



**Wildlife Health
Australia**

Wildlife Health Australia is the peak body for wildlife health in Australia.

wildlifehealthaustralia.com.au

Phone +61 2 9960 6333
during business hours
Monday to Friday

If you see any suspicious signs of disease or deaths in wildlife you can report it to the Emergency Animal Disease Watch Hotline on **freecall 1800 675 888**

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New Management Committee

The first annual general meeting for Wildlife Health Australia, and the last for the Australian Wildlife Health Network, were held last month in Sydney.

The new Management Committee for Wildlife Health Australia (WHA) was announced at the meeting and comprises:

- Australian Government Department of Agriculture representative, Australian Chief Veterinary Officer Mark Schipp (Chair),
- Animal Health Committee representative, NSW Chief Veterinary Officer Ian Roth,
- individual member representative Hume Field,
- organisational members include the **Wildlife Diseases Association Australasia** representative Andrew Peters, the **Zoo and Aquarium Association** representative Chris Hibbard and the **Wildlife Health Surveillance Victoria** representative Pam Whiteley.

Chair of the Interim Management Committee, Robyn

Martin, warmly wished WHA and its members well and thanked members who had served on the interim committee.

Taronga Conservation Society Australia, the NSW Department of Primary Industries, and the Australian Government Department of Agriculture were also thanked at the meeting for their important contributions to the network over many years.

Sam Gilchrist joins the team



Veterinarian Sam Gilchrist joined the Wildlife Health Australia team in October, increasing the total number of staff from four to five. Sam's background includes roles with the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage, Macquarie University, Wildlife Sydney Zoo, and Sydney Aquarium.

As Project Officer, Sam is scoping how to best incorporate wildlife disease cases seen by Australian universities into the current national wildlife disease surveillance program. Stay tuned for the circulation of a feasibility survey to kick-start this process. Sam is enjoying working with the WHA team and getting to know stakeholders and members.

EAD symposium at AAHL

Wildlife Health Australia staff Tiggy Grillo and Sam Gilchrist flew the flag for WHA at the *'Recent advances in Emergency Animal Diseases Annual Symposium'* held at the CSIRO's Australian Animal Health Laboratory last month. Tiggy gave a presentation on wildlife disease surveillance in

Australia. Tiggy and Sam congratulated the organisers on an excellent symposium, and said WHA will keep members informed of future events held by CSIRO AAHL.

Wildlife health information updates

Each quarter Wildlife Health Australia works with our wildlife health data submitters to pull together a report on wildlife disease events reported through the national electronic Wildlife Health Information System (eWHIS). Disease events are reported by state and territory WHA coordinators, zoo and sentinel clinic veterinarians, researchers and other WHA members. The report is published in [*Animal Health Surveillance Quarterly \(AHSQ\)*](#), which is produced by Animal Health Australia as part of Australia's national animal health information system.

[WHA's most recent report](#) (covering Apr-Jun 2014) includes:

- A report of an Eastern grey kangaroo mass mortality event in NSW
- Information on Australian bat lyssavirus exclusions
- A summary of wild bird disease surveillance efforts for the quarter.

In collaboration with our Bat Health Focus Group, WHA publishes a regular summary of ABLV testing of bats in Australia. Follow the link to download a copy of the most recent [ABLV BAT STATS \(June 2014\)](#).

Vet clinics report on wildlife disease

Australia's surveillance for wildlife disease is being strengthened by the involvement of three veterinary clinics, RSPCA Queensland Wildlife Clinic in Brisbane, Lort Smith Animal Hospital in Melbourne, and Adelaide Koala and Wildlife Hospital in Adelaide.

Wildlife Health Australia's Keren Cox-Witton said the clinics had a high wildlife case load and their participation meant that more information would be reported into the national wildlife health information system.

Keren said the success of the [Zoo Based Wildlife Disease Surveillance Program](#) had inspired the new project to involve 'sentinel' veterinary clinics. She said WHA aimed to add more clinics to the project in time.



Benn Bryant and Michelle Campbell of Taronga Western Plains Zoo, current participants in the successful Zoo Based Wildlife Disease Surveillance Program.

Marketing and communications

Wildlife Health Australia has engaged marketing and communications consultant Emma Homes to help plan and deliver some new initiatives.

Speaking at the recent WHA annual general meeting, Emma said that in the coming year she would be working alongside staff to broaden engagement with environment and public health stakeholders, develop new ways to listen to and inform members, and deliver media training to staff.

Contact us on admin@wildlifehealthaustralia.com.au

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