

Brisbane Bat Chatter

Issue No. 8: September 2009 - November 2009

2009 Annual General Meeting



The AGM underway at Heath Park, Norman Park

Louise Saunders presented the President's report summing up another very busy bat year. Cr Helen Abrahams gave an inspirational speech and congratulated Bat Care Brisbane for our commitment and achievements. It was great to see these hard working volunteers receive an award for all the hard work and dedication in rescue and care for 2008. Bat Care Brisbane wouldn't run without you.



Louise giving thanks to Trish with the 'wet hair'

We're pleased to report that the 2009 AGM was a huge success. A great time was had by all who attended. We were honoured to have our special guest Councillor Helen Abrahams from The Gabba Ward to chair our AGM. Helen's special task was to present our awards made possible by a Brisbane City Council's Wildlife Carer Grant. The awards were fuel vouchers and gifts from Steve Parish Publishing.



Helen Abrahams pledging to 'Go Batty'!

At sunset, the meeting closed and we all headed to the bridge behind Anglican Brisbane Boys Grammar to watch the Norman Creek flying-foxes fly-out. It was a great fly out, off to do their job—making forests! When we headed back to the park, dinner was cooked and ready for us to enjoy. We sat back, relaxed and had a great time watching a slide show of Bats thanks to the efforts our own member Craig Hardy, a BCC conservation ranger.

Congratulations to those who took on a committee or team leader role for this year. We look forward to more fun and achievements!



Dates to Remember

- TRAINING-

September Sun 20th
—Orphan Training Workshop (members only)

Compulsory for those who want to raise an orphan/s

SEPTEMBER

Tues 1st - Landcare Week

www.landcareonline.com

Sun 13th - 8am, Fodder Forest working bee

Fri 18th - Flying-Fox camp monitoring in your suburb

OCTOBER

Thurs 1st - World Habitat Day

Sat 11th - Fodder Forest Working Bee

Mon 12th - Arbor Day

Sat 31st— Tree Planting at Days Rd Samford.

Sat 31st - Bat man movie in the park, Sparkes Hill.

NOVEMBER

7th— Fabulous flyout Goodwin Beach Bribie

DECEMBER

6th—Christmas Mystery Party

For more details on these and other events visit our website

www.bats.org.au

Gilbert's Diary

We've braved another winter and it's now Spring! This is my favourite time of the year as flying-fox mums start to give birth to their young. Our dedicated carers need more help this year, so if you're vaccinated PLEASE make sure you attend the compulsory 'Beds to Branches' training to raise a little one or two or three... It's such an exciting time, but can also be *claw* biting as the rescue phone rings a little too often with a report of yet another orphan needing to be rescued. It is also time for me to work those claws overtime grooming my luxurious fur coat and to spit and polish my leather jacket (wings that is) there are lot more events coming up so I need to show off my assets! Louise says I have beautiful eyes and to just stare at people so they are suckered into my beauty. When I get the chance to go to school I eyeball those kids, each and every one of them—they smell great and scream a lot, fans, where would I be without them!

I'd like to share a poem with you that one of my dedicated fans wrote to me.

*I'm Gilbert and my job's education
Helping to stop bat eradication
We've so much to give
But how will we live
If there's no habitat in this nation.*



Isn't it great! As my fan mail has been increasing, I thought I'd start an ... 'Ask Gilbert' Fan club where you can all write to me and ask questions about me .. Like how come I'm so handsome? Cough or about my cousin flying-foxes or microbats and I will answer them in the newsletter and send you a personal letter! I'm looking forward to your questions!

Email to: 'Ask Gilbert' - newsletter@bats.org.au or P.O.Box 1727, Capalaba QLD 4157 with a return address
So it's bye from Gilbert for now. So do what I do hang on and hang loose!



Bat Care Brisbane - Member Profile - Trish Goodwin



Q - Were you always interested in wildlife?

A - I was brought up in Toowoomba and the folks had a very large backyard. The veggie garden was huge, but I remember from the earliest age, the ducks, chooks and Dad's aviaries with so many varieties of finches. When we'd visit Uncle Arthur and Aunt Myrtle at the farm, I'd usually come home with a couple of problem chickens and ducklings that I would treat with enough TLC that they would survive and then increase egg production to the point where it became a full time effort giving eggs away. Not only a chook rehabber at seven years of age, the neighbours started bringing injured birds to me to "fix" and that affinity with animals has been with me ever since.

