

LOCAL News

Story thanks to
Bronwyn Robertson



Wildlife Rescue

TABLELANDS

This beautiful pelican is called Mr Percival. He was found by a local resident on the shore of Tinaroo Dam, completely entangled in an abandoned fishing line and lure such that he was unable to move because every time he tried to paddle his foot, he pulled his head underwater.

In the past, birds like Mr Percival may have been left to die a slow death but thanks to a brand new group dedicated to the rescue, rehabilitation and release of native wildlife on the Tablelands, he was rescued and treated for his injuries. Officially incorporated in March this year, the group already has more than 80 members across the Tablelands, with wildlife carers based in Mt Molloy, Dimbulah, Mareeba, Atherton, Ravenshoe, Malanda and everywhere in between.

Many members of the group help operate a 24 hour phone hotline (4091 7767), so members of the public can ring in anytime they find injured or orphaned native wildlife and an experienced carer can be found to look after the animal.

The group has carers experienced in looking after all sorts of native animals, including birds, wallabies, possums, snakes and reptiles. Some of the more interesting animals that have been rescued and cared for by members include tree

kangaroos, green ringtail possums, pelicans, echidnas and goannas.

Tablelands Wildlife Rescue is also running workshops to teach people how to become native wildlife carers. They provide full training in how to look after a whole range of native animals. If you're interested in doing this you must also obtain a permit. The most important thing is that the animals receive the best possible care and are able to be released fit and healthy back to the wild. It really is the most satisfying feeling to see an animal you have cared for released back to its life in the wild.

Many hundreds of calls are received each year for injured and orphaned animals, so new members are always welcome. Some of the most common reasons wildlife come into care include attacks from dogs and cats and collisions with cars. Some animals can require months of care and extensive veterinary treatment, while others

simply require a safe place to recover for a few hours from a minor shock. There are also many members who don't care for animals, but are able to help in other ways, like volunteering on the 24-hour phone hotline, or simply being a financial supporter.

Spring and summer tends to be a busy time for wildlife carers, with many new babies born and lots of animals on the move so if anyone comes across injured or orphaned wildlife, call the 24 hour hotline on 4091 7767. The volunteer on the hotline will also be able to provide advice on how to care for the animal until a carer can be found.

Luckily Mr Percival eventually made a full recovery after extensive stitching and several courses of antibiotics and he was released back into the wild at Tinaroo Dam. **If you would like to become a native wildlife carer, call the 24 hour phone hotline on 4091 7767 or check the website at www.tablelandswildliferescue.com**