



**HUMANE SOCIETY  
INTERNATIONAL**  
AUSTRALIA

HSI AUSTRALIA'S SUPPORTER NEWSLETTER

# STANDING **for** **ANIMALS**

JULY 2022



## **A harrowing journey to safety**

Meet the tigers and  
bears whose lives  
you helped change

**INSIDE:** A new triage centre for wildlife | Feature: The dramatic rescue of tigers from a Thailand zoo | Launching our new community fundraising hub | Orangutans released back into the wild | What the new federal government means for animals | Updated Fur Free List and Better Wool Guide



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*We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of this land. We recognise and respect the enduring relationship they have with their lands and waters, and we pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.*

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Share your stories of creating a more humane world by using the hashtag **#standingforanimals** on social media.

#### Front cover

*One of the tigers rescued from a Phuket zoo now living a life of comfort. Photo: Wildlife Friends Foundation Thailand*

#### Back cover

*HSI Programs Coordinator Helen Church in the field feeding a wallaby in care.*

#### Newsletter design

Susanne Geppert

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## CEO Message

It has been another eventful few months for all of us at HSI.

We bid farewell and good luck to Alexia Wellbelove, one of our valued campaigners. After 13 incredible years with the organisation, she takes on a new challenge with our dear friends at the Australian Marine Conservation Society.

Alexia was an integral part of our work on protecting the Australian Sea Lion which you will read about in this issue. It's just part of the wonderful legacy she leaves behind. We will miss her and wish her every success.

We also welcomed several new team members including Louise Boronyak who you will meet in this issue. I am really looking forward to their contributions to our animal welfare and wildlife protection campaigns as we increase our advocacy in these two key areas.

The cover story for this issue is harrowing but ultimately so inspiring. I must admit that I shed several tears when I spoke to Edwin Wiek about the incredible challenges his team faced in relocating tigers and bears from shocking conditions at Phuket Zoo.

I am certain that, like me, you will be horrified by the conditions these poor animals were living in. And I realise I shouldn't anthropomorphise but it does look to me like there is pure joy on their faces in their new large and natural enclosures.

We also had a momentous election resulting in a new parliament for Australia. Our team is wasting no time getting in front of the new Ministers and we look forward to working with them to halt the extinction crisis and improve animal welfare conditions for farm animals.

As always, I hope you enjoy reading in these pages about the many success stories you have made possible. From tigers to sharks, wombats to orangutans—every animal we help is thanks to you. We are so very grateful.

**Erica Martin**  
Chief Executive Officer



IMAGE: SAVE A COW FOUNDATION

.....  
**WITH  
YOUR  
SUPPORT**  
.....

**Hay for stranded cows** *Save a Cow Sanctuary was among the recipients of emergency flood grants this autumn. HSI supporters helped to provide emergency hay and fencing, a critical intervention with 90% of their pastures flooded.*

## Help when disaster strikes

**Autumn floods in New South Wales and Queensland devastated communities and properties including many wildlife sanctuaries. HSI supporters helped us respond quickly.**

Within days of the first floods that would devastate much of the northern NSW and southern Queensland region, we received calls from wildlife carers and local groups requesting help. Wombat burrows were waterlogged, wildlife rehabilitation enclosures were destroyed, cows were left to huddle in tiny patches of high ground and people had run out of food for their cats and dogs and were unable to get more.

HSI's Head of Programs Evan Quartermain and Wildlife Land Trust Coordinator Helen Church hit the road to help, and donors answered the call to fund emergency animal rescue and protection efforts.

### Burrows and water pumps for wombats

Burrowing animals like wombats are especially vulnerable to flooding. When burrows become flooded, they can collapse, leaving animals either trapped or homeless and in great distress. They will stay out day and night seeking any shelter they can find, in danger of being hit by cars, attacked by dogs and foxes and getting into conflict with homeowners..

Wildlife carer John Creighton was relieved and thankful for the temporary wombat burrows he received from HSI. "These have been so effective and helpful", he told us. "The wombats are now regularly using these! They have shelter until their burrow is dried out or pumped out by us. HSI has supported us last year with the purchase of the pumps and they are indeed getting used this year and of course into the future. We have a workable solution here that will save lives and bring comfort to the wombats."



