



**HUMANE SOCIETY
INTERNATIONAL**
AUSTRALIA

HSI AUSTRALIA'S SUPPORTER NEWSLETTER

STANDING **for** **ANIMALS**

MARCH 2023



Hope from the rubble

On the ground
saving animals
in Türkiye

INSIDE: Urgent rescue efforts underway for animals impacted by Syria/Türkiye earthquake | How Australians are fueling trophy hunting | Big wins for sharks | Rossco, the little wombat that could | What the new federal government means for animals | Human/K9 teams making progress against poaching | and more



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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

Humane Society International team members rescue a stranded dog and her puppies in the earthquake in Hatay's Antakya district.

Image: Emrah Gurel

Newsletter design

Susanne Geppert

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Direct Mail Corporation for
their support in delivering
our newsletter.

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CEO Message

It is hard for me to write this letter without thinking of my colleagues who are working extremely long days in dreadfully harsh conditions in Türkiye, doing all they can to rescue the animal survivors of this disaster.

I am sure you will all join me in hoping they stay safe and wishing them great success in helping get these poor traumatised animals the care they need. I can't stop thinking about how lost and confused they must be, and I am in awe of the local rescuers and vets who continue to help these animals despite their own devastating losses.

Our ability to rapidly respond to these disasters is thanks to the generosity of our donors and I am so grateful to every one of you who makes this life-saving work possible.

Closer to home, we are continuing to engage on the reform of our federal environment law and working to ensure that the standards that are the bedrock of the new law will be strong enough to start to protect wildlife and turn around the current extinction crisis.

Working on law reform is a long and challenging journey and doesn't always lend itself to exciting updates and stories. This is another reason we are so grateful to all of you who support our policy work as well as our rescue work, anti-poaching projects and endangered species protection nominations—all of which are helping to save the animals we love.

You will also read about the great progress we are making on many other campaigns in these pages—from greater protections for sharks, to finding ways to help farmers better co-exist with wildlife on their properties.

Thank you for standing strong with us as we work together to build a world where animals and nature are treated with compassion and respect.

Erica Martin

Chief Executive Officer



A wave of good news for sharks

Sharks are vitally important to the health of oceans and—like all animals—they deserve to live free from cruelty and persecution. That makes two recent big wins for sharks, one global and one here in Australia, worthy of celebration!

A 'yes' vote on a crucial global treaty

Once every three years, CITES (the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species) meets to consider proposals from 184 nations to protect endangered plants and animals from the threats of international trade.

At the latest meeting in November, HSI's marine biologist Lawrence Chlebeck addressed the Conference on behalf of the international conservation NGO community and spoke passionately to governments on the need for increased protections for sharks.

In a major win, the most significant development for shark conservation in recent memory, proposals to list 54 species of requiem shark and 6 species of hammerhead on Appendix II of the treaty secured votes from enough governments to pass. Listing on the Appendix means that trade in sharks or their parts must be regulated to ensure the survival of the species. This brings the voracious shark fin trade under the control of the environment treaty, giving hope to decimated shark populations.

In total, adopted proposals at CITES gave 345 wild animal species new or increased protection from international trade.

Sharks now nationally protected from live finning

Australia took a major leap forward this February when Western Australia become the final state in the country to enact laws to prevent live finning of sharks in the fishing industry.

Live shark finning is a barbaric practice that involves slicing fins from living sharks and dumping their bodies overboard, leading to a painful death from blood loss, predation or suffocation.

The law, which requires that sharks caught for trade must be brought back to port with the fins attached to the shark's body, will greatly reduce illegal targeting and dumping of unwanted sharks at sea.

The fins-on policy, or Fins Naturally Attached (FNA) as it's technically known, will also help reduce the take of endangered sharks. It is extremely difficult to identify the species of shark from their separated fins or fileted meat, so ensuring sharks are brought to port with fins attached will ensure we can identify which sharks are being caught, how many and if they are endangered.



Lawrence Chlebeck at the 2022 meeting of CITES

Thank you for helping to make these two major wins happen!

Hope from the rubble

Help for some of the forgotten victims of the catastrophic earthquake near the Syria/Türkiye border as HSI teams rescue animals stranded and trapped in the rubble

The utterly devastating 7.8 magnitude earthquake that struck southern and central Türkiye and northern and western Syria on February 6 was followed by several major aftershocks. The loss was catastrophic. Whole towns and cities crumbled to rubble—more than 50,000 people lost their lives and entire families were destroyed in an instant. In addition to the tragic loss of human life, thousands of animals were crushed, stranded or separated from their families.

Immediate assistance rushed in to try to rescue as many people as possible from beneath the ruins, and we witnessed some of the miraculous rescues on our televisions.

