

Steve's Legacy

Australia Zoo Wildlife Warriors Worldwide

The loss of Steve Irwin on the fourth of September 2006 changed not only the world but also deeply affected the people that were close to him; his staff.

Wildlife Warriors went from a tiny handful of people with Steve in the driving seat to the biggest conservation group in the world overnight. Were we prepared for it, not on your life, we had a five year plan that disappeared overnight. Wildlife Warriors was his dream; something he was so passionate about; that he lived and dreamed ways in which to help not only the environment and the animals that reside in it but also the people who lived on this planet.

The one thing that we had left and one of the biggest gifts he gave us was the imparting of his passion and dreams, endless cups of tea around the kitchen table, or him dropping in to the hospital in the early hours of the morning or into the night, Steve was always vocal about what he wanted, how he wanted to achieve it and when he wanted it done (usually yesterday).

The spontaneity of his vision, like deciding at 10am you and a team had to be on a plane to who knows where at 11am to help wildlife in trouble; was one of the hundreds of things we loved about him.



He made you feel like family.

Wildlife Warriors has grown in the past few months; we have exceeded our expectations and are keeping his dream alive, we have a number of projects on the go from a wildlife hospital in Cambodia, to saving Cheetahs in Africa and of course our own precious wildlife in Australia, like the animals caught in the Framlingham fires.

This is our opportunity to tell you where Wildlife Warriors is today.

Gail Gipp
Hospital Manager
Australian Wildlife Hospital
Australia Zoo Wildlife Warriors
Worldwide.

WILDLIFE WARRIORS OUR YEAR



The commitment to the preservation of wildlife by Steve and Terri Irwin was finally revealed on a global scale following the news of Steve's passing on September 4, 2006. It also highlighted the Irwin family's generous support of wildlife conservation through Wildlife Warriors.

A world mourned a passionate family man, a celebrity and an active conservationist – someone who will go down in history as an energetic fighter for the survival of wild things and wild places.

Wildlife Warriors has been operating quietly and without fanfare since 2002 and was only launched publicly in April 2006, with a grand plan to encourage more people to join the Irwin family and contribute to the survival of nature's innocent victims.

The passion now burns in our hearts even stronger as we strive to carry on what Steve had started.

We thank you for your generous support.



I hope that you can continue to share your love for Steve to help wildlife across the planet – this would be the greatest tribute we can make to a man who helped change our world and, more importantly, will ensure that we can build a better tomorrow.

Terri Irwin AM, Patron

Wildlife Warriors at Work

Last month Wildlife Warriors responded to an SOS call from Victorian wildlife carers who were struggling to deal with the number of koalas requiring urgent medical treatment in the aftermath of the devastating bushfires. Within 48 hours a koala rescue unit, comprising 4 staff from the Australian Wildlife Hospital, was in Victoria working

from temporary hospital facilities set up in a public hall near Framlingham Forest, an area considered to be Victoria's koala capital. The team stayed for two weeks, treating over 150 koalas in the first week alone who might otherwise have died from their injuries or starvation as a result of the loss of vegetation.

Since opening in 2004, the Australian Wildlife Hospital team has lent its expertise to wildlife emergencies in Australia and in Asia and, long term, has ambitions to expand its operations to respond to wildlife emergencies around the globe.

MEET WILDLIFE WARRIOR

He's an impressive Anatolian Shepherd dog working in Africa as part of a ground-breaking project to save cheetahs.

"Warrior" is one of several new dogs recently added to this exciting programme.

One Dog Protecting Livestock and Saving Cheetahs ...



Wildlife Warriors Worldwide has commenced a new partnership with the Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF) to help expand their innovative Anatolian Shepherd Program which is working to reduce the human – cheetah conflict in Africa.

The Problem

Cheetahs in Africa are active during the daytime and often sighted near stock by farmers. This also means that they are quite often blamed for all livestock loss which, in the past, has led to farmers poisoning, hunting and trapping cheetah.

The Solution

The Anatolian Shepherd Program provides farmers with a non-lethal method of managing predators, therefore promoting a much happier co-existence with the cheetah.

