

Guidelines for Completing Wildcare Rescue/Carer Records

(Revised: January 2021)

Introduction

Why Records are Important

All wildlife rehabilitators in Queensland must hold a current Rehabilitation Permit issued by the Department of Environment and Science (DES), or be endorsed under a group's permit. Wildcare Australia Inc. holds a group Rehabilitation Permit, as well as a permit to rehabilitate the specialised animals of koalas, echidnas, venomous snakes and some raptors. If members would like to care for native wildlife under Wildcare's permit, then they must apply to Wildcare's Management Committee annually for endorsement.

One of Wildcare's conditions of this Permit Authorisation is that accurate records must be kept on all animals rescued or kept in care. These records must be submitted EVERY 6 MONTHS to Wildcare's Record Keeper, who collates all records received every 6 months and produces reports based on them. Records no longer go to DES each year, but DES can ask for these at any time or may receive specific reports, e.g. koala records data.

Records provide valuable information on figures and trends about our native wildlife and why they come into care. This assists State and local government authorities, such as DES, DTMR (Department of Transport & Main Roads) and local Councils, to plan strategies to reduce hazards that impact on our wildlife. The data reports also assist Wildcare and other interested parties in increasing community awareness of the need to conserve and protect our unique biodiversity and have been used to justify grant applications.

When to Submit Your Rescue/Carer Records

As above, rescue/carers records must be submitted EVERY 6 MONTHS to the Wildcare Record Keeping volunteer. A reminder email is sent to members at the end of every 6-month period (i.e. 30th June and 31st December). They will need to be sent in within 2 weeks of each due date (i.e. Submitted by 14th July and 14th January, respectively). In order for records to be complete and accurate, most carers find that they need to independently keep their records up to date every few days, before information is forgotten or mislaid. Some carers choose to submit their records more frequently, such as monthly as a back-up, and these early records will still be accepted and processed by the Record Keeping volunteer.

Wildcare Rescue/Carer Records Forms

There are 2 ways to complete your Rescue/Carer Records:

Excel Spreadsheet – (Preferred method)

The Excel template is available to download on the Wildcare website under the Carers Resources tab. When due, please email the Excel records file as an attachment to the Record Keeper at records@wildcare.org.au. The Record Keeper will then process your records and email the spread sheet back to you, so that you can continue to add subsequent records.

Word or Handwritten Rescue/Carer Records Form

If you don't have the Excel program or are not too computer-savvy, you have the option of handwriting your records and posting them to the Record Keeper. The latest version of this form is also available on the Wildcare website.

The guidelines for completing the records are the same for Excel users and those handwriting their records. However, as the Excel file has several drop-down picklists, there is some additional information for those submitting handwritten records (information includes the pick-lists and choice options).

How to Submit Records

By EMAIL:

records@wildcare.org.au (please send the Excel file as an attachment).

By POST:

Handwritten Records should be sent on the printed Word Records form, by post, to:

Wildcare Record Keeper, PO Box 2379, Nerang, Qld, 4211.

Please ensure these records forms are filled in completely and correctly. There is no need to include additional forms, such as Rescue Record forms, vet admission forms or individual Species Assessment forms (these should be kept by the carer).

If NIL rescues or animals in care for the quarter:

Please still advise the record keeper via email. If you had animals listed as 'still in care' on your last records submitted, then you will need to submit your records form, with their outcomes added (or SIC date updated).

