

## **The Australian Wildlife Society Over 100 years of caring for wildlife**

**Linda Dennis**

### **Who are we?**

The Australian Wildlife Society - formerly the Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia - is Australia's oldest wildlife conservation group, founded in May 1909 by David George Stead and The Hon Frederick Earle Winchcombe, among others.

Today, 107 years after our creation, AWS has a Board of Directors consisting of eleven people.

Suzanne Medway AM is our current President, Stephen Grabowski and Ken Mason are our current Vice Presidents, Patrick Medway AM is our current Secretary and CEO and Sash Denkovski is our Treasurer.

Seven highly qualified individuals sit on our Science Advisory Committee, covering a broad range of knowledge including mammalogy, palaeontology, environmental science, wildlife management and marine conservation.

And for our "on the ground" local issues we have around ten Regional Advisors, scattered throughout Australia. These people are often the face of the Society, supporting the people and wildlife where they live.

### **What do we do?**

The Society is committed to the preservation and protection of Australia's unique native fauna and flora in all its forms through environmental education programs, community involvement, political lobbying and advocacy, as well as practical hands-on wildlife conservation projects.

AWS understands the importance of protecting habitat - after all, with no good habitat for our native animals to live then the battle is already lost. In so much, AWS has played a leading part in the reservation of a long list of national parks, including the Morton National Park; Wilson's Promontory, and many islands along the Australian coastline.

We have funded and assisted many individuals and organisations working for the preservation of Australian fauna and flora, through grants, scholarships and donations.

### **Behind the scene, at a glance.**

Vincent Noel Serventy AM BSc BEd DSc

Vince, affectionately known as Vin, was a noted Australian author, ornithologist and conservationist. In 1946 he became a life member of the Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia and was for many years its President.

Over the sixty years of his environmental work in Australia and internationally, Vin worked to realise his vision of a world whose people understood that we do not own this earth, but are trustees for its future, and that we should live in harmony within nature. He has justly been called the 'father of conservation in Australia'.

Vin died in September 2007 but his legacy continues on.

#### **President - Suzanne Medway AM**

Suzanne has been a member of the Society since 1988 and has held positions of Secretary, Executive Director and Editor. Suzanne was awarded Life Membership of the Society in February 2009 for her outstanding contributions to the society.

Suzanne was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in recognition of her significant service to wildlife conservation work and her dedication to the work of the Society over many years.

#### **Vice President - Ken Mason**

Ken became a member of the Society in 2011. Ken and his family have had a lifelong interest in wildlife conservation and have travelled widely visiting many natural areas.

During his years on the AWS board, Ken strived to ensure that the Society is financially strong and commercially equipped to be able to promote and support wildlife conservation programs across Australia and university student grants for bright young people to study wildlife conservation issues.

#### **Vice President - Stephen Grabowski**

Stephen has been a member of WPSA since 2005 and in January 2016 he signed up as a life member.

Stephen is a Justice of Peace and, having a long career in finance, he is the Society's Financial Advisor, providing all aspects of financial planning.

#### **Secretary and CEO**

Patrick Medway, our secretary and CEO, joined the Society in 1985 and took Life Membership in 1988. He has been an active member serving as Honorary Secretary and Executive Director and President of the Society.

Patrick was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in 2003 for his 'Service to conservation and the environment through environmental education in a range of organisations and committees concerned with the preservation of wildlife and nature, particularly the Australian Wildlife Society'.

## **Other Directors**

Sash Denkovski (Honorary Treasurer), Noel Cislowski, Trevor Evans, Wayne Greenwood, Clive Williams and Richard Mason.

## **We stand by The Green Commandments**

The Green Commandments for sustainable development of our Planet are:

1. All people have a right to an Earth where they can live in good health and enjoy a fair quality of life.
2. No one has the right to substantially alter the natural world in a way that will damage the world's basic resources.
3. All people must conserve the present diversity of the natural world. Extinction is forever.
4. All people must plan their future so the resources they use will be sustainable – and when they use non-sustainable materials, plan for a future when these will be exhausted.
5. All people giving aid to others must be sure the help will increase the quality of life of those they assist, not forcing them into new ways of living, destroying their culture.
6. All people must use the world's common resources with regard to all other people, both now and in the future.
7. All nations must carry out their obligations under all environmental agreements. A world court should decide on serious breaches, while other pressures such as boycotts must be used when more suitable for the occasion.
8. All nations must co-operate, not only in monitoring their own environment, but also in their obligations to the rest of the world.
9. All nations must develop a sustainable population policy and adhere to it.
10. All nations and all individuals must develop a new morality, not based only on particular religions but with values of respect for the rights of all humans and also those of the natural environment.

## **The Serventy Award**

In 1997 the Council of the Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia decided to perpetuate the memory of the Serventy family - Vin, Lucy and Dominic - for their outstanding contribution to wildlife preservation in Australia by establishing the Serventy Conservation Award and Medal.

Each year, members of the public are invited to nominate individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the preservation of Australian flora and fauna which is not part of a professional career. It is given to those who labour in the conservation field for a love of nature and a determination that it should be conserved. Often these have been non-scientists who have earned their conservation skills through sheer hard work.

A beautiful crystal trophy and a cheque for \$1,500 are awarded annually. Many conservationists in the past have suffered financially for their devotion to the cause of conservation. This monetary award is a tribute to their dedication. The bronze medal is designed to be a constant reminder that the conservation movement has remembered their work in the past, just as history will remember the same achievements in the future.