From 6 weeks of age, these impressive dogs are raised exclusively with the flock. They live, eat, sleep and travel with their herd, their job being to bark and posture to scare the predator away. To date the CCF Anatolian Shepherds have defended their flocks against baboons, jackals, caracals, cheetahs, leopards and even humans. Cheetahs are not normally aggressive, and are quick to retreat from a barking dog. With less stock being killed by predators the cheetah is protected and farmers no longer seek retaliation.

Wildlife Warriors' Involvement

The CCF program has been so successful that Wildlife Warriors Worldwide are now joining forces with De Wildt's Wild Cheetah Management Program and Cheetah Outreach to expand this project.

Save the Individual, Save the Species, Save the Habitat ...

This is the motto for the Australian Wildlife Hospital (AWH), a major initiative of Wildlife Warriors Worldwide. Now the knowledge, skills and expertise of the team at AWH is also helping to establish a Cambodian Wildlife Hospital which will care and treat animals rescued from the illegal wildlife trade.



The Problem

Illegal animal trade is one of the greatest threats to a number of endangered species in Cambodia such as the Asian Elephant and Indochinese Tiger.

The Solution

The Phnom Tamao Wildlife Rescue Centre run by Wild Aid is further developing its skills, knowledge, expertise and facilities to care for and rehabilitate animals that are rescued from illegal traders.

Wildlife Warriors' Involvement

Wildlife Warriors Worldwide is joining forces with Wild Aid to develop a three year partnership with the team at the Phnom Tamao Wildlife Rescue Centre. This partnership will involve the supply of medical equipment (one container of equipment generously donated by the Queensland-based veterinary and medical facilities valued at approximately \$750,000 has already left our shores), funding for extra veterinary staff and sharing the skills and knowledge of the team at the Australian Wildlife Hospital.

TURTLE RELEASE LEADS TO TIMELY RESCUE

On Monday 29 January 2007 Australia Zoo Wildlife Warriors on-board *Croc One* experienced first-hand the full spectrum of wildlife rehabilitation and rescue.

The Wildlife Warriors team were some five nautical miles off shore near Mooloolaba on Queensland's Sunshine Coast to release Percy, a 100-year-old green turtle who had been successfully rehabilitated after being found struggling in the shore wash at nearby Coolum Beach in early January. The 94 kilogram turtle had sustained injuries that were deemed to be life-threatening, including a lost left flipper and severe throat lacerations caused by nylon rope entangled around it. After initially being guarded about Percy's prospects of being returned to the wild, veterinary staff at the Australian Wildlife Hospital, were delighted with Percy's response to treatment and had no hesitation in returning him to familiar waters.

After an emotional farewell to Percy by his rescuer, Brian Coulter, and supervising vet, Che Phillips, a radio call was received by the *Croc One* skipper that fishermen had spotted another turtle floating nearby that appeared to be in distress.

Thus ensued another well executed wildlife rescue – all captured on film by a local TV news team - with Brian and Che and their support team bringing their new patient, quickly named Trident, safely to shore for evaluation and treatment.



The most common problem with turtles requiring treatment at the Australian Wildlife Hospital is that they are “floaters”. Coccidia, blood fluke and obstructions (pollution) in the intestines causes this, and results in a large amount of gas accumulating under the shell causing them to float.

Once weakness, dehydration, hunger and barnacles set in, the turtles get so sick that they are commonly washed ashore. Floating on the ocean surface also leaves them vulnerable to sunburn and boat strikes. The staff at the Australian Wildlife Hospital see the condition repeatedly, and their purpose-built turtle rehabilitation pool is, unfortunately, always occupied.



Wildlife Warriors Ambassador John Williamson: “Wildlife Warriors: It’s Time”

Australian Wildlife Warriors are being urged to support a major new CD dedicated to the amazing work of Steve Irwin. The CD - “**Wildlife Warriors: It’s Time**” - is a tribute to Steve by Australian singer John Williamson.

With \$1 from the sale of each CD to come to Wildlife Warriors, it’s expected it will raise tens of thousands of dollars to help the vital environmental work being done.

