

ANNUAL REVIEW
2022-2023

HEALING *the* WILD



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Taronga acknowledges and pays respect to Country on which we stand. We Acknowledge Country is and always will be Aboriginal land and honour the environments of the Cammeraigal and Wiradjuri people where we are able to conserve, learn and teach others about sustaining futures for wildlife and people.

Taronga shares a commitment to listen and learn from First Nations Peoples to deepen our appreciation and understanding of the environment, with this knowledge we can provide best welfare for the animals we care for. Conservation requires respecting a species' past, present and future in order to sustain populations, and the animals at Taronga are here to teach us this through their strength, resilience and diversity. At Taronga, we strive to understand the history and journey of the species we are so passionate about and to share this knowledge and understanding with others.

As a zookeeper, I'm appreciative of the opportunities to learn about the lesson of Lore from First Nations People that deepens my connection to the environment which I am now a part of.

Taronga is committed to understanding the land and the importance of consultation with Traditional Custodians as we care for the animals that now, and in future, share the land too. As Taronga continues to grow and build relationships with past, present and emerging Cammeraigal and Wiradjuri Elders, we will, as an organisation, work towards a stronger Commitment to Country.

Penned by Christina Nicolas (Elephant Keeper at Taronga Western Plains Zoo, Dubbo), with knowledge shared from Wiradjuri Elder Aunty Yvonne Hill.



WIRADJURI MAN, ROD PENRITH
ON WOLGALU COUNTRY
FOR THE GYAK PROJECT:
CORROBOREE FROG CONSERVATION
PHOTO BY HARRY VINCENT

SECURING A SHARED FUTURE *for* WILDLIFE AND PEOPLE

At Taronga we believe that together we can find a better and more sustainable way for wildlife and people to share this planet.

Taronga recognises that the planet's biodiversity and ecosystems are the life support systems for the health and prosperity of all species including our own. At no time in history has this been more evident and urgent, with drought, bushfires, climate change, global pandemics, habitat destruction, ocean acidification and many other crises threatening natural systems and our own future.

Whilst we cannot tackle these challenges alone, Taronga is acting now and working to save species, sustain and rebuild ecosystems, provide experiences and create learning opportunities so that we act together. We believe that we all have a responsibility to protect the world's precious wildlife and take on new ways of living that have a positive impact on the planet. Not just for us in our lifetimes, but for generations into the future. Our Zoos create experiences that delight and inspire lasting connections between wildlife and people. We aim to create conservation advocates that value wildlife, speak up for nature and take action to help create a future where both people and wildlife thrive.

Our conservation breeding programs for threatened and priority wildlife help a myriad of species, with our program for 11 Legacy Species representing an increased commitment to six Australian and five Sumatran species at risk of extinction. In the last 12 months alone, Taronga has played a leading role in 23 state and national recovery programs and partnered with 22 organisations working on the front line of conservation across 14 countries.



SENIOR VETERINARIAN
DR. LARRY VOGELNEST
WITH KOALA, 'BAXTER',
AT TARONGA WILDLIFE
HOSPITAL, SYDNEY
PHOTO BY TIM BAUER

Overview

Taronga Conservation Society Australia (Taronga) operates Taronga Zoo in Sydney and Taronga Western Plains Zoo in Dubbo. Taronga is a leader in the fields of conservation, research, education and environmental sustainability, working across NSW, Australia and the globe. Taronga is constituted under the Zoological Parks Board Act 1973 as a statutory authority owned by the people of NSW and administered by the Minister for Environment and Climate Change. Amended legislation in 1992 defined Taronga's responsibilities in education, conservation, research and recreation (see Appendix 1). A minor amendment to the Act was undertaken in 2008 to formally recognise Taronga Conservation Society Australia as the official name, to better describe the work of the organisation.

A letter to the Minister

The Hon. Penny Sharpe MLC

Minister for Climate Change, Energy, Environment and Heritage
Parliament House
6 Macquarie St
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Minister,

It is with great pleasure that we present the 50th Annual Report of the Taronga Conservation Society Australia, which includes the statement of accounts, for your presentation to the NSW Parliament. This report covers in full the Taronga Conservation Society Australia's activities for the year ended 30 June 2023 in accordance with Sections 20 and 37 of the Zoological Parks Board Act 1973 (NSW) (as amended) and the Annual Report Statutory Bodies Act 1984 (NSW) (as amended).

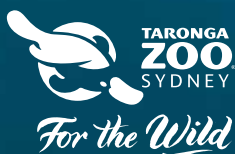
Yours sincerely,



Penny Bingham-Hall
Chair



Cameron Kerr AO
Chief Executive Officer



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PO Box 20, Mosman NSW 2088
Tel: 02 9969 2777 | Fax: 02 9969 7515
Open 9.30am – 5.00pm (Sep – Apr)
Open 9.30am – 4.30pm (May – Aug)
taronga.org.au



Obley Rd, Dubbo NSW 2830
PO Box 831 Dubbo NSW 2830
Tel: 02 6881 1400 | Fax: 02 6884 1722
Open: 9.00am – 4.00pm
Open 8.30am – 5.00pm (during school holidays)
taronga.org.au/dubbo

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GREEN TURTLE '7HOOKS'
RELEASED INTO THE WILD
WITH TRACKER
PHOTO BY HARRY VINCENT

CHAIR'S REPORT

As Taronga enters its 107th year, it has been a privilege to watch Taronga continue to move boldly forward, embracing new ideas and opportunities to benefit wildlife and our planet, while retaining at its core, a unique and visionary mindset that has created lasting connections with people and wildlife for more than a century.

The past 12 months have seen Taronga continue to recover and return to business as usual after the significant impact of the pandemic. International guest visitation has increased steadily and our local and interstate Australian guests remained highly engaged with our experiences across both Taronga Zoo in Sydney and Taronga Western Plains Zoo in Dubbo.

These results put us in a good position to grow our conservation science work and is testament to some amazing new guest experiences on offer, from the new Wildlife Hospital at Taronga Western Plains Zoo to Nura Diya Australia at Taronga Zoo in Sydney.

As Taronga continues to make strides in its strategic pillar 'Commitment to Country', I felt humbled to stand alongside my colleagues, representatives from the Taronga Aboriginal Advisory Group, Cammeraiagal, First Nations artists and Minister Penny Sharpe MLC as we listened to three Indigenous students from Taronga's Schools Based Apprenticeship and Traineeships program acknowledge Country at the opening of Nura Diya Australia.

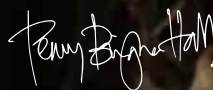
These three intelligent and articulate young women and their fellow trainees give me such hope for the future and I'm proud to lead an organisation that recognises and champions the importance of empowering Indigenous people and communities.

Taronga continues to be a leader in the environmental space. This year, Taronga Zoo and Taronga Western Plains Zoo became powered by 100 per cent renewable electricity. This landmark switch was made seven years ahead of Taronga's sustainability target, which was to be powered by renewable electricity before 2030. It means that every year from now on, approximately 7,000 tonnes of CO² are no longer being released into the atmosphere.

The year was not without its challenges. The identification and subsequent remediation of underpayments to some casual staff, and the temporary breach of five lions from their habitat tested us, however our organisation came together to respond decisively and with integrity.

I am very grateful to have been given the opportunity to Chair this inspiring organisation and it has been a privilege to be on the Taronga Board for over 10 years. I am proud not only of all that Taronga has achieved but also of how the teams responded in adverse situations – a true reflection of the fabric of this special organisation.

A heartfelt thank you to our Board members for their valued support, to the Environment Ministers that have supported Taronga and of course to the staff, volunteers, students and Taronga community at large. Taronga would not be what it is today without all of you.



Penny Bingham-Hall
Chair

TARONGA BOARD CHAIR
PENNY BINGHAM-HALL
WITH 'SKY' THE KOALA



OUR BOARD



THE BOARD OF TARONGA CONSERVATION SOCIETY AUSTRALIA (LEFT – RIGHT)
BACK ROW: SARAH NORGATE, MICHAEL HERRING, KRISTIN STUBBINS AM.
MIDDLE ROW: JOE DAVID, JENNIFER COWLEY OAM, MURRAY WOOD.
FRONT ROW: PENNY BINGHAM-HALL, CATHERINE HARRIS AO PSM.
NOT PICTURED: LAURA BERRY, IAN ROTH PSM

Section 6 of the Zoological Parks Board Act 1973 (NSW) stipulates the criteria under which the members are appointed to the Board. The Board met six times during the year and the number of available meetings attended by each member is shown in brackets.

Ms Penny Bingham-Hall (6/6)

BA (Ind.Des), FAICD, SF(Fin)

Ministerial Appointee. Chair of the Taronga Conservation Society Australia Board. Member of the Performance, Audit, Risk and Safety Committee. Ms Bingham-Hall is a Non-executive director of Dexu Property Group, Fortescue Metals Group and Supply Nation. She also chairs Vocus Group and the Advisory Committee of the Climate Governance Initiative, Australia and is Deputy Chair of the Crescent Foundation. Ms Bingham-Hall has extensive experience in the building, construction and property industries and has been a vocal advocate for sustainability, workplace safety and ESG issues for more than a decade. She also spent 10 years as a Director and Deputy Chair of the Tourism and Transport Forum. A member since 2 September 2013. Reappointed 2 August 2021. Term expires 31 December 2023.

Ms Kristin Stubbins AM (5/6)

BComm, BA, FCA

Ministerial Appointee. Deputy Chair and Chair of the Performance, Audit, Risk and Safety Committee. Ms Stubbins is an Executive Board member and Strategy & Transformation Leader for PwC Australia. She has previously held the roles of Acting Chief Executive Officer and Assurance Leader for the firm, as well as acting as the lead auditor for some of PwC Australia's largest audit clients. She has a passion for innovation and bringing together diverse groups of people to effect change. In 2023, Ms Stubbins was appointed as a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) for significant services to the financial sector, women and the community. Ms Stubbins was named as one of the Australian Financial Review's '100 Women of Influence' in 2019, having been nominated in the innovation category. She is a Board Member of Mindgardens (an innovative mental health alliance) and works with a group of senior female business leaders seeking to empower women in developing nations through education. Appointed 1 July 2021. Term expires 30 June 2024.

Ms Laura Berry (6/6)

GradCert, MAICD

Ministerial Appointee. Chair of the Community Engagement and Sustainability Committee. Ms Berry's career has spanned both private and public sectors over two decades, most recently as the CEO of Indigenous business organisation, Supply Nation where between 2015 and 2022 she led the organisation through a significant period of growth. Ms Berry has extensive experience across stakeholder management, risk

mitigation and reputation management and working with Indigenous business and procurement. She is a founding director of the Global Supplier Diversity Alliance, and in 2018, Ms Berry was announced as one of the Australian Financial Review's '100 Women of Influence'. During 2020 she served as a Commissioner for the Prime Minister's National COVID-19 Commission. Laura is an advisory board member of Uniq You and a member of Chief Executive Women. Appointed 26 April 2022. Term expires 31 December 2025.

Ms Jennifer Cowley OAM (6/6)

BA, Dip.Soc.Sci, Dip.Man

Nominated by an organisation involved in providing financial or other support to Taronga Western Plains Zoo. Member of the Wildlife Conservation Committee and Community Engagement and Sustainability Committee. Ms Cowley has built a career in regional media and community development over many years – she is a journalist, editor and published author of a number of non-fiction and children's books. She has significant experience working with at-risk youth, in the mental health, loss and grief spaces and has been involved with a number of humanitarian projects in Australia and around the world. She has also worked extensively with the remote Aboriginal communities of Central Australia and Western NSW. She is a devoted advocate for regional Australia, its communities and people. In 2019, Ms Cowley was awarded the Order of Australia Medal (OAM) for her services to regional communities through a range of organisations. Appointed 26 April 2022. Term expires 30 June 2025.

Mr Joe David (6/6)

Dip Law

Nominated by an organisation involved in providing financial or other support to Taronga Zoo and representing Taronga's volunteer community. Member of the Performance, Audit, Risk and Safety Committee and Wildlife Conservation Committee. Mr David is a Special Counsel in the Property and Real Estate practice group of national law firm Corrs Chambers Westgarth. This role follows on from an extensive career in law, in private practice at other national and international law firms. He has also represented many of Australia's leading property developers. Mr David was named in the 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023 editions of Best Lawyers in Australia in Real Estate. He has been an active volunteer at Taronga Zoo since 2017. Appointed 6 June 2022. Term expires 30 June 2025.

Ms Catherine Harris AO PSM (6/6)

B. Com, Hon.DBus

Ministerial Appointee. Member of the Wildlife Conservation Committee and Community Engagement and Sustainability Committee. Ms Catherine Harris is Chairperson of Harris Farm Markets Pty Ltd. She is on the Board of The Australian School of Business UNSW and GreenCollar Pty Ltd. Until recently, Ms Harris was the Consul General for Bhutan and served as a Board Member of the Australian Ballet. Previous roles have included Federal Director of Affirmative Action and Deputy Chancellor of the University of New South Wales, NRL Commissioner, Trustee of the Sydney Cricket Ground Trust, the Australian Defence Force Academy, the National Gallery of Australia, Museum of Contemporary Art, the Sports Australia Hall of Fame and Chairperson of the Australia Japan Foundation. Ms Harris is an Officer in the Order of Australia and was awarded the Australian Public Service Medal, the Centenary Medal and has an Honorary Doctorate in Business from the University of New South Wales. Appointed 6 June 2022. Term expires 31 December 2025.

Mr Michael Herring (2/2)

B Comm LLM

Ministerial Appointee. Member of the Performance, Audit, Risk and Safety Committee. Mr Herring spent 17 years as an Executive Director of Macquarie Group Limited, 12 years as Group General Counsel and five years as an investment banker with Macquarie Capital. Prior to his role at Macquarie Group, Mr Herring was a corporate partner and a managing partner at King & Wood Mallesons for over 16 years. He is a Director of ASX listed Region Group Limited. Mr Herring has also been a Director and Chairman of The Skin Hospital and a Director of Osteoporosis Australia Limited. Appointed 1 January 2023. Term expires on 31 December 2026.

Ms Sarah Norgate (5/5)

BA LLM (UNSW); GradDip Applied Corporate Governance (GIA)

Representing Mosman Council. Member of the Performance, Audit, Risk and Safety Committee. Ms Norgate has been practising as a commercial and property lawyer in Sydney for many years. She currently manages the in-house legal team at Metcash, Australia's leading wholesale distribution and marketing company supporting food, liquor and hardware independent businesses. Ms Norgate regularly advises on risk and compliance issues, mergers and acquisitions, tendering, contracting, property development and disputes and litigation. Appointed 19 July 2022. Term expires 30 June 2024.

Dr Ian Roth PSM (6/6)

BVSc, MANZCVs, GAICD

Ministerial Appointee. Chair of the Wildlife Conservation Committee and member of the Community Engagement and Sustainability Committee. Director on the Board of RSPCA NSW, life member of the Australian and New Zealand College of Veterinary Scientists, member of the Australian Veterinary Association, member of the Australian Veterinary Conservation Biology group and a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. Until January 2016, Dr Roth was the NSW Chief Veterinary Officer, Director of the Animal Welfare Unit within NSW Department of Primary Industries and a Director of Wildlife Health Australia. He has worked in the areas of animal health and animal welfare for more than 40 years and was honoured in the 2016 Australia Day Awards with a Public Service Medal "for outstanding public service to veterinary science, particularly animal welfare and biosecurity in NSW". Member since 2 September 2013. Reappointed 2 August 2021. Term expired 30 June 2023.

Mr Murray Wood (5/6)

EnvSc&Mgt, MBA

Representing Dubbo Council. Member of the Performance, Audit, Risk and Safety Committee and Community Engagement and Sustainability Committee. Mr Wood is currently the Chief Executive Officer of Dubbo Regional Council, which has a population of approximately 55,000 people across an area of some 7,500km², and maintains an annual budget of \$230 million. Mr Wood leads an organisation of 538 staff with a wide range of operations and services to the community within the Local Government Area. This role follows on from an extensive career in government at both state and local levels, affording him the opportunity to develop a wealth of industry experience and knowledge across regional NSW in addition to the establishment of national and international networks. Appointed 11 October 2021. Term expires 26 September 2023.

Board Member Attendance

Member	Ordinary Meetings
Ms Penny Bingham-Hall	6 of 6
Ms Kristin Stubbins AM	5 of 6
Ms Laura Berry	6 of 6
Ms Jen Cowley OAM	6 of 6
Mr Joe David	6 of 6
Ms Catherine Harris AO PSM	6 of 6
Mr Michael Herring	2 of 2
Ms Sarah Norgate	5 of 5
Dr Ian Roth PSM	6 of 6
Mr Murray Wood	5 of 6

OUR COMMITTEES

Board Committees

Performance, Audit, Risk and Safety Committee (6)

Monitors financial performance, work health and safety, human resource management, information technology, capital works programs and asset management. Monitors and covers issues relating to internal control systems, risk management systems, financial reporting and other financial responsibilities. Representatives from the NSW Audit Office and internal auditors KPMG attend meetings as required. Consists of selected Board members:

- Ms Kristin Stubbins AM – Chair
- Ms Penny Bingham-Hall
- Mr Joe David
- Mr Murray Wood
- Mr Michael Herring
- Ms Sarah Norgate

Community Engagement and Sustainability Committee (6)

Monitors environmental, social and governance (ESG), environmental sustainability, Taronga Foundation, Commitment to Country, education, guest experience, community programs, communications and tourism development. Consists of selected Board members:

- Ms Laura Berry – Chair
- Dr Ian Roth PSM
- Ms Jennifer Cowley OAM
- Ms Catherine Harris AO PSM
- Mr Murray Wood

Wildlife Conservation Committee (6)

Monitors strategic priorities – Wildlife Care and Welfare as well as Conservation Action. This includes husbandry and enrichment, preventative healthcare programs, population management, wildlife rescue and rehabilitation, conservation science and fieldwork, recovery programs, rewilding, conservation partnerships, biosecurity and veterinary services. Consists of selected Board members and external contributors from appropriate specialist fields:

- Dr Ian Roth PSM – Chair
- Ms Jennifer Cowley OAM
- Mr Joe David
- Ms Catherine Harris AO PSM
- Prof Richard Kingsford, University of NSW
- Ms Brooke Taylor
- Mr Steve Coleman, RSPCA NSW
- Dr Simon Longstaff AO, The Ethics Centre

Other Committees

Animal Ethics Committee (6)

Statutory committee through which all research projects involving animal research must be approved. Constituted in accordance with the Animal Research Act 1985 and consists of the following representatives:

- Dr Justine O'Brien – Chair
- Dr Monique Van Sluys (Researcher)
- Dr Jo Day (Researcher)
- Dr Frances Hulst (Veterinarian)
- Dr Peter Johnson (Veterinarian)
- Dr Benn Bryant (Veterinarian)
- Mr David Roden (Independent representative)
- Mr Harold Eagleton AM (Independent representative)
- Dr Catherine Brett (Animal welfare representative)
- Mr Aaron Purcell (Animal welfare representative)

The committee reviewed and approved 14 new projects. The committee also approved 32 ongoing projects and 14 amendment applications.