Completing Wildcare's Rescue/Carer Record Forms

<p>CARER'S NAME</p>	<p>This is generally you, but in cases where animals are transferred between carers, then both carers' names will be listed here when the records on the same animal, but received from different carers, are merged into one by the Record Keeper.</p> <p><i>For Excel Form users only:</i> The easiest way to ensure your name is entered exactly the same in each row is to type it once in the first cell and hit enter, then copy & paste this cell into the other relevant rows.</p> <p><i>Justification:</i> This column helps us when we merge all records of all carers (usually more than 4000 records) into one single Excel spreadsheet, as we will have a carer's name associated with each record.</p>
<p>DATE ANIMAL WAS RESCUED (ENTRY DATE)</p>	<p>This is the date the animal was rescued. If you received the animal as a transfer, then please ask for the rescue date, and put 'T' next to the Code (next column). If you do not receive the rescue date, then put the transfer date here, and again put 'T' next to the Code (next column).</p>
<p>WILDCARE CODE</p>	<p>Wildcare Code - Codes are issued to all animals that enter care. They remain with the animal until release/other outcome and are a means of providing a unique identification. Codes also include the (first) carer's initials and rescue date, so are a source of information in themselves.</p> <p>Wildcare Codes should be in the same format, of: XXX dd/mm/yy/00001, as this assists us during collation, in checking for duplicate records and merging these.</p> <p>The code consists of your initials, followed by a space, then the date (dd/mm/yy), then forward slash (/), then a sequential 5-digit number (starting with 00001). It doesn't matter if you accidentally skip numbers in the sequence (such as one code has 00025 and the next animal has a code with 00027), so long as no 2 codes are identical among the animals in your care.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the animal was transferred to you after being in care with another Wildcare carer, then use the 1st carer's code for the animal and add 'T' at the end. Please do not issue a new code for that animal, as that can lead to the animal being accounted for twice during collation, thereby inaccurately duplicating figures in our records data. • If for some reason the first carer did not issue a code, then please issue one with your initials but put the rescue date in the animal's code. • Rescuers are not required to issue a code. However, if the rescuer did issue a code, then you may use that one for the animal, again with 'T' added to the end. <p><i>The code along with all rescue information should be obtained from the previous carer either at the time of transfer or very soon after.</i></p> <p>Pick-list options when no code is required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ROAD KILL - For road kill sightings. • DOA - For non-roadkill animals that you either find by chance or are dead upon your arrival at the rescue scene. • No Rescue – If you attend a rescue and determine once you get there that the animal does not need to be rescued or is unable to be located.

<p>CODE (Continued)</p>	<p>· N/A - If you rescue an animal and take it straight to another carer, or to a vet surgery or wildlife hospital. If it is determined that the animal has a good prognosis and requires rehabilitation by a carer, then the Wildcare carer providing this care will issue a code for the animal.</p> <p><u><i>For examples on how to code more than one animal received, refer to 'Quantity' and also 'Common Question' on this (both below).</i></u></p>
<p>ANIMAL (Excel form only)</p>	<p><i>For Excel Form users only:</i> The ability to free-type in this column has been blocked on the Excel records form; only an option from the drop-down list can be selected for entry.</p> <p><i>Justification:</i> This field enables the Record Keeper to sort and collate efficiently for reports (e.g. totals by animal groups, to obtain data specific to an animal group). If an entry you desire is not on the list, please contact the Record Keeper at records@wildcare.org.au.</p>
<p>SPECIES (FULL COMMON NAME)</p>	<p><i>For Excel Form users:</i> A drop-down list of common names has been provided and is formatted with the general name first followed by the descriptor (such as "Kingfisher, Azure" or "Possum, Common Brushtail"). This will hopefully make it easier to scan the list for the correct full name. We have also provided various "unknown sp." options as we are aware that identifying the species is not always easy (e.g. "Bandicoot, unknown sp", or "Bird, unknown sp" for baby birds that die before they obtain mature feathers. The ability to free-type in this column has been blocked on the Excel records form; only an option from the drop-down list can be selected for entry. If an entry you desire is not on the list, please contact the Record Keeper at records@wildcare.org.au. There is a tab (another sheet in the records form) that has the complete lists by animal groups, so you can also click on this tab to search for your species.</p> <p><i>For Handwritten Records:</i> The full species list is supplied in the Extra Information file.</p> <p><i>Justification:</i> Selecting from the list helps to keep all data consistent among the thousands of records that the record keepers manage and also saves the record keepers a lot of time which was previously spent on correcting typos or correcting slang names entered by carers (such as Pee-wee or Mickey Bird).</p>
<p>NAME YOU GAVE ANIMAL</p>	<p>This field is <u>optional</u> and has been added because many carers, especially mammal carers who have animals in care for several months, find it easier to track the progress and outcome of each animal by its 'name', rather than by a Wildcare code.</p> <p><i>For Excel Form users only:</i> The worksheet columns are "frozen" at the Name column which will allow carers who use the Name column to scroll and view data to the right while maintaining the ability to read the Name of their animal. Some computer programs (if font enlarged) are disadvantaged by 'freeze frames', so this can be undone on request to the record keeper. If you decide not to use this name column, please just skip over it and leave it blank. DO NOT delete this column.</p>