THE HOT TOPIC – CLIMATE CHANGE

The mission for Wildlife Warriors Worldwide is to protect wildlife and wildlife habitat, inclusive of humanity. Overriding this endeavour however is the threat of global warming which scientists predict could have a devastating effect on all of Earth’s inhabitants if it is not addressed by this generation.

The science journal *Nature* revealed between 15 and 37 per cent of terrestrial species worldwide could become extinct by 2050 if estimated levels of climate change are not reduced. Yet it is just one more of a number of existing threats to wildlife – including loss of habitat by land clearing, urbanization and pollution.

At the Australian Wildlife Hospital – a major project of Wildlife Warriors Worldwide - we are already seeing the effects of climate change. The widespread drought in Queensland has seen many emaciated koala patients admitted in recent months. By and large, koalas do not rely on water to drink, however the loss of vegetation as a result of the drought leaves them without a food source. The Climate Action Network Australia has stated that there are at least 90 species of animal in Australia at risk from climate change. In the wider world, there are many other examples of the effects of global warming on bio diversity.

Wildlife Warriors Worldwide supports the proactive reduction of carbon emissions - an issue that is presently high on our agenda. We are pursuing partnership opportunities with like-minded organizations and individuals.

It is heartening to see this issue now receiving a global push from all levels, including the upper tiers of government. The Australian federal government has recently committed \$200M to avoided deforestation. Deforestation results in greenhouse gas emissions from the burning and decay of cleared forest and woodland. It has been estimated that about

25 per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions comes from deforestation which we know is occurring to make way for agriculture, urban development and to produce timber. On the other side of the Pacific, Californian Governor, Arnold Schwarzenegger, has signaled his desire for his state to be a world leader in the effort to reduce carbon emissions – setting a target for California to achieve a 25 per cent reduction by 2020. Further, he has signed an agreement with British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, to undertake co-operative research on clean energy technologies. We applaud these initiatives and hope that other influential leaders will follow suit.

Our founder, Steve Irwin, had a vision to re-vegetate Australia. He had seen the benefits of large-scale tree planting on his own Queensland properties, including the planting of 44,000 eucalypts on one property alone. The benefits were two-fold – providing safe habitat for wildlife and improving air quality for future generations. Conversely, during the period 2000 and 2004, 1.5 million hectares of forest were cleared across Australia according to the Australian State of the Environment 2006, UN Global Forest Resources Assessment 2005. Wildlife Warriors Worldwide is on a mission to purchase additional safe habitat areas, not only within Australia but elsewhere.

We can see clear evidence that, at a very fundamental level, what is good for wildlife is also good for us. There is scope for every person to take a lead from Steve's example to make a difference – it may be as simple as planting a tree, choosing clean, green alternatives including recycling, supporting conservation organizations like Wildlife Warriors and influencing others to make a difference too.

The push to reduce carbon emissions – is it a breath of fresh air?

We invite your feedback on this topical issue. Please email us with your view and/or suggestions.

Please send your email to info@wildlifewarriors.org.au – with the subject line “Carbon reduction feedback”. We will not be in a position to send a personal reply, however all responses will be read and collated.



Live a little
on the wild side

NEW BREED WARRIORS TO PROVIDE ECOLOGICAL SERVICES

Despite the prevalence of land clearing, historically there has been little consideration given to the wildlife affected. We have found that there is a commonly-held, but mistaken, view that animals simply move “next door”, without understanding that many exist in complex, territorial communities that are influenced by the availability of a food source and a mate. Not surprisingly, the animals that already live next door do not welcome interlopers who will jeopardize their own survival. So, for the animals that

survive the first physical impact of the land clearing, the end result is ultimately still fatal, but more prolonged.

We are helping to make our co-existence with wildlife a little easier by establishing an Ecological Services Unit (ESU). The ESU team will make a real difference to conserve our wonderful Australian wildlife by working with developers, councils and government agencies to identify wildlife threatened by development and then, together, find solutions to protect them. Habitat loss due to land clearing is the reason most animal patients are admitted to the Australian Wildlife Hospital so the ESU will fill a void that presently exists in the wildlife sector.