Science Advisory Council (7)

Brings representatives of Taronga's academic, conservation and community partners to provide subject matter expertise and strategic input into Taronga's conservation science goals, research initiatives, grant opportunities and all matters relating to conservation science at Taronga.

- Prof Richard Kingsford, University of NSW - Chair
- Dr Ian Roth - Deputy Chair
- Pro Deputy Vice Chancellor Lesley Hughes, Macquarie University
- Prof Kathy Belov, The University of Sydney
- Dr Rebecca Spindler, Bush Heritage Australia
- Dr Kristofer M. Helgen, Australian Museum
- Dr Georgina Kelly (Government Partner)
- Ms Gretel Packer AM (Community Partner)
- Dr Justine O'Brien (Taronga representative)
- Mr Cameron Kerr AO (Taronga representative)
- Mr Nick Boyle (Taronga representative)

Taronga Aboriginal Advisory Group, Cammeraiagal Country

As part of Taronga's commitment to Reconciliation, the Taronga Aboriginal Advisory Group (TAAG), on Cammeraiagal Country was established in 2019. The purpose of the group is to support and guide Taronga Zoo's journey to Cultural Excellence, building strength in relationships and providing advice, knowledge and truth of Aboriginal Culture at Taronga Zoo. The Taronga Aboriginal Advisory Group (TAAG), Cammeraiagal Country includes:

- Prof Dennis Foley
- Susan Moylan-Coombs
- Francis Bodkin
- Gavin Andrews
- Caroline Glass-Pattison
- Kerry Toomey
- Claire Beattie
- Gary Field
- Roxanne Saunders
- Daniella Dickson
- Paul Sinclair

Taronga Western Plains Zoo's Community consultation is facilitated through local Yarn Ups and Community team representation on relevant Community groups. Yarn Ups are facilitated by the Community team and aims to achieve proactive, respectful and authentic consultation with the Aboriginal Elders, Community and relevant groups in Dubbo.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT

In all areas of our organisation, Taronga has an important vision: to secure a shared future for wildlife and people. We do this in a myriad of ways – from educating and inspiring the next generations of conservationists to breeding and releasing endangered animals back to the wild.

This past year has seen us reach some momentous milestones. We opened a new Wildlife Hospital at Taronga Western Plains Zoo, not only increasing our capacity to treat and rehabilitate native wildlife, respond in emergencies, and support conservation programs, but also providing a window to our guests as to how we heal the wild.

We've made great strides across our conservation breeding programs, including our first-ever release of Chuditch to the Vulkathunha-Gammon Ranges in South Australia, only months after the program was established.

In April, I was lucky enough to join our expert team and conservation partners as 10 Platypus were reintroduced into the Royal National Park, where they have been locally extinct for 50 years. The release marks the culmination of two years of collaborative, science-driven planning and was particularly poignant as we work across multiple projects and disciplines to protect our emblem species.

Taronga is well and truly making a global contribution to conservation, in so many ways. Thanks to a world-first reproductive treatment, critically endangered Black Rhinoceros 'Kufara' gave birth to a male calf 'Matabo' – the result of an international research partnership which has wide-reaching implications to help secure genetic diversity for this species on the brink.

In November last year, Taronga representatives attended the UN's 19th Conference of the Parties in Panama to meet with like-minded experts on the issue of wildlife trade. As part of the conference, they made interventions and supported the up-listing of the Pygmy Blue-tongue Lizard affording it the greatest level of protection from trade.

Taronga's commitment to embed a way of working that respects and includes Indigenous peoples has continued across all aspects of our organisation. The rescue of 130 Loggerhead Turtle eggs showcased how powerful the collaboration between Cultural and conservation teams can be, with the Darkinjung Local Aboriginal Land Council working with First Nations staff at Taronga to ensure the

Cultural safety of the eggs and hatchlings while at Taronga on Cammeraigal Country and their return to the ocean and Darkinjung Country.

Our education programs continue to champion a new generation of wildlife conservationists and I'm particularly proud of the growth of our School Based Apprenticeship and Traineeship program, which saw the employment of an additional 12 Indigenous trainees this year, bringing the total number to 19.

After a challenging few years with the impact of the pandemic, it was so rewarding to see Taronga prosper once again, with strong visitation throughout the year thanks to local and domestic support as well as the return of international tourism. This was spurred on with the opening of Nura Diya Australia – a state-of-the-art native wildlife experience that combines Culture and our iconic wildlife which has been a huge highlight for our guests.

These examples are just a snapshot of all that we have achieved this year. I am so proud of our teams, and I am grateful for their hard work and dedication. Everyone from volunteers and keepers to our administration staff and science and conservation teams play such an important role in driving us forward and the gains we have made this year would not have been possible without each and every one of them.

With so much momentum behind us, I'm more excited than ever to see what we will be able to achieve for our beautiful natural world over the coming years and the impact we can have to secure a shared future for wildlife and people.



Cameron Kerr AO
Chief Executive Officer



CEO CAM KERR RELEASING PLATYPUS
AT THE ROYAL NATIONAL PARK
WITH DR PHOEBE MEAGHER,
SAM BENNETT AND AMY GUILFOYLE
PHOTO BY R. FREEMAN,
UNIVERSITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES

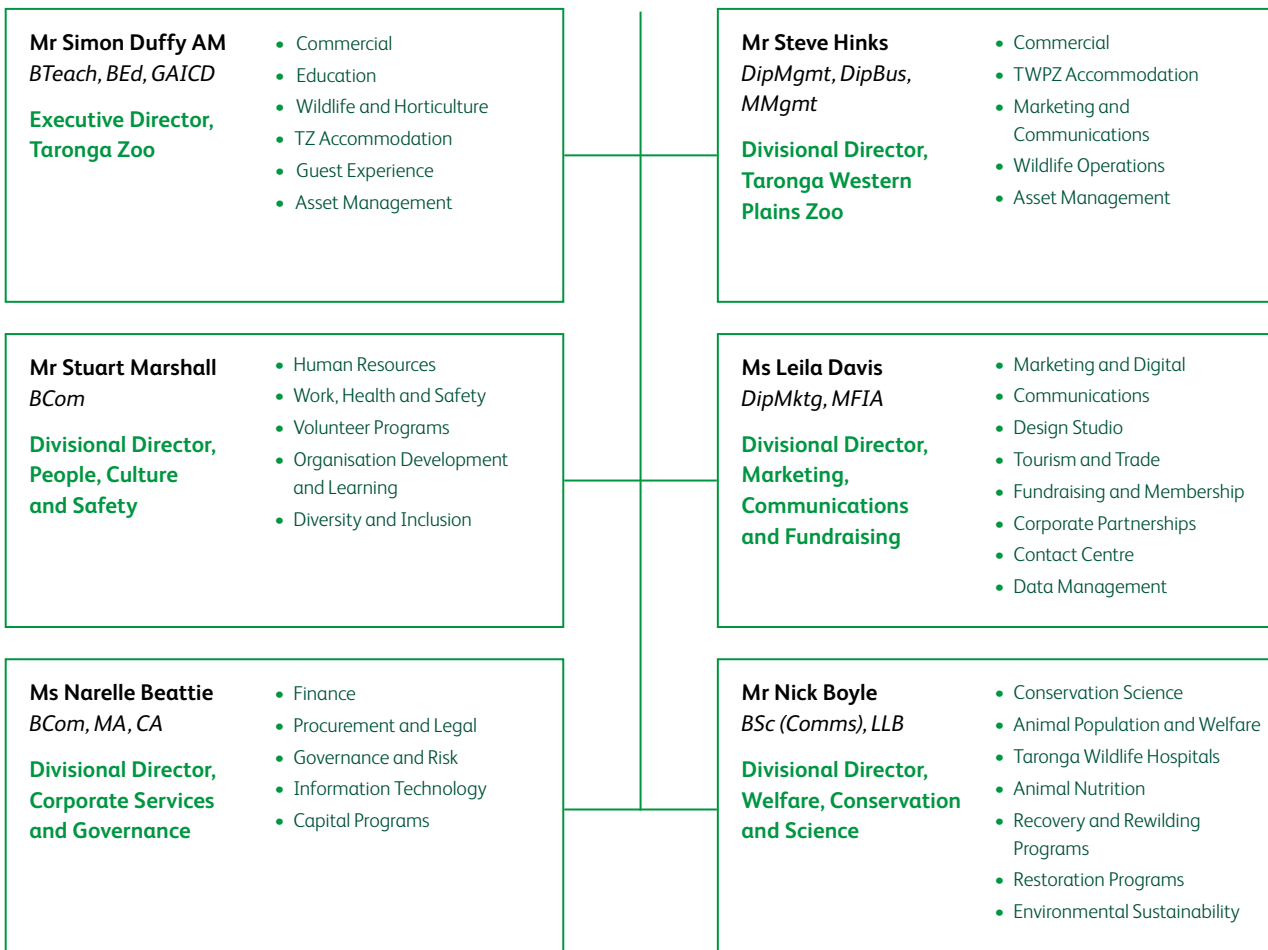
OUR ORGANISATION



RELEASE OF THE CRITICALLY
ENDANGERED PLAINS-WANDERER
AT OOLAMBAYAN NATIONAL PARK
PHOTO BY ALEX PIKE, DPE



Executive Team



OUR FOOTPRINT

Taronga Zoo, Sydney

Located on the Sydney Harbour foreshore on Cammeragal Country, Taronga Zoo is a leading conservation zoo and tourism destination. Taronga Zoo supports breeding programs for critically endangered species such as Northern and Southern Corroboree Frogs, Regent Honeyeater and Christmas Island Blue-tailed Skink. With more than 20 keeper presentations each day, local and international guests develop a deeper understanding of wildlife and are inspired to take action. Taronga Zoo is home to the Taronga Institute of Science & Learning, which provides world-leading conservation education, research and science. Unique experiences like the Wildlife Retreat at Taronga, Roar and Snore, Vivid and Twilight at Taronga provide options for people wishing to engage with the Zoo in different ways.

Taronga Western Plains Zoo, Dubbo

At Taronga Western Plains Zoo, guests observe wildlife in an open range environment. Taronga Western Plains Zoo is situated in Dubbo on Wiradjuri Country and has a global reputation for Rhino breeding programs and cares for other endangered and vulnerable species including the Sumatran Tiger, Siamang and African Lion. It is also home to the Taronga Wildlife Hospital, Dubbo – the only dedicated wildlife hospital west of the Blue Mountains. An increasing number of guests choose to experience the Zoo overnight by staying at Zoofari, the Savannah Cabins or Billabong Camp. These overnight offerings improve education and conservation outcomes through immersive experiences.

Taronga Sanctuary

Taronga Western Plains Zoo has become a threatened species conservation powerhouse in regional NSW with four successful breeding programs operating out of the Taronga Sanctuary. In 2019, this 110-hectare breeding hub was established behind-the-scenes at Taronga Western Plains Zoo. The semi-wild habitat is home to populations of Greater Bilbies and Chuditch (also known as Western Quolls), as well as breeding aviaries for Plains-wanderers and Regent Honeyeaters. The aim of the Taronga Sanctuary is to be an endangered species haven, where animals can live and breed in a wild manner, closely monitored by conservation officers and keepers, before being released to bolster wild populations.

Taronga Box-gum Woodland Rewilding Sanctuaries

Announced in April 2022, this project will see more than 5,000 hectares of Koala habitat, targeting Box-gum Grassy Woodlands – a critically endangered ecological community – restored and revegetated in NSW to provide critical habitat for threatened species. The project forms part of the NSW Koala Strategy and will be a significant tool in protecting fragile Koala populations. This project will also provide vital climate resilient habitat for a wide range of other iconic species, such as Spotted-tail Quoll and Regent Honeyeaters, allowing for maximum return on conservation investment. As habitat condition improves through restoration, Taronga will pursue opportunities to reintroduce additional species to the area.

Partners on the frontline

Taronga works closely with the NSW Government, the NSW Department of Environment, NSW National Parks and Wildlife and other government partners on many species recovery programs to prevent the extinction of native wildlife and to secure resilient ecosystems. The threats facing our native animals are complex and the only way we can succeed in preventing species' decline is to act together. It is through this combination of knowledge and action that we see glimmers of hope.



New South Wales

Marine turtle critical habitat identification
NSW

Regent Honeyeater conservation breeding and translocation
NSW

Conservation breeding and translocation of Greater Bilbies
Taronga Western Plains Zoo

Comparing habitat preferences of Greater Bilby founder groups
Taronga Western Plains Zoo

Conserving Koalas in peri-urban areas
Port Stephens

Northern Corroboree Frog translocations and strategic biobanking
Brindabella Mountains

Threatened frog surveys and reproductive research
NSW Northern Tablelands

Post-fire and post-translocation monitoring of threatened marsupials
Booderee National Park

Southern Corroboree Frog translocations and strategic biobanking
Kosciusko

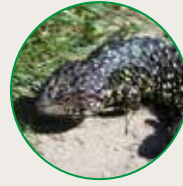
Seabirds to Seascapes - Understanding the impact of environmental change on food availability for marine predators to inform ocean policy and conservation strategies
NSW

Shark neurophysiology and deterrents
NSW



Combating illegal trade of Australian wildlife

Australia (nationally)



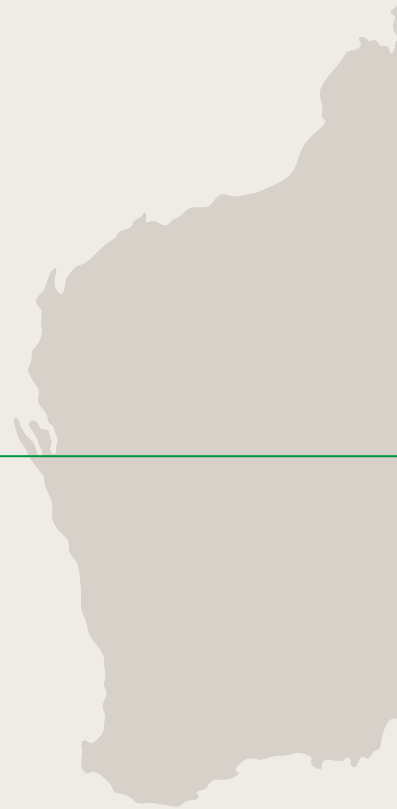
Frog mass mortality investigation

Australia (nationally)



Restoring populations of endangered Great Desert Skinks at Newhaven Wildlife Sanctuary

Northern Territory



OUR WORK ACROSS AUSTRALIA

Over the last 12 months, Taronga scientists, conservation team and partner organisations conducted multidisciplinary programs under our unified mission of leading and supporting effective conservation through innovative science that ensures species’ survival and the long-term security of resilient ecosystems.

Taronga’s programs and partnerships within Australia have been carefully selected to ensure effective, practical and timely outcomes that address urgent, current and future conservation challenges. Taronga plays a leading role in several national threatened species recovery programs and contributes to 27 state and national recovery programs. Together with partners in university, government and conservation groups, Taronga has secured scientific grants from donors, corporate partners and highly competitive funding bodies, including the Australian Research Council, to support these programs.

Australia (Nationally)

Marine turtle critical habitat identification

NSW

Regent Honeyeater conservation breeding and translocation

NSW

Conservation breeding and translocation of the Plains-wanderer

Taronga Western Plains Zoo

Conservation breeding and translocation of the Chuditch

Taronga Western Plains Zoo

Conservation breeding and translocation of Greater Bilbies

Taronga Western Plains Zoo

Comparing habitat preferences of Greater Bilby founder groups

Taronga Western Plains Zoo



Collaborative science for monitoring marine megafauna
Northern Territory



Multimodal communication in marine mammals (Sea Lions on the Edge)
NSW and South Australia



Building sustainable Rhino Insurance Populations
Taronga Western Plains Zoo NSW

Forging new strategies for human-dingo coexistence

Myall Lakes National Park

Conserving Koalas in peri-urban areas

Port Stephens

Northern Corroboree Frog translocations and strategic biobanking

Brindabella Mountains

Threatened frog surveys and reproductive research

NSW Northern Tablelands

Post-fire and post-translocation monitoring of threatened marsupials

Booderee National Park

Southern Corroboree Frog translocations and strategic biobanking

Kosciusko

Seabirds to Seascapes -

Understanding the impact of environmental change on food availability for marine predators to inform ocean policy and conservation strategies

NSW

Platypus translocations and environmental surveys

NSW

Shark neurophysiology and deterrents

NSW

Understanding the impact of disease and pollution on Green Turtles and Fur Seals

Australia (nationally)

Animal welfare and veterinary ethics in wildlife emergency rescue

Australia (nationally)

Taronga's Australian Registry of Wildlife Health: Wildlife health preparedness and response including disease investigations to support One Health programs

Australia (nationally)

Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park Mala Census; Fire Management strategies in Kakadu National Park

Northern Territory

Field Grants

Restoring populations of endangered Great Desert Skinks at Newhaven Wildlife Sanctuary

Northern Territory

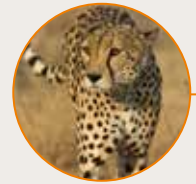
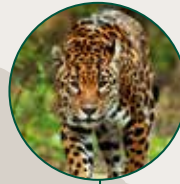
OUR GLOBAL REACH

Taronga partners with 22 organisations working on the front line of conservation in 14 countries.

