creature is hurt and in pain, it could bite or kick and scratch in an effort to escape.

Using a towel, a coat or rug, cover the beastie and pick it up inside this cover.

Obviously rescuing an adult kangaroo is going to pose more difficulties than handling a joey.

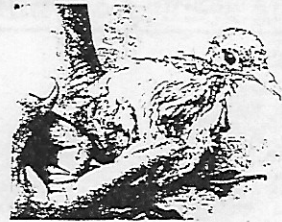
The aim is to pick the animal up in a manner which will cause it the least possible stress - but without putting yourself at risk.

The cover usually has a calming effect upon the injured bird or animal and gives the rescuer at least *some* protection from a well aimed peck, kick or bite.

An injured bandicoot, for example, can be restrained and made to feel calm and secure once wrapped carefully, yet firmly, in a towel.

If it is also placed in a box it poses less threat of escape inside your car.

The risk of it recovering, escaping and causing you to have an accident is minimised.



Birds which are brought into care are usually stunned, concussed or suffering a broken limb.

When dealing with both birds and animals it is essential to restrain them to keep them from harming themselves even further.

A bird left to flap around inside a large box, or an animal allowed to roll around inside a container, becoming increasingly stressed and risking further injury, is not going to *benefit* very much from having been rescued.

Trying to assess damage and injury to a creature by yourself - then deciding to "help" - isn't a wise move.

The victim needs professional help at this time.

Even animals that have been rescued, cared for, healed and are ready for release need special consideration. They will have to be reintroduced to their habitat. An untreated injury - a bird or animal with

an injury which could have easily been overlooked - may not be able to feed it's self or escape from predators when it is back in it's natural environment and it will perish.

The advice of either a Vet or an animal carer should be your first consideration.



A patient is often lost when well-meaning rescuers have tried to give the casualty a drink, or something to eat, then kept it warm by the fire for several hours before noticing it's health is deteriorating.

Seeking the assistance of someone who may be more knowledgeable and better equipped to deal with the particular animal immediately is mandatory.

It is most frustrating, as a carer, to be brought an animal *days* after it has sustained an injury.

We sometimes discover it has also been fed the wrong diet.

A bird or animal with a broken limb can often suffer irreparable damage owing to a lack of professional treatment at the time of rescue.

It is most important to reduce stress and movement and the steps explained above are your first considerations.

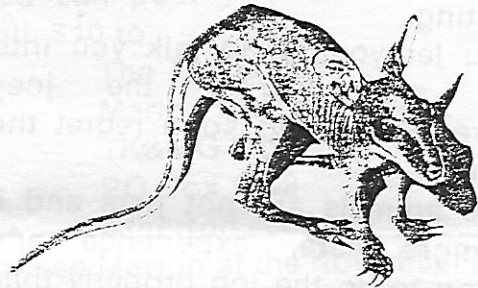
Many animals and birds can be hypothermic - that is, they are suffering from a low body temperature due to exposure or shock - and will be helped

a great deal by being placed in a box with a towel or bag to snuggle up to.

If the animal feels cold to the touch, try putting the heater on in the car.

It is always best not to try to feed the patient.

If your rescue situation is one in which you are hours away from help and the creature is hot and dehydrated, simply offer a little water.



When you've checked the pouch of a road kill and found a live joey the most common mistake well-meaning people make is to give it *milk*.

Not *knowing* that macropods are intolerant to lactose in the cow's milk (or baby formula) can have disastrous effects.

Lactose intolerance can upset the gut and cause severe diarrhoea.

Therefore, water is a much safer alternative if you feel it is urgently in need of a drink.

Small, hairless joeys are surprisingly hardy. Their most urgent requirement is warmth.

After dragging the mother's body off the side of the road, remove the joey as gently as you can.

Wrap it in a soft cloth (a T-shirt would be ideal) and nestle it close to you so it can benefit from your body warmth and it can gain some comfort.

Remember, wallabies and pademelons etc have one joey, possums and gliders etc can have twins and quolls and bandicoots can have four to eight young. Sometimes, young can be overlooked if this fact is not understood.

Experienced carers have managed to raise quite immature joeys, even

when they were brought in hairless, with their eyes firmly closed and their ears still stuck to their head, so every animal is worth trying to rescue.