The ESU's role begins with a preliminary evaluation and assessment of wildlife existing in an area earmarked for land clearing. Once they have been given the green light, the team then begins working on site. As highly skilled spotter/catchers, they will inspect trees and evacuate wildlife safely prior to tree felling, set traps to safely capture those animals that live underground in burrows before machines start digging and even walk ahead of bulldozers to assist the safe removal of unsuspecting wildlife from its path.



Right now the team is working in an area of south-east Queensland that is being cleared to make way for a new railway line. In just a couple of months, they have captured and relocated more than 600 animals from this area including possums, gliders, snakes and frogs. Our client, Trackstar Alliance, is setting a fantastic example to other businesses – they are acknowledging that wildlife is valuable and demonstrating that land clearing doesn't have to sound a death

knell.

ESU team member, Ben Nottidge, says the highlight of his job is “being involved in projects that are doing the right thing by wildlife – we’re capturing and relocating wildlife that would otherwise lose their food source, their homes and ultimately their lives”.

The ultimate ambition of the ESU is to set a new industry benchmark in their field that may be replicated around the world.

Our vision:

That people, wildlife and habitat survive and prosper without being detrimental to the existence of each other.

THE NEW AUSTRALIAN WILDLIFE HOSPITAL – CONSTRUCTION BEGINS

We have reached a significant milestone, with the first stage of the construction of the new Australian Wildlife Hospital commencing. With the site now pegged and the cement slab starting to be laid, we can now see the true scale of this amazing new facility, which will be the world's largest wildlife hospital and a project of international significance.



The new hospital will share its considerable expertise by offering education and training opportunities for wildlife professionals and volunteers around the globe – both here at Beerwah and via live video streaming.

A prospectus, which includes artist's impressions of the new hospital and details its environmentally-friendly construction elements, is now available for download on our web site.



OUR TEAM HOSTS FFI VISIT

In April we were delighted to welcome Mark Rose, Chief Executive Officer of Fauna and Flora International, to Wildlife Warrior Headquarters.

Mark is based in the UK and oversees FFI's many international conservation projects.

As our organization is still in its infancy, we were particularly interested to hear about how FFI was formed in 1903 - making it the longest established international conservation body in the world - and its remarkable achievements over more than a century.

In particular, Mark made reference to FFI's ongoing tiger protection and conservation project in Kerinci Seblat National Park in Sumatra, which is arguably the most successful in south-east Asia. We have worked in partnership with FFI on this project for some time. It primarily involves keeping the Tiger Conservation and Projection Units (TCPU) in operation across a vast area of some 1.5 million hectares. The project also offers practical solutions to mitigate conflict between local villagers and wildlife, and educate local villagers on environmental protection.



Very recently, the TCPU also rescued two clouded leopards that had been found in snares. One had a particularly severe injury which required sixty stitches.

The veterinary team in Sumatra attributed their ability to successfully rehabilitate the leopards to the training received from our warriors, Giles Clark and Dr Jon Hanger, who have conducted veterinary workshops at their base.

CAMBODIAN WILDLIFE HOSPITAL UPDATE

The new Cambodian Wildlife Hospital featured in our last newsletter is now fully functional with equipment donated by Wildlife Warriors and starting to receive patients. They have had eight bears arrive for treatment in the last five weeks, with another two on the way.

Our warriors also made some stretchers for the hospital and their team has forwarded us some images of them in use ([see right](#)).



AMAZING FUNDRAISING

We never cease to be amazed by the dedication and resourcefulness demonstrated by people who determine that they want to raise funds for Wildlife Warriors. The following are just three recent examples.

- Young Australian Ken Carter has set himself an enormous challenge - to compete in a 250 kilometre ultra-marathon in Mongolia's Gobi Desert in late June. Ken was inspired to compete in the race - where contestants face some of the world's most arduous conditions - by his six year old daughter, Erin. Erin is a big Steve Irwin fan so Ken decided competing in the race would be the ideal way to raise funds for our charity!
- Californian Joanne Ehrich, has published a new book, *Klassic Koalas: Ancient Aboriginal Tales in New Retellings*, by award-winning author Lee Barwood. Joanne, who has published other books under her Koala Jo brand, is sympathetic to the plight of native Australian wildlife under threat – from habitat destruction, global warming and the incursions of predators not native to Australia. Joanne is lending her support to the Australian Wildlife Hospital and has dedicated this project to the preservation of the koala and other Australian creatures under threat.