From Cambodia to Cameroon, and Botswana to Nepal, Taronga works with conservation experts in the field to protect priority species and habitats, facilitate ways that people can live and share environments with wildlife, and foster community and government support for conservation. With these close partnerships, we ensure that our contributions have long-term effects and outcomes for biodiversity that are measurable in the wild.

Mind the gap: protecting a cryptic population of jaguars in a reserve network in the Cerrado, Brazil.

Brazil



Cheetah Conservation

Botswana

Conservation Partnerships 2022

Save the Bilby Fund

Australia

Save Vietnam's Wildlife

Vietnam

International Rhino Foundation

Sumatra, Indonesia

Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (Chuditch)

Australia

TRAFFIC

Asia

Cheetah Conservation

Botswana

Northern Rangelands Trust

Kenya

Jane Goodall Institute Australia

Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi

Botswana Predator Conservation Trust

Botswana

Field Grants

New Nature Foundation

Restoring Habitat for Kibale National Park through Invasive Plant Biomass Briquette Production

Uganda

Endangered Wildlife Trust

Using dogs to detect snares and reduce poaching

South Africa

International Crane Foundation

Restoring the Kafue Flats floodplain in Zambia by preventing the return of an invasive plant

Zambia

Elephants for Africa

Installing a solar-powered cluster fence to prevent elephant crop-raiding in a village

Botswana



Endangered Wildlife Trust

Protecting threatened species and their habitats in South Africa's Soutpansberg mountains

South Africa

Conservation International

Sea Turtle Conservation in the Nesting Capital of Fiji's Largest Seascape

Fiji

The Soala Foundation

Finding Saola to Save Saola
Vietnam

Project Numbat

Population survey and monitoring of Numbats in Boddington, Western Australia

Australia

Birdlife Australia

Tackling nest predation on Regent Honeyeaters: a new approach for bird conservation globally

Australia

Wildlife Conservation Research Unit

Mind the gap: protecting a cryptic population of jaguars in a reserve network in the Cerrado, Brazil

Brazil

Giraffe Conservation Foundation

Africa's wildlife conservation leaders – enhancing capacity, one veterinarian at a time

Namibia

Banda Community Group at Nyungwe National Park

Capacity building on family planning for sustainable conservation of Nyungwe National Park

Rwanda

Woodland Park Zoo

Applied Land Use Monitoring Technology for Community-Based Management of the YUS Conservation Area
Papua New Guinea



IMPACT THROUGH EDUCATION *and* EXPERIENCE

Offering inspiring and fun experiences that connect people to wildlife, shaping wildlife friendly attitudes, beliefs and behaviours





POSSUM (BURUMIN,
SYDNEY FIRST LANGUAGE;
WILAY, WIRADJURI
FIRST LANGUAGE)
LANTERN ON THE WILD
LIGHTS AT TARONGA TRAIL
DESIGNED BY NATHAN PECKHAM
OF YURANA CREATIVE
PHOTO BY MATT DUNBAR



Impact

Community Conservation Programs

Taronga's community conservation programs aim to inspire and motivate individuals, schools, businesses and the community at large to choose behaviours that support wildlife conservation and environmental sustainability.



Fish for Good

Promoting a healthy future for marine life by encouraging sustainable seafood choices. Taronga's Seals for the Wild presentation continues to inspire guests to choose MSC-certified seafood. Taronga has partnered with Seafood Positive's OneFishTwoFish program to return two fish into the ocean for every fish consumed by Taronga's animals.



Wildlife Witness

Taronga's ongoing partnership with TRAFFIC Southeast Asia supports illegal wildlife trade monitoring and in partnership with Interpol and local enforcement agencies confiscation of illegally traded wildlife. In addition, Taronga supports a specialist Wildlife Crime Analyst based in Kuala Lumpur in an effort to tackle the ring leaders in the illegal wildlife trade.



Litter Free Oceans and Rivers

Reducing single use plastics for the benefit of marine and freshwater species. The Litter Free community has reached 3,000 individuals, schools, and businesses, who are now all working to eliminate single-use plastics. These campaigns were promoted online and through bespoke stalls at Fair Day and through the All-At-Once community at the Jack Johnson concert to reach new audiences.



Beads for Wildlife

This program supports people living side by side with wildlife in Northern Kenya through alternative and sustainable incomes. The sale of beadwork through the Zoos' retail outlets provides communities in Northern Kenya with a source of income, reducing human-induced pressures on wildlife such as poaching and habitat destruction. This year Taronga sold 17,252 beaded products across both Zoos with all profits returned to the craftswomen and their communities.



Raise Your Palm

Driving the transition towards a responsible palm oil industry. Taronga Zoo's Tiger Trek aims to raise awareness about the benefits of sustainable palm oil and leverage action from guests to encourage companies to transition to 100 per cent Certified Sustainable Palm Oil in their supply chains. Celebrating its fifth anniversary, Tiger Trek has welcomed over 4.3 million guests, of which more than 25 per cent have interacted with the Choice Mart supermarket activation. These guests have raised their palm for critically endangered Sumatran Tigers, sending 157,000 emails to 10 Australian retailers and manufacturers.



They're Calling on You

This program recycles mobile phones to reduce landfill and support primate conservation. Taronga has partnered with Mobile Muster and PhoneCycle to recycle and re-use mobile phones and divert them from landfill. More than 59,000 mobile phones have been reused and recycled through the campaign, which has now generated over \$95,000 in support of the Jane Goodall Institute Australia's primate conservation work in the Maiko-Tanya Kahuzi-Biega ecosystem in the Democratic Republic of Congo.



Education

Education is at the core of Taronga's 360-degree approach to conservation, which targets wildlife as well as habitats and the community. Taronga offers a range of education and learning programs for primary and secondary school students through to tertiary, vocational and teacher professional development. These programs are delivered on various platforms, both onsite at Taronga's two Zoos, as outreach programs within the community, in other partner zoos and through digital platforms.

School Education Programs

Taronga's school education programs aim to inspire the next generation of conservationists through curriculum-linked programs developed and delivered by qualified teachers, with several employed by the NSW Department of Education. Through this partnership, Taronga has access to curriculum experts who ensure all programs are of the highest quality. By providing access to incredible wildlife and environments, learning is brought to life through innovative and enriching opportunities for students.

On-site Experiences

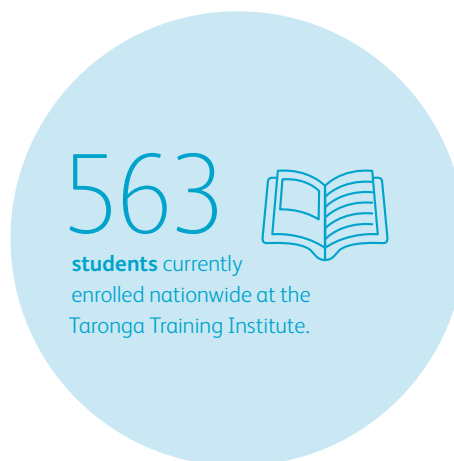
At Taronga, students can engage in a variety of educational experiences both through a self-guided visit or when participating in a workshop. The high-impact and immersive learning workshops support students in deepening their understanding of content across multiple disciplines with a focus on STEM. Wildlife interactions in these workshops give students the opportunity to connect with a range of native and exotic species and enhance their knowledge of the curriculum. Through on-site presentations such as Seals for the Wild and Free Flight Birds, students can engage with Zoo experts, learn all about a variety of species and what they can do to become champions for the wild.

ZooSnooz

This immersive overnight experience continues to be considered the 'wildest school sleepover' and has once again delivered strong results. This year more than 7,300 students embarked on this educational experience, which included exciting night-time discovery walks around the Zoo, early morning tours, behind-the-scenes encounters, and educator-led workshops. At Taronga Zoo, students can get up close and learn about a range of native wildlife and become advocates for the wild. At Taronga Western Plains Zoo, students are immersed in a Billabong Camp, an Australian bush tent site surrounding the waterhole.

Zoomobile and Regional Outreach Education

The Taronga Zoomobile continues to deliver exciting and enriching educational incursions to students in their schools. This metropolitan and regional



outreach program has delivered quality curriculum-based experiences to more than 4,000 students this year and has travelled as far as Lake Cowal to deliver the Animals of the Dreaming program to remote schools. Taronga Western Plains Zoo's education team partnered with the NSW Department of Education's Environmental Education Centres, to deliver a three-day rural sustainability outreach event. This program saw more than 1,500 students from regional schools participate in engaging and practical activities focused on sustainability.

Project In-Situ

This year, Taronga's project-based conservation education program, Project In-Situ, engaged 1,130 students across 14 primary and secondary schools from the Northern Beaches and the Hay region. The target species for each region were the Little Penguin and Plains-wanderer respectively. Students were led through the design thinking process by Taronga's education curriculum specialists, with the support of their classroom teachers to create STEM-based conservation solutions specific to their local context. Working in-situ, students learnt about species through practical investigations and experiments – a key to the program's ongoing success is forging authentic connections to real world leaders in conservation.

Work Experience

School Work Experience at Taronga remains a competitive choice for secondary students in Years 10, 11 and 12. Both Zoos host students from across NSW, as well as students who travel interstate to help inform their choices to consider a career in conservation or STEM. Senior students utilise the immersive, week-long placement as an opportunity to guide their critical pathways as they look beyond school. This popular program empowers students in making informed vocational choices and has delivered strong learning outcomes. The School Work Experience Program hosted 272 students across both Taronga Zoo and Taronga Western Plains Zoo in 2022/23.

Community Education Programs

Youth at The Zoo

Taronga's Youth at the Zoo (YATZ) program provides opportunities for young people at Taronga Zoo and Taronga Western Plains Zoo to participate in a range of onsite activities, gaining practical skills and industry experience while volunteering and interacting with Taronga staff and guests. There are currently 531 active YATZ members who contributed 15,488 hours to the Zoo in volunteer time, which would equal 17 full-time staff. In the past year, YATZ leaders received specialised leadership training and mentored newer members. These leaders are trained in access and inclusion, with guest trainers from ASPECT and the Sunflower Scheme, and leadership and communication skills from Taronga's own Organisational Development and Learning Team.

WINGS Program

WINGS is a supported work experience program for adults with intellectual disabilities. Currently, Taronga Zoo Sydney hosts crews from two agencies – Windgap Foundation and Avenue Coworking. Groups of five participants and their support team take on regular and adjusted tasks in a real-life work setting in the Zoo. The WINGS participants are supported by experienced staff and build a strong connection to the work they complete and the animals in Taronga's care.

Aged Care and Dementia Program

The Community Programs team has continued to provide meaningful experience for aged care residents with the establishment of an on-site program with St Luke's Aged Care. Participants with dementia take part in enrichment building, meet with keepers after the Seals for the Wild and Free Flight Bird presentations and learn about Taronga's work. The response has been overwhelmingly positive, with some caregivers stating their loved one opened up and talked in a way they hadn't heard in many years.

Taronga Training Institute

The Taronga Training Institute (TTI) is a Registered Training Organisation and delivers accredited certificate courses in Animal Care and Management. Training is delivered at five sites nationally: Taronga Zoo, Taronga Western Plains Zoo, Perth Zoo, Melbourne Zoo and Adelaide Zoo. In 2022/23, TTI enrolled 563 students nationwide.

TTI continues to deliver exceptionally high-quality training. In a survey of students who completed their ACM20121 Certificate II in Animal Care or ACM30321 Certificate III in Wildlife and Exhibited Animal Care training in 2022, 100 per cent were satisfied with the training. Furthermore, 97 per cent of survey respondents 'strongly agreed' that trainers had an excellent

knowledge of the subject content, 100 per cent would recommend the training to others and 98 per cent said the training prepared them well for work.

Taronga – University of Sydney Education Alliance

The Education Alliance with Taronga and the University of Sydney continues to have a global impact by providing training to the next generation of conservationists. Students undertaking the Bachelor of Science/Bachelor of Advanced Studies in Taronga Wildlife Conservation degree are given access to learn from Taronga and university experts, researchers, practitioners and dedicated teaching staff and make use of facilities at the university and at Taronga Zoo and Taronga Western Plains Zoo. In their fourth year of study, students spend a week in the Taronga Sanctuary immersed in conservation and practicing essential field skills, setting them up for the future career in conservation.

There are currently about 240 domestic and international students studying the degree. Taronga also provides training to 3,000 university students per year who are studying a different degree but take one or more of units of study offered by Taronga.

The degree has now seen two cohorts of graduating students. Alumni students have applied their degree far and wide with careers in ecology, local council policy writing, sustainability, biosecurity and bush regeneration, continued their training through post-graduate studies and even completed internships with Australian Wildlife Conservancy, and overseas in Africa.

This unique degree has been the recipient of two teaching awards, winning the University of Sydney Vice Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching and silver at the international Reimagine Education Awards for the Power of Partnerships.

Wild Lights at Taronga

With a strong focus on caring for Country and driving change, this year's Wild Lights event as part of Vivid Sydney debuted new breathtaking lanterns that shone a light on some of the country's most iconic species such as the Emu, Possum, Echidna, Dingo, Platypus, Kangaroo and Koala and the landscapes they call home. These lanterns were created by contemporary Aboriginal artist Nathan Peckham of YURANA CREATIVE and were part of a successful collaboration between precinct director Nicholas Tory and his technical and creative team at Ample Projects. Wild Lights at Taronga welcomed more than 49,000 guests across 18 nights and was once again supported by access and inclusion partner, Cushman & Wakefield. With a focus on building accessibility across the event as well as holding two dedicated access and inclusion nights.



STUDENTS IN THE
RAINFORREST CLASSROOM
AT THE TARONGA INSTITUTE
OF SCIENCE & LEARNING
PHOTO BY HARRY VINCENT



Twilight at Taronga

With unrivalled views of sunset over Sydney Harbour, the quintessential Twilight at Taronga 2023 Summer Concert Series returned after a two-year hiatus to deliver back-to-back weekends of live music from some of Australia's finest artists at one of Sydney's most picturesque locations. Guests enjoyed a picnic on the Concert Lawns and soaked up the last rays of a summer's day while watching, listening and dancing to the beats of their favourite artists. The line-up had something for everyone.

Twilight featured 14 concerts over five weekends and welcomed more than 24,000 guests through the gates. This year saw the introduction of two new types of shows – Lil' Twilight shows, morning shows aimed at kids to capture a new generation of Twilight fans and the inaugural Drag Gala that was part of Sydney World Pride.

Building a Zoo for the future

Taronga continues to deliver several capital projects that transform the facilities for wildlife in our care, provide opportunities to expand Taronga's capacity for the treatment and rehabilitation of wildlife and deliver education and conservation programs. The delivery of current capital projects is coupled with a new project to produce a long-term master plan for both Zoos, which imagines Taronga in the year 2050.

Taronga Zoo

Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Centre

The Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Centre will be a world-class facility, connecting guests with important and fascinating species and breeding programs while raising awareness of the impacts of climate change on wildlife. It will be a multi-layered educational experience for

guests that showcases the beauty and diversity of some of the most misunderstood and most imperilled creatures on the planet under threat from climate change, disease and habitat loss. Funding for the Conservation Centre comes from the Wild Futures Initiative and the NSW Government. Construction commenced in September 2022 and the experience is expected to open in 2024.

Taronga Wildlife Hospital, Sydney

The Taronga Wildlife Hospital, Sydney is a key component of the Wild Futures initiative. The new hospital will provide new state-of-the-art facilities to match the world-leading expertise of the hospital team, expand capacity for wildlife treatment and conservation programs, provide larger facilities to provide best-practice training in wildlife health and provide interactive experiences to connect guests with the work of the hospital. Core veterinary treatment rooms, laboratories, and wildlife rehabilitation facilities, including a prominent marine wildlife rescue and rehabilitation centre, will be visible to guests from the public plaza and meeting place. The project is currently in the planning approval phase, with construction set to commence in early 2024 and be completed by late 2025.

Platypus Refuge and Rehabilitation, Sydney

The Platypus Rescue and Rehabilitation Centre in Sydney comprises two facilities to support Platypus rescue, rehabilitation and research. The first facility was completed in May 2022 and can hold up to 10 Platypus for rehabilitation prior to reintroduction to the wild. This facility was recently used in the first translocation of Platypus in NSW, which saw 10 individuals released into the Royal National Park. The second facility, which is in the design phase, will be a hub for our wildlife and conservation team, allowing them to expand their



JANE BURGESS AND
SENIOR VETERINARIAN DR. ALISA
WALLACE PERFORMING KOALA
HEALTH CHECK AT TARONGA
WILDLIFE HOSPITAL, DUBBO
PHOTO BY RICK STEVENS

Spotlight

Taronga Wildlife Hospital, Dubbo

The new Wildlife Hospital is the largest and most ambitious project in Taronga Western Plains Zoo's history. The \$14.6 million project opened on 7 December 2022 and was funded by the NSW Government and philanthropic donations.

The new hospital increases Taronga Western Plains Zoo's capacity to treat and rehabilitate native wildlife, improve its ability to act as first responders in emergencies and play a pivotal role in conservation programs for critically endangered species such as Greater Bilbies, Plains-wanderers, Chuditch and Regent Honeyeaters.

Excitingly, the new Wildlife Hospital is now on the circuit as the final stop for guests. It showcases advanced and purpose-built facilities where guests can see wildlife experts from multiple disciplines in action.