<p>QUANTITY (QTY)</p>	<p>This number is usually '1'. The only instance in which a carer would record more than 1 in this column is if absolutely ALL data in every other column is EXACTLY the same, E.g. 9 ducklings ALL rescued at the same location on the same day by the same rescuer for which the gender cannot be determined for any of them and they are subsequently ALL released on the same day at the same release location.... These can be recorded in one row with a quantity of '9'.</p> <p>If the GENDER, AGE, OUTCOME, OUTCOME DATE, or any other piece of information is different, then a new row needs to be completed. For example, if the 9 ducklings from the example above are Wood Ducks and one dies, and the rest of the ducks are released on the same day at the same location, then you will need to use 2 rows to record these animals. One row for the 8 that are released, and one row for the 1 that died. <i>The CODE for these animals is the same, but with 'a' & 'b' added at the end (For Excel Records users, refer to the Sample Record on the Excel form illustrating this).</i></p> <p><u><i>For more examples on how to record quantities and codes, refer to 'Common Question' on this (below).</i></u></p>
<p>REASON FOR CARE</p>	<p>We have created a simplified list of reasons. Other details (such as specific injury, e.g. fractured wing) should be noted in the Comments field.</p> <p>In this example, if the cause of the fractured wing is unknown, then REASON selected is: "Injury, OTHER – See Comments". You can put 'Fractured wing' and any other comments in 'Comments' field.</p> <p>If wing fracture was caused by the bird being struck by a car, then REASON is: "Injury – Road Trauma". You can again add 'Fractured wing' to the 'Comments' field.</p> <p><i>Justification:</i> The simplified list of reasons exists to keep all data consistent among the thousands of records that are submitted and so saves the record keeper a lot of time which was previously spent on sorting through similar entries which were written differently (such as "Cat attack" and "attacked by a cat").</p> <p><i>For Excel Form Users:</i> The ability to free-type in this column has been blocked on the Excel records form; only an option from the drop-down list can be selected for entry. If an entry you desire is not on the list, please contact the Record Keeper at records@wildcare.org.au .</p> <p><i>For Handwritten Records:</i> This list is also supplied in the Extra Information file.</p>
<p>OUTCOME</p>	<p><i>For Excel Form users:</i> All possible outcomes are in the drop-down list in this column, to make it easier for carers to record the appropriate information.</p> <p>The ability to free-type in this column has been blocked on the Excel records form; only an option from the drop-down list can be selected for entry.</p> <p><i>For Handwritten Records:</i> This list is also supplied in the Extra Information file.</p> <p><i>Justification:</i> Selecting from the list helps to keep all data consistent among the thousands of records that the record keeper manages. This should also make it easier for carers to sort and update their records for animals that are still in care (SIC).</p>

