

# THE ARK

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EDITION #13



## **BIRTH OF ENDANGERED EASTERN QUOLLS**

Aussie Ark are celebrating the birth of 28 Eastern quoll joeys

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## **CONSERVATION ARK OFFICIALLY OPENS**

A true lifeboat for Australian native species.

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# DIRECT FROM THE PRESIDENT

***"You cannot protect the environment unless you empower people, you inform them, and you help them understand that these resources are their own, that they must protect."***

Wangari Maathai

What an incredible year 2021 has shaped up to be. Despite the challenges faced with the continued impacts of the global health pandemic, Aussie Ark has, as always, remained steadfast in our mission to protect native wildlife.

Over the last few months Aussie Ark has been incredibly busy, we celebrated some incredible wins – including the birth of 28 endangered Eastern Quoll Joeys, the opening of "Conservation Ark" at the Australian Reptile Park and celebrating a decade of conservation! 10 years, wow, what a journey. My boy Billy was just a few months old when we started this wild ride – I never could have imagined all the things we would be able to achieve!

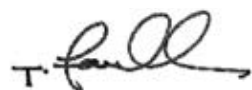
We just wrapped up our latest crowdfunding campaign to save the little known Broad-toothed Rat from extinction. The species numbers have decreased drastically due to the compounding threats they face. Introduced predators, such as foxes and cats, prey upon them. Feral horses, cattle, and pigs degrade their habitat and outcompete them for food. Weeds such as Scotch Broom take over their environment, decreasing food plants and shelter. We owe a huge thank you to our community of supporters for jumping on board and helping us to help this Aussie animal. Although we did not meet our goal, Aussie Ark and the team remain committed to protecting this species and have huge plans to build the world's first insurance population and breeding facility for the Broad-toothed Rat.

The last 24 months have been incredibly busy – Bushfires, floods, Coronavirus are just some of the challenges we have faced. Through it all Aussie Ark has been working hard and 2022 will see the culmination of years of hard work come into effect. We are excited to enter our eleventh year of wildlife conservation and deliver huge outcomes for native wildlife conservation.

As always Aussie Ark is incredibly grateful to our community of supporters – our successes are shared. We are grateful for your ongoing support and belief in the Aussie Ark vision. Likewise our thanks go out to our partners without who Aussie Ark would not be where it is today – Re:wild, WildArk, Australian Reptile Park Glencore, Australian Geographic, WIRES, Volkswagen, FAME, Ellerston, Zoo Zurich, Pairi Daiza, Zoo Leipzig, Sydney Helicopters, Coles and Symbio Wildlife Park.

Big things are happening, and we are excited to have you along for the ride. Please where you can, continue to support Aussie Ark. Donate, share our message, visit us and help us build a brighter future full of native wildlife.

Yours sincerely,



Tim Faulkner – President  
Aussie Ark



## VISION

Creating a long-term future for Australia's threatened wildlife.

## MISSION STATEMENT

- To protect Australia's threatened species with robust insurance populations,
- To create healthy ecosystems within Aussie Ark sanctuaries and through rewilding,
- To have long-term tangible outcomes for the species in our care,
- To be a proactive, professional, transparent, and effective organisation

## CONTACT DETAILS

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Twitter  
@aussie\_ark

TikTok  
@aussieark



# AUSSIE ARK CELEBRATES BIRTH OF ENDANGERED EASTERN QUOLLS



Aussie Ark are celebrating the birth of 28 new Eastern quoll joeys. The endangered species has called Aussie Ark home since 2017, when the facility stepped into bring the species back to mainland Australia for the first time in over 60 years.

The organisation's breeding program has bred over 150 Eastern Quolls since 2017, and in 2020 confirmed the first Joeys to have been born and bred into our wild Barrington Wildlife Sanctuary – a huge win for Aussie Ark.

***"It's an exciting time of year for the whole team when we do the Eastern quoll pouch check. These creatures are so important, and they fall into a really unique niche in the ecosystem,"***

- Aussie Ark Manager of Conservation, Hayley Shute.

Hayley continues "Getting to see them so tiny, inside mums' pouch is like nothing else. They're so vulnerable at this age, it's a special feeling knowing we are playing such an important role in their survival as a species."

Eastern quolls were once common throughout Australia, but sadly became extinct some 60 years

ago. The cause of their mainland extinction is due to introduced feral pests such as cats and foxes, as well as poisoning and trapping. Across Tasmania, quoll numbers have declined by more than 50% in the 10 years to 2009 and are showing no sign of recovery. It's estimated approximately 10,000 are left in Tasmania, but numbers have fallen rapidly with Eastern quolls edging closer to extinction.

