



## Wild about Seatrees



May 2022

Issue 9: Teddy



*Teddy meets Scruffy eye to eye*

Teddy is one of our resident koalas who delights as only a koala can. Whether peering through the window, tree sleeping, walking along the roadway on his little bandy legs or performing gymnastic swings, he is a treasure. Teddy could very well be one of the orphaned joeys we released back into the wild years ago.

Koalas are mostly nocturnal so Teddy probably sleeps for 18 to 20 hours a day. His two thumbs per padded 'hand' and sharp claws gives him the grip to alternate between branches and he has the most amazing sense of balance once established in his tree. Even during a howling gale when on the slenderest of branches, Teddy holds firm.

Koalas stay hydrated by getting most of their moisture from juicy eucalyptus leaves so it is a worry that Teddy takes huge drinks from our wildlife waterbowls. This can be an indication of disease or severe stress as well as the fact that the eucalyptus leaves are not nearly so juicy as they used to be due to climate change. Koala research of

***“I think sometimes we need to take a step back and just remember we have no greater right to be here than any other animal.”***

*- Sir David Attenborough*



## Teddy, continued

late indicates just this so water stations are becoming increasingly crucial, particularly in warmer areas or after disasters such as fires.

No matter how many times we see Teddy, the cry goes out "There he is!" as if it is the first sighting ever. He is so relaxed, curious and seems to just want to be best friends. Waddling up to peer into the living room before moving off he shows no fear of little Scruffy and Scruff no fear of Teddy.

So the question has to be asked how governments can continue to allow koala habitat to be razed to the ground resulting in such an exquisite marsupial ending up on the endangered list.

And their temerity in offering money as a substitute.



*Hello! Anyone home?*

*Teddy at drink bowl*

## Waterbowls

It is not just the Teddy's of the world that rely on water bowls but all animals, birds and living creatures. At Seatrees we have water bowls of different sizes, depths and elevations to cater for ground based as well as aerial customers. Birds and creatures from the tiniest of skinks to very large wallabies drink from and bathe in bowls that suit their size. If too deep they can drown, if not deep enough, hydration is limited. It is crucial that water stations are easy to fill and replenish, which in hot weather can be daily.



*Echidna at waterbowl*

*King Parrot at waterbowl*





## The Ancient Marengo Rockshelves

It is always a thrill to meet guests who have an interest in a particular aspect of the environment. Bird watching, wildlife spotting, fungi, weather and the night sky are just a few of the areas that seem to particularly appeal.

So we were delighted to host a guest geologist who knew about “the spectacular wave-cut platforms along the Otway coast, including those you see offshore from Seatrees Farm in Marengo, just a short stroll from the cottages. They are a fascinating reminder of Victoria’s geological history dating back to the age of the dinosaurs.”

We learnt that “the rocks formed partly as a result of the separation of Australia from Antarctica when this joint landmass was located much closer to the south pole. The rock formations were deposited between 95 and 120 million years ago and are composed mainly of sandstone and mudstones, with lesser conglomerate layers and some small coal bands. To Geologists, these rocks are referred to as being part of the Eumeralla Formation...”

The platforms contain sculptured Cannonball shaped concretions, craters, honeycomb weathering, dinosaur footprints, shell-filled rockpools, and massive boulders. To walk over them is like traversing an ancient tapestry that apart from their geological significance provides protection, shelter, and food for sea birds and marine life.

*Thank you to Haydn Swan, lecturer in Geology at Federation University in Ballarat for sharing and awakening us to the uniqueness of the platforms.*



*Terns gather on the big rock*



*‘When we recognise Earth, stones, plants, animals, stars, and more as sentient beings, we change the dynamics of how we live our lives and we approach everything we do as affecting a valuable family member...and therefore ourselves.’*

*- Maria Xraceburu - author, theatrical director, healer, counselor, teacher, elders’ guardian and energy scout*

## Microbats – such important but often misunderstood mammals

Often thought of as scary and ugly, microbats are mammals like us, being warm-blooded placental animals who nourish their young with milk. Their wings are hands the same as our hands only the bones are elongated and connected by a membrane which is made up of two layers of skin enclosing elastic fibres, blood vessels and nerves which allows them to fly. The family order they belong to is called Microchiroptera meaning “little hand-wing” and they make up one-fifth of all Australian mammals

These amazing creatures often go unnoticed because they are small, nocturnal and hard to hear but they play a critical role in ecosystems and are bioindicators of ecological health.