Guests can now see firsthand how Taronga heals the wild with previously 'behind-the-scenes' hospital activities now front and centre. Animal treatments, surgeries and research can be viewed as they happen via windows and TV monitors – a unique offering of education and awareness to guests on our world class animal care, conservation in action, and threats to our precious wildlife.

The Wildlife Hospital guest experience is brought to life by an extensive interpretation package. It showcases Taronga's extensive conservation, science and research efforts through a colourful and purpose-driven welcome and entry, engaging signage at each viewing window, small screens, and a large digital display for live and recorded emotive storytelling. There is also an array of exciting science and nature play-based learning installations like an interactive lab table, bilby ear inspired listening dishes and interactive wheel signs that explore the world of animal poo, and the way scientists use it to help conserve wildlife.

“

Guests can now see firsthand how Taronga heals the wild with previously 'behind-the-scenes' hospital activities now front and centre.

”

understanding of Platypus reproduction and behaviour and support breeding. The conservation centre was completed in early 2023, with the Research Centre expected to be completed in 2024.

Bellinger River Turtle Conservation Centre

The Bellinger River Turtle centre allows for the rescue and breeding of critically endangered Bellinger River Turtles, with the first phase of the project delivered in early 2023. The facility contains 14 tubs with state-of-the-art life support systems for rearing up to 150 juvenile turtles. A secondary facility which is due to be completed in late 2023 includes an aquarium with a hatching room and 40 tanks for the rearing of turtles before they can be moved into the external facility. With less than 200 Bellinger River Turtles left in the wild, this facility is critical to the species' survival.

Sky Safari Revitalisation

Taronga Zoo's famous Sky Safari will be transformed into an unforgettable and accessible family experience thanks to a major investment from the NSW Government. The revitalised Sky Safari will provide accessible and efficient transport across the Zoo as well as a sensational sightseeing experience over Sydney Harbour. The project team has now commenced design, planning and consultation, with the upgraded Sky Safari expected to open in 2026.

Taronga Western Plains Zoo

Platypus Rescue HQ

Construction of the Platypus Rescue HQ – a dedicated rescue and rehabilitation centre – continued throughout the year. The unique facility will provide future refuge for drought-threatened wild Platypus populations, and allow for ongoing research to study Platypus behaviour, a public Platypus habitat with an interpretative and educational overlay, and a pre-release area comprising a naturalistic creek line to prepare rehabilitated Platypus for release back into the wild. The project will be completed in late 2023.

Serengeti Plains

In partnership with Dubbo Regional Council, Taronga was successful in receiving a \$20 million grant from the NSW Government's Regional Tourism Activation Fund. This investment will go towards the development of the Taronga Western Plains Zoo's Serengeti Plains Visitor Experience and Eco-Accommodation Projects. This investment is supplemented by a \$10 million investment from Taronga. The project will include a new 55-hectare open range, multi-species exhibit, 20 two-bedroom cabins all with prime exhibit frontage, a large billabong-style pool and recreation area, a restaurant overlooking the exhibit, a casual dining area and a seated event space. The development application will be submitted in mid-2023 with the project set for competition in late 2025.

Education and Experience Snapshot

7,300 

students participated in Taronga's ZooSnooz wild overnight educational experience at both sites.

49,000+

guests were welcomed across 18 nights of Wild Lights at Taronga.



531 active YATZ members who contributed

15,488 

hours to the Zoo in volunteer time.

17,252 

beaded products from the Beads for Wildlife campaign were sold across both Zoos with all profits returned to the craftswomen and their communities.



WILDLIFE CARE *and* WELFARE

Global industry leader in wildlife care
and continuous improvement in welfare





GIRAFFE NURSERY
HERD AT TARONGA
WESTERN PLAINS
ZOO DUBBO
PHOTO BY
RICK STEVENS



Animals in our Care

Taronga Zoo

Taronga Zoo saw significant milestones in its wildlife operations, demonstrating its continued commitment to conservation, education, and animal welfare. Throughout the year, Wildlife Operations focused on breeding programs, research and conservation initiatives, and the opening of a new experience, Nura Diya Australia.

Nura Diya Australia is a world-class experience that was designed to share an Australian journey and story, and to provide habitat for several rare, vulnerable and endangered native species, such as the Bilby, Platypus, Ghost Bat and Chuditch (Western Quoll). The precinct was also designed with a First Nations' lens, to allow guests to learn about Cammeraiagal and the importance of these species to First Nations people, while also learning how best to support Taronga's ongoing conservation efforts.

The exhibits were designed to provide native wildlife with complex environments while also meeting high standards of welfare. The habitats in Nura Diya also promote an inspiring guest experience by enabling wildlife staff to tell the story of Taronga's conservation work through guided tours and informative Keeper talks that highlight the importance of biodiversity and the role that guests can play in safeguarding our natural world.

Nura Diya saw the reintroduction of Dingoes to Taronga for the first time in a decade. 'Kep Kep' and 'Warada' are now at home in a thoughtfully designed exhibit which includes many key features to ensure positive animal welfare.

This year the Wildlife Operations team has continued to play a significant role in contributing to Taronga's conservation breeding and recovery programs. This included the first reintroduction of the critically endangered Booroolong Frog to the Northern Tablelands in NSW and the birth of a Long-nosed Fur Seal pup in December 2022. Several Squirrel monkey babies were also born and successfully raised to be included in the group and Taronga Zoo also celebrated the birth of a healthy Chimpanzee baby.

Taronga Western Plains Zoo

The Wildlife Operations team at Taronga Western Plains Zoo is responsible for the care of 57 species and saw several highlights throughout the year. Across the Zoo, new arrivals included Spider Monkeys, Ring-tail Lemurs, Tasmanian Devils, Giraffes, Addax, Blackbuck, Plains Zebra and a Black Rhinoceros calf. These births are testament to the teams who provide diligent care and

ensure optimal conditions. These new arrivals were very popular with guests, with the five Giraffe calves providing excellent viewing opportunities with one calf even born on exhibit in front of delighted guests.

Female Asian Elephant 'Anjalee' was successfully integrated to the herd of females as well as breeding bull 'Gung' following her arrival from Auckland Zoo. Recently, the team have worked diligently on introductions with the younger bulls 'Pathi Harn' and 'Sabai'. It is hoped that following these successful interactions, 'Anjalee' will be able to breed by the end of the year – key to her physical and social health.

While there were many highlights throughout the year, Taronga Western Plains Zoo and its community also farewelled several iconic and well-known animals. This included the loss of elderly Siamang pair 'Saudara' and 'Puteri', and 'Kani', a male Common Hippopotamus who was euthanised due to significant health issues in May 2023. 'Kani' had been receiving ongoing treatment for a leg injury, with a post-mortem revealing a complex break from which he would not have been able to recover.

Taronga Western Plains Zoo is renowned for its White Rhinoceros population and this year, adult female 'Mopani' gave birth to a young male calf 'Jabulani'.

ZAA Accreditation

Taronga Western Plains Zoo demonstrated its commitment to positive animal welfare and this year was re-accredited by the Australasian Zoo and Aquarium Association (ZAA), the peak body that represents the collective voice of the zoos, aquariums, sanctuaries and wildlife parks across Australasia operating to the highest standards.

The ZAA Welfare Accreditation program is progressive, science-based and champions welfare from the animal's perspective. The framework considers not just the absence of negative welfare but the promotion of positive welfare. Welfare assessments were conducted for key species based on the five animal welfare domains.

During accreditation, Taronga Western Plains Zoo was required to provide compelling evidence for set criteria on both its operations and the experiences of its animals. This validated Taronga Western Plains Zoo's commitment to positive animal welfare, but also broader commitments to safety, biosecurity, conservation and sustainability. ZAA-accredited zoos and aquariums are assessed every three years to retain accreditation.



BLACK RHINOCEROS
CALF 'MATABO'
PHOTO BY
RICK STEVENS

Spotlight

Black Rhinoceros Birth

Taronga Western Plains Zoo celebrated the birth of 'Matabo', a male critically endangered Black Rhinoceros calf in April 2023 who was born to mother 'Kufara' using a world-first reproductive treatment. This special birth was the result of an international research partnership in Black Rhinoceros conservation and represents the fifth calf born into the conservation breeding program in the last eight years.

With more than four years passing after 'Kufara's' last gave birth, Taronga's keepers, veterinarians and conservation scientists began efforts to address 'Kufara's' infertility as part of a collaborative Rhinoceros research program with Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo and Aquarium, SeaWorld USA's Species Preservation Lab, biotech company STGenetics®, along with other conservation partners, funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services and the Taronga Foundation.

Knowledge of the species' biology generated from our current and previous research was integrated into a clinical treatment program with 'Kufara' receiving a series of hormone treatments, ultrasound exams, along with blood and faecal hormone analyses, and finally conceiving naturally. With less than 6,500 Black Rhinoceros remaining in the wild due to habitat loss and poaching that supplies the illegal Rhinoceros horn trade, the birth of this Southern Black Rhinoceros is an important one. It also shines new light on the maximum gestation length the species can experience, with 'Kufara's' calf born 490 days after mating. This exceeds that of the longest reported gestation period for Black Rhinoceros of 486 days.



127 
Loggerhead Turtles
released back to the wild
on Darkinjung Country

LOGGERHEAD
TURTLE HATCHLING
BEING RELEASED
TO THE WILD
PHOTO BY
HARRY VINCENT



Spotlight

Loggerhead Turtle Incubation and Release

On 9 January 2023, a Loggerhead Turtle nested on Shelly Beach on the NSW Central Coast, setting a new, southernmost nesting record. The nest was carefully managed and monitored however when the sand temperature dropped to 22°C on 29 March, the nest was excavated, and 134 eggs were transported to Taronga Zoo where a Cultural handover from Darkinjung to Cammeraigal Country was conducted on arrival. The hatching process began on 1 April, resulting in 93 healthy turtles fit for release out of the initial 130 eggs. These turtles were transported back to Shelly Beach on 9 April, where a welcome to Country and smoking ceremony took place before their release.

Volunteers, NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service representatives and Taronga teams patrolled the beach after dark, recovering 31 washback turtles due to the high swell and cool sand temperatures. These turtles, along

with two more found the following day, were returned to Taronga Zoo for care. All 33 turtles received fluids and critical care. On 12 April, the washback turtles, along with 25 recent hatchlings, were released two nautical miles offshore into the warm East Australian Current.

The rescue’s success surpassed expectations, with an impressive 94.6 per cent of eggs hatching and turtles released. This achievement highlighted the collaborative efforts of NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, Darkinjung Local Aboriginal Land Council, Central Coast Council, NSW TurtleWatch, Marine Wildlife Rescue Central Coast and Taronga. The release received significant media attention, with almost 200 media stories reaching 40 million people, fostering awareness and admiration for Leatherback hatchlings and Green Turtles.

Animal Welfare

Welfare

Taronga promotes positive animal welfare for all animals, both in human care and in the wild. Inherent within that, is caring for and portraying wildlife with the greatest dignity and respect, whilst delivering engaging and transformational guest experiences. Taronga's Animal Welfare Committee is charged with guiding our Animal Welfare Program to ensure standards are exceeded, continuous improvement is achieved, and contemporary welfare science incorporated into our framework. Taronga is committed to providing excellent care, health management, housing and species appropriate behavioural opportunities that promote positive experiences for all animals in our care.

Research

Understanding of animal welfare is continually evolving. Taronga is continually engaging in research to deepen its knowledge and implement new approaches. This outlook on welfare research involves scientists, population managers, keepers, vets and nutritionists. Taronga's Conservation Behaviour Laboratory works collaboratively across both Zoos to conduct scientific research and disseminate findings to ensure we remain at the forefront of industry and community standards. Taronga's welfare research encompasses all animals in its care, from informing the design of future Zoo experiences to the rearing of animals bred for release to ensure success in the wild.

Welfare on Display

Artificial intelligence (AI) has the potential to reshape our daily lives, and Taronga is harnessing the power of AI to explore animal behaviour and welfare. Researchers in the Conservation Behaviour Laboratory are developing tools and algorithms to identify and track individual animals throughout their daily lives. Over the past year, a pilot project has been conducted to observe Taronga's Giraffe herd using computer vision and AI. This data-driven understanding of animal behaviour can assist optimising enrichment programs, habitat designs and feeding strategies. While providing valuable information to keepers, vets and scientists, a major aim is to put this information on display to guests to enable a deeper understanding of the daily lives of these animals and an appreciation of our ongoing focus on the welfare of the individuals in our care.

Taronga Wildlife Health and Rehabilitation

Taronga Wildlife Hospitals

Taronga's veterinary teams are dedicated to delivering the highest standard of healthcare for the animals and wildlife under their care. They are committed to promptly responding to wildlife crises and actively sharing their expertise nationwide to enhance knowledge and capabilities in wildlife crisis management. Taronga places great importance on a comprehensive veterinary health program, which plays a vital role in upholding best-practice animal welfare, biosecurity, conservation and scientific endeavours.

The Wildlife Hospitals in Sydney and Dubbo follow a preventive medicine calendar, prioritising the health and wellbeing of the animals. They develop and implement programs for quarantine, vaccination and disease surveillance. Regular health assessments are conducted at different stages of an animal's life, with particular emphasis on critical phases such as growth and aging. Additionally, Taronga provides consultancy services to support other zoos, wildlife organisations and welfare agencies.

Wildlife Nutrition

Taronga's nutrition department plays a crucial role in ensuring the animals receive nutritionally balanced and sustainable diets, promoting their health and welfare. Maintaining a consistent and high-quality food supply poses challenges due to adverse weather, disruptions in the supply chain and increasing costs, but Taronga remains steadfast in upholding the highest dietary standards and advancing the sustainability of animal feed, even in challenging circumstances.

Taronga's dedication to nutrition goes beyond its own facilities. Taronga takes a leading role in both in-situ and ex-situ nutrition research, which is integral to conservation efforts. Collaborating with manufacturers, Taronga actively contributes to the development of diets that can be used internationally and actively seeks out programs and partnerships to reduce waste and improve sustainability.

Furthermore, Taronga serves as a valuable resource for consulting and education, offering expert advice on nutrition for breeding and conservation programs throughout the region and providing mentorship for aspiring zoo nutritionists. Through these efforts, Taronga contributes to the overall welfare and conservation of wildlife by promoting optimal nutrition practices.



VETERINARIAN DR. SARAH
ALEXANDER PERFORMING
HEALTH CHECK ON RESCUED
WEDGE-TAILED EAGLE
AT TARONGA WILDLIFE
HOSPITAL, DUBBO
PHOTO BY RICK STEVENS

Spotlight

Taronga Wildlife Hospital, Dubbo

Taronga's new specialist Wildlife Teaching Hospital in Dubbo officially opened on 7 December 2022, marking a new era in wildlife care for Taronga's animal populations, conservation breeding programs and native wildlife treatment and rehabilitation. Treatment rooms, surgical facilities and laboratories are now on display, showcasing to Zoo visitors critically important clinical care and conservation science that has traditionally been done behind the scenes.

Jointly funded by the NSW Government and philanthropic donations, the new \$14.6 million hospital is a regional hub for the treatment of native animals such as Koalas, Platypus and raptors. This cutting-edge veterinary teaching hospital provides increased capacity to respond to wildlife emergencies and new educational opportunities for students, veterinary professionals and wildlife rehabilitators. The hospital also hosts a Cryodiversity Bank, an extension of Australia's first biobank holding living samples from endangered wildlife for active species recovery.



Wildlife Rehabilitation

Taronga's two Wildlife Hospitals received 1,505 sick, injured or orphaned native animals for treatment and rehabilitation in the last year. The Taronga Wildlife Hospital, Dubbo received 620 native animals: 344 birds, 169 mammals, 104 reptiles and three amphibians. The Taronga Wildlife Hospital, Sydney received 885 animals: 419 birds, 237 mammals, 214 reptiles (including 130 Loggerhead Turtle eggs/hatchlings), and 15 amphibians. Overall, 316 native animals were released, comprising of 100 birds, 52 mammals, 138 reptiles and one amphibian. The hospitals hand-raised 27 animals and transferred 75 animals to wildlife rehabilitation groups for ongoing care.

Many marine turtles admitted to the Wildlife Hospital in Sydney were affected by plastic pollution and injuries from marine debris. One Green Turtle hatchling rescued with a stomach full of plastic at Tamarama Beach and weighing only 127g is due for release in the summer of 2023. Taronga collaborates with NSW National Parks and Wildlife rangers and Sydney Harbour Water Police to release marine birds and turtles offshore from Sydney Heads. The Taronga Marine Turtle Satellite Tracking Program released five Green Turtles with satellite tags, bringing the total of tagged turtles to 41, including one female that underwent a five-hour surgery to remove seven ingested fishing hooks and fishing line, which caused extensive intestinal damage.

Both hospitals successfully rehabilitated Platypus this year. One young female, entangled in fishing line, was admitted to hospital in Dubbo with foot and bill injuries. It recovered well and was released after a week. In Sydney, another young female weighing 300g, presented with poor body condition, dehydration, a heavy tick burden and poor waterproofing. It was assessed as not suitable for release and now resides in Taronga's collection as a Platypus conservation ambassador.

Since the opening of the new wildlife hospital in Dubbo in December 2022, seven Wedge-tailed Eagles have been admitted. The new hospital includes a flight tunnel for flight testing birds prior to release and the new raptor mews has noticeably improved housing for these large raptors.

In Sydney, an adult male Sea Eagle, injured after being struck by a boat in Newcastle Harbour, underwent treatment and weeks of veterinary attention and physiotherapy. Following four months of physiotherapy and exercise at Raptor Recovery in Falls Creek, the eagle returned to Taronga for leg banding and was returned to Hunter Wildlife for release where it had been found.

In conjunction with the Australian Bird and Bat Banding Scheme, 42 birds from 22 species were leg banded and released, allowing for post-release monitoring and data collection on survival and movement patterns.