In 2020, Aussie Ark returned the first Eastern Quolls back to the wilds of the Barrington Tops inside our Barrington Wildlife Sanctuary. The sanctuary which has been managed to reflect that of a pre-European era is a wild idea to rewild Eastern quolls and protect their species from extinction.

The success of the Eastern quoll program at Aussie Ark is only possible thanks to the ongoing support of Aussie Ark partners including Re:wild, Australian Reptile Park, Australian Geographic, WIRES, Glencore and the Foundation for Australia's Most Endangered Species.

You can help Aussie Ark's mission of saving endangered native wildlife from extinction by 'adopting' an Eastern quoll for as little as \$25 a month. Head to [aussieark.org.au/adopt](https://aussieark.org.au/adopt) to find out more. ❖



# CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION

Conservation Organisation Aussie Ark is celebrating 10 years of wildlife conservation. Aussie Ark was established in 2011 as 'Devil Ark', with a focus on saving the iconic Tasmanian devil from extinction. Since then and due to overwhelming success, the role of the organisation has expanded, and now has a vision of creating a long-term future for our threatened Australian species through the rewilding of lost or threatened species.

To help celebrate, Aussie Ark are launching an online Auction of a one-of-a-kind artwork by Artist Warren J Fox. Warren J Fox is an Australian artist, who crafts photo-realistic illustrations, based on detailed photography. The incredible artwork depicts a young Tasmanian devil joey nestled in the Hands of Aussie Ark President Tim Faulkner. All donations made through the campaign will be directed straight back into the vital work Aussie Ark undertakes, protecting Australian native wildlife from extinction.

"It's amazing - really I am in awe of the detail in the artwork. Warren has an incredible eye, and we are so grateful for his support of the Ark and our mission" says Tim Faulkner, Aussie Ark President.

"Our 10-year anniversary provides an opportune time to take a step back and acknowledge all that we have been able to do for wildlife in the last decade.

***"The last 10 years have been wild - full***

***of highs and lows and I for one am excited to see what the next decade holds for conservation in Australia"***

- Tim Faulkner, President.

In Aussie Ark's 10-year history the organisation has increased their land holding by 500%, returned the Tasmanian devil to mainland Australia for the first time in 3000 years, built world class turtle breeding facilities, bred over 400 Tasmanian devil joeys, and reintroduced the Eastern Quoll to the Barrington Tops. During the black summer disaster Aussie Ark were in the thick of it, relocating hundreds of at-risk endangered turtles, rescuing platypus and providing supplementary food sources for displaced wildlife.

Whilst the organisation is proud of their successes over the last decade, we aren't done yet.

In the next 12 months alone, Aussie Ark has plans to launch breeding programs for Spotted-tail quolls, Squirrel gliders, multiple frog species and the Broad-toothed Rat. They are also in the development phase of the creation of their newest sanctuary Mongo Valley Wildlife Sanctuary. It is safe to say conservation is safe in the capable hands of Aussie Ark.

To help Aussie Ark on their mission or to get involved in their online auction head to **[aussieark.org.au](https://aussieark.org.au)**. ❖







“ IT'S AMAZING – REALLY I AM IN AWE OF THE DETAIL IN THE ARTWORK. WARREN HAS AN INCREDIBLE EYE, AND WE ARE SO GRATEFUL FOR HIS SUPPORT OF THE ARK AND OUR MISSION ”

– TIM FAULKNER  
AUSSIE ARK PRESIDENT



# CONSERVATION ARK OFFICIALLY OPENS

Aussie Ark, in conjunction with the Australian Reptile Park and the Australian Federal Government, have officially opened their new endangered wildlife conservation facility – Conservation Ark. A true lifeboat for Australian native species.

The brand-new facility located at the Australian Reptile Park in Somersby was officially opened by the Honourable Sussan Ley MP. Minister Ley said of the program “It is incredibly significant to have this project here at Aussie Ark in conjunction with the Australian Reptile Park. We love the partnership that we have with Aussie Ark because we know that as a conservation organisation they understand what to do and how to do it best practice, with the best science to give the animals the best chance at recovery”

Conservation Ark has been jointly developed by conservation organisation Aussie Ark and eco-education and tourism organisation Australian Reptile Park as an extension of the Central Coast’s premier tourism attraction to help bring wildlife conservation to the local community. The facility is supported by the Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation Program – an Australian Government initiative. Through this program Aussie Ark was awarded \$850,000 towards protecting endangered species including the Manning River turtle, Brush-tailed Rock-wallaby, Giant barred frog and Stuttering barred frog.