Both Ken and Joanne are donating proceeds from their projects to Wildlife Warriors Worldwide. Further details can be found on our web site.

- The employees of Mitsubishi Motors Australia (South Australia) recently made an incredible donation of \$32,000 for the Australian Wildlife Hospital. Thanks to their generous support, we re now able to purchase a back-up generator for the new hospital – an essential piece of equipment and a significant funding priority for us. Our wholehearted thanks got to the Mitsubishi Motors Employees Canteen Society for believing in our mission and investing in the long-term welfare of wildlife.

PRO SURFERS PROMOTE CONSERVATION

Warrior headquarters received a visit by three international surfing stars in March who had been attending the Quicksilver Pro event at Snapper Rocks - Rosy Hodge (an up-and-coming rookie from South Africa), Bede Durbidge (new world number two) and fellow Australian Toby Martin.



The trio was interested to learn about the work of the Wildlife Warriors team, particularly in relation to vulnerable species including koalas and green sea turtles. Surfers on the international circuit commonly cross paths with sea turtles, not only in Australia but also in Fiji and Hawaii.

Rosy, Bede and Toby were touched by the plight of Trident, a 100 kg female green sea turtle, who was suffering from an all-too-common floating condition which, for Trident, resulted in her floundering and being struck by a boat a short distance off-shore. The trio spoke with hospital staff about the likely cause of the condition, including water pollution and ingestion of plastics – particularly plastic bags left on our beaches.

The visit was filmed for inclusion in a TV series being hosted by Toby about the 2007 pro surf tour and will ultimately be shared with a worldwide viewing audience.

KHALIAH IS PROUDLY WEARING KHAKI

Our newest Ambassador, Khaliah Ali, has recently launched a new book, *Fighting Weight*, which has resulted in several television appearances across the USA. Khaliah has used this opportunity to also talk about her involvement with Wildlife Warriors – even proudly wearing her khaki shirt on one occasion!



It's great to know that our conservation message has been reaching millions of potential new warriors. Thanks Khaliah, you are a great champion for our cause!

SPOTLIGHT ON OUR SPONSORS

We are indebted to the continuing support of our sponsors.

We would like to extend special thanks to Australia Zoo's Big Cat team who have literally taken their support a few steps further by selling plaster casts of their tigers' footprints to patrons for our benefit.

We would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge Sci-Fleet Toyota. They are highlighting the need watch out for wildlife on our roads by providing every new car purchaser with a Wildlife Warrior information pack and making a donation to our charity on their behalf.

USA OFFICE NOW OPEN

We are pleased to advise our US supporters that we have recently opened an office in Eugene, Oregon. Catherine Leach has been appointed office administrator and she will be supported by our head office team in Australia.

Contact details for the US office are as follows:

Telephone:

541-687-4788

Email:

catherinel@wildlifewarriors.org

Street address:

541 Willamette Street

Suite 202

Eugene Oregon 97401

Postal address:

PO Box 11347

Eugene Oregon 97440

RESEARCH AIMS TO HELP SAVE OUR KOALAS

Wildlife Warriors Worldwide has launched a 12-month research project to investigate the migration patterns of rehabilitated koalas returned to the wild and their ability to re-establish new home ranges. The project is the brainchild of Bob Irwin (Steve's father).



Although koalas are recognised worldwide as an iconic representation of Australian wildlife, they are a species in crisis.

Zarraffa's Coffee, with 23 stores throughout Queensland and Sydney, donated an initial sum of \$5,000 to Wildlife Warriors to kick-start the project and boosted the project further by raising an additional sum in excess of \$20,000 throughout April by involving franchisees, staff and customers.

Of the hundreds of koala patients the Australian Wildlife Hospital treats each year, the main causes of harm are motor vehicle accidents, habitat destruction, domestic dog attacks and diseases triggered by nutritional stress and starvation. Bushfires are also a major threat, displayed earlier this year in Victoria after a bushfire ravaged Framlingham Forest and claimed the lives of approximately 4,500 koalas.