Q - Would you call yourself an animal person?

A - I've encountered some not so nice people in my time, but a lot of very nice animals. So, yes.

Q - How did you become involved with bats?

A - I'd been caring for native birds for a number of years and have become known as the "bird lady" in the street. Then a couple of years back I was reading an article in the 'Bayside Bulletin' about flying-fox starvation, written by, guess who?...Louise Saunders! I phoned and asked what's involved. She invited me around and explained a few things and took me out the back to meet Gilbert. How clever of her. Instant bat addiction. So I jumped in the deep end and have been there ever since.

Q - What's your role as a carer?

A - The lot. Rescues, rehab and as a special treat, orphans. Also I do events and host the craft workshops at home. A lot of fun. I also shed and share a lot of tears.

Q - What is 'Belfry Manor'?

A - Before I committed to BCB I asked my husband if he would support me. After his eyes stopped rolling he said yes. This was a little while before my birthday, and I'd asked him about an aviary for bats. He came home from work on the Saturday and was busy being secretive downstairs. The next day he gave me a birthday present. A scale model of the bat aviary he would build me!

Halfway through building, the name 'Belfry Manor' somehow crystallised. We didn't have a Belfry so he built one. I don't suppose many people can actually lay claim to having bats in their Belfry.



'Belfry Manor' and the original model in the foreground

Regardless, my husband and I have both gone batty.

Presidents Report

Well I'm back in as president for BCB again so thanks to everyone for your wonderful support. Thanks to my support team too check out page 8 to see who they are and how to contact them. We do have a really wonderful team of volunteers. We have a lot of fun together, so many members are now best friends and we can laugh and chat about the crazy world of bat care (and cry sometimes too). I have the door wide open for communication, I am always open to ideas and suggestions if you need to discuss anything. I'm proud of all our volunteers—we are attracting wonderful young intelligent and compassionate people, people who care about helping with our aims and progressing BCB as a dynamic organization. Plenty of things you can do to help.

Keep an eye on the web site and subscribe to posts so you stay in touch. Hope to see you soon at Orphan Training and also at our Christmas Party, love our get togethers!

Keep being and feeling batty—yours truly Louise

CHRISTMAS PARTY

**6th December - 11.30am
onwards**

**Lock in the date and we will tell
you more soon!**

FUNDRAISER CHOCOLATES

Some members have a sweet tooth when it comes to our fundraiser chocolates!

They are not as hard to sell as you might think. Download the 'Bats Matter' poster

off our web site to put with the box and you help to educate at the same time.

The money raised from the sale of chocolates goes to our orphan crèche and release – so the more money we raise from chocolates the . Don't rely on other members to support your

orphans, order a box today—EMAIL

fundraiser@bats.org.au

You can have a mixed box or full box of *Freddo Frogs*, *Picnic bars*, *Time Out*, *Honey Nougat*, *Summer Rolls*, *Carmelo Koalas*, *Boost bars*, *cherry ripe* and other favourites. There are 48 bars to a box, \$1.20 per chocolate.



“BAT MAX”

Thanks to the success of another Brisbane City Council Wildlife Carer Funding grant, a team of BCB members have been hard at work making “bat maxes”. This is to help assist our carers provide a safe and bat friendly environment for their orphans or rehabs.

- **What is a BatMax?**

A BatMax is an enclosure made of prawn trawler netting pulled tight over a frame, has an access door, is transportable and demountable when not in use. It is snake proof ONLY if placed on level and firm ground.

- **What can I use it for?**

The BatMax can be used for orphans once they start to fly and for protected sunshine times, also for the rehab of adults.

- **Where can I put it?**

We hope they will go undercover but have access to morning or filtered sunshine. Preferably on a balcony,

Who can get one?