***“The support from the Government’s Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation Program has been game changing. These new facilities are state-of-the-art and better yet, they will allow Aussie Ark to achieve enormous things for wildlife,”***

– Tim Faulkner, President

We hope that in the coming years we will be reporting to our community about incredible breeding seasons, births and of course the return of these animals to the wild.

Conservation Ark is a collection of endangered or threatened wildlife breeding programs that are helping to produce real world outcomes. Currently the programs include Australian freshwater turtles, endangered amphibians and koalas. However, together we have huge plans to expand to other endangered species including the Broad-toothed rat and Squirrel gliders.

The newly opened facilities are accessible by visitors to the *Australian Reptile Park*, with the new space included in the ticketed price. Both organisations are passionate about educating visitors on the plight of Aussie wildlife and what we can all do to change their trajectory and hope that Conservation Ark will play an important role in this education. To purchase tickets to the Australian Reptile Park, please visit [www.reptilepark.com.au](http://www.reptilepark.com.au)

Aussie Ark Partners include the *Australian Reptile Park*, *Re:Wild*, *WildArk*, *WIRES*, *Glencore*, *Australian Geographic*, *Symbio Wildlife Park*, *Sydney Helicopters*, *Volkswagen* and *FAME*. With the continued support of partnering organisations, Aussie Ark is able to continually provide the best care and conservation activities to native wildlife. ❖



A close-up photograph of a woman with dark hair, smiling broadly at the camera. She is wearing a blue collared shirt. Her right hand, covered in a clear, textured nitrile glove, is holding a small, vibrant green tree frog. The frog is perched on her fingers, facing left. The background is softly blurred, showing green foliage and a hint of an outdoor setting.

“IT IS INCREDIBLY SIGNIFICANT TO HAVE  
THIS PROJECT HERE AT AUSSIE ARK, IN  
CONJUNCTION WITH THE AUSTRALIAN  
REPTILE PARK”

– THE HONOURABLE SUSSAN LEY  
MP AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL GOVERNMENT



# IT'S A "RAT" RACE TO THE FINISH

Aussie Ark have once again stepped up, this time launching a crowdfunding campaign to save the Broad-toothed rat from extinction! Don't let the name fool you – Broad-toothed rats are critical to our native environment, and they are disappearing – rapidly. If the Broad-toothed Rat disappears from the Barrington Tops, the compounding effects will be felt by all species within the ecosystem.

Aussie Ark is building a captive breeding nucleus for the species, constructing intensive breeding facilities, modification of sites for release to sanctuary, wild population supplement and research. Aussie Ark will be the pioneers for learning about this important species including behavioural traits that are unknown.

After a month-long crowdfunding campaign we are thrilled to announce that together we raised \$60,842.63 to help save the Broad-toothed rat from extinction!

THANK YOU to each of our supporters for your generous donations, and support of the campaign and the Broad-toothed Rat. Despite not reaching our \$98,000 goal, Aussie Ark is committed to protecting this uniquely Aussie species and planning is well underway for the development of the world's first Broad-toothed rat breeding program.

"We love being able to shed light on some of Australia's more unknown species" Says Hayley Shute, Manager of Conservation at Aussie Ark. "Rats bring with them the connotation of dirty and diseased and lack the attention of the world in comparison to pandas, elephants, or tigers. However, they play a critical role, and it's up to us to make sure they are given the chance to survive" She continues.

The Broad-toothed rat, or Tooarrana, is unique in nature and behaviour. They make and use runways through the dense wet grasses and tussocks they inhabit, which protect them from predators. They

nest and shelter under logs and undergrowth, huddling in these nests to stay warm in winter. Their diet consists of almost all greenery and so their bright green faeces are very distinguishable.

The species numbers have decreased drastically due to the compounding threats they face. Introduced predators, such as foxes and cats, prey upon them. Feral horses, cattle, and pigs degrade their habitat and outcompete them for food. Weeds such as Scotch broom take over their environment, decreasing food plants and shelter.