To nominate an individual for the Serventy Conservation Award please visit our website at [www.australianwildlife.net.au](http://www.australianwildlife.net.au).

### **The Community Award**

The Australian Wildlife Society Community Wildlife Conservation Award is an award to a community conservation group that is making a major contribution to wildlife preservation in Australia.

Our Society is very conscious that we need to join together with other conservation groups to save and protect all native Australian wildlife populations in all its many and varied forms across Australia.

AWS wants to recognise and help these conservation groups continue with their good work on behalf of the whole community. Our Society knows that many organisations and thousands of volunteers are already working tirelessly to save our threatened species, as well as the humble and more common Australian species, and the precious wildlife habitat in which they live.

Each year, AWS will present a crystal trophy and a cash award of \$3,000 to the winning conservation group that is helping to save our precious Australian wildlife.

To nominate an organisation for our Community Award please visit our website at [www.australianwildlife.net.au](http://www.australianwildlife.net.au).

### **Grants and Scholarships**

#### **Wildlife Ecology Science Research Scholarship.**

Run by the University of Technology Sydney and funded by AWS, the Wildlife Ecology Science Research Scholarship is open to Higher Degree by Research students undertaking a research project with direct relevance to the conservation of Australian native wildlife - flora and fauna.

One candidate will be awarded the scholarship each year and the recipient will be awarded \$5,000 in total, and will receive one payment of \$2,500 each semester.

If you are a full-time PhD candidate or Masters Research Student and your project has a direct relevance to the conservation of Australian native fauna or flora, you may be eligible to apply for this scholarship. Please visit our website [www.australianwildlife.net.au](http://www.australianwildlife.net.au) for more information.

#### **University Student Grants.**

Each year AWS awards ten university research grants to honours or postgraduate students at Australian universities. Grants are available for projects with a direct relevance to the conservation of Australian wildlife, plant or animal. Each grant is \$1000.

#### **Last years grants included:**

Bianca Amato - The Contribution of native flower visitors and their hosts plants to crop pollinating on the Yorke Peninsula, South Australia.

Sarsha Gorissen - Conserving the endangered fauna of highland swamps.

David Hamilton - Contact networks and transmission of facial tumour disease in the Tasmanian devil.

### **Conservation Group Grants**

The Directors of The Australian Wildlife Society carefully consider all requests for grants from Conservation Groups that places special emphasis on wildlife and the preservation of wildlife habitat.

#### **Past recipients include:**

INSiGHT Ornithology - the wedge-tailed eagle tracking project. This is a community education project which allows people to follow the movements of Wallu, the first ever adult wedge-tailed eagle to be tracked by satellite. This exciting and pioneering study aims to shed light on aspects of these amazing eagles' biology which have never before been researched.

Wirrimbirra Wildlife Sanctuary - AWS became a Major Partner in Wirrimbirra's Country & Western in Wollondilly Concert to raise money to establish a koala enclosure. Wirrimbirra has resolved to explore the possibility of hosting koalas at Wirrimbirra Sanctuary, both as an exhibit and in the wild.

Cairns Turtle Rehabilitation Centre - AWS donated funds to purchase two water tanks that were needed to act as water storage and settlement tanks for incoming water supplies for turtle rehabilitation.

Fourth Crossing Wildlife - Linda Dennis has a passionate commitment to the rescue, rehabilitation and release of injured native animals and knows the importance of sharing knowledge within the wildlife caring community. To facilitate the teaching of other carers AWS donated funds for the teaching of Fauna First Aid courses in Victoria and NSW. Linda is also our chosen representative to the Australian Wildlife Rehabilitation Conferences and is funded accordingly.

Tolga Bat Rescue & Research Inc - On one of our members' wildlife study tours, they visited Tolga Bat Hospital and were so impressed with the volunteers and their commitment to the rescue and treatment of native injured wildlife in Queensland, we were asked to donate funds to go towards the goal of rescuing, rehabilitating and releasing bats that would otherwise die.

Australian Seabird Rescue Inc - A donation was made to purchase an endoscope for ASR's marine sea turtle hospital, which is one of only four licensed facilities in New South Wales, and the only facility on the East Coast staffed by volunteers. The volunteers have been rescuing marine sea turtles from the North Coast of New South Wales since 1998.

Please visit our website [www.australianwildlife.net.au](http://www.australianwildlife.net.au) for more information.

## **Our Projects**

Over the years AWS has been a part of and has initiated many conservation projects. Just some of our projects on the go now, include:

Save the Bilby

The Flying Fox Project The Koala Project

The Sea Turtle Project The Small Birds Project The Soils Project

The Wombat Project

The Information for Schools Project, including information sheets on: Arid Australia

Australia's Marine Environment Bandicoots

Blue Tongue Lizard Endangered Species Feeding Wildlife Great Barrier Reef Koalas

Microbats Native Wildlife Possums Quolls Reptiles

Short Necked Turtles

Donations to any of these projects can be made to the Australian Wildlife Society and we will ensure that the donations go directly to those working on these projects. Some of these organisations include;

Australian Bush Heritage Fund Australasian Wildlife Management Society Australian Koala Foundation

Australian Seabird Rescue Birds Australia Conservation Volunteers Habitat Network

Nature Conservation Council

Please visit our website [www.australianwildlife.net.au](http://www.australianwildlife.net.au) for more information.

## **Contacts**

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