BUSHFIRE RECOVERY: YOUR IMPACT

Your support returned Maryanne home into the wild

Bushfire ‘ground zero’: your support in action

‘Right-way fire’: how you protect wildlife
Your commitment is driving the second phase of our vital turtle cooling project.

You may have read previously that turtles in the northern Great Barrier Reef are facing a terrible challenge. Rising sand temperatures are causing many more turtle hatchlings to be born female than male, leading to a feminisation rate of 99% - a problem that could destroy these populations.

Last year, you helped support a turtle cooling project on Milman Island, where we trialled many different methods to help cool turtle nest sites and help readjust the gender balance.

The most successful cooling methods were found to include using palm fronds for shade and seawater irrigation on nesting sites. We’ve now been able to continue these tests on Heron Island, thanks to you. We are still crunching the numbers and will be able to share the results of the experiment shortly.

Thank you for protecting turtles.
A message from CEO, Dermot O’Gorman

The hope that’s emerged from the ashes makes me so thankful we are all in this together. Thank you for uniting for nature.

As we raced to protect and restore the wildlife and land that we all care about so much, your actions spoke volumes: you answered our call to help launch and then extend our crucial bushfire recovery.

I wanted to tell you how incredibly grateful and humbled we all are here at WWF-Australia for your capacity to care – for people and our animals at this immensely challenging time.

You showed in your thousands how much dedication and commitment you have to restore what we’ve lost – but even more importantly, protecting it for future generations.

From funding aerial food drops for starving wildlife, caring for injured koalas, to helping the recovery of Kangaroo Island’s endangered glossy black cockatoos and dunnarts, your support has never had more impact.

You’re helping us drive forward with our ground-breaking – and crucial – ‘Towards Two Billion Trees’ program, that will plant trees, restore forests and damaged wildlife habitat, and stop further deforestation.

And you are showing your commitment to future-proofing Australia, supporting long-term climate strategies for people and nature.

Looking forward, as we call for our koalas to be immediately uplisted to endangered, it was incredibly humbling to receive support from over 26,000 people like you, who signed the petition for stronger nature laws.

As we await the outcome, your continued support and action to protect fragile koala habitats are more important than ever before. Your generosity is driving vital conservation and changes to preserve our incredible land and wildlife for future generations to enjoy.

I have never been prouder of our passionate community. Thank you.

Dermot O’Gorman
CEO, WWF-Australia

It has sparked a colossal wildlife response, as we work with partners to provide care and treatment for injured wildlife and long-term recovery.
A landscape of scorched earth, nothing more than ashes, and forests so charred that many may not recover.

This was what our WWF-Australia team witnessed as one of the first in to assess the devastation following the Currowan bushfire on New Year’s Eve. It tore through the NSW south coast region with such ferocity that it destroyed over 350 properties.

Abi Sexton, WWF-Australia’s Oceans & Wildlife Engagement Manager, was part of that first response:

“There was no green, just black and orange. The trees looked like burnt matchsticks poking out of the ground.”

Sadly, it was a fire most wildlife couldn’t survive. For those that did, they were left without food and habitat. Abi continued:

“At that moment we needed to ensure their survival. Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, we were able to quickly deploy funds to vets on-the-ground and wildlife care organisations, which enabled them to care for and save sick and injured wildlife.

Now native grasses are starting to appear, and tiny sprouts on the trees — a glimmer of hope in this horrible situation.”

Your support also enables longer-term plans like the Great Eastern Ranges initiative, which will restore habitat to protect forest-dependent animals like koalas, gliders and quolls from Vic, NSW, the ACT, up to Far North Qld.

To support the ongoing recovery effort, please visit wwf.org.au/restore to donate today.

“As I was looking around that burnt forest, I thought, ‘I don’t know how anything can survive’.”

- Abi Sexton, WWF-Australia’s Oceans & Wildlife Engagement Manager

FIGHTING FIRE WITH FIRE
HOW YOU ARE HELPING IMPLEMENT INDIGENOUS FIRE CULTURE

Your generosity is helping us work with Indigenous rangers such as the Ngurrara Rangers in the Kimberley, to assist with early-season burning — to help prevent destructive late-season wildfires, and to help protect communities, habitats and wildlife.