***"Without intervention the Broad-toothed rat's demise is imminent. I refuse to sit back and watch, and I hope the rest of Australia can get behind us. I cannot stress enough how quickly they are disappearing, and that action is needed right now"***

- Hayley Shute, Manager of Conservation

The 2019-2020 bushfires destroyed no less than 1/3 of their total remaining habitat. They now have less habitat to call home and their future is at risk. The impact these fires have had is shown to be far worse than first anticipated. Many species that were already vulnerable are now facing extinction. The loss of the Tooarrana will be detrimental to other species as well as the ecosystem it lives in. It is known that we as humans can bounce back from natural disasters, however for our vulnerable Australian native species their future cannot be restored without help.

The Tooarrana belongs to the Barrington Tops. Sadly, it is on a trajectory to extinction if action is not taken in the short term. This population of Broad-toothed rats is found in the Barrington Tops and nowhere else on Earth, meaning once it's gone it is never coming back.







“ WE LOVE BEING ABLE TO SHED LIGHT ON  
SOME OF AUSTRALIA'S MORE UNKNOWN  
SPECIES

”

— HAYLEY SHUTE  
MANAGER OF CONSERVATION



# WHY IS AUSTRALIA'S WILDLIFE SO WACKY?

Australia's wildlife was so weird to 19th-century scientists of the northern hemisphere that it caused one of them, a devout Christian by the name of Charles Darwin, to question his God's creation. "A disbeliever in everything beyond his own reason might exclaim, 'Surely two distinct Creators must have been [at] work; their object, however, has been the same'," Darwin wrote in 1836, after visiting Cocks River at Wallerawang in NSW, during which he had stumbled on a potoroo, parrots and a platypus. Darwin's mind was blown.

It poses the question; Why is Australia's wildlife SO Wacky?

More than 80% of Australia's nearly 400 mammal species, from flying marsupial sugar gliders to truffle-eating miniature kangaroos, are found nowhere else in the world. The same goes for about 95% of nearly 1000 reptile species, from blue-tongued lizards to thorny devils, and for more than 90% of the nearly 300,000 species of invertebrates, of which fewer than 15% have been formally described.

Some 180 million years ago, the super continent of Gondwana split. One of the breakaway landmasses from that separation, contained what would become Australia and Antarctica. By 30 million years ago Australia had fully separated and journeyed north on its own. Since then, changes in land formation and climate, and the physical separation from the rest of the world, led to the unique flora and fauna that we know in Australia today.

As it turned out, monotremes and marsupials, with their less demanding reproductive systems, were

more suitable for this new environment and became the dominant animals in Australia.

The animals which were originally on the Australian landmass no longer had contact with creatures from other parts of the world and so continued to evolve independently.

This separate evolution has resulted in some unusual Australian animals and is the reason why Australian native animals are so different from those found elsewhere in the world

Australia's native plants and animals had adapted to life on an isolated continent over millions of years, now new pressures from invasive species have caused a major impact on our country's soil and waterways and on its native plants and animals. Sadly, Australia now has the worst mammal extinction rate in the world, and a high proportion of our surviving animals and plants are listed as threatened or endangered.

A major factor in the ongoing decline of mammals in many parts of Australia is intense predation from feral cats and foxes. This, in addition to, environmental degradation resulting from rabbits, hares, and other introduced grazing species is causing havoc to Australia's biodiversity.

All these threats are why conservation organisations like Aussie Ark are so critical to the survival of our truly unique Australian species. After millions of years, let's say "enough is enough" to any more extinctions.





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OWN REASON MIGHT EXCLAIM, 'SURELY  
TWO DISTINCT CREATORS MUST HAVE BEEN  
[AT] WORK; THEIR OBJECT, HOWEVER, HAS  
BEEN THE SAME.”

— CHARLES DARWIN





# WHAT THE FROG?

With over 200 species, Australia has one of the most diverse frog assemblages in the world. For many Australian frog species however, the prognosis is grim. Dramatic population declines in some Australian frog species have been reported since the 1980s, some of the more serious crashes occurring in pristine habitats. With the decline of Australia's frog species continuing, Aussie Ark has stepped up to the plate this time creating specialised breeding facilities for Australia's disappearing amphibian species.

The project includes the construction of world class breeding facilities at the Australian Reptile Park, to assist in the establishment of an insurance population of disappearing amphibian species. The project will begin by housing the Stuttering barred frog and Giant barred Frog, with potential for expansion into other locally endangered and disappearing species! Aussie Ark's project received support from the Australian government as part of a Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation program. The purpose of the Grant is to provide funding to assist bushfire affected wildlife through emergency interventions, such as through captive breeding, under the Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation Program.

