



## *FRIENDS OF BATS NEWSLETTER - SUMMER 2024/2025*

### **POCTA Legislation review**

The KBCS recently made a submission regarding the draft changes to the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (POCTA) legislation. We have advocated for the inclusion of bat-safe netting regulations, such as those that exist in Victoria.

### **Bellingen Road Show**

KBCS Members, Tim Pearson and Haley Henning, recently visited Bellingen with the education bats as part of a road show sponsored by Jaliigirr Biodiversity Alliance (JBA). Tim and Haley attended a number of community events, and had a display at the monthly Bellingen market. The bats won over many hearts and minds during their trip around Bellingen and were very well received by primary students during their school visits!

### **In the news.....**

KBCS Chairman Tim Pearson has been quoted in a number of mainstream news articles and interviews in recent months, including this very positive [article](#) regarding the beauty and importance of flying foxes, printed in The Guardian in January 2025. Also heartening, was this [piece](#) by the ABC discussing the unusual places that flying foxes are being found....or not found! Tim found the ABC radio interviews (links [here](#) and [here](#)) particularly encouraging, as listeners called or texted in with questions and comments. Notably, the comments that were played or read were all positive, mostly about the odd places the flying-foxes had been spotted, and some comments even about how much the people enjoyed seeing them.

### **Discovery of a New Species: The Coastal Lobe-lipped Bat. Summary by Rosie Dowsett.**

A new species within the *Chalinolobus* genus, the Papua New Guinea Coastal Lobe-lipped Bat (*Chalinolobus orarius*), has been found from bats located at the Australian Museum. These individuals were initially identified as the Hoary Bat (*Chalinolobus nigrogriseus*), that lives in northern Australia and southern and coastal New Guinea. The new bat species has been called *Orarius* which translates in Latin to “of the coast”.

The new species has a large lobe which is located on the outer ear and near the mouth, as well as main differences in the first upper incisor and genetics compared to the Hoary Bat. The main takeaways from the new findings were:

- Numerous morphological features (features of the body) need to be studied, as well as genetics to more accurately determine a species
  - Coastal Lobe-lipped Bat (based on what the researchers know so far) live in coastal lowlands, like wetlands and woodlands in New Guinea, but this needs to be studied further.
  - There is an increasing need for more bat research to be done in New Guinea and Australia. This should include research in the field, as well as re-examining museum specimens
- Want to know more? Click the [link](#) to read the full article by the Australian Museum.

## **Finn's Journey**

**Recounted by Susan Parish Smith, licensed wildlife carer and KBCS Committee Member**

On 14 October, I received a call from my daughter's former Year Coordinator, Amy. She said her daughter, Millie, and her boyfriend, Henry, had found a baby bat on its dead mum on someone's driveway... who do we call??? The back story begins years ago when Millie was still in primary school. In 2024, Millie finished her HSC and is now a beautiful young lady, inside and out! When she was younger, I was the winter carer for the adult flying foxes who were not ready to be released or pregnant mothers who were kept back due to horrific injuries. By the time the pups were born, I had a total of 24 bats in care for five months. I invited Amy to bring Millie and her younger sister, Eva, to see the bats, experience what they're about, and hopefully learn a few life-long lessons. They were enamoured, fascinated, and asked some great questions. I hoped they walked away understanding that the world desperately needs flying foxes to survive and never to pick up a bat.



Baby Finn ready for a meal!!!

Fast forward to October 2024, and Amy told me that Millie did not touch the bat. She remembered what I told her years ago and proceeded to find an old plant pot, a long stick, and a towel. The pup grabbed the stick and Millie immediately placed the pup in the pot and put the towel over the baby. I told Amy to send Millie and the bat to me so I could stabilise the little one. When Millie and Eva arrived, they had a squirmy, screeching octopus in the pot. With a little TLC and a much-needed mumma roll, the pup turned out to be a 10-day-old little boy who weighed a whopping 74g. I asked Millie and her boyfriend, Henry, to give the little pup a name. After a couple of days, they decided on Finn. Sweet boy Finn is now 65 days old, weighing 221g. He's still slightly underweight, so his bottles contain goats' milk, full-fat yogurt, and a pinch of High Protein Supplement. He's started on fruit in the evenings, and I'm hoping he'll begin to love the small pieces of apple and pear... though he's not quite there yet!

\*\* If you find an injured or orphaned bat, please phone WIRES on 1300 094 737 or Sydney Wildlife Rescue on (02) 9413 4300.

## **Roxy's Journey**

Six days ago, I received my second pup. She was found at the base of the Balgowlah Flying Fox Camp without a mum in sight. My best friend from Texas, USA, asked if she could name a pup this year, so I texted her asking for a female name. She gave me Alice, Roxy, and Olive. The little girl hadn't been with me for more than 12 hours, so I picked the one I liked, which was Olive. That lasted about 24 hours. Nope, this little sassafras girl needed an independent, strong female name, so she became Roxy on the third day. And she has no trouble filling those independent, strong stilettos. Roxy is 2 days older than Finn and is also very underweight, so she's receiving the "all the extras but the kitchen sink" bottles four times a day. Because Roxy came into care as a wild 9-week-old pup, she's still settling into care. She's still not sure if I'm a good thing, but she definitely loves the fruit served each night and the belly rubs she receives while drinking her bottle.

## **Looking Ahead**

Finn and Roxy will stay with me until their creche cage is ready at Lane Cove National Park. We're projecting to open on 4 January to receive more than 35 pups from the Sydney Regional area. The 4 January crew will begin the first of many 4 week cycles to dehumanise the pups. Each group will be moved to a release cage far within the Centennial Park Flying Fox colony to ensure all orphaned pups have the best chance to survive the 2024-2025 season and thrive.

### **Flying Foxes (excerpt from poem by Peter Skrzynecki)**

**With the hot summer rains they came  
out of the forest, crying like lost souls  
against a December moon that offered**

**no respite or refuge from the secrets  
they carried to unburden themselves from  
in the darkness of river gorges—**

**or clung, to mango and pawpaw,  
while stars pierced their tongues  
and breezes mercilessly whipped them on**

**from tree to tree, valley to valley,  
as midnight faded slowly into a Hades  
of sunlight and the flying foxes**

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