Training in Wildlife Rehabilitation

Taronga is the leading provider of veterinary services in wildlife rescue and rehabilitation in NSW and continues to expand its offerings in wildlife education. Education and knowledge sharing is a crucial strategy to improve both Taronga's and the nation's capacity to respond to wildlife crises through wildlife first aid.

Veterinary Professional Training in Wildlife

Taronga offers Veterinary Professional Training in Wildlife Treatment and Care. With a strategic priority to increase capacity to assist wildlife in need, Taronga renewed partnerships with Zoos Victoria and Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary to deliver workshops interstate in addition to its local offering. This hybrid program, combining online and face-to-face training, focuses on building the confidence, knowledge and skills required for the triage, first aid, treatment and care of wild Australian species.



GIRAFFE 'JIMIYU' UNDERGOING A HEALTH CHECK AT TARONGA ZOO SYDNEY
PHOTO BY HARRY VINCENT



ECHIDNA REHABILITATION
AT TARONGA WILDLIFE
HOSPITAL, DUBBO
PHOTO BY RICK STEVENS

“

Taronga is the leading provider of veterinary services in wildlife rescue and rehabilitation in NSW.

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Developed in collaboration with the NSW Department of Environment, NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, and the University of Sydney's Koala Health Hub, the course is endorsed and accredited by the Australian Veterinary Association and the Veterinary Nurses Council of Australia. Since 2020, 1468 vet professionals have completed the online component, with 981 receiving subsidies from the Federal Government or the NSW Government's Koala Strategy.

Taronga Wildlife Hospitals and Nutrition Research

Taronga collaborates with university and industry partners to conduct research, aiming to enhance wildlife welfare and conservation. While hospital teams collect numerous samples annually through the opportunistic sampling program, Taronga staff also take the lead in research. These include investigating skeletal development in Short-beaked Echidna, establishing urinalysis reference ranges for monotremes and marsupials, monitoring vitamin D levels in Southern Hairy-nosed Wombats, satellite tracking marine turtles, studying health and disease in Platypus, vaccinating Zoo animals for SARS-CoV-2, and conducting nutrition research on various species. This includes projects on carotenoids in Regent Honeyeaters, the vitamin E status of Plains-wanderers, gastric emptying, glucose metabolism and milk composition in Short-beaked Echidna and improving the Koala feed base with toxin assessment tools and artificial leaf supplements.

Zoo Vet Residency

Dr Jess Whinfield, the first Resident in this three-year program, has now completed two and half years of training. The residency comprises hands-on training in Zoo and wildlife medicine and a research component. The research topic is 'Investigating the Health and Diseases of Platypuses in NSW'. Two of five thesis chapters have been written: 'Disease Risk Analysis for Platypus translocations', and a 'Retrospective review of Platypus medical records across Australia'. Research is progressing on the topics of protozoa of wild Platypuses in NSW; epidemiology of Leptospirosis in Platypuses; and novel disease processes in Platypuses. There has been crossover between the research aspects of the Residency and Platypus-focused clinical work, including the rearing of a rescued juvenile Platypus, and the translocation of Platypuses to Royal National Park. Research was presented at the 2022 Wildlife Disease Association Australasian-section conference and will be presented at 'The Future of the Platypus Conference' at Healesville Sanctuary, and International Translocation Conservation Conference in Perth.

Wildlife Care and Welfare Snapshot

316



native animals returned to the wild following care at Taronga's two Wildlife Hospitals.

'Tama', the Green Turtle hatchling, weighing only

127g



was rescued with a stomach full of plastic on Tamarama Beach.

7

Wedge-tailed Eagles admitted



to the Wildlife Hospital at Taronga Western Plains Zoo.

Critically endangered Black Rhinoceros born after a

490



day gestation period, is the fifth calf born to the conservation breeding program in eight years.

STRATEGY



CONSERVATION ACTION

Deliver world leading conservation
action, recovery and science





GREATER BILBY AT
THE TARONGA
SANCTUARY IN DUBBO
PHOTO BY RICK STEVENS

Conservation Science and Recovery

Taronga's conservation science programs work to address a range of key threatening processes, impacting a diverse range of species, with a focus on some of the most critically endangered in Australia and around the world. With support from the Taronga Foundation and other funding bodies, Taronga drives wildlife conservation initiatives that ensure the long-term security of wildlife in suitable ecosystems and habitats.

Over the past 12 months, Taronga scientists, conservation officers and partner organisations have conducted multidisciplinary programs under a unified mission of increasing understanding and protection of wildlife through investigation, evidence-based application and communication of science to the community.

In the Water

Marine Turtle Research

Taronga researchers are working with Macquarie University to analyse the tracking data obtained from turtles that have been released following rehabilitation at the Taronga Wildlife Hospital in Sydney between 2014 and 2023. Taronga has tracked 32 Green Turtles, five Hawksbill Turtles, one Loggerhead Turtle, and one Olive Ridley Turtle. Most turtles were tracked for more than 100 days (max 279 days), travelling up to 5,000km. Green Turtles generally stayed close to the coast and used the estuaries of the central and north coast of New South Wales. Hawksbill Turtles ranged widely into the South Pacific Ocean.

These results demonstrate successful rehabilitation of sick marine turtles and provide information on movement patterns and habitat use of juvenile turtles, an age class where little is known. By combining these tracks with habitat data from along the coast of New South Wales researchers can identify key areas of habitat critical for the conservation and management of Green Turtles in New South Wales.

CryoDiversity Bank

Working with local and global partners, Taronga scientists have continued to refine methodologies for cryopreservation of gametes (biobanking) across a range of species to support genetic management and wider conservation goals.

During 2022/23, Taronga staff and collaborators from the University of Wollongong cryopreserved 139 sperm samples from 44 frogs across four of Taronga's conservation breeding programs: Booroolong Frogs, Yellow-spotted Bell Frogs and Southern and Northern Corroboree Frogs. These scientists also attended



Melbourne Zoo to train and assist their staff in the collection and biobanking of sperm for the first time for an additional three breeding programs: the Baw Baw Frog, Spotted Tree Frog and Stuttering Frog.

In 2023, Taronga scientists also performed gamete rescue procedures to cryopreserve sperm from important animals within hours of death. Post-thaw tests of rhinoceros, hippopotamus and amphibian samples indicate good fertility potential and suitability for use in future assisted reproduction procedures to ensure managed wildlife populations remain genetically diverse and adaptive to change

Reef Recovery

Taronga continues to lead cryopreservation and biobanking efforts to secure the genetic diversity of corals from the Great Barrier Reef as part of the Australian Government's Reef Restoration and Adaptation Program. In 2022/23, Taronga scientists and collaborators including First Nations Peoples cryopreserved 239 samples from 33 colonies across four species collected from the central Great Barrier Reef, and a further 150 samples from 24 colonies of *Acropora millepora* collected in the Keppel Islands region (Konomie).

Importantly, many of the samples are from colonies with phenotypes indicating tolerance to ocean warming events, making these samples extremely valuable for future breeding of resilient corals. Fertilisation experiments showed that cryopreserved sperm can be used for production of coral larvae at the scale required to support aquaculture for reef restoration. Collaboration with Smithsonian Institution and University of Minnesota scientists to cryopreserve coral larvae have shown great promise, and Taronga's Cryodiversity Bank now contains cryopreserved coral larvae from the hard coral *Fungia fungites*.



REGENT HONEYEATER
AT THE TARONGA
SANCTUARY IN DUBBO
PHOTO BY RICK STEVENS



Australian Shark Incident Database

The Australian Shark Incident Database (ASID) was launched to the public last year via the open access platform GitHub, linked through Taronga's website. The move to open access has significantly increased the reach and impact of this data and improved efficiencies in data sharing across media, academia and the general public. As of June 2023, the online database has received more than 15,000 individual views and nearly 7,000 downloads. Taronga remains the custodian and curator of this legacy dataset.

Since June last year there have been a total of 14 shark incidents reported to the ASID. Twelve of these have been classified as unprovoked, with two fatalities recorded within this reporting period occurring in Western and South Australia. Taronga's experts are regularly called upon by media and news organisations to provide commentary on attacks and share important perspectives on the conservation of sharks.

Making the Waves Safe

This Australian Research Council funded project with Macquarie University and other partners aims to investigate the effects of pulsed electric fields on shark physiology and behaviour, develop novel electronic pulse waveforms that maximise the deterrent effect on shark species, and deliver innovative improvements in electronic shark deterrent technology that will save the lives of humans and sharks.

To generate novel electronic shark deterrent technology with improved deterrent range, researchers measured muscle twitching in sharks exposed to 12 novel wave forms and selected four that produced the best results. Using our specially developed electronic wave generator, researchers have started measuring behavioural and physiological effects of Port Jackson Sharks, White-tipped Reef Sharks and juvenile Bull Sharks when exposed to these four wave forms, simulating what a shark would feel from close range and from distance. Next steps include testing these wave forms on White Sharks, Tiger Sharks and other Whaler Sharks.

Bellinger River Turtles

As part of the bushfire rehabilitation recovery efforts, Taronga secured Federal Government funding to expand the holding facilities for this critically endangered freshwater turtle. The expansion has significantly increased Taronga's breeding and holding capacity and will allow for ongoing translocations to the wild.

Adults and older juvenile turtles were transferred to new outdoor facilities in March 2023. Taronga staff provided input at a workshop to reevaluate conservation planning and actions for the Bellinger River Turtle, held in August 2022. The most recent breeding season (2022/23) produced 43 hatchlings that are doing well, and the insurance population at Taronga now consists of 203 turtles.

Seabirds to Seascapes

Seabirds to Seascapes seeks to understand how coastal restoration influences marine species and broader biodiversity. Taronga's contribution to this NSW Environmental Trust major project will explore the population genetics of Little Penguins and identify their foraging hotspots. Little is known about the status of penguins in New South Wales and their vulnerability to the impacts of a rapidly changing marine environment. The project aims to shed light on these threats and identify management strategies.

Similarly, the recovering populations of fur seals in New South Wales are still poorly understood. The project will assess the New South Wales population and gather data on habitat preference. In December 2022 Taronga's scientists tracked 'Skip', a young male New Zealand Fur Seal that was released off Sydney Harbour after being rehabilitated at Sea World. Over six months Skip travelled 10,000km along the state's coast, Bass Strait, and into the Southern Ocean around Tasmania's south-west. The tracking shows the rehabilitation was a success and that Skip has re-joined a wild colony.



Spotlight

Platypus Conservation

This year marked a milestone achievement for Platypus conservation, with Taronga partnering with the University of New South Wales, NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service and WWF Australia to undertake the first translocation of this iconic species in New South Wales. Ten Platypus were successfully released into the Royal National Park, where they have been locally extinct for 50 years. The release marks the culmination of two years of collaborative, science-driven planning involving a comprehensive Disease Risk Assessment, Habitat Suitability Assessments, and in-situ population and eDNA surveys.

The 10 translocated Platypus were collected from several rivers across New South Wales to ensure genetic diversity of the release population. The six female and four male Platypus underwent health and demographic screening before being bought to the new Platypus Rescue and Rehabilitation Centre at Taronga Zoo, which was funded

by RSPCA NSW and generous donors. During their time at Taronga, the animals had radio tags externally secured and were implanted with acoustic receivers at the Taronga Wildlife Hospital. These tracking devices allow the Platypus to be monitored post release. After three weeks at Taronga, the female Platypuses were released to establish themselves first, followed a week later by the males. Initial results indicate high survivability and establishment of nesting burrows. Monitoring will continue for up to three years post release.

Construction of the new, state-of-the-art Platypus Rescue and Rehabilitation Centre known as Platypus HQ at Taronga Western Plains Zoo is on track for target completion by December 2023. Comprising both research and rescue facilities, as well as an exciting new Platypus exhibit and pre-release sanctuary. This facility is an ambitious project that will support scientific outcomes, and fill knowledge gaps, across reproductive biology and emergency rescue interventions, providing the science to secure a future for our emblem species.

On the Land

Regent Honeyeater

Taronga's Regent Honeyeater conservation breeding program has continued to go from strength to strength with 52 chicks born from 16 breeding pairs at Taronga Zoo and Taronga Western Plains Zoo in the 2022/23 breeding season. A further 50 Regent Honeyeaters were released in November 2022 in Tomalpin Woodlands, Wonnarua Country, at the same site as the 2021 release, alongside representatives from the NSW Department of Environment's Saving Our Species Program and Birdlife Australia. A song tutoring program is being trialled at both Zoos; it aims to assist zoo-bred chicks with learning the wild song repertoire.

Plains-wanderer

During the last 12 months, Taronga continued working with partner organisations to develop the long-term release strategy for these birds. Two additional releases were undertaken, one in August 2022 and one in April 2023. The birds were released into natural habitat in the Hay Plains, New South Wales Riverina (in private land and National Park). The results will be consolidated, and recommendations provided to the National Recovery Team. Successful breeding continues at both Taronga Zoo and Taronga Western Plains Zoo, with 18 chicks hatching during the 2022/23 breeding season.

Greater Bilby

Since its establishment in 2018, the Greater Bilby conservation breeding population in the Taronga Sanctuary has flourished. Despite contending with the impacts of climate change through drought and record rainfall, monitoring conducted in May 2023 has estimated the population size is 136. To date, 137 joeys born within the Sanctuary have been identified and all Bilbies are in excellent condition.

Bilbies from the Taronga Sanctuary have assisted in the reintroduction of the species to two conservation sites where the Greater Bilby had become extinct – Wild Deserts in Sturt National Park in western New South Wales and the Australia Wildlife Conservancy's 'Newhaven' site in the Northern Territory.

The Taronga Sanctuary remains a significant stronghold for conservation efforts for Greater Bilbies and in 2024, Taronga intends to supply Bilbies to a further two conservation sites where the aim is to reintroduce this species.

Norfolk Island Snails

Over the last year, the Norfolk Island Snail conservation program continued to contribute new information on these elusive invertebrates. Through careful data recording and behaviour observations, life history parameters such as longevity, growth and birth intervals continue to unfold. Additional adjustments to the husbandry were made based on the additional learning. For example, increases in relative humidity were made in the snails' tanks thanks to data from the island suggesting these snails live in a very moist environment, which is expected to have a positive impact.

Corroboree Frog

Both the Southern and Northern Corroboree Frogs are critically endangered and were greatly impacted by the Black Summer bushfires throughout south-eastern Australia. During the past year, 523 Southern Corroboree Frog eggs and 89 frogs were released into newly refurbished exclosures in Kosciuszko National Park that had been burnt in the 2020 bushfire. For the Northern Corroboree Frog, 210 fertile eggs were released in Brindabella National Park. An additional 148 Northern Corroboree Frog eggs were collected from wild nests to further build the genetic diversity within the insurance colony.

Conservation in Action Snapshot

10 

Platypus returned to the Royal National Park for the first time in decades.

1,371

frogs released into the wild this year, including

658 Booroolong Frogs, 

523 Southern Corroboree Frog eggs and 

89 Frogs, and 

210 Northern Corroboree Frogs.

The Australian Registry of Wildlife Health completed

356 

individual animal investigations.

Booroolong Frog

The Booroolong Frog is restricted to New South Wales and North-eastern Victoria, predominantly along the Western-flowing streams of the Great Dividing Range. The 2018-2020 drought severely impacted the habitat for this species within its northern range where several streams completely dried up. Sixty frogs were collected from drying habitats across the known range of the northern populations in 2019/20 and brought to Taronga Zoo for holding and breeding.

Funds from the NSW Department of Environment's Saving Our Species program allowed for the construction of a breeding facility and the operation of the program. So far, 725 offspring were produced by 39 of the wild founders. Habitat conditions recently improved, which allowed for a trial translocation to inform long-term re-establishment and range extension of the Northern Booroolong Frog.

In March, 638 juvenile Booroolong Frogs were released along a 1km section of Mulla Mulla Creek, each with a unique toe-clip ID. Post-release monitoring will search the creek to assess survival and dispersal of released frogs and is scheduled for Spring. About 110 frogs remain within the breeding program and are closely genetically managed to ensure maximum genetic diversity and demographic stability are maintained.

Koala Conservation and Partnerships

In March 2021, Taronga entered into a partnership with Koala Conservation Australia to develop a world first ex-situ Koala conservation breed-for-release program at the new, purpose-built facility in Port Macquarie, 'Guulaba'. The facility is now nearing completion and the acquisition of founders for the program is planned to commence in August 2023.

Taronga has also entered into an agreement with the University of Newcastle and NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service to deliver a Koala translocation and related research. The understanding of existing populations, habitat suitability, disease profiles and genetics is a major determinant of both translocation necessity and translocation success. A dedicated PhD student has been engaged and Koalas bred within the conservation breeding program will be supplied to facilitate translocations.

Christmas Island Blue-tailed Skinks and Lister's Gecko

The Christmas Island Blue-tailed Skink and Lister's Gecko are reptiles endemic to Christmas Island and are now considered extinct in the wild primarily due to the impact of the invasive Wolf Snake. Fortunately, some of the last remaining individuals were collected by Parks Australia in 2009/10 and a conservation breeding program was established on Christmas Island with a secondary population at Taronga Zoo.

In the last five years, the program has facilitated the release of 850 Blue-tailed Skinks to the Cocos (Keeling) Islands including 425 Taronga-bred animals. With the support of the Threatened Species Initiative, the reference genome for both species was annotated this year through extractions from Taronga lizards and this has now been published.

The genome and subsequent molecular genetic analysis are helping inform future genetic management of these two species. This year, Taronga hosted the IUCN Species Survival Commission Conservation Planning Specialist Group Christmas Island Reptile workshop funded by Parks Australia. This workshop brought together 25 experts from across the world to guide the development of the next Conservation Plan to conserve and restore Christmas Island's native reptiles.