***"Frogs are a good indicator of ecosystem health, the disappearance of our frogs is a telling sign."***

- Tim Faulkner, President

Tim continues; "Threats to frogs include habitat destruction, pollution and pesticides, climate change and, of course, invasive species. The planet is in the midst of a mass extinction and it's looking like

amphibians are some of the most at-risk class of vertebrates"

This breeding program for Aussie Arks newest flagship species, is set up for success, due to the high reproductive rate of the Amphibian species. The program will act as a head start for the species, breeding adult frogs and then raising the tadpoles to an age that they can be successfully reintroduced back into the waterways.

Australia already has the worst mammal extinction rate in the world, so if we fail to reduce the impact of feral predators, more species will be lost forever – including our frog species. This is particularly disturbing because amphibians have been around for hundreds of millions of years. Amphibians are a keystone of many ecosystems, and when they disappear, the environment changes dramatically. In many ecosystems, the population of amphibians outweighs all the other animals combined.

Eight frog species have become extinct in the last 25 years, and several more are likely to become extinct in the near future if action is not taken now. Aussie Ark's project will provide hope to Australian frogs, and we are eager to get started.

With construction finished and the facilities officially opened, Aussie Ark staff are excited to get back into the field to start completing habitat surveys and founding population collections.

Aussie Ark has a vision of providing a long-term future to threatened Australian wildlife. Support Aussie Ark's endangered frog facility by donating today at [aussieark.org.au/donate/](https://aussieark.org.au/donate/)





“ THE PLANET IS IN THE MIDST OF A MASS  
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– TIM FAULKNER  
AUSSIE ARK PRESIDENT





# WHAT'S ON AT THE ARK! - COME AND VISIT US

*'One person can make a difference and everyone should try'* – John F Kennedy



## DEVIL'S IN THE WILD TOUR

Want to get up close with our devils?  
Well, now you can!

Devils in the Wild tour is a 2.5 hour fully escorted tour led by one of our Aussie Ark Rangers and starts off with an introduction of the project and the Tasmanian devil over morning tea at our Interpretation centre.

You will be privy to enter a huge free-range enclosure and experience a rare opportunity to really get up close and personal in the devils natural enclosure to witness a communal feed to encourage wild behaviour.

**To book visit [www.aussieark.org.au](http://www.aussieark.org.au)**

## STAY WITH US!

Come and enjoy a 2 nights stay with us at Devils Retreat or Quoll Cottage! With all of the essentials to ensure a relaxing getaway in the mountains, you'll find yourself wishing to stay longer! Join us for a once-in-a-lifetime experience that you'll remember for years to come. Your stay also includes our "Devils in the Wild" tour – a 2.5 hour walking tour of the Aussie Ark facility.

**What are you waiting you for? Head to [www.aussieark.org.au](http://www.aussieark.org.au) or contact us via phone 02 4326 5333 or email [admin@aussieark.org.au](mailto:admin@aussieark.org.au) for more information.**



# SUPPORT AUSSIE ARK TODAY!



# HELP FROM OUR PARTNERS

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## **Zoo Leipzig**

Zoo Leipzig stands for a unique concept that includes animal welfare and husbandry, species conservation, education and exciting explorer tours. They demonstrate their commitment to conservation by partaking in almost 60 breeding programs all over the world.



## **Pairi Daiza**

Since its inception Pairi Daiza has been actively involved in the preservation of countless endangered species, including birds, mammals, fish and reptiles. Their objective is to promote the conservation of endangered species globally.



Musems Victoria

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PHOTO BY LACHLAN GILDING

## HOW CAN YOU HELP?



### DONATE

Australia has the worst mammal extinction rate in the world. You can help us build a brighter future for Australia's threatened wildlife by donating today. All donations will help fund vital conservation work at Aussie Ark- with every donation over \$2 tax deductible.



### STAY

Looking for a getaway? Aussie Ark's "Devils Retreat" is perfect for you. With all of the essentials to ensure a relaxing getaway in the mountains, you'll find yourself wishing to stay longer! Join us for a once-in-a-lifetime experience that you'll remember for years to come.



### SUPPORT

Aussie Arks success isn't possible without people like you, our supporters, we cannot thank you enough. Aussie Arks mission is mammoth and we will not stop. Help us help them by providing feral free sanctuaries. \$150 will provide 1 meter of fencing, your contribution goes directly to serving Australia's wildlife.

## PROJECT PARTNERS OF AUSSIE ARK

