

NWC Wildlife Rehabilitation Grants Program 2023-2024

Grant Agreement

Grant Number: 9-G

Grant Recipient: **Wildlife A R C**

Grant Amount: \$527

Project Description: Flying-fox intensive care hospital cage with temperature support and food/water dishes

The grant enabled the flying fox section to purchase a hospital cage and accessories to house baby flying-foxes. The grant came at a perfect time as it was a difficult season this year. We started off with a drought and resultant food shortage in the western colonies during winter and spring. Breeding females lost their milk and their babies died of starvation in the days after birth: for example, in October, 880 dead babies were picked up at the Cowra colony.

However, it was when the starving flying-foxes moved into more eastern areas that large numbers of babies came into rehabilitation societies. Starving flying-foxes make mistakes, and in Sydney and elsewhere, large number of female flying-foxes were killed on powerlines and many had live young when rescued. In December we had the first of three heat stress events that occurred over summer and once again large number of juveniles came into rehabilitation societies.

These various events have resulted in over 100 baby flying-foxes coming into the ARC over the summer, with most being in extremely poor condition as they were starved while on their mothers.

The problem with rearing flying-foxes is that they generally start to fly while they are still on bottles. By the time they are weaned at about 300g they can fly (which makes them difficult to keep in an average home) yet they are not competent enough to be released until they are at least 400g. So, between 300g and 400g ARC bats are kept in a mini-creche, that is in outside medium sized cages so they can fly a bit and make friends with other bats.

We greatly appreciate the provision of this grant as it made this monumental job a little bit easier. Eighty-three flying-foxes have already been sent to be released leaving only 37 still with ARC carers.

Thank you once again.

Kind Regards,

Sam Beasurer

Wildlife ARC