Dingo

As the largest terrestrial predator in Australia, Dingoes are an iconic species. Beyond their intrinsic value, Dingoes play an important role in ecosystems, but can also pose risks around human populations and agriculture.

The Myall Lakes Dingo/Dapin Project is a collaboration between Taronga and the University of NSW working closely with NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service and Mid Coast Council to implement evidence-based management of Dingoes while developing non-lethal management tools to enable the effective retention and conservation management of Dingoes in the landscape. Critically, the project is working with local Traditional Owners to gain insights into the Dingoes, and their importance, and represent First Nations Peoples' views and knowledge in research and management.

This year the team has monitored at least seven packs of Dingoes in the region using GPS and radio tracking collars and camera-traps across urban and natural landscapes. Over 6,500 images of Dingoes were collected using remote cameras and 123 reports received through citizen science observers. The research is providing insights into the life history and ecology of the species.

Wildlife Forensics

Taronga continues to work with Federal and State partners to combat illegal wildlife trade using cutting edge technology. The forensics program leads the way using complementary technologies to dismantle illegal trade on two fronts: detection and tracing.

Partnering with Rapiscan Technologies and the Federal Government, Taronga is working to increase detection accuracy of smuggled lizards, fish and birds in transit pathways such as post and luggage using 3D x-ray CT scan technology. New target specimens such as ivory and Pangolin scale have been recently included in the algorithm development, as well as a range of heavily trafficked marine species such as shark fin, seahorse and coral.




Spotlight

Chuditch

In April 2022, Taronga embarked on a new recovery program for Chuditch (Western Quoll) with the acquisition of the first four breeding pairs from remnant and translocation populations. The program experienced rapid success, with joeys produced in the initial year breeding, and the first release of Chuditch from the program occurring in November of the same year – just nine months after the program began. Fifteen Chuditch were released to support the re-introduction of this

species in the Vulkathunha-Gammon Ranges in South Australia, and all post release monitoring demonstrated high survivorship and adaptation to the release site.

In the second year of operations, Taronga has doubled its capacity to eight pairs and aims to supply Chuditch to three different rewilding sites, including Wild Deserts in Sturt National Park. The reintroduction of the species to Wild Deserts will represent the return of Chuditch to New South Wales and is a milestone event in the conservation of this species.



CHUDITCH AT THE TARONGA
SANCTUARY IN DUBBO
PHOTO BY
MORRIGAN GUINANE



(LEFT – RIGHT)
SANDRA RINGHOF,
DAVID COOTE,
TIM WATTS AND
MICHAEL MCFADDEN
RELEASE BOOROOLONG
FROGS IN NORTHERN NSW
PHOTO BY ALEX PIKE, DPE

The novel tracing program, using hand-held x-ray technology (pXRF) to determine the origin of traded specimens, published its second peer-reviewed paper this year, demonstrating the use of the technology in determining provenance in the world's most trafficked South-East Asian species: Pangolins, Cockatoos and Freshwater Turtles.

This year also saw the completion of a second phase of the program, focusing on Australia's most trafficked species, the Shingleback Lizard, with the aim of delivering a cloud-based app that can communicate with the pXRF and deliver real-time determination of the animal's origin.

Over 300 wild and captive lizards have been scanned to develop a comprehensive reference library of elemental signatures and develop the species-specific algorithms for determining origin. Working in partnership with the University of NSW, the University of Technology and ANSTO, models have been successfully developed that can assign provenance of Shingleback Lizards with an accuracy and confidence level of about 75 per cent. The end-to-end prototype will be trialled with staff at the Sydney Gateway Facility and Department of Climate Change, Energy, Environment and Water in August 2023.

CITES COP19

In November 2022, Nick Boyle, Divisional Director Welfare, Conservation and Science and Dr Phoebe Meagher, Conservation Officer, attended the 19th United Nations Conference of the Parties for the Convention of International Trade of Endangered Species (CITES COP19) in Panama.

Representing Taronga, they made interventions on the review of trade of animal specimens reported as produced in captivity, and supported the up-listing of the Pygmy Blue-tongue Lizard to Appendix I – affording it the greatest level of protection from trade. Taronga's forensic work was also presented at an official side-event giving this work an international platform.

Conservation Partnerships

Taronga is investing in developing strategic partnerships with like-minded organisations to support in-situ conservation initiatives for vital wildlife, habitat, and communities across the globe. These partners share common, long-term conservation goals and are delivering high-impact research and conservation initiatives in the field.

Long standing partners included the Jane Goodall Institute, International Rhino Foundation, the Northern Rangelands Trust and TRAFFIC, and in 2022 also included Save Vietnam's Wildlife, Botswana Predator Conservation, Cheetah Conservation Botswana, the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation & Attractions (Chuditch) and Save The Bilby Fund.

Taronga Field Conservation Grants

Every two years Taronga's Field Conservation Grants give funding and support to conservation projects that help wildlife, habitats and communities all over the world. The 2022 round of funding attracted 108 applications from 38 countries and 14 applications were successful in receiving funding, from a total of \$200,000.

Box-gum Woodlands Rewilding

Taronga is 12 months into its most ambitious conservation project to date – Box-gum Woodland Rewilding Sanctuaries – which will restore more than 5000ha of habitat for Koala and critically endangered Box-gum Woodland¹. Box-Gum Woodland supports a wide variety of Australia’s plant and animal species, including 36 threatened species². The project received \$16 million in seed funding under the NSW Koala Strategy. In addition, Taronga is catalysing significant additional investment from partners who demonstrate leadership responding to the climate and nature crises, who are committed to going beyond just meeting their carbon neutrality obligations to future-proof their reputation.

Taronga is conducting extensive planning for this multi-decade project, with significant revegetation set to occur over coming years. More than planting trees, Taronga is re-establishing and restoring ecosystems that will provide sanctuaries for endangered wildlife and support communities by diversifying regional economies. Consequently, Taronga is working with First Nations People and local communities to select sites that are valued by people and nature to host sanctuary sites.

Taronga is also working with spatial scientists within the NSW Department of Environment’s Science Economics and Insights division to use cutting edge spatial products to locate sites that maximise climate resilience. Work this year indicates the best project sites are in northern New South Wales, to the west of the Great Dividing Range as far as Moree, south of Goondiwindi, north of Armidale.

The Australian Registry of Wildlife Health

Taronga hosts the globally unique Australian Registry of Wildlife Health (the Registry), to address the needs of wildlife managers, agriculture, and public health officials. The Registry is supported through agreements with NSW Departments of Primary Industries and Environment, as well as Parks Australia and others.

Taronga’s Registry provides a diagnostic service for free-ranging wildlife, delivers training to build capacity to detect wildlife disease, and conducts research to understand the ecology of newly discovered and known agents.

Known biosecurity threats (e.g. highly pathogenic avian influenza and foot and mouth disease) are approaching Australia with unknown potential impacts on free-ranging Australian wildlife. Environmental instability enhances the potential for emergence of organisms from wildlife hosts that could be significant to human health (as seen in the SARS Cov-2 pandemic). The Registry seeks to support early detection, and risk assessment of disease-causing agents in wildlife for early intervention and mitigation, prior to potential spill over to new hosts or conservation or biosecurity concerns.

Registry priorities moving into 2024 include an electronic database overhaul, enhancing diagnostic capacity in Australian wildlife, and securing sustainable funding beyond 2025. In 2022/23 The Registry conducted approximately 356 individual animal investigations (comprising 45 unusual or mass mortality events).

¹As per NSW Government definition of Critically Endangered White Box - Yellow Box - Blakely’s Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Derived Native Grassland in the NSW North Coast, New England Tableland, Nandewar, Brigalow Belt South, Sydney Basin, South-eastern Highlands, NSW Southwestern Slopes, Southeast Corner and Riverina Bioregions.

²Based on known species records within Box Gum Woodland within the Glenn Innes-Guyra Basalts subregion of the New England Tablelands bioregion (a representative area for the program) available through NSW Government threatened species search.

Conservation in Action Snapshot

Long-nosed Fur Seal was tracked for
10,000km

as part of the **Seabirds to Seascapes** project



389

coral samples

cryopreserved from the Great Barrier Reef as part of the Australian Government’s Reef Restoration and Adaptation Program.



15



Chuditch released to the Vulkathunha-Gammon Ranges in South Australia, the first release as part **Taronga’s breeding program**.

850



Blue-tailed Skinks, including **425** Taronga-bred individuals have been released in the Cocos (Keeling) Islands in the last five years.



ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP

Lead environmental sustainability
and climate change action





AUSTRALIAN
SEA-LION
PUP 'AMALIE'
PHOTO BY
RICK STEVENS



Actions

Switch to renewable electricity

In 2022, Taronga Zoo and Taronga Western Plains Zoo became the first Zoos in NSW to be powered by 100 per cent renewable electricity.

The landmark switch was made seven years ahead of Taronga's sustainability target, which was to be powered by renewable electricity before 2030. It means that every year from now on, approximately 7,000 tonnes of CO² are no longer being released into the atmosphere. The emissions saved every year are the weight equivalent of about 300 Humpback Whales.

By making the switch, Taronga is directly supporting the transition to clean energy, which is a significant step towards helping secure a future for wildlife.

Climate change is a key threatening process that has an impact on many of Australia's unique flora and fauna, and wildlife across the globe. More than 1,900 species in Australia are on the brink of extinction and climate change is accelerating this process. Renewable energy sources such as solar and wind emit little to no greenhouse gas, which is the biggest contributor to climate change.

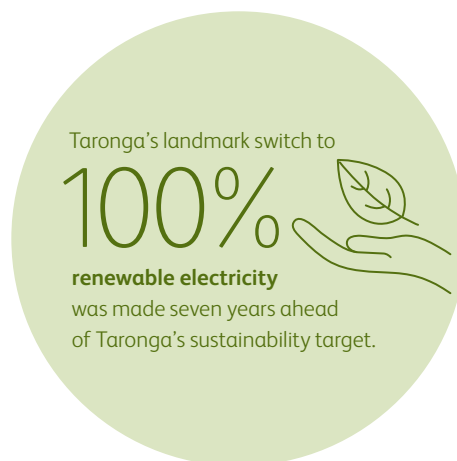
By switching to Red Energy as its renewable electricity provider, Taronga is directly supporting clean electricity generation from a solar farm that is local, on Wiradjuri Country near Taronga Western Plains Zoo, Dubbo.

Emissions Management

Since making the switch to renewables, Taronga has significantly lowered its Scope Two emissions and is now focusing on its largest Scope Three emissions, including animal feed, food and beverage and construction. Taronga is continuously working with its suppliers to make better choices for the environment, including the built environment. The built environment accounts for 20 per cent of Australia's total carbon emissions released into the atmosphere. It also consumes one-third of water and generates 40 per cent of total waste. By selecting sustainable building materials, reducing wastage, recycling, and using recovered material, the embodied environmental impacts of developments can be drastically reduced. In 2022/23 Taronga has updated and implemented an Environmentally Sustainable Design Checklist to use on all new builds across both sites.

Water Audit

Over the past 18 months, Taronga has collaborated with Sydney Water to identify, prioritise, and achieve large-scale, cost-effective savings to water usage. Initial investigations found that the Zoo's average water usage was higher than benchmarks for similar sized properties,



and potable water consumption was calculated to be over 52 million litres per year.

A remote monitoring system was installed to main water meters, which enabled real-time visibility of water usage behaviour. With the benefit of this insight, water usage could be directly correlated to operational activities and leaks could be better identified.

The water usage data was added into planning and prioritisation of maintenance works and, so far, an astonishing 75 per cent reduction in water usage has been achieved. As a result, Taronga Zoo is now saving nearly 40 million litres of water per year, the equivalent of 16 Olympic sized swimming pools.

Climate Resilience

The devastating impacts of climate change have already been experienced throughout parts of New South Wales. Most recently these have included storms, floods, bushfires, droughts and unprecedented heatwave cycles. It is imperative to act now to secure a future for humans and wildlife.

Taronga has been working to build oversight of climate-related risks and opportunities into its Governance processes. As part of this, Taronga's management team and other internal stakeholders have undergone workshops coordinated by the NSW Government's Climate Risk Ready team to understand climate projections in line with current scenarios. Following this, climate risks relevant to the organisation, such as drought and water resilience have become a key focus for Taronga Western Plains Zoo. Taronga also works to mitigate the impact of its operations on climate, by measuring Scope One, Two and Three Green House Gas emissions.

Waste Reduction

Taronga has more than 16 different waste streams – and an ambitious target of 90 per cent diversion of operational waste from landfill by 2025. A new addition is the 'Problem Plastics' stream. Since its inception in October 2022, 1,617kgs of soft plastics, and more than



ONEFISHTWOFISH FOUNDER
CHRIS GILLIES AND
MICHELLE SHAW, MANAGER
OF WILDLIFE HEALTH
AND REHABILITATION

60kgs of hard plastic have been recycled. Taronga’s recycling partner Plasmar collects plastics and creates civil and agricultural products that Taronga can buy back and use, creating a circular economy.

Taronga Western Plains Zoo has just begun its ‘problem plastics’ journey. This new waste stream joins several others including the organics waste, that is composted onsite through the ‘HotRot’ Aerobic Digester. The ‘HotRot’ takes compostable packaging, food waste, green waste and animal waste, and produces approximately 250 litres of compost per day. In 2022/23, Taronga Western Plains Zoo achieved an average diversion rate of 83.65 per cent.

OneFishTwoFish

Taronga’s animal diets rely on 35,000kg of seafood annually. Taronga strives to improve fish sustainability in animal food diets by replacing red-listed species where possible and supporting MSC-certified suppliers. Supporting Taronga’s strategic priorities of Environmental Leadership and Conservation Action, in 2023 Taronga entered into a three-year agreement to participate in Seafood Positive’s OneFishTwoFish program, which launched in February 2023. OneFishTwoFish aims to return two fish to the ocean, for every one fish consumed by investing in ocean conservation projects that measurably improve fish populations and marine life.

Capital Programs

Taronga continues to lead in the Zoo and tourism industry by including environmentally sustainable design

initiatives within all new capital development projects and insisting that new projects investigate and develop innovative design and construction solutions that reduce the impact on global environments and wildlife habitats. All projects consider the use of recycled materials, energy consumption, access to renewables and holistic decisions around lifecycle assessments.

Sustainable and Ethical Procurement

Taronga is committed to the environment, the broader community and as a government agency is also aligned to the NSW Procurement Framework. The purchasing of goods and services for Taronga should not cause harm to the environment or negatively impact Taronga’s supply chain.

Taronga demonstrates this commitment by having clear guidelines like the sustainability and ethical framework for its staff and business partners to understand how to purchase and contract goods and services in an environmentally sustainable and ethical fashion.

A strong focus is placed on Taronga’s business partners to demonstrate a similar commitment by having open dialogue on important matters such as modern slavery, single use plastics and landfill diversion. Sustainable and Ethical Procurement cannot be achieved by Taronga alone. Taronga relies on its partners to do the right thing and committing to meaningful environmental targets in supplier contracts is the way Taronga ensures minimum environmental impact.

LIBBY HALL WITH
PRE-RELEASE PENGUIN
AT TARONGA WILDLIFE
HOSPITAL, SYDNEY
PHOTO BY TIM BAUER



Influence

Sustainability Scorecard

Taronga's ongoing commitment to sustainability extends not only to its own operations, but in working with partners on their own sustainability goals. Through the formalised Sustainability Scorecard Framework, developed as part of Taronga's previous Strategic Plan, Taronga has been able to work with both new and existing partners to see significant changes to sustainability practices. This collaborative approach has seen Taronga work with its partners to rework internal practices, review supply chain and procurement processes, increase organisational awareness of key sustainability issues and prioritise future actions. Work is now being undertaken to grow and develop the framework and an updated version will be launched in 2023/24.

Red Energy Saver

Taronga and Principal Partner Red Energy joined forces on a residential electricity product designed to deliver funding to support Taronga's conservation work. The 'Red Wildlife Saver' product was launched in March 2023 and sees Red Energy contribute \$5 every month to the Taronga Foundation for every residential electricity customer on the plan. In the first few months of launch, Red Energy had more than 210 customers on the 'Red Wildlife Saver' plan with representation from every state they retail in. The number of sign-ups has continued to grow at promising rates. The product has been well-received by customers and highlights the mutually beneficial opportunities of a strong, well-aligned corporate partnership with revenue generated for both organisations.

Rubbish Run

Taronga Rubbish Run, a unique fitness event that asked participants to prioritise picking up rubbish while engaging in physical exercise, made the focus of its fundraising efforts the Taronga Wildlife Hospitals in Sydney and Dubbo. Our hospital teams have identified an increase in cases of wildlife impacted by rubbish. The treatment, care and rehabilitation of these animals resonated with Taronga's wider community and highlighted the role individuals can play in helping to protect native habitat for native wildlife – by simply 'picking it up to protect'. The campaign received significant support and raised crucial funds.

Single Use Plastics Plan

The NSW Plastics Action Plan has seen some of the most problematic single-use plastics, including single-use plastic bags, straws, cutlery, plates and bowls and polystyrene food ware and cups, phased out across the state from June 2022. Taronga hosted the original NSW Single Use Plastics Industry Forum and has continued to support the NSW Government with these significant changes within the community. Taronga has provided educational information across its formal education programs, social channels, website and Litter Free Oceans community. Taronga also used its powerful social media platforms to provide commentary and guidance to its 800,000-strong social media community around the plastics changes and the broader impact to wildlife.

Environmental Leadership Snapshot

Taronga switched to 100% renewable electricity, saving approx.

7,000

tonnes of CO₂ from being released into the atmosphere each year.



The emissions saved every year is the weight equivalent of about

300

Humpback Whales



75%

reduction in Taronga's

water usage, saving nearly 40 million litres of water per year, the equivalent of 16 Olympic sized swimming pools.



Taronga Western Plains Zoo has produced

250 litres

of compost per day from onsite organic waste through the 'HotRot' Aerobic Digester.