<p>OUTCOME DATE</p>	<p>Every outcome should have a corresponding Outcome Date entered. If an animal is still in care (SIC) at time you complete your records, then the Outcome Date is the same as the date you submit your records (needs to be typed in this column).</p> <p><i>Justification:</i> This shows the Record Keeper that you haven't forgotten to provide the animal's outcome.</p>
<p>OUTCOME DETAILS</p>	<p>Most outcomes require further detail. An optional dropdown list provides some outcomes to make this easier. Outcomes requiring outcome details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RELEASED Animals: Need Release Location. • TRANSFERRED Animals: Need carer's name, and also group that carer belongs to if not Wildcare. • Animals taken to VET/WILDLIFE HOSPITAL: Need name of Vet Surgery / Wildlife Hospital. • EUTHANASED animals: Need name of the Vet Surgery, Wildlife Hospital or Wildcare Trauma Carer who performed the euthanasia.
<p>GENDER</p>	<p>Only 3 options are relevant in this column and a list has been provided with the acceptable entries; male ('M'), female ('F') or 'Unknown'.</p>
<p>AGE</p>	<p>This column has been kept very simple with only 4 relevant ages: "Orphan / Baby", "Juvenile", "Sub-Adult" or "Adult". Any other detail on age can be noted in the Comments field (e.g. 'Hatchling', 'Fledgling', 'Unfurred', '93gm orphan', etc.)</p> <p><i>Justification:</i> Limiting the age list helps to keep all data consistent among the thousands of records that the record keepers manage.</p> <p><i>For Excel Form Users:</i> The ability to free-type in this column has been blocked on the Excel records form; only an option from the drop-down list can be selected for entry. If an entry you desire is not on the list, please contact the Record Keeper at records@wildcare.org.au.</p>
<p>RESCUER DETAILS</p>	<p>Please enter the name of the person who rescued the animal, usually a carer or Wildcare rescuer. If you rescued the animal, please type in your own name. Do not type "me" in the field as we may not be able to determine who "me" is after all records are merged together.</p> <p><i>Justification:</i> This information is useful in case we need to contact the rescuer to gain more detailed information about the rescue location or scenario to ensure we appropriately assess, rehabilitate and plan the release of the animal. <u>This detail is removed from data reports, for privacy reasons.</u></p>
<p>CALLER'S NAME & PHONE NUMBER</p>	<p>Please enter the name and phone number of the person who found the animal and/or the vet surgery who contacted Wildcare to request collection. Please do not put 'Wildcare' as although they did call you about the animal, they were not the original caller/finder.</p>

<p><i>CALLER'S details - continued</i></p>	<p><i>Justification:</i> This information is useful in case we need to contact the caller/finder to gain more detailed information about the rescue location or scenario to ensure we appropriately manage the release or treatment/care of the animal. <u>This detail is removed from data reports, for privacy reasons.</u></p>
<p>ACCESSIONS CODE</p>	<p>All 3 wildlife hospitals in SEQ, , assign each animal an accession or ID number. If you pick up an animal from one of these hospitals, please record their accessions code in this column. <i>These facilities will usually give you a copy of a Discharge Form which has this accession code as well as all the rescue details.</i></p> <p><i>Justification:</i> When records are collated with the wildlife hospitals; it is easier to identify each animal.</p> <p>The RSPCA (1300ANIMAL) also issues a 'job number' for each rescue so you can record this in this column as well.</p>
<p>SPECIFIC PLACE OF RESCUE</p>	<p>Please record the street number and street name of the specific place the animal was rescued. Please don't use abbreviations (e.g. Tally Crk Rd) and if you aren't sure of the spelling, please use Google Maps to check.</p> <p><i>Justification:</i> This is VERY important particularly when releasing territorial animals, and adult animals which mate for life. In the past specific locations have been required for a number of data reports given to DES and DTMR (Main Roads), e.g. determining 'black spot' locations needing road signage.</p>
<p>SUBURB / TOWN</p>	<p>Please record the specific suburb or town of the location of the rescue. Please don't use abbreviations such as "R'Bay" as this could represent a different place according to where you live (e.g. Raby Bay or Runaway Bay).</p> <p><i>Justification:</i> Please also don't assume that the Record Keeper will know the suburb by the street name and leave the suburb blank, as we get records from all over South-east Queensland and don't necessarily know your local area as well as you do.</p>
<p>COUNCIL JURISDICTION (Excel form only)</p>	<p><i>For Excel Form Users Only:</i> Most Council jurisdictions are listed on the optional drop-down pick-list on the Excel records form. If you are unsure what Council the rescue suburb belongs, then click on 'Suburbs & Councils' tab (bottom of screen), and you'll find most are listed on this separate sheet. You can copy and paste your suburb and council into your record. Otherwise, just leave this column blank and the Record Keeper will fill it in.</p> <p><i>Justification:</i> This column was added due to the frequent requests from Councils and Members of the Public for wildlife rescue data specific to their locality. It is also useful for collating records data used in Council-specific grant applications by Wildcare.</p>
<p>COMMENTS</p>	<p>Use this column to record any other details related to the Reason For Care, the Age, or any other information that you think may be relevant and useful regarding the rescue or rehabilitation of the animal.</p>