The anguish written on the faces of the survivors who lost loved ones was palpable and we were all touched by their tremendous loss and heartache.

Our colleagues at HSI global were immediately in touch with groups on the ground including Yuk Hayvanlari

Koruma Ve Kurtama Dernegi (Working Animals Rescue Foundation) and Homeless Animals Protection Society and were requested to join the rescue efforts.

HSI on the ground

The first HSI global responders arrived in Antakya, in the far south of the country near the Syria border, and were stunned by the harsh realities facing survivors. Almost every building in this once-beautiful city was seriously damaged or destroyed—the only accommodation now is the rows of tents housing both refugees and rescuers.

Our teams report that the animal need was immediately visible with cats and dogs wandering through the ruins, also dazed and confused, having lost their homes and families. Of course, in addition to family pets there were also street dogs and cats who survived and needed care, so the team quickly established food stations to ensure they could at least access food and water.

One local vet that our team has been working with lost his clinic when the disaster struck but has been working day and night alongside his wife to care for the survivors in one of the emergency veterinary tent clinics which have been established. These stories of resilience have been incredibly motivating for our team as we work alongside these heroic locals.

Search and rescue parties depart daily and have saved many animals suffering from cuts and bruises, malnutrition, dehydration and infections. All are suffering from shock and trauma.

A steady stream of people come to the field tent asking for help to find their missing pets—hoping for a miracle, which occasionally, joyfully, does come true.

Facing ongoing danger

And this work continues as more earthquakes hit the region. Two weeks after the first, another 6.4 earthquake hit the area where our team is based along with so many other rescue workers and displaced people. Our team was safe yet tragically more local lives were claimed. The danger is very real and ongoing.

In the aftermath of that shock, another unexpected discovery—a mother dog hidden in the rubble of the broken buildings. She had very recently given birth, and our team worked fast to locate her still-blind puppies and bring the family back to the safety of the field hospital. As soon as she felt secure, the mother dog fell into a deep sleep while her pups suckled, blissfully unaware of the chaos around them.



“It was an absolute privilege to be able to help people and animals who had suffered so much. Seeing the incredible joy of both pets and owners who had lost everything else and nearly given up hope when they were reunited after weeks of searching is a feeling I’ll never forget. Thank you for helping us to be there.”

EVAN QUARTERMAIN
HSI AUSTRALIA'S HEAD OF PROGRAMS

You can read more about the situation in Türkiye and support rescue efforts at: hsi.org.au/turkey

We will continue to bring you news on the recovery efforts in Türkiye on our social media and update you on the stories of rescue and reunification that your donations help to make possible.

A mother dog and her puppies are carried out of a collapsed building site.



IMAGE: EMRAH GUREL (LEFT), HSI GLOBAL (OPPOSITE)

REUNITING RUMEYSA AND LEYLA

Just before the earthquake hit, Turkish nurse Rumeysa was asleep in her apartment. Woken suddenly by her cat Leyla, she was able to jump from her window before her building collapsed. Rumeysa's leg was broken and she was whisked away by first responders. In the chaos she became separated from Leyla. Desperate to be reunited, she turned to Facebook with a plea for help in finding her beloved cat. HSI teams on the ground took on the challenge.

With a voice recording of Rumeysa calling Leyla's name, HSI's Kelly Donithan went to where Rumeysa's house had once stood. She played the recording over and over. Finally, Leyla emerged from among the broken buildings and was brought to a field veterinary tent. With one leg in a cast, Rumeysa soon returned to reunite with her precious pet. As soon as she arrived, Rumeysa took Leyla into her arms and started crying, along with everyone who witnessed their reunion. Later, Rumeysa sent Kelly a bittersweet text. “My everything is gone...There is only Leyla,” she wrote. “Thank you.”



New HSI report exposing trophy hunting

In our just-released new report, *Trophy Hunting by the Numbers*, we reveal Australia's role in the international trade of hunting trophies.

Did you know that Australia ranks 10th in the whole world for the highest number of protected mammal species imported as wildlife trophies? That's 10th for bringing home the body parts of wildlife hunted overseas for private display, including trophies of species like giraffes and zebras.

Other commonly imported trophy species include vervet monkey, American black bear, chacma baboon, brown bear, and caracal.

Last month HSI Australia released a new report which examines Australia's role in the international trade of hunting trophies. The findings show the disconnect between Australians' feelings on trophy hunting and current laws.

The issuing of permits for the imports of wildlife hunting trophies is out of step with community sentiment.

Polling undertaken by HSI in 2022 showed that only 15% of people over 18 in Australia support the continuation of trophy hunting.

