

# Storms, cyclones, tornadoes, floods, fires... heroes and desperate times!

by Brian Carter

I caretake a bush property in Range Road, Captain Creek, cared for as a sanctuary for the Australian wild.

It is interesting to compare human and the wild creature impacts of such natural disasters imposed on us all by the great provider of everything...the earth.

I have been caught in some 5 cyclones and tornados in my life. Cyclone 'ADA' many years ago, I was in Proserpine... forty inches of rain in twenty four hours. I have been in two desert tornados in the Grampians with devastation a mile wide.

It is wonderfully surprising how humans pitch in and help, so most recover quickly and their dramas become the best dinner party stories when the trauma has gone...

The wild on the other hand suffers extensively and takes generations to recover individual species, if at all!

Storms account for over 50% of premature deaths in birds. Many lost their lives in the 900 mm (46 inches)... I received here from Thursday night to 7am Sunday morning on the Australia Day weekend... one never to be forgotten...Australia doing what it does best!!

Creatures and plants have to recover quickly with no time for dreams and drama or recovery funding and sympathy. No expectations other than 'Get on with it' with great urgency or die in the storm and its aftermath from weakness, injury, lack of shelter.

'Bandy' a Bandicoot who lived around the house, died of hyperthermia ...too long exposed to constant rain, wet and cold. A sad discovery for me as he was a 'place sharing' wild pet. Not encouraged to personally co-habitate but still wild, with all respectful. Bandy entertained me often with other creatures of the wild. Because of poor eyesight and hearing, Bandy would leap into the air like a startled Impala deer if surprised... All over the place aerating the soil with his nose while searching for roots and rotted wood to eat.

The small Willy Wagtail, lone magpie now, red backed wren, striated pardeotes, drongo with many other birds like honeyeaters, crows, night hawk... all victims of the storm and now in reduced numbers.

Their fractured, exhausted bodies strewn all over the land with hundreds of dead small creatures such as bandicoots, marsupial mice, bush rats, some small wallabies, kangaroos, betongs and much more. Snakes and lizards died because of lack of cover from storms via tree hollows on the ground and up high, cleared by humans and burnt in too many fires.

All my pretty face wallabies returned, and it is a miracle and testament to animal

parenting, caring and love for their own. Four or so females were carrying young. All taken from extreme dry conditions to 900 millimetres and never seen rain before. Following the tough two and a half days of extreme wet and cold, Mum Wallaby constantly soaked, has to protect her joey from foxes, cats, eagles, goannas, snakes, wild and roaming domestic dogs. When the little one is in the pouch she may have to outrun all and many predators to save herself and her young.

A Drongo bird after travelling thousands of miles to get here, sits on eggs or young in 4 days of wild and wet. The tiny nest only held together by spider web and some fine weaving of the web with sticks, leaves and bark.

Strange insects and small animals and reptiles with a great orchestra of now hundreds and thousands of excited native frogs seek shelter in

your home if you leave doors open. Small ant teams invade the house and eat every tiny thing in the home not secured. The Plover parents are so diligent in protecting the young with signals and calls to all.

Then of course the larger predators feed on the dead, injured, exhausted and dying. Birds that survive feed on dead and injured insects and others of the Arthropod family. Trees are pruned by the storms and parrots, often for the better though no pollen will be available to bees and other nectar feeding birds and creatures for a long while. Spiders hang onto their webs for dear life in violent storms and powerful winds..

Yes it is a tough and never ending fight for survival. Just keep going... or die... From storms in the wild, heroes emerge in desperate times both human and natural!

## Prince hits at soulless science

LONDON: The Prince of Wales has blamed a lack of belief in the soul for the world's environmental problems, and says the planet cannot sustain a population expected to reach nine billion in 40 years.

He said he found it "baffling" that so many scientists professed a faith in God yet this had little bearing on the "damaging" way science was used to exploit the natural world.

Prince Charles pinned part of the blame on Galileo. Criticising the profit imperative behind much scientific research, he said: "This imbalance, where mechanistic thinking is so predominant, goes back at least to Galileo's assertion that there is nothing in nature but quantity and motion. As a result, nature has been completely objectified... and we are persuaded to concentrate on the material aspect of reality that fits within Galileo's scheme."

The prince said he believed "green technology" alone could not resolve the world's environmental problems. Instead, the West must do something about its "deep, inner crisis of the soul".

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Stephen  
Hawkins  
agrees  
after years  
of touting  
out of  
control  
science