



## **Media Release**

### **Public Urged to Obtain Carers Permit**

The Parks and Wildlife Service today urged Alice Springs residents to obtain carer's permits before looking after injured or orphaned wildlife.

Parks and Wildlife Service wildlife officer Jon DeLaine said recent incidents of kangaroos escaping from residential properties of non-permitted people was of concern.

"Whenever kangaroos escape a person's yard they pose a risk to the public by exhibiting unpredictable and erratic behaviour when scared and stressed," Mr DeLaine said.

"The risk might be directly posed to a person or to passing traffic and who knows what might happen then.

"Fortunately no one was harmed in these recent incidents."

Mr DeLaine said it is vital people obtain a carer's permit through Parks and Wildlife Service before trying to look after native wildlife.

He said people taking or interfering with protected wildlife could face fines of up to \$55,000 or five years imprisonment if found guilty of breaching the *Territory Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act*.

"Carers associated with non-profit organisation Wildcare do a brilliant job looking after native animals as they have the necessary qualifications and housing facilities," Mr DeLaine said.

"The best interests of the native animal concerned should always be a carer's number one priority and we work together with Wildcare as much as we can to ensure this happens with each and every volunteer.

"The Wildlife Carer's Permit system is designed to enable members of the public to care for injured wildlife and assist Parks and Wildlife Service with the care and rehabilitation of native animals.

"Permit applications are assessed on relevant criteria such as housing facilities and experience in caring for injured or orphaned animals."

Mr DeLaine said in the particular case of Kangaroos they should only be kept until they are between 14 and 16 months old, which is when they have stopped feeding from a bottle.

He said adult kangaroos (18 months or older) do not make good pets and should be handed to Parks and Wildlife Service to reduce the risk of injuries and escape.

“Adult kangaroos can become aggressive and pose a danger to people when sexually mature,” Mr DeLaine said.

“Parks and Wildlife Service run a release program for the hand reared kangaroos and small groups of kangaroos are released on parks and reserves after spending time in their pre-release facility where they learn vital social and survival skills in a naturalistic setting.”

Mr DeLaine said when kangaroos are weaned, carers should contact Parks and Wildlife southern region office on 8951 8283 or 8951 8226 to arrange a time for the animals to be taken to the pre-release facility at the Arid Zone Research Institute.

He said people interested in keeping joeys are encouraged to join Alice Springs Wildcare and attend carers training courses. More information can be accessed at <http://www.nt.gov.au/nreta/wildlife/animals/rescue.html> or by phoning 0419 221 128.

Ends

**Media Note – For more information contact Jon DeLaine on 8951 8283**

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