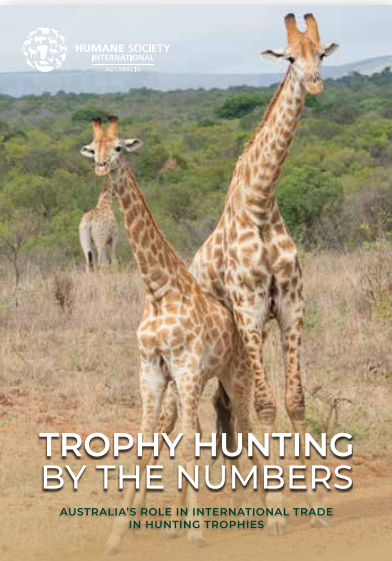
What can we do about trophy hunting imports?

This year, our national environment laws are being updated. This legislation, the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) is the same legislation responsible for managing import permits for hunting trophies.

While this law is being overhauled, we have a chance to make improvements that would completely ban the import of hunting trophies from protected species. Some species, like African lions, rhinos, and African elephants, are already banned from being imported into Australia as trophies. We need to take this a step further so that all hunting trophies from species protected under the Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species are banned.

Now is the time to act! You can help by writing to the federal environment minister, the Hon. Tanya Plibersek, asking her to take this opportunity to ban the import of wildlife trophies into Australia.

! Take action at hsi.org.au/trophyhunt



The guide will enable sustained advocacy work to ban imports of trophies into Australia.



Black and brown bears are among commonly imported trophies.

Living with dingoes

Farmers have often viewed dingoes as the enemy, waging war against them to protect their livestock. But some farmers are starting to experience greater benefits by learning to coexist with them instead.

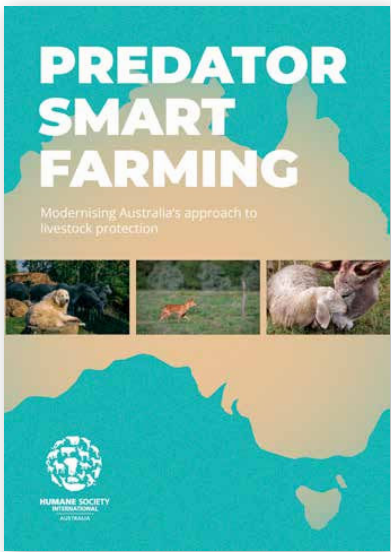
HSI's newest report, *Predator smart farming: Modernising Australia's approach to livestock farming*, demonstrates how farmers can adopt new strategies to reduce the loss of livestock without killing dingoes.

It showcases how guardian animals can be used to protect animals; how increased understanding of dingo behaviour can reduce opportunities for predation; and how different land management and husbandry practices can improve the productive capacity of pastures and increase livestock resilience.

Dingoes play an important role in healthy biodiversity, actually preferring to eat wild animals and importantly, pest species such as rabbits and cats.

We are committed to helping farmers adopt new methods that will have a positive outcome for them as well as the native species that call these farms home.

The report will be made available to any farmer interested in trying these new methods. We will work to connect farmers and build a network to share experiences and increase the knowledge and understanding of alternative methods.



This guidebook will support sustainable high-welfare farming.

In addition to the guidebook, this research has been published in the scientific journal *Frontiers in Conservation Science*.

We believe this can be a real win-win for our farmers and dingoes.

Read more at hsi.org.au/coexist



Predator smart farming uses Maremma dogs, pictured right, to help keep dingoes and livestock safe from harm.





INSIDE STORY

Dr. Megan Kessler

Nature Campaigner

Megan Kessler joined HSI as the Nature Campaigner in July 2022 after a decade as the Scientific Director at the Environmental Defenders Office. Her role includes working to strengthen our national environmental laws and to ensure sustainable and appropriate wildlife trade, with a current focus on banning trophy hunting imports and the domestic ivory trade.

Why did you join HSI?

As an environmental scientist I've done a lot of work in partnership with HSI over many years, and I've always been impressed by the organisation's ability to embed good science into government policy. The chance to join the team and work on improving our national environmental laws was too good an opportunity to miss. Strengthening our nature laws will protect our places and animals for the long-term.

Oh, and the role gives me an opportunity to work to protect really cool stuff – not only our native plants and animals but elephants, rhinos, giraffes and zebras!

What is special about HSI's work on nature laws?

HSI was instrumental in the development of the original Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act, so as an organisation we are uniquely positioned to know what works, what doesn't and what else we need to see in our national environmental legislation. Getting the current reforms right will be vital to turning around our extinction crisis, so there's never been a more important time to be a HSI policy wonk.

What is it that motivates you each day?

Every day we hear news about the dire state of the natural environment. This job provides an opportunity to make a positive contribution to addressing the problems of environmental decline, every day. I find that very motivating!