As insectivores they control insect numbers by eating tons of disease carrying mosquitoes and agricultural insect pests each night. As a prey species they provide a food source for other animals such as owls and snakes.

As they fly microbats emit a high-frequency noise from their nose or mouth. These noises strike objects and bounce back as echoes and form pictures of sound. It also explains why they have such large and unusual shaped ears and noses. Using this echolocate navigational system they can catch 1,200 insects in an hour and can consume up to 60% of their body weight each night. So the common saying ‘Blind as a Bat’ is incorrect.



This **Lesser Long Eared Bat** was found roosting in a Seatrees woodpile.

They are the most common species of bats in Australia and as the name suggests they have impressively long ears. Only 5cm long these bats hunt near the ground catching grasshoppers, moths, crickets, spiders and other insects in flight, off the ground or from leaves.

They are susceptible to predation by owls, hawks, cats and are threatened by loss of tree roosts and land clearing. Pesticides are also a problem.

***‘Until man learns to respect and communicate with the animal world he will never be able to know his true role on Earth.’***

*Enzo Majorca - Italian diver who rescued a trapped dolphin in a net after the male dolphin asked for help and led him to his trapped female mate. They thanked him by emitting almost human sounds and the male touched his cheek almost like a kiss in gratitude.*



## Recent Seatrees Wildlife Shelter Patients

**Pip & Polly**, adolescent sugar gliders were found huddled at the base of a cut down tree. Not being old enough to glide they were unable to escape with their parents when their home was destroyed. They remained in care for a couple of months feasting on a special sugar glider mix, mealworms and native flowering gum and grevillea. After they were soft-released back into the wild they returned to their feeding station to be supplementary fed for a month or so and continue to use their nesting boxes.



*Sugar Glider Pip*



**Rattie Houdini**, a native bushrat so named as he escaped into our laundry when he was being examined for injury after being rescued from the middle of the Great Ocean Road. Captured on camera he would happily emerge from his hiding place each night to enjoy supper. Eventually recaptured he bounded off into the bush a lot fatter!

*Rattie Houdini*

**Bontie & Junior**, koala joeys have enjoyed living in a beautifully designed and brand new enclosure funded by Animals Australia. They were raised from tiny joeys by Wildlife Otway carers Hayley and Katie before coming to spend the necessary outside time with our Seatrees wildlife carer, Kimberly for a number of months. Having gone through the process of being weaned off milk and reaching the required weight and age they have been released back into the wild.



*Bontie and Junior*



**Walnut**, the wallaby joey, came in at a tiny 650 grams and has been lovingly and capably raised over 7 months by Emma, one of our Seatrees wildlife carers.

Emma couldn't believe that wallabies are such characters. She described him as cheeky, unflappable, confident, and highly affectionate. Wallaby joeys have a unique ability to bond with their carers and readily accept them as their mother. But once they reach their teenage years are happy and eager to be released back into the wild.

*Walnut*

## Shelter patients, continued

This tiny **Silvereye** was found lying on the deck probably due to crashing into a window in search of insects. Sadly many birds sustain concussion after such an incident. Silvereyes are cheeky and attractive birds and their name derives from the thin white rings of colouring around the eyes that give the impression they are wearing silver-rimmed glasses.

Fortunately for this little fellow, after being hydrated and given sustenance and cage rest for a couple of days he flew off happily to re-meet his flock.

*Silvereye*



**Mint Bush** This highly attractive native shrub is found throughout Seatrees. It is a showstopper in Spring and early Summer with its lavish display of violet flowers. Its aromatic foliage releases a mint essence into the atmosphere attracting butterflies and insect-eating birds.

*“Only by means of reverence for life can we establish a spiritual and humane relationship with both people and all living creatures within our reach. Only in this fashion can we avoid harming others, and, within the limits of our capacity, go to their aid whenever they need us.”*

*- Albert Schweitzer -  
theologian, musician, philosopher  
and Nobel Prize-winning physician*

*Stay in our cottages to enjoy and  
experience the beauty of Seatrees*

[www.coastcottages.com.au](http://www.coastcottages.com.au)

Tax deductible donations to our Seatrees Foundation are greatly appreciated.

[www.seatreesfoundation.org](http://www.seatreesfoundation.org)