IMAGE: JOHN CREIGHTON

**Shelter for wombats** *Donations to our emergency flood appeal helped to provide temporary burrows for wombats whose homes were flooded out.*



IMAGES: H. CHURCH/HSI AUSTRALIA

**Kibble for families with dogs** *Helen and Evan delivered nearly 100 bags of emergency food around Lismore, Grafton and the surrounding area for dogs whose families were unable to leave the house or find a store with stocked shelves.*

**Because of you, we were able to deliver critical interventions that saved animals' lives. Thank you!**

# Tigers and bears rescued from hell

11 tigers and 2 bears were in dire trouble at the Phuket Zoo. Wildlife Friends Foundation Thailand, with the support of HSI donors, acted quickly to save them.

When Edwin Wiek, the founder of Wildlife Friends Foundation Thailand (WFFT), got a call from the Phuket Zoo asking for help to relocate 11 tigers and two bears last December he immediately said yes.

The reports he received from Phuket Zoo detailed shocking cruelty. Animals were housed in small, cramped concrete cells and, because of the pandemic, they were also no longer getting the proper nourishment and care they needed.

Edwin's team jumped into action. They started on the arduous process to obtain all the official clearances to move the animals. By April the team had everything in place and they began rescuing and relocating the 11 tigers and two bears.

Rescuing wild animals is always difficult and anesthesia is particularly tricky. Edwin and his whole team were terribly shaken when one of the first tigers to be relocated, 20-year-old Pinthongta, did not survive emergency surgery to treat a severe spinal injury that was necessary before being transported. And more sadness for the team was to come when another tiger, Bua Pan, could not recover from being sedated for the move.

The longer the rest of the animals remained at the zoo, the worse their chances of having the strength for the move were. So the team rallied and returned to their mission to get the remaining tigers, sun bear and black bear on their 14-hour journey to their new home. We are thrilled to report that this mission was a success.

All nine remaining tigers have now been successfully relocated (Susu, Mee Mee, Maruay, Mukda, Mena, Baithong, Rambo, Pong and Paeng) as well as the Malayan Sun Bear Pookie and Asiatic Black Bear Ginny. All are adjusting well to their new home and thriving under the improved conditions and care.

To see these magnificent creatures in their new home is utterly unforgettable. To witness a tiger who has only ever known tiny, dirty concrete cells as their home get to experience a spacious natural enclosure with places to explore and room to behave like a wild tiger is nothing short of euphoric!

**We are so very grateful to all of our supporters who have helped to make this rescue happen and we will continue to support the life-changing work of the Wildlife Friends Foundation Thailand.**

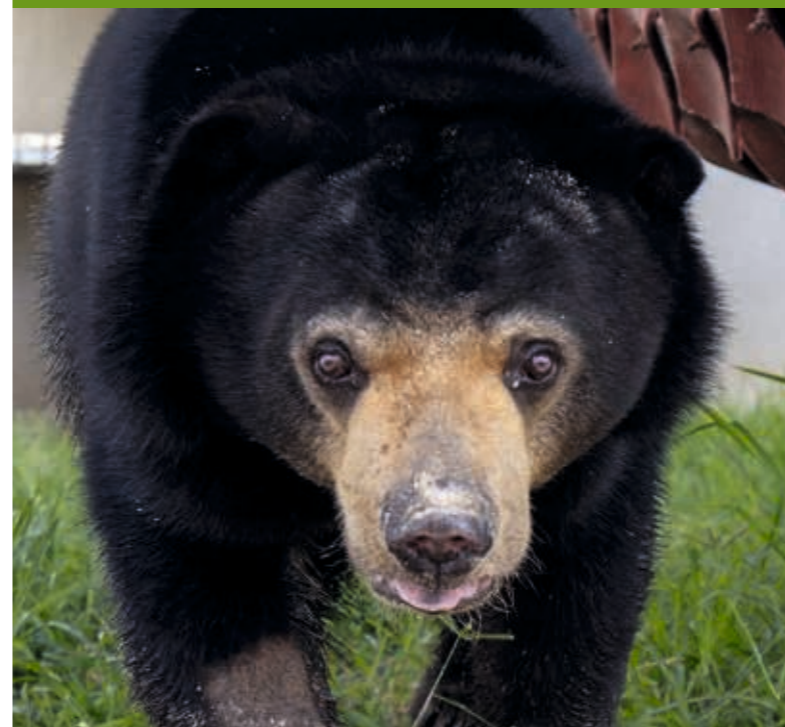


Tigers are often captured from the wild as cubs and caged to be used for photo props.