However, little joeys need a lot of time and concentrated effort.

They will need to be fed throughout the night and they will also need to have their less attractive needs met, like toileting.

If you let your child talk you into keeping and rearing the joey yourselves you could soon regret the decision.

These animals are not pets and it takes more care, experience and dedication to do the job properly than most children are equipped to give.

If, on the other hand, the animal is given to a carer to raise, you are always welcome to phone and check up on the progress of "your" joey at regular intervals.



Baby birds can be quite a challenge to identify by someone without experience.

Imagine the damage that can be done when a fruit eating bird like a parrot, for example, has been mistaken for a young Kookaburra and fed a diet of meat!

It's always advisable to seek professional advice.

Some animals have very special requirements and they present many more problems in trying to raise them.

A highly specialised diet, requiring only certain rainforest leaves or fruits is one that comes to mind. Another is a bird that requires live insects.

Other animals are on a special list and are not allowed to be cared for anyone but registered carers.

Beth Stirn on Ph 4096 5926 and myself on Ph 4095 0292 are Co-ordinators for

the FNQ Wildlife Rescue group and we welcome calls from :-

- * people who have an animal they believe needs removing or rescuing,

- * a person who has rescued an injured or orphaned animal, even if the animal seems OK and it's just to talk about the situation.

- * if you'd like to become a carer or help out in some other way with the Wildlife Rescue Group.

Vet John McKenzie is usually Margit's first port of call when a wild animal has an injury which requires treatment.

Although bills for operations are usually covered by the Wildlife Rescue Inc., the majority of the various costs incurred in providing care fall to Margit and Beth.

Is there anyone who would like to organise a fundraiser to offer some much needed assistance with these costs?

What about a wildlife talk, a spotlighting evening and a BBQ tea?

Or a Star Party with binoculars and telescopes, a glass or two of your favourite poison and a knowledgeable talk on what's going on up above?

Phone Robyn if you are willing to volunteer to organise or help with any of these projects or you have some other terrific fundraising idea to suggest. Ph 40965684



Items contained in this newsletter are offered for their interest to members and do not necessarily reflect the views of the TK&MG Inc.

THE COOKTOWN MONSTER IS IT OUT THERE?

At the October meeting Tony Hastings spoke of his search for the Cooktown Black Panther at the Dowling Range in the Black Mountain area south of Cooktown. Tony invited interested members to accompany him to his study site.

Apparently there have been persistent reports of sightings of an animal which Tony suspects could be a large Tree Kangaroo with a coat colour variant.

Scott Burnett, who gave a talk at a previous meeting, mentioned that he is also interested in unidentified mammals of this nature.

Sponsorship

The February newsletter will be sent to around 300 people on the Tableland. This number will include the people who kindly responded to the Tree Kangaroo Survey. It is an expensive business compiling, photocopying and posting that many newsletters. To offset costs, would you like to pay \$5 to have your business card made into an advertisement for that issue? Please send your card to the secretary at our new PO box, number 1409, with your \$5 fee.

Thank you in anticipation of your support!

Guest speaker at the December 3rd meeting

Come along and enjoy Fredericke Kroon's presentation on the School for Field Study's Project concerning Tree Kangaroo distribution in the Peeramom and Curtain Fig area versus the Lake Eacham and Lake Barrine areas.

Membership

Have you been meaning to reregister your membership but you live such a busy life it keeps slipping your mind? Then now might be a good moment to take care of business, as it was decided at the last meeting that the newsletter will only be posted to *financial members* after this issue.

You can post your membership details with \$10 to

The Treasurer,
Marion Buchanan,
TK&MG Inc.,
PO Box 1409
Atherton 4883

or see Marion at the November meeting.



The Bramble Cay Melomys

Our guest speaker
at the next meeting -
at 7.30pm on Thursday 5th
at the Malanda Hotel -
will be Andrew Dennis who will
give us an interesting
presentation covering his studies
of the
Bramble Cay Melomys.

Readers Digest Environment Awards 1998

Olivia Whybird has entered the TK&MG Inc in the Community Category of these awards. On offer is a one-off prize for which we, as a non-profit group with an environmental project under way, are eligible.

The winning entry will receive a prize of \$15,000.