The BatMax enclosures will remain assets of BCB and available via a loan system to full rescue /care members – to those doing rehab and orphans. If you are interested in loaning a BatMax, let us know at the orphan training session. Or email—

vicepredent@bats.org.au



Bat Care Brisbane Events

Kids Day Out



Sue with Gilbert giving a talk to the Kids day out visitors



Gilbert's friend 'Batman Jnr' paid us a visit and gave us a glimpse of his impressive wings

What a *funtastic* day! The 'Kids Day Out' at Mt Coot-tha Botanic Gardens is an event Bat Care Brisbane looks forward to every year. Our stall is always a huge success and this year was no exception. Thousands of kids and their parents turned up to make crafts, paint, play, learn, sing and dance to the music. Naturally Gilbert was a star attraction and we were swamped with people all day with questions, stories and interest in our merchandise.

We gave out free batty showbags which were an absolute hit, with people asking around 'where can we get our own 'Bat' bag?'. We also had many special guest appearances visit our stall such as Sugar Blossom Fairy, Spiderman, a bumble bee, a Gumnut kid and even Batman himself! Seven dedicated members turned up from a far to lend a hand and it was great to meet other members and share our 'batty' experiences.

We were all very impressed with Gilbert as he was working hard to impress the public all day. So hard in fact, that he slept all the way home! Not much company for a change I must say. Make sure you don't miss out on one of our fun days out, help out when ever you can and hope to see you there next year!



A happy customer showing off her new 'bat' beanie hand crafted by our talented member Trish

Indigi Day Out



Monique 'hanging out' at Indigiscapes dazzling the visitors

We had two great sunny days for the Indigiscapes weekend. Many thanks to those who volunteered their time. Without your support, we would not be able to attend these events.

A special thankyou to Sheree for her help on the Friday with the setting up.

Monique was brilliant on both days, but she worked so hard that she looked a little thinner on the Sunday. She was very popular, even more so than the koala at the next stall ;o)

People just wanted to know more about our magnificent winged friends. It was a very positive weekend for education.

Thanks to Denise for supervising us (Dot and Trish) with the packing up on Sunday. We always need someone to keep us in line!!

Once again, thanks to all , it was a very successful event.



Sue and Dot - Not put off by Monique stealing the show.



Dot McGilvray and Trish Goodwin

B 1 & B 2

Our Members Show True Dedication

Two of our members made a trip down to Nowra, NSW to attend the Flying-fox Information Conservation Network Conference. It became an interest to the local newspapers and Ro and Sue (top right picture) even had their picture taken!

Fans gather to save the bats

Story: Frances Rand
Photo: Narelle Kemp

A conference on flying foxes attracted 50 delegates to Nowra last weekend.

Members of the Flying Fox Information Conservation Network travelled from as far away as Queensland and the Far South Coast to discuss issues such as rehabilitation, diseases and heat stress.

Nowra delegate and bat carer Gerry Hawkins said the biennial conferences are normally held in Queensland or northern NSW where most of the delegates live.

Ms Hawkins was working at Batworld in Texas when she was given the job of organising the Nowra conference.

"We'd been whingeing for so long to have it here, and with the bushfires in Victoria where we lost so many bats, they decided to move the conference to this neck of the woods."

Ms Hawkins had told FFICN members that the Shoalhaven was a nice place with lots of bat colonies and to prove her point, 90 per cent of the state's flying foxes have taken up residence around Termeil.

At the conference researchers, rehabilitators and students presented papers and fielded questions on their pet topic.

"There was a lot on heat stress in colonies – we're losing thousands of bats every year – in one day we lost 1000 bats," said Ms Hawkins.

"Councils are allowing clearing up to the edge of colonies and their temperatures are getting hotter."

"One of the speakers estimated that there would be no grey-headed flying foxes left in 120 years."

"Bats are a key species, they seed eucalypt forests and without them there would be no koalas, no birds, no possums and no forest," said Ms Hawkins.

- SOUTH COAST REGISTER - Wednesday, August 5, 2009 - 21

Visitors fly in for fox facts

IT was a batty bunch that met on Sunday for a conference on flying foxes that attracted 50 delegates to Nowra.

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Nowra delegate Gerry Hawkins said that bats are a key species, as they seed eucalypt forests.



BAT BUDDIES: Steve Amesbury from Tapitallee was the master of ceremonies and Gerry Hawkins of Nowra Hill was the conference organiser. Gerry is also the flying fox co-ordinator for the Native Animal Network Assoc. (NANA).