1,617kgs

of soft plastics and more than 60kgs of hard plastics recycled through the 'problem plastics' stream since October 2022.





COMMITMENT TO COUNTRY

Commit to and embed a way of working that respects and includes Indigenous peoples, Culture and place.



CRITICALLY ENDANGERED
SOUTHERN CORROBOREE
FROG RELEASED INTO
NATIONAL PARK LAND
PHOTO BY HARRY VINCENT



In a time of rapid environmental change, Taronga's commitment to education, wildlife, conservation and science has never been more critical. As a conservation community, we commit ourselves to the ongoing process of Reconciliation within our field; to respect, connect, consult, and be led by the complex and vital knowledge(s) of First Nations Peoples as we urgently work to safeguard the future of our planet.

Taronga Aboriginal Advisory Group, Cammeraigal Country

Through ongoing meaningful consultation with Taronga's Aboriginal Advisory Group (TAAG), Cammeraigal Country, Taronga continues to strengthen connections, trust and partnerships with First Nations Peoples and Communities. In 2023, the TAAG continued to provide Taronga with Cultural guidance and support across all areas of the organisation, including the Nura Diya Australia Project, employment and traineeship programs and the embedding of Cultural protocol and practice in Education and Conservation projects. With a changeover in membership term in June 2023, expressions of interest have been sent out inviting new members to join the group, supporting the continuation of representing diversity in Country, Community and expertise within the group.

Yarn Up – Wiradjuri Country

Supporting Taronga's commitment to work respectfully and meaningfully with Country, Community and Culture in Dubbo, guidance and leadership in this area has been facilitated by Indigenous staff working and living on Wiradjuri Country. Through listening and learning from Taronga's people, who hold strong connections and relationships with the Indigenous community and organisations in the local area, ongoing consultation has been provided across multiple areas at Taronga Western Plains Zoo. Community Yarn Ups have provided ongoing opportunities to deepen Taronga's relationships and connections with Traditional Owners and Custodians, sharing knowledge and Cultural advice on capital projects, conservation, education, and training.

Burbangana

The Burbangana Program, a Sydney language word meaning 'take my hand and help me up', has been running since 2008 as a long-term partnership with the NSW Department of Community and Justice Metro ISS Unit. Young people aged 11–18 are referred to the therapeutic and aspiration-building program, where they engage in Zoo-related learning and develop life skills. Students build long-term relationships with staff through education, science, and Culture, developing the students' sense of worth and self-confidence.



The Sydney Red Gum, Growth and Development Program, launched 12 months ago, is for 18–25-year-olds. It evolved from the Burbangana Program and provides continued support and opportunities for young people who are no longer eligible for the Burbangana Program and are transitioning to adult living. This initiative will continue to provide support, mentoring and skill development in a safe environment, ensuring each young person can continue to think positively about their future while building their life skills. The outcomes range from therapeutic experiences to vocational pathways and training, depending on the individual needs and aspirations of each student.

Classroom teacher and Principal regarding their two students who participate in our program: "We have noticed an increase in empathy and greater care towards fellow students, improvement in the students' language skills and speech and increases in confidence and knowledge, which enhances their engagement in learning.

“

The Zoo has been like my school,
my second home, my life saver.

”

Current long-term student: "The Zoo has been like my school, my second home, my life saver. I've learnt so much and it's built up my confidence; I'm able to talk to people, socialise more with community and get rid of all the negativity that had been in my life."



WAGANA DANCERS
AT THE OPENING OF
NURA DIYA AUSTRALIA
PHOTO BY HARRY VINCENT



Spotlight

Nura Diya Australia

Through the creation of Nura Diya Australia, Taronga has made a commitment honoring Country, Culture and Place. This contemporary precinct is inspired by an ancient and present wisdom of First Nations People and the oldest continuing Culture on the planet.

The development included respectful consultation and collaboration with First Nations People, including Taronga’s Aboriginal Advisory Group, First Nations staff, Cammeraigal and Dharawal Elders, Indigenous spatial and landscape designers and Aboriginal contemporary artists Jacob Nash (Bangarra Dance) and Nathan Peckham (Yurana Creative).

Nura Diya shares stories of Australia, of a sanctuary of ochre carrying a legacy and a knowing far beyond its alluring colours. The design of Nura Diya Australia showcases Cultural visual language, sculptural artworks and co-naming of places and species sharing Sydney First Language.

The design features artwork by Jacob Nash Design, including Angophora Bark Precinct Markers and Angophora Leaf Pattern, Travelling Country Cultural line work, Tree Hugger Mother and Child with Spirit Line, Tree Hugger Hands – White Spirit, Animal Cultural Paw prints – buru (Kangaroo), gulamany (Koala) and wuragal (dingo), Cammeraigal Line of Country, nguwing nura (Night Country), Horizon Line artwork and Angophora Leaf gobo lighting projection.

Nathan Peckham from Yurana Creative created the Songline Black Swan and Black Duck, garraway (Cockatoos) in flight and the graphic design of Nura Diya Australia signage. Yuin lore man Les McLeod is also featured using clap sticks through sound art composition.

Taronga is proud that Nura Diya Australia is a place of gathering and learning like nowhere else, connected with pathways of endless journeys taken back and forth on Country.



TARONGA'S BURBANGANA STUDENT CATARINA WITH LOCAL BRUNGLE PUBLIC STUDENT NAVAEH, PAINTED UP AS GYAK. THIS IS THE FIRST TIME IN ALMOST 200 YEARS THAT COMMUNITY HAVE DANCED ON COUNTRY FOR GYAK
PHOTO BY HARRY VINCENT

Spotlight

Gyak Project

Gyak is the ancient name of the critically endangered Northern Corroboree Frog, a vital species Taronga is committed to conserving for generations to come. The Gyak in-situ project works on the home Country of the Wolgalu and Wiradjuri people of New South Wales to bring elders, scientists, conservationists, students, and family together, to tell a modern conservation story through cultural dance and the ancient knowledge of this frog and its people.

Local students from Brungle Public School, Tumut High School, Burabinya Girls Group, Taronga Zoo's Burbangana Program and Taronga's School Based

Apprenticeship and Trainee program were the recipients and voices of this project. Together they developed a dance, with help from Bangarra Dance Theatre, to tell this important story. Wolgalu representative and Community leader Shane Herrington said, "This is the first time our mob have danced and told stories on Gyak Country in almost 200 years. Putting Gyak back on Country, puts our people back on Country". The Gyak in-situ project first commenced in March 2022. This is a wonderful collaboration between Taronga, Brungle and Tumut Aboriginal Land Council, the NSW Department of Environment, Brungle Primary School, the University of Wollongong, Buugang Wambaal Project and Bangarra Dance Theatre.



Menangle Project

The program is facilitated on a rural property in Menangle, south-west of Taronga, where up to nine young people live in a specialised facility. The program sees a Zoo staff member with specialised skills in teaching, urban ecology and farm care engage with young people in the familiar and safe setting of their own home. This project provides much needed experiences to several young people who are not eligible for referral to the Burbangana Program at the Zoo. The students have learnt about composting, worm farms, soil quality and veggie gardens, with the aim of producing their own sustainable veggie patch that they can use for their meals. They also have 11 chickens that they care for each day; they have enjoyed learning about these animals, their needs and requirements, and, best of all, collecting up to 11 eggs each day.

Walanmarra Program

Walanmarra at Taronga Western Plains Zoo is the sister program to Burbangana. It provides opportunities for Indigenous children living in out-of-home care to participate in a range of activities on Wiradjuri Country whilst being mentored by Taronga staff. The name of the program, Walanmarra, is a Wiradjuri word that means 'to make strong now', which represents the core aim of the program – building confidence and strength in each young person through deepening their connection to Culture and Country. Over the last 12 months, this successful partnership program with the NSW Department of Community and Justice Services has had more than 30 participants from local Dubbo Primary Schools. Each child attended one day a week throughout the school term to work alongside Taronga staff, youth mentors and Community members to develop life skills, self-determination and a sense of pride in their Culture.

Birranry and Mulungan Business

In partnership with the NSW Office of Regional Youth, this education program at Taronga Western Plains Zoo reconnects young people to Culture, developing an increased sense of worth and reengaging them back into education and training pathways. Since it began in 2022, more than 120 high school students have participated in the program, developing skills in the areas of wildlife care, conservation, tourism and hospitality. The success of this program has resulted in graduate students joining the Youth at the Zoo program to continue their development and training with Taronga and one graduate being recruited and employed as a School Based Apprenticeship and Trainee at Taronga Western Plains Zoo.

School Based Apprenticeship and Trainee Program

Over the last 12 months, the Taronga School Based Apprenticeship and Traineeship program expanded after a new partnership was established with the Elsa Dixon Aboriginal Employment team. Taronga has employed an additional 12 Indigenous trainees, including five at Taronga Western Plains Zoo undertaking a certification in Animal Care, and seven at Taronga Zoo studying Tourism, Animal Care and Conservation and Ecosystem Management. The Community and Cultural programs team mentor the trainees to ensure they are successful in their course whilst also considering future opportunities – providing support with life skills, personal and professional development. Teams from across all divisions are working alongside the trainees; this is a mutually beneficial relationship with positive outcomes for all.

Training and Employment

Supported by Taronga's Aboriginal Advisory Group (TAAG), Cammeraigal Country, Wiradjuri Community members and Indigenous staff, there has been a strong focus over the last 12 months on increasing training and employment opportunities for First Nations Peoples. A review of Taronga's current Aboriginal Employment showed there are about 50 Indigenous staff employed across both sites; this includes 17 newly created targeted School Based Traineeships and two newly targeted positions to mentor and train them. These newly created targeted roles are essential in not only supporting the trainees through their training courses and practical placements, but also in creating and developing ongoing training and employment opportunities through long-term career pathways. The next stage in Taronga's Aboriginal Employment plan is to further develop the School Based Apprenticeship and Trainee Program and increase targeted and identified roles throughout different levels and grades within the organisation, such as supervisor, management and executive.

Reconciliation Week

The 2023 National Reconciliation Week theme, 'Be a Voice for Generations', provided opportunities on Cammeraigal and Wiradjuri Countries for Taronga staff, students and volunteers to reflect on ways to positively contribute to true reconciliation. To launch Reconciliation Week, Taronga Zoo hosted a special event with the Aboriginal People and Culture team from the NSW Department of Planning and Environment. More than 250 staff from across multiple portfolios were invited to participate in a range of cultural activities, including dance and weaving workshops and panel discussions. A highlight of this event was Taronga's School Based Trainees opening proceedings by delivering a personal Acknowledgement of Country, sharing their journey and the importance of being a voice for generations.



STUDENTS FROM
BRUNGLE PUBLIC
SCHOOL LOOKING AT
A CORROBOREE FROG
PHOTO BY
HARRY VINCENT

NAIDOC Week

Throughout NAIDOC in the first week of the July School holidays, a range of activities and staff events were held on Cammeragal and Wiradjuri Country to celebrate the 2022 theme, 'Get Up, Stand Up, Show Up'. These celebrations were an opportunity to connect staff and guests to Indigenous Cultures across both Zoos and to provide opportunities for ongoing meaningful conversations with Indigenous staff, Traditional Owners and Custodians and Community members. A highlight of the 2022 NAIDOC celebrations was once again the Animals of Dreaming Zoomobile program delivered by Brewarrina Elder, Colin Hardy OAM, alongside Taronga

Education staff. This highly engaging program connected more than 500 students throughout New South Wales to Australian native wildlife and Indigenous Culture through the power of storytelling and music.

Wild Lights at Taronga

Wild Lights at Taronga featured artist Nathan Peckham, an Aboriginal artist at the cutting edge of contemporary First Nations art and design. A direct descendant of the Tubbah Gah clan within the Wiradjuri Nation of New South Wales, Nathan is the creative director and founder of Yurana Creative. Based in Dubbo, he is proud to see his art and work reaching and connecting with people across the globe.

“

Celebrations were an opportunity to connect staff and guests... and to provide opportunities for meaningful conversations.

”

Nathan Peckham’s artwork was crafted onto the canvasses of many new lanterns, including the wilay (Possum), bura (Kangaroo) and gulamany (Koala) as well as featuring in projections.

As part of the access and inclusion partnership with Cushman & Wakefield, Nathan Peckham also created a unique mural with 16 students from St Lucy’s School for Children with Disabilities. Together they created a shared story of connecting place and nature and uniting people of all abilities in caring for Country. A broadcast feature was secured with NITV (National Indigenous Television), highlighting the collaboration.

Supply Nation Partnership

Taronga is a proud member of Supply Nation, an indigenous supplier advocacy organisation. Taronga recognises that \$1 spent with an Indigenous supplier leads to \$4.41 of social return. This means that by having Taronga partner directly with a Supply Nation business, a greater impact to the Indigenous community is achieved. Indigenous businesses are also 100 times more likely to employ other Indigenous businesses. Taronga has recently engaged with Supply Nation members on asset management and facilities opportunities and is actively looking to engage with Indigenous suppliers in a variety of categories at both Zoos.

Loggerhead Turtle Translocation

Taronga has continued its journey towards integrating Cultural practices and knowledge in its conservation science programs. In January 2023, representatives from Taronga’s Community and Cultural team and the Darkinjung Local Aboriginal Land Council from the Central Coast of New South Wales came together in a handover of precious endangered Loggerhead Turtle Eggs, excavated from Darkinjung Country and transported to Cammeraigal Country. Taronga’s vet and herpetofauna team carefully incubated and cared for the turtles until their return to the Central Coast, where the hatchlings were welcomed back to Country by the local mob and then released into the ocean. NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service engaged the Darkinjung representatives during the excavation and rescue, and they were keen to meet Taronga’s Indigenous team to formally receive responsibility of the turtles while they were off Country. Having Darkinjung Local Aboriginal Land Council perform Cultural processes throughout the event was received with gratitude by the many volunteers, conservation and ranger teams who worked hard to return these turtles to the ocean. Cultural representation enhances conservation and grows connection and relationships between people and places.

Commitment to Country Snapshot

30+



participants from the local Dubbo Primary Schools engaged in the **Walanmarra Program**.

50



Indigenous staff are now employed across Taronga.

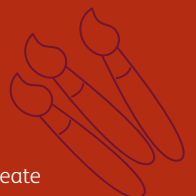
17



new targeted School Based Traineeships and two new targeted positions to mentor and train them implemented in the last 12 months.

16

students



worked with artist Nathan Peckham to create a mural connecting people of all abilities to Country and Culture.



ORGANISATIONAL STRENGTH

Enhance our reputation,
financial position and
organisational effectiveness





TARONGA
CONSERVATION SOCIETY AUSTRALIA
For the Wild

TARONGA
WESTERN PLAINS
ZOO

TARONGA
WESTERN PLAINS
ZOO

(LEFT TO RIGHT) KIRSTY
DUNDAS-HARGRAVES,
LEANNE SUTCLIFFE
AND TELEISHA-FAY
BROOK CELEBRATING
RECONCILIATION WEEK 2023
ON CAMMERIAGAL COUNTRY,
TARONGA ZOO SYDNEY

Financial Strength

Taronga's Financial Model

Taronga is a NSW Government Agency constituted under the Zoological Parks Board Act 1973. Taronga is a self-funded agency, not-for-profit organisation and a Public Non-Financial Corporation. Taronga's financial model self-generates over 85 per cent of its operating revenues through its Zoo Admissions, Accommodation, Retail stores, Education Programs and donations through the Taronga Foundation. Any operational surplus is held in reserves and invested in Taronga's conservation projects and capital infrastructure with no dividends distributed.

Taronga receives a recurrent grant of \$16.5 million per annum from the NSW Government, which is allocated to asset maintenance and social policy programs. All other NSW Government funding is project specific and relates mainly to capital works or conservation programs.

Operational Strength

People Matter: Employment Engagement and Culture

The People Matter Employee Survey is an annual employee engagement survey that asks all NSW Government employees about their experiences with their work, workgroup, managers, and organisation. Taronga encourages all employees to have their say and give feedback to improve their workplace experience and help make Taronga, and the NSW public sector, a better place to work.

The survey was undertaken over a four-week period in August and September 2022. All up, 594 survey responses were recorded, a response rate of 88 per cent. Taronga's overall engagement score was 71 per cent, an increase from the previous year, and 7 per cent higher than the NSW public sector's overall score. The results highlighted our people are proud to work for Taronga (83 per cent) and the top scoring areas of the survey were Ethics and Values (89 per cent), Risk and Innovation (88 per cent) and Inclusion and Diversity (87 per cent).

By reviewing survey feedback, Taronga identified three key themes for focus and targeted initiatives across the organisation: Learning and Development, Recognition and Employee Voice and Psychosocial Safety and Wellbeing.

Learning and Development

Taronga is committed to developing its people to ensure that all employees receive the training and development needed to do their job well. Taronga also strives for employees to be satisfied with opportunities available for career development.

Taronga partnered with National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA) to deliver courses to develop storytelling, presentation skills and confidence. Drawing on NIDA's expertise in performance and the art of communication, the customised one-day short courses were designed specifically for Taronga's people and over 100 employees attended the face-to-face sessions at both sites.

Taronga also partnered with Tim Sullivan, who delivered a special two-day course. Mr Sullivan is an internationally renowned and award-winning specialist in animal behavioural husbandry and training. Twenty-five staff from Taronga's wildlife operations team were involved in this intimate two-day workshop drawing on participants' real life experience and ideas for professional growth, networking and to benefit the animals in our care.

In collaboration with TAFE NSW, 20 employees completed an Australian Sign Language Short Course (AUSLAN). This course introduced a variety of signing skills to help participants communicate with the Deaf community.

The design and build of a new Learning Management System (LMS), an SAP SuccessFactors module, is also underway and will be launched next financial year. The new system will host all internal eLearning modules, track training, monitor compliance licence and qualifications and allow more visibility over Taronga's learning opportunities.

