

Friends of the Western Ground Parrot Inc

Annual Report 2010/2011

This was a historic year for the Western Ground Parrot in that it was the year in which it was declared a distinct species, based on the publication of genetic evidence.

Our formalized community group has now completed its second year. At 30 June we had 136 financial members which is very close to the estimated number of WGP's for 2010.

First I would like to thank our committee members without whom our group can do nothing. During the year, five committee meetings were held. Additionally several decisions were made using email.

Tax Deductible Gift Recipient Status

Thanks to Anne's fearless approach to the red tape involved, our organization has now been added to the Commonwealth's Register of Environmental Organizations and we have obtained Deductible Gift Recipient Status

Exetel

We are most appreciative of Exetel's ongoing support. Birds Australia received a very generous \$60,000 in donations from the company which were used to help fund the WGP Recovery Project. Exetel has now pledged \$5000 per month for 12 months starting in August 2012. This money is being used to care for the captive birds and to do some monitoring of them. As we are now a deductible gift recipient, our group is now able to accept and manage this donation. We have thanked Birds Australia and BAWA for making available the donations for the past two years.

Grants

The DEC Community Grant was available for this year. We had over \$27000 to spend on getting survey volunteers into the remote places where WGP's could be and also on buying a small amount of survey equipment. So far this money has subsidized volunteers for two trips to Cape Arid National Park, two to Fitzgerald River National Park, plus a series of evening surveys at Waychinicup National Park and a survey trip to Walpole where there had been a very interesting sighting last October. Three GPS units were purchased. The funds were not all gone by the time they were supposed to be used, but we have been granted an extension of a few months.

We decided to apply for a grant from Lotterywest for promotional material. Vicky, our Vice-Chairperson put together the application (not a trivial task) and it was lodged on 30 March. The application was for the production of items such as brochures, banners, posters, bookmarks and small stickers. Additionally we applied for a little professional design input into the CD that Saul has overseen and that we hope to use for education and seeking funding, as well as some blank CDs.

The Lotterywest grant is not yet assured though we have guarded optimism that it will be successful, and we should get the result in October.

Sales

Merchandise is important to us as it gives an opportunity to work towards two of our goals: awareness raising and support of the WGP Recovery Project - by fundraising.

Sarah Comer took over sales and during the year. Shirts, cards, bookmarks and our new car stickers, designed by committee member Craig Johnston, were sold by Sarah and others to a total of over \$900.

Craig set up six online shops with CafePress. Our group should get 10% of all sales and this has begun to flow through.

The Creightons of Condingup Vineyard made us a generous offer this year. Jim Creighton has been involved in WGP surveys for several years now. Condingup is en route to Cape Arid National Park. The offer was that they would donate some of the proceeds from the sale of their wine. This offer was accepted with pleasure. There were many details to thrash out. At last with input from the Creightons and the whole committee and also with special help from member Stephen Fryc who designed the labels and found a printer, we got everything together began delivering orders. Condingup Vineyard sent a proportion of the income from the wine with WGP labeling to the Friends of the WGP and we have received over \$700 so far.

Liaising

Abby Berryman has attended all our committee meetings. FWGP agreed last October that we would contribute substantially to the upgrade of security for the captive birds, and the upgrade has now been finalized.

Anne Bondin continued as the representative from our Friends group to the South Coast Threatened Birds Recovery Team which is responsible for planning the recovery actions to be taken.

Lobbying

When the State Minister responsible for conservation came to Albany in March, Anne as our representative had the opportunity to meet him and talk about the role of our group.

Publicity and Awareness Raising

Our website is an important point of contact for us. It was established and managed by Anne and the revamped website is now being managed by Deon.

Birds Australia

We believe it is important to ensure that bird enthusiasts of Australia are aware of the existence and plight of our Western Ground Parrot.

We gave the nearly 200 participants to the Birds Australia AGM which was held in Perth this year, one of our car stickers and an early version of our brochure.

Anne, Allan Burbidge and Sarah supplied an article to Birds Australia's glossy magazine "Wingspan" and Anne has also provided reports to two of the four Bird Notes of our last year with another report on the Cape Arid National Park fire being provided by Sarah, Steve Butler and Allan.

Shows

Last November, our group participated in the Albany Agricultural Show using display space provided by the South Coast Natural Resource Management.

We have made a commitment to have a display this year in the Landcare and Conservation section of the Perth Royal Show and also in the Albany Agricultural Show.

Newsletters

Stephen Fryc has been our editor throughout the year and has produced an attractive and interesting newsletter every two months in accordance with our established practice. He has continued with the four-page format. The regular newsletter does keep our membership informed as to what is happening with our group and we do attempt also to supply information about the Recovery Project and the WGP. The idea of the short but frequent newsletters is to keep the WGP from disappearing from our consciousness while it is still so much in need of help to assure its survival.

Conclusion

With the estimated number of WGPs last year at around 140 birds, the WGP is in grave danger of extinction in the short term. Recovery from this low ebb is not easy but it is possible. Our group has continued to progress towards our two goals of awareness raising and supporting the WGP Recovery Project in practical ways this year and that plus maintaining a spirit of optimism is all we can do.

As a result of the Lotterywest grant we should very soon have some more and better materials for displays. If you have any opportunity for awareness raising - for example, know of a good place to leave some of our brochures, let us know. Maybe you know of a location where one of our posters could hang for a while. These things are only useful if they are out there....

Thanks for your encouragement by being here. I think awareness is increasing but there is a long way to go so keep up the good work. None of us has unlimited time or energy for this and it is essential that we offer each other support. Ideally there will be many people actively involved and no-one with too much to do.

Next year let us hope we can report both more members and more birds.

Brenda Newbey

Chairperson September 2011