



Wild

about
Seatrees

July 2013



Issue 1: Ingleby Returns

Plenty of action at sea!

During June and July Southern Right Whales have been seen in front of Seatrees. In May an unusual early sighting of humpback whales put on an acrobatic display of breaching and slapping.



Hundreds of gannets have also arrived and are putting on a spectacular and entertaining display of diving at breakneck speed and bombing into the water from on high to catch their fish.



Seals and dolphins are regular passers-by.

Ingelby's Story

Ingelby was an orphaned pinkie Swamp Wallaby when he lost his mother in a freak accident. A large rock from a landscape gardener fell and trapped his mother who suffered irreparable nerve damage and had to be euthanised. He was raised by a fellow carer Robyn Rule who runs a shelter in Torquay. In January at around 12 months of age he was transferred by car sitting in his pouch on Willie's knee to our Seatrees Wildlife enclosure. This allowed him to acclimatise to what was to be his release environment. At this stage he was on 2 bottles of special low lactose wildlife milk per day which was gradually reduced to one a day much to his disgust, He was released on a lovely sunny and cool day in late January this year.

The release went very smoothly. We just opened the doors to the enclosure and he slowly hopped out sniffing around the enclosure and exploring the roses at the front of the house.

After some time Ingelby took off up the road and that was a teary time as I thought I would never have the pleasure and privilege of a close encounter with him again, especially as wallabies are usually fiercely independent.

Wrong! To our delight Ingelby returned daily – often knocking on the back door asking for his bottle after munching on roses and other plants on the back deck.

After another month bottles were stopped but Ingelby's enclosure remains open to this day, He visits once or twice daily to nibble on his special pellets, the wattle he adores and the rose that is always left for him. It is an absolute delight to watch him and to see him bound back into the bush with such speed and agility.



KeepGuard

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Sugar glider entering outside food box on tree

Sugar Glider Release a Success

Ned & Kelly released themselves from their enclosure at the end of May. To prepare for the release a special feeding box, made by Erwin Tienstra, that only allowed sugar gliders and not ringtail possums to enter was installed in a nearby tree. Two outside sleeping boxes were also installed high in the trees.

To monitor the progress of their release two infra red cameras pick up their nightly movements.

Both Ned and Kelly visit both the tree feeding box and re-enter their enclosure through a small hole nightly to feed on their specially prepared nectar mix, meal worms, flowering gum, wattle and banksia flowers.

Did you know...

Marengo Reefs Marine Sanctuary protects 12ha of ocean waters? About 150m offshore, this sanctuary protects a reef system known as Little Henty Reef. Two sections of the reef, the inner and outer reef, are usually exposed and separated by a narrow channel known as 'The Gap'. Composed of sandstone they support wonderful intertidal and subtidal reefs which are packed with sea life.

Visitors exploring the intertidal reef may come across many invertebrates including sea snails, tubeworms and abalone. In slightly deeper waters there are beautiful seaweed gardens including towering Bull Kelp forests and beds of delicate green and red species. Between the two small islands, calmer waters support colourful soft corals, sponge gardens and sea urchins. The diverse range of habitats provides resources for a huge range of species including Australian Fur Seals, schools of Zebra Fish and many species of wrasse.

To find the universal elements enough; to find the air and the water exhilarating; to be refreshed by a morning walk or an evening saunter; to be thrilled by the stars at night; to be elated over a bird's nest or a wildflower in spring - these are some of the rewards of the simple life.

~ John Burroughs, Naturalist (1837-1921) ~

Did you know...

Australia only has one mainland Gannett colony and it's guarded by Maremmas dogs?

Situated at Point Danger, five minutes drive from Portland Ewan Lovell and David Williams tend the site, along with their faithful canine companions, Reamma and Elma. These shaggy white dogs are Maremmas, a breed that originates from the mountains of Italy, where they are used to protect sheep from wolves. Although the gannet colony is only 12 years old, by 2004 foxes had destroyed all the nests, so Reamma and Elma were introduced as guardians for the birds. Since then, the number of pairs has risen to a few hundred.

The principle colony of about 10,000 birds is on Lawrence Rocks, a conspicuous flat-topped island about 2km offshore from the tip of Point Danger.

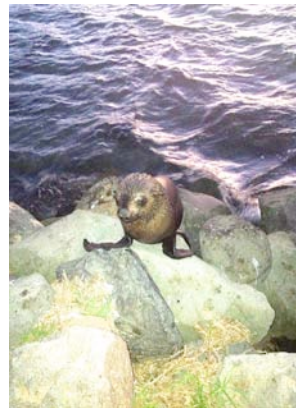
Australasian Gannets are expert fishers. Birds soar 10 m or more above the surface of the water, herding fish into dense shoals, then fold their wings back and dive into the water to catch their prey. The fish are grasped with the aid of small backward-pointing serrations along the edges of the bill. A bird only stays under the water for about ten seconds, but the fish is normally swallowed before the bird reaches the surface.



Other wildlife patients...



- Jolke, the Willie Wagtail with a damaged wing and feather loss after being hit by a car. He was rescued by carer Erwin, and after a fortnight, he flew back to the wild.



- Monitoring an Australian Juvenile Seal who turned up at the Apollo Bay Harbour and has now returned to sea. It is likely that this seal pup came from the nearby Marengo Marine reserve that houses a seal colony.



- A Little Fairy Penguin who died overnight. These penguins are usually found malnourished and it is difficult to save them – but we always try.

- May Bell and Basil Ringtail Possums. Unfortunately May who was in a very weak state at just 62gms died after a mighty struggle after a month in care. The new humicrib with its controlled temperature did help with her care. Her buddies, Bell and Basil are due for release soon at my new carer, Wim's property in Aire River.

Fungi – the 3rd forgotten “F” for our Environment -Fauna, Flora & Fungi

Alison Pouliot conducted two wonderful workshops in Apollo Bay in May 2012 & May 2013. We now see our many and varied fungi around Seatrees Farm with new eyes, new sensory delight and with an increased awareness of the importance of the fungi kingdom for a sustainable environment.



Did you know...

Fungi are an important food resource for many animals including birds?

Our swamp wallabies and native rodents eat truffle like fungi and disperse the spores in their faecal pellets. Fungi forms symbiotic relationships with trees and plants and assist in the uptake of nutrients. So our mammals and birds are doing an important job in promoting plant health and growth.

There is a way that nature speaks, that land speaks. Most of the time we are simply not patient enough, quiet enough, to pay attention to the story.

~ Linda Hogan ~