The project for which Olivia has nominated us is The Malanda Area Tree Kangaroo Survey.

This project was initiated to -

- help raise public awareness of this unique animal and,
- to target information gathering on it's distribution in the past, it's distribution today and on it's behaviours.

A survey was sent out to all of the people who lived in Malanda township or had a box number or mail service through the post office.

The pre-proposal has been accepted. Our final application was posted early in October and now we have to wait and see.

The funds will be put to good use if we are the winners of this award. \$5065 will be used to continue the survey in another area and the remaining monies will be spent on producing a glossy-paged, limited edition book.

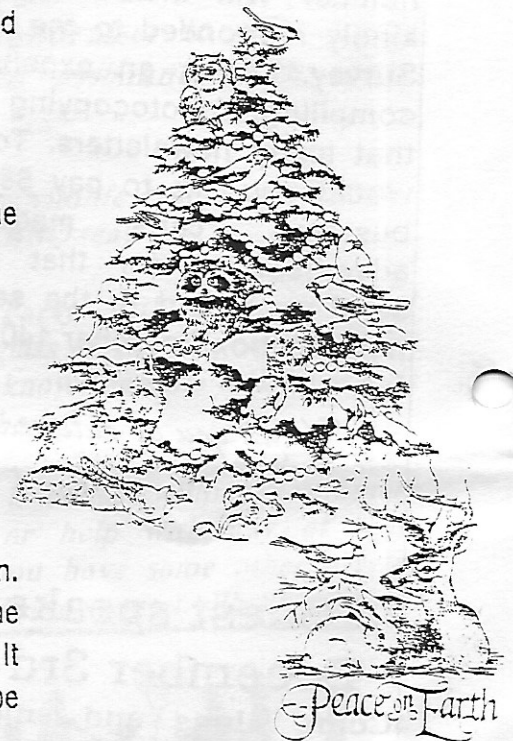
The book will cover -

- the general ecology, distribution and identification of the animals,
- anecdotes of local Tree Kangaroo encounters,
- Aboriginal legends, stories and art work of TK's,
- historical photos and
- Tree Kangaroo conservation information.

The Malanda section of the Tree Kangaroo Survey is winding down. Almost all of the people who responded have been contacted and the information is being formulated into a data base by John Prideaux. It was suggested at the October meeting that a draft copy of this be provided to Darren Storch for the World Wildlife Atlas.

A completed report will be presented to the DEH in February 1999.

Merry Christmas



Your newsletter needs your contributions. Tell us about your projects, the animals in your back yard, the birds feeding their nestlings in your trees, the animal you are caring for, a story from your childhood. Draw something, make up a cartoon, invite us to your place for a b.y.o. b.b.q. fundraiser, illustrate some animals or plants, lend us a photo of a tree kangaroo, design a letterhead, offer to post, staple, address, fold or photocopy your newsletter. It's going to be as good as you help make it, so come on, get motivated. Help please? Thank you ☺



Dr Zarszoff on his Chrissy Hols!

T.K.M.G. Inc.
 (Tree Kangaroo & Mammal Group Inc.)
Membership Application / Renewal Form
Subscription is \$10.00 p.a. per household (due 1st July)

Name:.....

Postal Address:.....