**Pookie** is a Malayan Sun Bear whose life had been reduced to sad confinement in a tiny cage of two metres x two metres for more than two years in Phuket Zoo. She was kept in 'lockdown' because she would desperately try to escape her outside enclosure. She is now loving her new expansive enclosure and especially enjoys the grass, sitting in her hammocks and bathing in her tub. Soon she will be introduced to another sun bear who was rescued last year. After 12 years alone at Phuket Zoo, we expect her to thrive in the company of another bear.

**Susu** started life as a cub used for petting and photo opportunities for tourists visiting Phuket Zoo. Once she grew too big to be used in this way she was transferred to the barren, concrete-floored cell which would be her 'home' for the next 14 years. Susu now lives in an enormous outside habitat full of trees, lakes, grasslands and natural enrichment. Susu is living her very best life now and the WFFT team has been delighted to see her exhibiting natural behaviours for the first time in her life. She just loves to claw at the trees and hide in the grasslands.



IMAGES: WILDLIFE FRIENDS FOUNDATION THAILAND



## Wild and free at last

**Two Critically Endangered orangutans are now living wild and free, and helping to boost the species' numbers in Borneo.**

Ucokwati (18 years old) and her daughter Mungil (8 years old) were released in May with the participation of our partners at The Orangutan Project.

Ucokwati gave birth to Mungil in May 2013. It is unclear how long she had been living in miserable conditions at an amusement park, but it is highly likely that she was taken from her mother as an infant and sold into the illegal pet trade.

The long journey to rehabilitate the animals began, and the pair were at last able to be released after successfully completing rehabilitation at the Bornean Orangutan Rescue Alliance (BORA) Rescue and Rehabilitation Centre in East Kalimantan.

They are both now being monitored in their new home in the Busang Ecosystem, which is one of the last remaining viable rainforest habitats for Critically Endangered orangutans on the island of Borneo.

This is the first of several releases that will be completed this year by BORA which is a joint initiative of the Indonesian Nature Conservation Agency (BKSDA), Centre for Orangutan Protection and The Orangutan Project, which is funded by HSI.

Ucokwati and Mungil are a success story for both the improvement of an individual animal's quality of life and the hopes of population recovery through their release.

**Thanks to supporters like you, we received the wonderful news that mother and daughter orangutans are now living wild and free!**

IMAGE: THE ORANGUTAN PROJECT



## Success saving sea lions

**A decade-long program to protect Australian sea lions has borne fruit off South Australia coast, giving us great hope of sea lion population recovery.**

In 2010 the South Australian Research and Development Institute (SARDI) published a report that found up to 256 Australian sea lions were killed in gillnets in the Commonwealth-managed Gillnet Hook and Trap (GHAT) Fishery every year.

Sea lion numbers were already crashing and this practice was pushing the species even closer to the brink.

HSI worked tirelessly with government, scientists, other conservation organisations and fishers to instigate a management strategy which would include gillnet fishing exclusion zones around all breeding colonies, cameras on fishing boats and the introduction

of closures in parts of the fishery if a certain number of sea lions were caught.

Thanks to those interventions, new research has shown an incredible 98% reduction in the numbers of sea lions killed in GHAT gillnets. It is extremely heartening to see studies prove the effectiveness of this work, with hundreds of endangered sea lions spared from a senseless death as 'bycatch'.

We are now advocating for similar measures to be fast-tracked in a Western Australian fishery to assist recovery of sea lions there.

**Lasting change for animals can take many years of campaigning. The ongoing support of HSI donors helps us stay on the case and make these successes possible, thank you!**



The Australian sea lion (*Neophoca cinerea*) is a federally Endangered species.