Common Questions

1. Do I need to keep records if I only rescue and do not rehabilitate animals?

YES. This data is just as important as rehabilitation data and is a means of identifying impacts of land development, roads and domestic animals on our wildlife. It also provides us with data on the extent of involvement that Wildcare has had with local wildlife. Rescues represent a large component of the community service that Wildcare provides, and the records of these rescues therefore indicate the magnitude of this.

Both rescue and rehabilitation records data can be used in grant submissions to justify the need for funds. When successful in obtaining such grants, these funds then help to reimburse costs to members, such as the carer's subsidy for shop items, and even phone and fuel expense reimbursement.

Animal transfers may also be listed on your records and they also represent the community service that Wildcare provides.

2. What if the animal is dead when I reach the site of rescue?

If the animal was killed by road trauma or had died by the time you arrived to rescue it, please still record the rescue for the same reasons as above.

The record then acknowledges the intervention by you as a Wildcare volunteer.

The code will be either "ROAD KILL" or "DOA" depending on the situation/cause of death.

Our records are a source of identifying the impacts of various factors on our local wildlife to local governments, departments and researchers. Therefore, even if the caller informs you that the animal has died when you phone them to arrange collecting the animal, then it is good to still record the animal, even though its code and outcome are "No rescue".

3. Why are we asked to record Road Kills that we see?

As above, our records are a source of identifying the impacts of various factors on our local wildlife to local governments, departments and researchers. In the past the Qld Department of Transport & Main Roads (DTMR) and some local Councils have obtained our records data to determine road 'hot spots' - locations where wildlife mortalities frequently occur. This has then led to signage and even redesigning roads to include painted 'wildlife' caution strips across roads, underpasses/overpasses and fencing.

4. What if more than one animal is collected on one rescue?

FAMILY OF SAME SPECIES: The same code can be used for all animals of the same species ONLY if all details are exactly the same, e.g. 7 sibling Pacific Black ducklings that are orphaned and rescued together and if they end up having the same outcome, such as all are successfully released at the same location. The code for these animals would be KRJ 28/01/21/00167a-g. If, however, any of them end up with different outcomes such as 1 dies, then you will need to separate their records by adding a different letter onto the end of the code,

Example: KRJ 28/01/21/00167a, and KRJ 28/01/21/00167b-g.

MULTIPLE ANIMALS OF DIFFERENT SPECIES: If you receive two different animals for care from the same Vet on one day (e.g. crow and magpie), then you should issue two separate Wildcare codes.

PARENT AND JOEY: In the situation of a parent and its young being rescued, the same code but separate records, with 'a' and 'b' added to the end of each Code, should be given to the parent and its young. It is likely that their outcomes, gender, or other details will be different.

Examples: If a female adult possum with a pouch-young enters care for dermatitis, then the mother's code would KRJ 29/07/20/00168a and the joey's code would be KRJ 29/07/20/00169b.