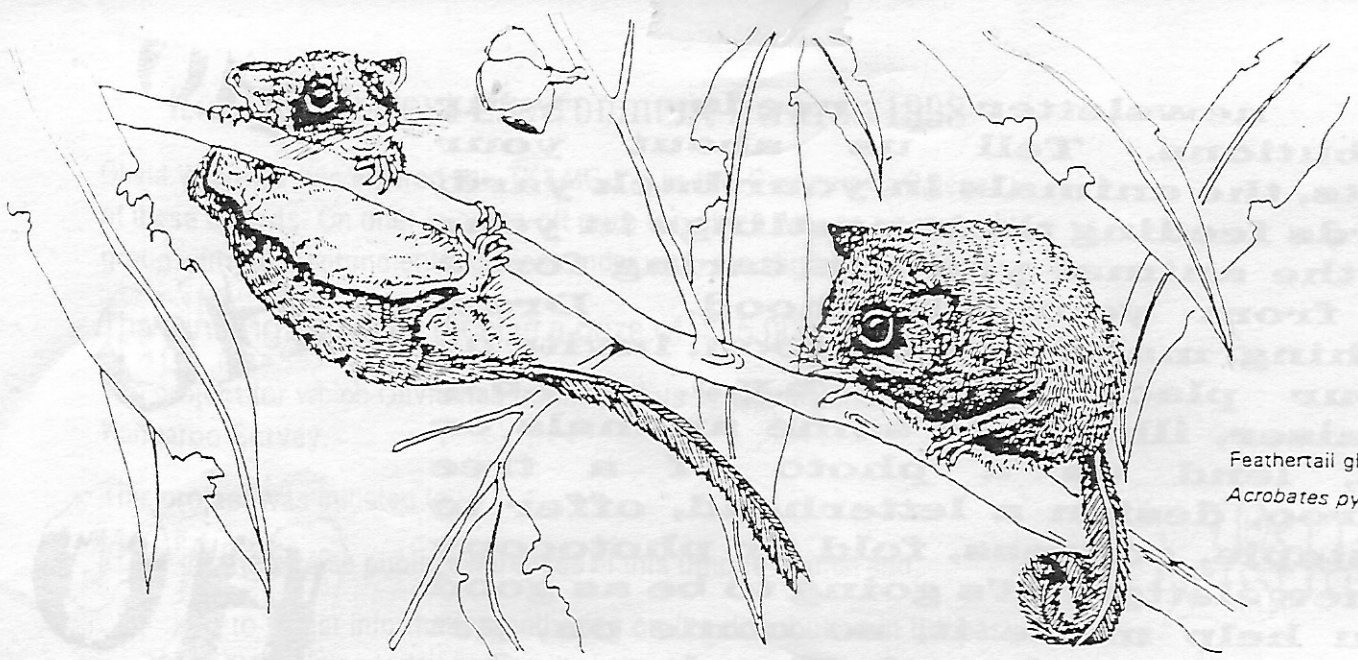
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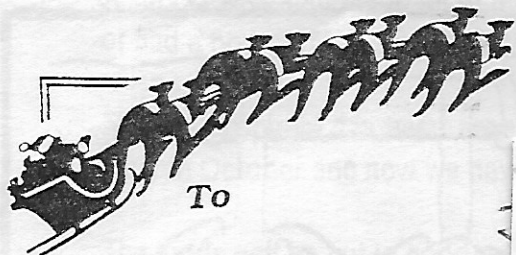
Subscription \$.....	Received by
Donation \$.....	New Member
Purchase \$.....	Renewal



Tip of the week
 When you're counting bats in a week or two, look up and say, "Ummm, bats," not "Ahhhhh, bats!"



Feathertail glider
Acrobates pygmaeus



To

Inside:-

Funding news.

Wildlife rescue information.

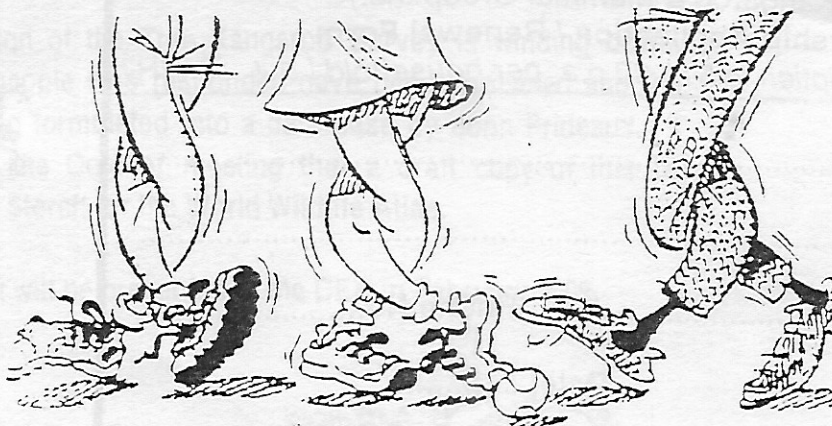
The Cooktown Monster?

Tree Kangaroos for Tarzali?

Submit your business card.

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From the Tree Kangaroo and Mammal Group Inc.



How much stress is Too much stress?