Sea lion populations off South Australia have declined by 67% over the last four decades.

The GHAT fishery targets sharks which are commonly known as 'flake' at the fish and chip shop.



# Louise Boronyak

Wildlife Campaigner

Louise Boronyak joined the HSI team in June as a wildlife campaigner with a focus on reducing the lethal control of Australia's wildlife. Louise recently completed a PhD in human-animal coexistence, in which she identified how to foster coexistence between humans and large carnivores (e.g. wolves, leopards and dingoes) in agricultural landscapes.

### Why did you join HSI?

I'm drawn to HSI's pragmatic approach to finding solutions that make animals' lives better. My parents were long-time HSI supporters, so it was a natural choice!

### Tell us about your PhD, what did you study?

I travelled to the United States, South Africa and around Australia conducting field observations and interviews with livestock producers, ecologists and representatives from agriculture and government to document the most effective ways to create a 'win-win' of reducing livestock predation and retaliatory killing of carnivores. I have termed this 'Predator Smart Farming', and it involves the

use of preventive non-lethal innovations such as lights, sounds, human presence and livestock guardian animals to deter predators in areas where livestock are raised.

### Why did you focus your research in this area?

Large carnivores are killed via shooting, trapping or poisoning with meat baits. In Australia, these methods are used to reduce dingo abundance and livestock predation risk. Yet, after more than 200 years of killing dingoes, many graziers report worsening rates of predation.

I spent many hours with graziers who have stopped killing dingoes. These graziers reported seeing benefits to landscape health, their farm productivity and mental health. This research has been compiled in a new guidebook called *Predator Smart Farming: Modernising Australia's approach to livestock protection*. It provides practical guidance for farmers to minimize or prevent predation risk while acknowledging the important cultural and environmental role of dingoes across Australia. The new guide will be released in July and is the cornerstone of HSI's campaign to support communities to coexist with wildlife.



Louise is researching different methods of intervention like the livestock guardian dogs pictured here protecting sheep in Oregon, USA.

IMAGE: L. BORONYAK/HSI AUSTRALIA

# Just launched: Our new fundraising hub

We are so grateful for every one of our wonderful supporters. Your passion and enthusiasm for animals as well as your creativity in fundraising is simply remarkable!

From vegan bake sales and Australian wildlife pottery sales to movie nights and marathon running, we are always blown away by the efforts of HSI supporters.

That's why we've built a dedicated community fundraising hub to make it easier to turn your big fundraising ideas into big impact for animals.

[Fundraise.hsi.org.au](https://fundraise.hsi.org.au) is your new home for fundraising as part of the HSI community. You can create a page where people can make donations and you can access information, resources and manage donations and receipting all with ease.



## Special launch offer!

The first 20 people to start fundraising will receive a free Humane Society International Australia bag and sticker set and the top fundraiser will have the chance to be featured in our next newsletter!



**Go to [fundraise.hsi.org.au](https://fundraise.hsi.org.au) to get started.**

## New government, new policies?

Australians went to the polls on May 21 and we now have a new parliament in place. Concerns about the environment and the extinction crisis we are facing certainly seemed important to voters, as reflected in the policies of many of the successful candidates.

The Labor Government has committed to environmental law reform and to establishing a new independent Environment Protection Agency as well as funding for threatened species recovery plans, which we warmly welcome.

The new government has also stated that it will play a leadership role in international environmental negotiations which we hope will lead to increased protections for a wide range of animals through the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species, the Convention on Migratory Species, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the International Whaling Commission.

We look forward to working with the new government as well as all other parties and the independents to advance animal protection measures and turn the tide on our terrible loss of biodiversity.



HSI is working with the new government to strengthen laws which would protect our native animals.

## Saving little Layla

During the Western Australia bushfires, HSI provided Maggie at Amaris Wildlife Rehabilitation Sanctuary with with an ICU and generator to make sure she could still care for critical patients.

This help came at just the right time, as a Critically Endangered western ringtail possum she called Layla arrived into care. Weighing only 90 grams, possums her age are usually unviable without their mothers. She spent two weeks in critical condition in the ICU before she was finally stable enough to survive.