Mr. Len Bleasel AM Leadership Program

Mr Len Bleasel AM continues to support Taronga and its people with a Scholarship and Leadership Program. Mr Bleasel generously committed to funding the Taronga and University of Technology Sydney (UTS) collaborative 24-month program that provides 12 Taronga employees with the opportunity to complete a Diploma of Leadership and Management. All participants successfully achieved their Diploma in Leadership and Management. The team celebrated their success with a graduation ceremony held in Sydney in April 2023. This event included attendees from UTS, Taronga and Mr Bleasel.

The Scholarship program awarded 27 applicants in 2022; this is the most supported in a single year. Celebrations for awardees were held in April at Taronga Zoo and June in Taronga Western Plain Zoo. Aligned to the Bleasel Scholarships, the Dr Susan Freidman Living and Learning with Animals course specifically for the Wildlife Operations teams will take a Taronga cohort through eight weeks of study commencing in July 2023. Mr Bleasel has directly supported over 140 team members in their learning and development since the program's inception in 2017.

“

In collaboration with TAFE NSW, 20 employees completed an Australian Sign Language Short Course (AUSLAN).

”

Employee Recognition

Taronga continues to recognise the efforts of people and teams through many formal and informal initiatives, with a deliberate focus on the employee experience and team culture. In 2022/23, Taronga's recognition strategy saw the relaunch of the Values Awards, which gives employees the chance to nominate their colleagues who have demonstrated Taronga's core values. Monthly nominees go into the draw to win accommodation experiences across both Zoos monthly. The program was an instant success, with 120 nominations received in the first month alone.

In November 2022 the Silver Shovels Awards night returned to its traditional face-to-face format with events at both Zoos. There were more than 250 nominations received highlighting the diverse and incredible work done by our people.

Workforce Diversity and Multicultural Themes

Taronga is committed to a diverse workplace, fostering a culture of belonging and inclusion. NAIDOC Week, National Reconciliation Week, International Women's Day and World Pride were some of the celebrations to promote inclusion for Taronga's people and a greater understanding of our diverse community. These celebrations were acknowledged and shared with our people through virtual communications platform Workplace and publicly across our website and social media platforms.

Taronga is proud to be supporting 19 School Based Apprenticeship and Traineeship participants (SBATS) who have joined Taronga for up to two years and are studying either tourism, wildlife or horticulture, while completing the practical part of their studies. Work has continued on Taronga's Aboriginal Employment Strategy with stakeholder and community representative engagement. Taronga's Indigenous Youth Programs have continued to operate in partnership with the NSW Government, delivering over \$2 of social value for every \$1 invested.

Equal Employment Opportunity

Disability Inclusion Action Plan

The NSW public sector has set a target to increase the representation of people with disabilities to 5.6 per cent

by 2025. Taronga continues to make progress towards this target while supporting volunteers, students and guests by removing social and physical barriers impacting accessibility. Taronga hosted two 'Night of Inclusion' events as part of Wild Lights at Taronga, supported by partner Cushman & Wakefield. More than 2,000 guests from schools, community groups and other organisations supporting families with children with disabilities were provided tickets to attend the experience during an accessible session with additional volunteers and support measures provided.

Assistance Animals

One of Taronga's many goals is that all members of the community feel welcome to visit its safe, inclusive and accessible Zoos. Taronga continues to play a leadership role in supporting members of our community who require an assistance animal during their visit. In 2022/23, Taronga worked closely with an external accessibility consultant to better understand the access needs of people who have an assistance animal, relevant legislative requirements and consider a best-practice model that suits Taronga's Zoos and operations. During this phase of consultation, staff and guest safety, along with animal health and welfare, have been carefully considered. Information sessions for staff and volunteers are underway with a new policy to be rolled out by the end of 2023.

Volunteers

During 2022/23, Taronga's Volunteer Programs team increased the number of people volunteering with the organisation to 521, while also expanding the types of opportunities on offer.

In 2023, 'The Change Makers' was the theme for National Volunteer Week, a fitting description for Taronga's volunteers who are represented in more than 30 different teams across administration, animal care, guest experience, science and research and regularly champion new initiatives.

The recruitment of Keeping volunteers in 2022 saw the introduction of online resources to educate potential volunteers on Taronga's animal care positions. This platform reached more of the community than ever before and provided a more accessible platform for recruitment.

Work Health and Safety (WHS)

Safety Culture and Leadership

Taronga remains committed to embedding a positive safety and wellbeing culture, with the leadership team placing a strong emphasis on the importance of health and safety, providing resources, support and guidance to teams. Taronga believes that a safe work environment is a shared responsibility and encourages active participation from its people and ensures safety by design for new capital work programs.

Taronga Foundation

The Taronga Foundation was privileged to receive support throughout the year, generating gross income of \$19.1 million. These funds were generously donated from individuals through direct marketing, regular giving, trusts and foundations, corporate partners and individual supporters who kindly remembered Taronga in their Will. Funds raised throughout the year supported field conservation grants program, in-situ conservation partnerships, education and research projects.

The focus remained on securing philanthropic pledges towards the Wild Futures project, the building of two state-of-the-art veterinary teaching hospitals at Taronga Zoo and Taronga Western Plains Zoo. When completed they will not only build on the nations capacity to respond to wildlife emergencies in the future, but also add to the guest experience at both Zoos, with procedures able to be viewed by guests. Whilst 2022/23 was a challenging year economically across the country, Taronga is heartened by the support of the community who gave generously to ensure that wildlife is protected, and habitats are restored.

Corporate Partnerships

The Foundation secured over \$5 million in financial support from corporate partners to fund Taronga's critical conservation work during the financial year. This included more than \$3.7 million in cash contributions and more than \$1 million of in-kind support providing significant savings in the operation of both Zoos. The success of Taronga's Corporate Partnerships program is attributed to over 55 partners, many of which have made long-standing investments with Taronga, and whose ongoing support has been integral to the financial sustainability of the organisation. Additionally, Taronga engaged various new corporate partners throughout the year including Visa, joining the likes of Red Energy, Peters Ice Cream, Coca Cola Amatil and Citi as a strategic partner of Taronga's conservation efforts.

Fundraising Events and Community Fundraising

The Taronga Rubbish Run returned for its second year encouraging participants to 'pick it up to protect wildlife'. This community fundraising campaign was moulded and updated based on learning's from the previous year's campaign. Taronga also saw community fundraisers engaged across a number of public running events through the Run Wild campaign. Other large-scale community fundraising initiatives included the ECP Golf Day and a co-produced Girl Guides fundraiser and sleep out event at both of Taronga's Zoos. November 2022 also saw the return of Taronga's Zoofari Gala. After a two-year hiatus, Taronga's donors and supporters were back in force raising over \$400,000 at the event.

Major Gifts and Gifts in Wills

The Taronga Foundation is grateful to the generous supporters who included a gift in their will, contributing over \$1 million in support of Taronga's conservation work. Generous gifts of \$7.9 million were received from philanthropists, helping fund new initiatives, such as supporting the development of Platypus Conservation Centres in Sydney and Dubbo, the translocation of Platypus to the Royal National Park and the establishment of a new breed-and-release program for the Chuditch (Western Quoll), which saw the first release into the Vulkathunha-Gammon Ranges National Park in South Australia in 2022.

These donations also supported the Wild Futures project, helping the completion and opening of a new Wildlife Hospital at Taronga Western Plains Zoo, as well as ongoing wildlife recovery work in Australia and conservation projects overseas. Taronga Foundation hosted several events this year to thank donors and partners for their extraordinary support, including Twilight and Vivid events and a Friends of the Future lunch.

Regular Giving and Zoo Parents

Taronga's individual giving programs raised more than \$3 million from new and existing supporters. Programs include appeal, Zoo Parent animal adoption and Taronga Wildlife Defenders. These results in a difficult and uncertain economic time are testament to the trust in Taronga from its supporters.

Taronga would like to acknowledge the following generous supporters who donated \$20,000 or more this financial year:

Mr Lindsay Allen
Auxilium Foundation
Dinah Beeston
Bird Holcomb Foundation
Mr Len Bleasel AM
Mr Leslie Boardman and Mrs Dianne Boardman



QUEEN NYANI
AT TARONGA
ZOO SYDNEY
PHOTO BY
HARRY VINCENT

Spotlight

World Pride

Taronga Zoo celebrated 2023 World Pride – which was hosted from 18 February until 5 March 2023 in Sydney – and welcomed thousands of guests to learn more about wildlife. Taronga kicked off the celebration with the unveiling of ‘Queen Nyani’ as part of the Rainbow City project that celebrated 45 free public artworks and marked 45 years of the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras. Taronga Zoo’s resident gorilla statue was decorated with a giant rainbow cape and surrounded by disco balls, welcoming everyone to sit in their hands

and celebrate the diversity of our communities and the spirit of inclusion.

The Taronga Zoo forecourt and retail areas came to life with World Pride flags and colourful window displays were on show across the Zoo. The Twilight at Taronga concert series featured a special World Pride Amplified listed event – with an inaugural Drag Gala show held in March. To celebrate diversity, Taronga also partnered with Rainbow Families, offering a discount on Zoo tickets across a dedicated weekend.

BridgeLane Foundation
 Conen-Spence Trust
 Crookes Family Foundation
 The Curtis Foundation
 Min Darling and Ian Darling AO
 Max and Dianne Denton
 Mr Jerry Ellis AO and Mrs Ann Ellis
 Mr Richard Elmslie and Mrs Leslie Tilly
 Kennards Hire Foundation
 Ferris Family Foundation
 For Animals Foundation
 Dr Martin Gleeson
 Greater Good Charities
 Ms Rosie Williams and Mr John Grill AO
 Steven and Victoria Horne
 Dr Sandra and Mr Graham Humphrey
 Anna Josephson and Rickard Gardell
 Alan and Lynne Rydge
 Mrs Ingrid Kaiser
 The Kinghorn Foundation
 Maple-Brown Family Foundation
 Jacob Meredith-Elali
 Mark and Louise Nelson
 Orinoco Foundation
 Ottomin Foundation
 Mr and Mrs John and Rosalinda Sample
 Skipper-Jacobs Charitable Trust
 The Skipper Family
 The Suters Family
 Janelle, Corinne and Mark Turner
 Ms Lisa Walker
 Mr George Wang
 Julia Vonwiller AM and Chris Vonwiller AM

Friends of the Future Income
 (Funds received from estates 2022/23)

The Estate of the Late David Bennett
The Estate of the Late Alma Bower
the Estate of the Late Danielle Coles
The Estate of the Late Joan Davis
The Estate of the Late Jane Mary Frolich
The Estate of the Late Lynette Forbes
The Estate of the Late Jean Dorothy Hill
The Estate of the Late Reiko Izawa
The Estate of the Late Helen Kemp
The Estate of the Late Ottilie King
The Estate of the Late Irene Martin
The Estate of the Late Don John McClimont
The Estate of the Late Milena Nemec
The Estate of the Late Gweneth Mossman
The Estate of the Late Jenny Tait
The Estate of the Late May Wilson



TARONGA FOUNDATION
 CHAIR, DAVID PARADICE AO
 WITH GIRAFFE AT TARONGA
 WESTERN PLAINS ZOO DUBBO
 PHOTO BY AMY RUSSELL

The Taronga Foundation Chairman's Report

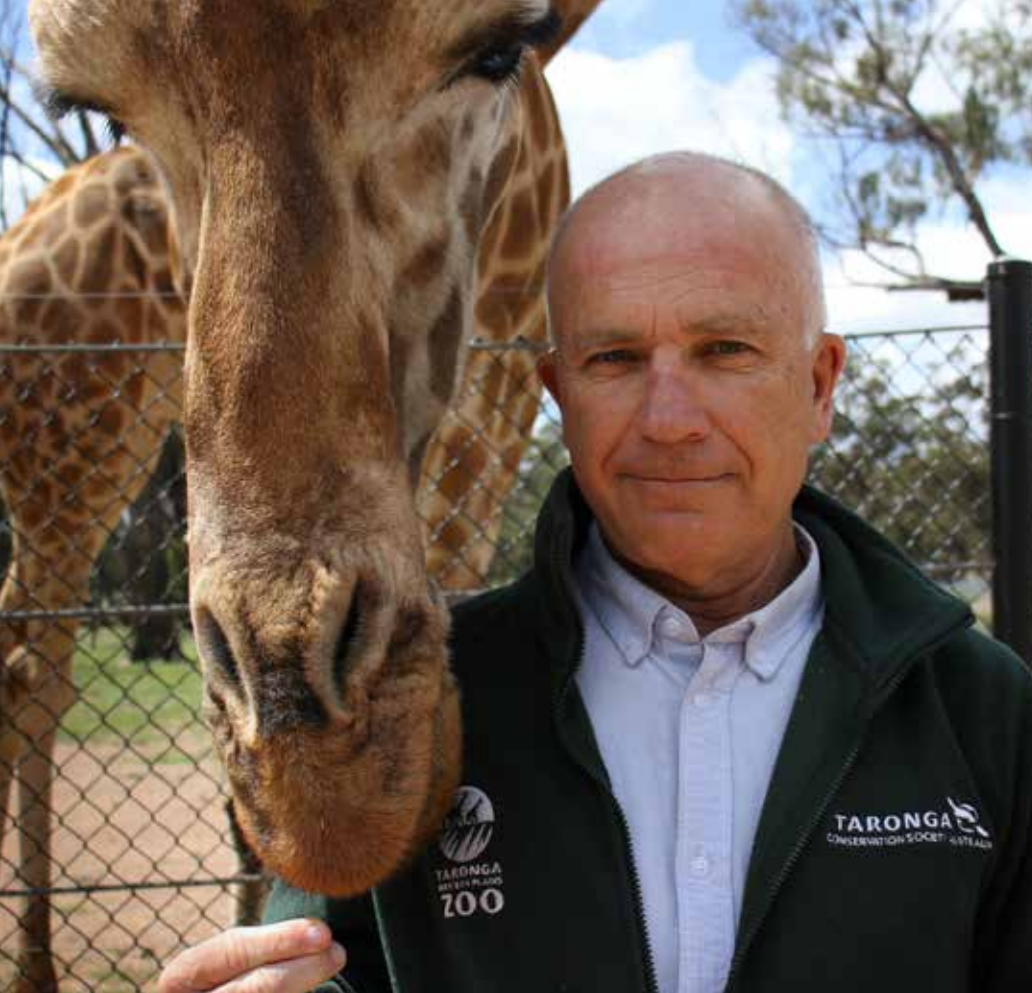
This year has seen some big milestones for wildlife conservation. Thanks to our incredible supporters, from individuals and community fundraisers through to major donors and corporate partners, we are creating a future for the country's wildlife that is bursting with positive possibilities.

In December, we opened the doors to our new Wildlife Hospital at Taronga Western Plains Zoo, increasing our capacity to care for injured, orphaned and sick wildlife as well as boosting our conservation programs. One of the highlights of my year was to host some of our supporters at the opening of this state-of-the-art hospital.

We are in the final stages of completing our Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Centre at Taronga Zoo in Sydney, foreseeing an acceleration in our conservation efforts for vulnerable species like the Corroboree Frog, in tandem with ongoing planning for the new Taronga Wildlife Hospital, Sydney.

These three initiatives together form Wild Futures, our most transformative project yet, which aims to increase Taronga's, as well as the entire nation's, capacity to care for wildlife. I am incredibly grateful for the ongoing support for this project.

Philanthropy played a crucial role in the first ever translocation program for Platypus in New South Wales, which saw these elusive animals return to Sydney's Royal National Park.



Prior to release, the Platypus were cared for at a new purpose-built Platypus facility at Taronga Zoo. With construction underway for the Platypus Rescue and Rehabilitation Centre, known as Platypus HQ, at Taronga Western Plains Zoo, both facilities will provide critical refuge for Platypus during emergency translocations when intervention is required to save a population.

Another milestone was completing our first-ever translocation of Chuditch from the Taronga Sanctuary, our engine room for breed and release programs of endangered species, into the Vulkathunha-Gammon Ranges National Park in South Australia.

With sincerest gratitude, I thank our generous supporters, for caring so deeply about the future of our most vulnerable species, those that are invaluable to our nation's identity, and for helping us future-proof Australian wildlife. Your support has ensured that Australia is renowned for its unique wildlife across the globe.

Finally, my sincere thanks to Taronga Chief Executive, Mr Cameron Kerr AO, the Chair, the Board and the committed people across the organisation for their dedication to our vision, to wildlife and the work it delivers.

David Paradise AO

Chairman, Taronga Foundation

Organisational Strength Snapshot

The number of **volunteers** across the organisation reaches

521 

spanning over 30 teams.

A record-breaking year for overnight experience Zoofari Lodge which saw

14,286 

visitors over the year.

The two Zoos welcomed over

27,336 

new Zoo Friends members.

The **Len Bleasal Scholarship** was awarded to

27 

applicants in 2022; the most in a single year.

20 

employees completed an Australian Sign Language Short Course (AUSLAN) in partnership with TAFE NSW.

TARONGA ZOO *and* TARONGA WESTERN PLAINS ZOO'S PARTNERS IN CONSERVATION

Sponsorship supports the Taronga Foundation's contribution to conservation

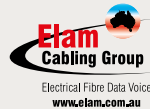
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Koko Black

KPMG
North Shore Veterinary
Specialist Centre
Norton Rose Fulbright

NSW Fire Brigades Relief
& Welfare Fund
SASH Small Animal
Specialist Hospital

Tourism and Transport Forum
Virbac
Waterlogic Australia



CHIMPANZEE 'CERES'
WITH BABY 'CEKIRI'
PHOTO BY SCOTT BROWN

Power to Protect

Please support our work. You can visit us, become a member or make a donation.

Taronga is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to wildlife conservation and community education.

For more information go to taronga.org.au



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LOGGERHEAD TURTLE
HATCHLING BEING RELEASED
BACK TO THE WILD ON
DARKINJUNG COUNTRY
PHOTO BY HARRY VINCENT