Early season fires are cooler, and burn slowly, effectively reducing fuel loads and creating fire breaks.

Rangers use helicopters to carry out aerial burns, as well as ground burning as practised by Aboriginal People for thousands of years.

These rangers play a vital role in looking after Australia’s native wildlife and landscapes. With your support, you are helping WWF-Australia and our partners to call for long-term funding to double the number of Indigenous Rangers across the country.

Thank you.
Thank you for taking the time to respond to our recent supporter survey.

It’s so important to hear what issues you passionately care about, so that together we can take strong action that cuts through with real impact.

We heard you. You are frustrated, ashamed, and angry about the state of our natural world today. The good news is, WWF is working hard to change things. Including tackling the extinction crisis on a global scale - an issue you feel is critical to address.

We asked, you answered

Maryanne the ‘miracle’ koala has been released after her bushfire wounds healed.

You may remember from our April edition of Living Planet we brought you the story of Maryanne. This young koala was found alone, separated from her mother in Wivenhoe Dam wall, west of Brisbane.

Maryanne was underweight, dehydrated and suffering from burnt paws after a bushfire swept through the area in December last year.

With your support of the RSPCA Wildlife Hospital, Maryanne was taken to the hospital for emergency treatment and later received ongoing medical attention by koala carers.

After six months in care, Maryanne’s wounds healed, a missing claw grew back, and her weight more than doubled from 1.5 kg to a much healthier 3.5 kg.

Maryanne was released back into the wild in June not far from where she was found.

When the cage door opened, Maryanne bolted to the top of a small ironbark eucalypt and looked down at the smiling faces below.

Within minutes, she was stretching, scratching and eating leaves. It’s hoped that in the years ahead Maryanne will have offspring of her own and help to repopulate the area.

“It’s always a privilege to be able to see the difference WWF’s bushfire response funds can make for wildlife like Maryanne. She has been through trauma and come out the other end like a true Aussie battler.”

– Darren Grover, Head of Healthy Land and Seascapes

Your kindness returned Maryanne home into the wild. To watch a video of Maryanne’s return, visit: wwf.org.au/Maryanne

53% of you want to help our natural world because you believe animals and nature are worth protecting for their own sake.

43% of supporters’ greatest environmental concern is the loss of landscapes and ecosystems.

31% asked WWF to prioritise the immediate rescue and rehabilitation of wildlife following the devastating bushfires, with 22% calling for the restoration of damaged forest and wildlife habitats.
With your support, one of WWF-Australia’s most successful predator-proof fence projects began here in 2010, when the rock-wallaby population had plummeted to just five.

Our vulnerable rock wallabies were under threat by feral cats and foxes, there was also little food for them to eat, leaving the population decimated.

Thanks to you, we helped to build a five kilometre fence to keep the wallabies safe. As a result, their numbers more than doubled between 2010-2014. In fact, this flourishing population has rebounded so well, they have gone on to repopulate other reserves and parks in WA where rock-wallaby numbers were declining. This includes 23 transferred to Kalbarri National Park, to boost dwindling numbers there and secure the future of this special native.

It’s not hard to see why these acrobats of the Australian bush are so popular, as they effortlessly leap and bound across the rocky landscapes.

Rock-wallaby feet are grippy like bike tyres, allowing them to bounce from rock to rock, seemingly defying gravity.

Our team have recently returned from Nangeen Hill Nature Reserve where survey monitoring confirmed how well they’re now thriving: we counted 73 rock-wallabies in total, including 32 females. Many of these female rock-wallabies, when visited, had pouch young or joeys at their heel. By continuing to microchip and monitor the rock-wallabies, we can gather vital information, including data on their survival rates and breeding.

Your gifts will also support long-term projects including weed control and revegetation over the next three years, to ensure the wallabies have a healthy habitat to thrive in. Work will also include checks of the predator proof fence and camera monitoring.

This project’s success has now inspired further projects such as our Yorke Peninsula fence project featured in the April edition of Living Planet, and our eastern quoll reintroduction program.

A healthy black-flanked rock-wallaby spotted by scientists in March 2020.