After a lot of dedicated care, Layla has now upgraded to her very own pre-release enclosure and enjoys racing around tree branches, practicing her climbing and trying new native blossoms to eat.

She will soon be released back into the wild, where she will play an important role in the survival of her species.



IMAGE: AMARIS WILDLIFE REHABILITATION SANCTUARY

Ringtail possums like Layla were one of the species heavily affected by fires in WA this year.

## HSI going to CITES Panama

In November this year, our marine biologist Lawrence Chlebeck will head to the Conference of the Parties of CITES (the Convention on the International Trade of Endangered Species) in Panama where we will continue our legacy as a leading NGO pushing for new threatened species listings. We play a crucial role as the Oceania regional bureau for SSN—the Species Survival Network—which means we lead on lobbying signatory nations in Oceania to support species proposals.

This next meeting is especially exciting for sharks. The Family Carcharhinidae, or Requiem sharks, is subject of a proposal that would see the listing of 60 species of shark, including some of the most heavily fished species in the world. Also up for listing are small hammerheads and a group of rays known as guitarfish.

Listing species on CITES Appendices means they have greater protection from trade and direct recovery actions for threatened species can be devised and implemented. We look forward to reporting back on successes from the meeting.

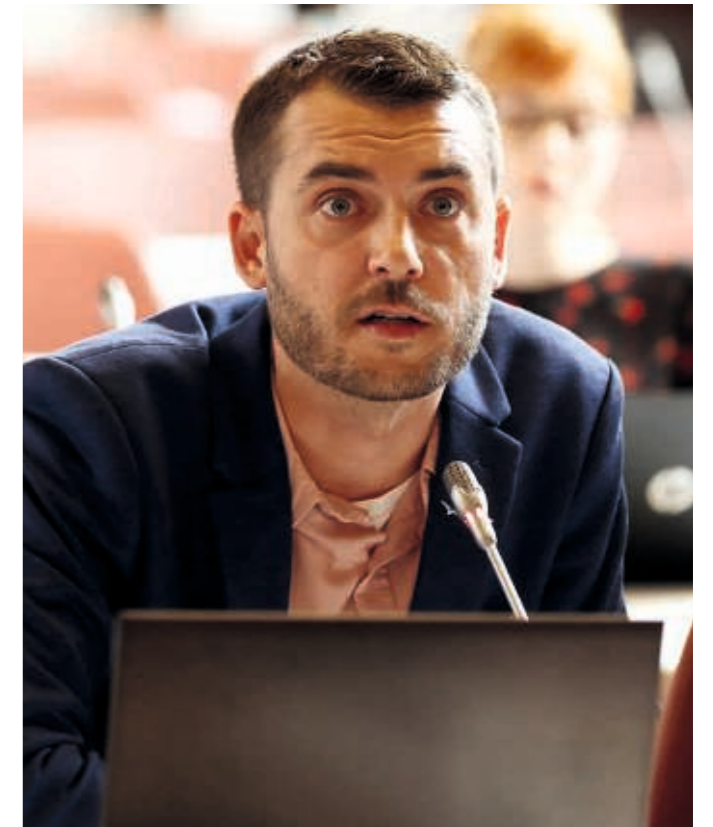


IMAGE: ASTERIOS TSIUMANIS/ISD REPORTING SERVICES

HSI marine biologist Lawrence Chlebeck, pictured here at the Meeting of the Signatories to the Sharks MOU, Monaco 2018.

## Keep cozy and compassionate this winter

If you're feeling the chill and looking to keep warm this winter, then supporting brands who consider animals is key to keeping your wardrobe ethical.

We all know that animal cruelty is never in style, so be sure to download our new and fur-st ever downloadable Fur Free Guide ([hsi.org.au/furfree](https://hsi.org.au/furfree)) featuring more than 250 fur-free brands available to Australian shoppers! It's perfect and portable when you're on-the-go.

For those of you who buy wool, make sure you choose brands who are making the world a better place for lambs and saying 'no' to painful mulesing—download the newly launched 2022 Edition of our Better Wool Guide ([hsi.org.au/better](https://hsi.org.au/better)) today.



► To download the guides please use these links:

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support*

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