The biggest threats to the survival of koalas are also their only saviors – humans.

Although the reintroduction of rehabilitated koalas to the wild is relatively common practice, little post-release monitoring has been carried out and reported to determine its success in terms of their survival and dispersal.

This project is particularly significant because new data will be collected on the reintroduction of hand-raised koalas into a larger and protected habitat. Previous studies have only concentrated on the survival of koalas in areas of continuing habitat destruction and encroachment of human developments.

Staff from the Australian Wildlife Hospital, led by Senior Veterinarian Dr Jon Hanger, and an honors student from the University of Queensland are coordinating the project. Depending on the research gathered, the study may extend to a doctoral research project.

VICTORIAN BUSHFIRE EMERGENCY UPDATE

Our response team recently attended a de-brief in Melbourne following the rescue effort. In summary, the previously significant koala population at Framlingham Forest (in excess of 4,500 spread across 16,000 hectares) was almost wiped out by the bushfires, the survivors numbering only in the hundreds. Some surviving koalas were able to remain in a small fringe of the forest unaffected by the fire, while the majority underwent translocation. A small number still remain with wildlife carers until they fully recover.

We have received a letter of thanks from Denise Garratt, Director of Help for Wildlife Inc (a 24 hour emergency rescue service in Victoria) who worked alongside our team. The following is an excerpt:

“We were devastated when we arrived (at Framlingham Forest) having no idea of the holocaust which had happened and all of our team were deeply affected to see suffering on such a huge scale as was happening there.

When our crew pulled in on that particular Saturday morning, the first thing we saw were your Wildlife Warriors - there was silence in the lead vehicle which I was driving and I sat there with tears streaming down my face to see these incredible young people there. You cannot even begin to imagine how thankful we were - we all knew then at that point the koalas would be so much safer and treated with the respect they deserved. It didn't need any words as we are a tight unit but the relief and joy was palpable amongst every one of us.

They inspired all by their care, compassion, and gentleness ... their total focus was on the welfare and comfort of the wildlife and this carried through with their quiet work.

We stood in awe of these incredible young folk and knew without a doubt our wildlife does have a chance in hands such as these and the example they lead. They are our future and we salute them.”

Wildlife Warriors extends its sincere thanks to Kong's (Aust) Pty Ltd who generously donated aviaries in which several of the surviving koalas are now being housed as part of their ongoing rehabilitation.



HELP US BUILD THE WORLD'S LARGEST WILDLIFE HOSPITAL – ONE BALE AT A TIME

“Rome wasn't built in a day” and neither will the new Australian Wildlife Hospital, but it will be built! The federal government has contributed \$2.5 million; however we need to raise an extra \$2.5 million to complete it.

You can help us provide the best possible facility for the care of nature's innocent victims by buying a straw bale (just one of the “green” building elements) for \$75 which will become a part of the walls of this amazing facility.

Join us and for \$75 we can build the Australian Wildlife Hospital – one bale at a time!

Purchasing a bale is easy – just fill in your details below and post it to:

Australia Zoo Wildlife Warriors Worldwide, PO Box 29, Beerwah, Qld, 4519.

Mr / Mrs / Miss	Given Names: _____
	Surname: _____
Address: _____	
City: _____	State: _____ P/code: _____
Email address: _____	
Phone number: _____	
I am purchasing:	1 bale @ \$75 [<input type="checkbox"/>] 2 bales @ \$150 [<input type="checkbox"/>] 5 bales @ \$375 [<input type="checkbox"/>]
Please charge to my:	Visa [<input type="checkbox"/>] Mastercard [<input type="checkbox"/>] American Express [<input type="checkbox"/>]
Card number: _____ / _____ / _____ / _____	Expiry date: __ / __
Signature: _____	
OR cheque/money order enclosed – see page 4 for donation information.	

Over all Wildlife Warriors direction has not changed, we approach everything with the enthusiasm and commitment that we did before Steve's death; but now we have an added determination to *continue Steve's dream*, and ensure that we do our best to honor his memory.

Gail Gipp
Hospital Manager
Australian Wildlife Hospital
Australia Zoo Wildlife Warriors Worldwide

