

Wildlife Moves

Sometimes wildlife gets into the wrong place. We all know about possums in the roof, but over the last few months, *Wildcare* has been called out to capture and relocate a number of wombats that had moved into the Queanbeyan suburbs. Left alone and after some time they would move on, but *Wildcare* gave them a helping hand and returned them to a nearby wombat habitat. It is thought that development at Googong and elsewhere may have been the trigger for some animals to wander off into places they would not normally be seen. The flooding of creeks and rivers in 2009/10 also caused wombats to disperse to unlikely places.

Another example of the movement of wildlife can be seen in Canberra. Large areas, of traditional wildlife habitat, have been developed for new housing. This has caused animals to hop and wander off to places nearby – including other built-up areas. In Canberra there is another factor. Over time (perhaps years), where kangaroos have been killed off, other animals migrate into the vacuum created. Of course, this migration will stop once all the animals have been killed off in the region.

In our own backyards we occasionally see a snake in the ‘wrong place’. This can be worrying for people who don’t know their behaviour – we often think snakes will turn and attack us, but nothing could be further from the truth. Snakes are shy, and defensive. They don’t want to be near either our companion animals or us. Left alone snakes will move on and you won’t see them again. Dogs, cats and stock animals, that are free to roam over large areas, are inquisitive and will seek out snakes and other animals, thereby being at much more risk. At home, dogs are safer if they are contained in a fenced run. The risk of cats being bitten can be much reduced by keeping them inside the house (particularly at night when they can cause a lot of damage to other wildlife too). Fortunately the chances of encountering a venomous snake are small, however *Wildcare* is on hand to give advise and help if needed.

Contact *Wildcare* on 6299 1966 – put this number in your Mobile phone. As we come to the end of the financial year, think about donating to *Wildcare* and get a tax-deductible receipt – visit their website www.Wildcare.com.au and see how this can be done. Donations directly pay for veterinary bills for injured wildlife.

Photo caption: This wombat has been captured and is being relocated

Philip Machin
For Wildcare
62383717