VISITORS: Sue Rixon and Rosemarie Neve both travelled from Brisbane for the conference.

- The Shoalhaven and Nowra News, Thursday, August 6, 2009 - 5

The **Flying-fox Information Conservation Network (FFICN)** is a loosely knit, informal group of individuals with a common interest in the welfare of Australian flying-foxes. It is NOT a carer group. The aims of the group are:

- To collect and analyze information to improve the care and rehabilitation of flying-foxes
- To educate wildlife carers and the public about flying foxes
- To disseminate information relating to flying-foxes within the scientific and conservation communities
- To encourage the protection of flying-foxes and their environment

The principal criteria for acceptance into the group is active experienced participation in activities or research that further the well-being, rehabilitation, and conservation of flying foxes.

Join now!

Sally's Surprise

From the FFICN conference— A play in three acts. Written by Lib Ruytenberg

Main Characters: D'Argo, a mature, once orphaned male p.alecto; Velma, a sub-adult female p.poliocephalus. Sally, a bat carer and miscellaneous flying-foxes in the background doing what flying-foxes normally do.

Act 1

Scene: A flowering eucalypt on the outskirts of Bellingen. A few flying foxes chat amongst themselves as they feed.

D'Argo (to no-one in particular): "All that rain has thinned out the food supply somewhat. Sigh. I wouldn't mind a nice easy feed of fruit, like the feeds I used to get when humans looked after me".

Velma (feeding in a branch nearby and rotates one ear to tune into D'Argo's mutterings): "I think I know where we can get some of that".

D'Argo (greatly surprised): "Really? Can you take me there"?

Velma: "I think so. It was a long time ago and I was only there for a short time, but there is a human who puts on a good bat buffet every night. I might just be able to find my way back there".

D'Argo: "What are we waiting for? I'll follow you! I reckon my nose might help us locate that fruit buffet".

There is a gentle whoosh as Velma leads D'Argo into the night sky.

Act 2

Scene: Sally's flying-fox aviary. Sally has finished her usual evening routine of medicating and tending the wounds of the injured bats in her care and is putting the fruit up for their nightly feed. The almost imperceptible sound of bat's wings, whoom, whoom as Velma and D'Argo land in the tree overhanging the aviary.

Velma: "This is it! And there she is, Sally, the one I was telling you about".

D'Argo: "Well done. Next time one of my smart alecto mates tries to tell me poliocephaluses aren't very clever, I'll tell him it ain't so".

Velma: "OK, smart electro, what do you suggest we do now. Looks like the fruit buffet is on the inside of the cage. How are we gonna get some of that"?

One of the rehab bats (has overheard and calls out): "Make your presence known and look pathetic. Maybe she'll put some on the outside".

D'Argo: "Come on Velma, we have to suck our tummies in, look famished and despondent, press ourselves against the outside of the cage & hope she gets the message".

Thunk. Thunk. D'Argo and Velma land on the aviary, presenting a suitably pathetic appearance and wait for Sally to notice them.

Sally: "What tha....! Oi, a pair of freeloaders! Hmmm. Maybe you'd like some of this tucker"?

Sally places container of fruit on the outside of aviary.

D'Argo: "I could weep with joy".

Sally watches in amazement as the pair tuck into the fruit.

Act 3

Scene: Three nights later. Sally's flying fox aviary. Sally is prepared with towels to nab these freeloaders and pounces on D'Argo.

Sally: "Gotcha my little one, now let me check your band".

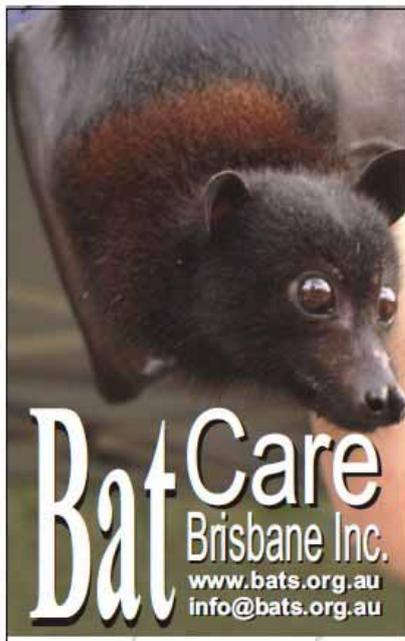
D'Argo: "Must I endure this? It's 98311 for goodness sake. Can't you just let me get back to the fruit? Fly away Velma. Fly away".