Do you have a favourite animal?

Given my PhD was on humpback whales, I should probably say whales, but as much as I love them, I think my favorite animal at the moment is the hippo.



Hippos are among the animals that will benefit from strengthened nature laws in Australia by stopping their importation as trophies.



SUPPORTER SPOTLIGHT

A legacy of compassion

As proudly told by her twin sister Karen, Dr. Katherine Edyvane was a committed conservationist and dedicated life-long supporter of animals, particularly species conservation, as well as animal rights advocacy and welfare.

"During her teenage years in Tasmania she discovered the joys of nature through bushwalking, camping and diving," Karen says. "She also developed a passion for caring, through almost a decade of volunteer work with St John Ambulance."

These twin threads of altruism and activism proved to be the hallmarks of Katherine's life. Katherine went on to become a brilliant and highly-accomplished international surgeon, including working for a decade in newly-independent Timor-Leste, and leading Australia's medical relief efforts in the 2006 Pakistan earthquake.

Katherine's commitment to international medicine and humanitarian missions was recognised with a prestigious RACS International Medal and RACS scholarship in her name.

It was in Africa as a founding member of Specialists Without Borders that her passion for nature, and especially wildlife, was re-kindled. Karen recalls one of the highlights of Katherine's time in Rwanda as the chance to see gorillas in the wild.

With her life-long love for animals, Katherine was determined to see support for animal advocacy also continue. It now proudly lives on in the HSI work that is funded in part by the generous gift she so kindly left in her Will.

HSI thanks Dr. Edyvane and every person who has made the profound and lasting gift of a bequest.



Dr. Edyvane's work in Africa brought her close to one of her favourite animals, the mountain gorillas of Rwanda.



To learn more about leaving a gift for animal protection in your Will, please call Caroline Pattison on 02 9973 1728 or visit hsi.org.au/wills.



IMAGE: CONSERVATION SOUTH LUANGWA

K9s stop poaching in Zambia

HSI's long-term partner in Zambia, Conservation South Luangwa (CSL), includes four incredible working dogs, along with their eight highly skilled handlers, who work tirelessly to help protect the wildlife of South Luangwa National Park.

Recent reporting shows the impact these dogs and their handlers are making. Wrapping up 2022, the K9 team conducted a total of 198 operations which resulted in the seizure of 164kgs of illegal bushmeat, 46kgs of ivory and 69 wildlife crime suspect arrests.

The K9 Unit represents a significant proportion of CSL's anti-poaching results, demonstrating the continued importance and need for expert specialist units working in this complex conservation landscape.

Wallabies thriving after relocation

Work continues on the regeneration of Wallaby Wetlands in Far North Queensland into a wildlife refuge. Along with the larger canopy trees, we hope to begin planting understorey plants to build more complex habitat for smaller animals.

In the meantime, we've been delighted to see the wallabies that were relocated from a dangerous urban environment appearing on camera traps. A large alpha male, multiple mums with joeys and curious locals like the ones pictured here have all been spotted post-release.

In addition to the camera traps, we have plans to test out new methods and technologies for monitoring wildlife post-release here. Stay tuned for updates for this incredible project!



Wildlife cameras help to monitor post-release activity, like these curious agile wallabies.

Rosco, the little wombat that could!

At tax-time last year, we asked for your support to help stop the licensed killing of native wildlife and to care for the animals who were orphaned and injured because of it. You might remember orphaned wombat Rosco, who was found and taken into care as he was far too little to survive on his own.

After his rough start to life he is now doing wonderfully! He has graduated from dedicated care with his rescuer Heather to wombat kindergarten at Docsden, a Wildlife



IMAGE: PAULA BOER

Rosco, Maddy and Buddy in one of the enclosures.

Land Trust Australia sanctuary. Rosco is now living a great life with three other rescued boys, and together they're learning how to be real wombats—burrowing, playing and exploring—to prepare for life back in the wild.

Their enclosure was provided by HSI thanks to donors' kindness and will help to rehabilitate orphaned wombats for years to come.

Making a splash in our neighbourhood

The alleyway behind HSI HQ just got a lot more colourful thanks to artist Daniel Hend. The streams of children and families walking to the nearby public school and locals strolling about have taken notice of a huge new humpback whale mural gracing the back entrance of our office.

It's been lovely to meet new supporters who have popped in to learn more about the giant whale in Avalon, NSW. Thank you Daniel for the beautiful artwork! Visit danielhend.com to see more of the artist's murals.



At five metres long, our mural is only about a third of the length of an average adult humpback whale!



*Thank you
for your
support*

Trained responders from HSI Australia are part of the animal rescue efforts in Türkiye. Pictured is Georgie Dolphin with a stray dog being looked after in the responders' tent camp.