5. If I acquire an animal from another carer, do I need to include the rescue details in my record?

YES. Please request all the rescue details from the rescuer or previous carer. Ideally the initial carer should be submitting their record for this animal so their record will contain all the rescue details. However, it is important that you have all these details too, as you may need some during the course of the animal's treatment or rehabilitation (e.g. To contact the finder for more information, or to arrange eventual release of the animal back at the rescue location). It also helps the Record Keepers to confirm that the animal is the same as that provided in the initial carer's records. If you are the first carer, then you will need to issue a code for the animal, ensuring the rescue date is within the code. The transfer date may be included in either the 'Outcome Details' or 'Comments' columns.

6. When an animal is transferred to me, do I put my name in the Transferred (Outcome Details) column?

You can do this so long as you also record your own outcome for the animal (e.g. SIC, release location, transferred to..., etc).

The 3 Outcome columns are primarily for you to record the status of the animal at the time you are submitting your records (i.e. animal's final outcome if known, or else SIC if still in care).

7. I received my Excel records back from the Record Keeper last submission, and have added my new records, only the new records were not saved. What happened?

If you opened the file but did not save it as a new file on your computer, and instead just clicked 'save' only, then your computer would have stored it in a temporary folder, possibly as a 'read-only' file. Most computer programs now prompt you to make a new file now if you do this, so this shouldn't occur much now.

When you receive your records back from the Record Keeper, you'll need to first save the file on your computer (e.g. under 'My Documents' folder) with a new file name (even just adding '1' to the end of the existing file name will do this) - All before making more changes. Of course, save everything as you go and before closing the file.

8. When do I have to submit my Carer/Rescue Records?

As stated above, your Wildcare Records must be submitted EVERY 6 MONTHS. However, you should update your records every few days if you regularly rescue or get new animals in/out. You should also back up your records regularly, similar to all other important documents on your computer in case of

computer malfunction. You are welcome to send in your records more frequently to the record keeper as a back-up system.

AS stated above, you will still need to ensure all your records are submitted at the end of June and at the end of December each year, as this is when everyone's records are collated for data reports. Ensuring you are up to date at the time you apply to renew your Rehabilitation Permit Authorisation under Wildcare will also ensure there are no delays in getting this endorsement due to records incompleteness. It is up to you to remember to submit your records, as there is little time for the Record Keepers to contact carers individually to remind them, among the other tasks required within the Record Keeping role. However reminder emails are usually sent to all members about records submission at the end of June and December.

9. How do I know my records have been received?

Emailed Records: If emailing your records (or Nil report), once your carer records have been received and processed by the Record Keeper, then they will reply by email to you, usually within a few weeks. The reply email will have your processed Excel carer records file attached, so you can save this and add on your next month of records to it.

Handwritten Records: If you usually post your handwritten records to Wildcare, then the Record Keeper may contact you by email if they have any queries on your records, e.g. some missing information. Otherwise there is no reply/receipt issued for mailed-in records. If unsure if received, then you can check with the Record Keeper by email as to whether they have been received.

10. What if I forget to submit my records?

If you are likely to forget, please put a system in place to remind yourself regularly to submit your records, e.g. make a note in your diary or calendar when they are due. However most carers find they need to update their records soon after a rescue or change (animals in or out) has occurred. This becomes every few days for busy rescuers/carers.

As mentioned above, the incentive for you to remember to submit your records is that your Rehabilitation Permit Authorisation from Wildcare may not be issued until you are up-to-date with your records submissions.

Unfortunately there is usually little time left over for the Record Keeper to spend in ringing individual carers to remind them. The role of the Record Keeper (also a volunteer) is a very demanding position and so your assistance in ensuring that your records are submitted regularly is much appreciated.

11. What if I resign from Wildcare or am no longer caring for wildlife?

Please notify the Record Keeper by phone, letter or email if either of these situations occurs.

If you resign or become inactive, any outstanding records must be submitted to the Record Keeper IMMEDIATELY, including the outcomes of ALL 'still in care' animals as soon as their outcomes are known.

Record Keeping Volunteer (January 2021)
records@wildcare.org.au