Velma: (her cheeks are so puffed out & full of fruit, she's barely audible): "Are you kidding? This is pear, grapes, apple and rockmelon.. I'm not leaving just yet". (Sally has dealt with D'Argo and has now successfully grabbed

The Story Behind the Play

WIRES mid north coast has had a visitor in the form of a male Black flying-fox who has been calling in to a carer's home cage in Bellingen. Sally had noted the bat landing on the outside of her rehab cage in company with a smaller grey-headed female.. Thinking they may be hungry, she started putting a small (so not to effect their natural foraging) dish of fruit and protein supplement on the outside of the cage when she fed her rehab bats on the inside. Both returned for several nights and she eventually grabbed them with towels to read their band numbers. Both were fiercely resentful of the handling and disturbance to their meal; both seemed to be in excellent health and were released as soon as their bands were read.

The grey-headed female (Velma) was one of our orphan releases this season and the Black male (D'Argo) was one of last year's crew. They were released a year apart from the cage on the far side of Bellingen from where the carer lives and, while the grey had been in Sally's care for stabilizing before going to a long term carer, the Black had never been in her care. - Lib Ruytenberg



Our great & wonderful Gilbert features on a new bookmark coming out next week. Our new bookmark will also feature the WPSQ Batty Boat Cruises.

Letter to the Editor

On my Garage Sale expedition this morning, I came across this banana tree with a white bag covering the developing fruit. It was in the backyard of a house in Ashgrove. I congratulated the owners on their 'bat friendly' approach to fruit tree growing. The bag is the type used for small quantities of landscaping products and bulk fruit and vegetables. It is tied at the top of the fruit but left open at the bottom. The perplexed looks on the homeowners' faces led to a conversation on the subject, when they requested that I "please explain". It seems that to date, they have considered bush turkeys, possums and bats to be pests. The dad is a retired grower - however he was friendly and receptive.

When I spotted a paw-paw tree, I suggested that they could also consider 'sharing their produce' with the wild life, as I do. I bring paw-paws inside the house to ripen. I pick the ones I want before they are ripe and leave the rest. If I find partially eaten fruit, I leave it on the tree and it gets demolished in the next few nights. I then suggested that they could even consider growing some trees for wildlife only. The look on their faces suggested that they thought I was 'nuts'.

I requested permission to take the photo and of course, left some brochures.

- Nanette Kempel



Editor:
Thanks Nanette let's hope more people use bat friendly deterrents on their fruit trees this year!



Flying Fox Fudge Slice

- 6oz butter
- 1 cup plain flour
- 1 cup cornflakes or Weetbix crushed
- 1 cup coconut
- ½ cup caster sugar
- 2 Tablespoons Cocoa
- 1 teaspoon Baking Powder
- ½ teaspoon vanilla essence
- Melt butter.
- Add all ingredients and mix well. Press into a flat sponge/slice tin.
- Bake 20 – 25 minutes at 160oC fan forced. Let cool.
- Ice with chocolate icing and your favourite topping.



Did You Know?

When Bats leave a cave they always turn left.

WELCOME



Donna Edwards

Kym Spathonis

Kat Gawlik

Caitlin Molyneux

Emily Burgess

Lyndal Cairns

Welcome to our new members we hope you go batty very quickly!

Donations



The following people have made kind donations to Bat Care Brisbane Inc.

Jennie Bi Blasi

David & Elke Lennard

Sponsorships

Donations help our education bats go out to entertain the public and also help raise orphaned babies.

Thanks to:-

Theodora Chan

Roz & Jess

If you would like to make a donation either send a cheque to PO Box 1727 Capalaba 4157 or contact our treasurer for internet banking to treasure@bats.org.au

BATTY BOAT CRUISES 2009

2009 November 1st Sunday

2009 November 22nd Sunday

2009 December 6th Sunday

Organize a Batty Boat Cruise with your family and friends, learn about the river and our bats.



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