



WILDLIFE TOURISM AUSTRALIA Inc.

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Second Annual Workshop

17-19 April 2005

*Wildlife Tourism and Conservation:
The Perfect Marriage?*



WORKSHOP PROGRAM

Hosted by

**Binna Burra Mountain Lodge
and O'Reilly's Rainforest Guesthouse**

WORKSHOP SPONSORS

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WORKSHOP PROGRAM

Wildlife Tourism Australia, 17-19 April 2005



Sunday, 17 April

- 11.00am Launch of Southern Qld Wildlife Trail
- 6.30pm – 7.30pm Dinner at Campsite Lamington Teahouse (optional extra)
- 7.30pm- 8.30pm Early registration

Monday, 18 April

- 6.15am **Guided bird walk** with Binna Burra guides (optional extra)
- 7.30am Breakfast at lodge (optional extra or included in last night's lodge accommodation)
- 8.15am – 9.00 am Registration
- 9.15am **Welcome and Introduction** to workshop (Tonia Cochran and Karen Higginbottom)
- 9.30am Welcome and introduction to **Binna Burra**, with brief tour of facilities (Linus Bagley, Manager, Binna Burra Mountain Lodge and Binna Burra guides)
- 10.15am **Keynote presentation 1:** The Hon. Warren Entsch MP
A Political Vision for Marriage of Wildlife Tourism and Conservation
- 10.45 am Morning Tea
- 11.10 am **Keynote presentation 2:** Bradley Trevor Greive
The Taronga Foundation: Marriage of Wildlife Tourism and Conservation
- 11.40 am **Case studies of marrying wildlife tourism and conservation:**

Inala Nature Tours: marrying wildlife tourism and conservation (Tonia Cochran)

Fostering sustainable behaviour through interpretation: a case study of Zoos Victoria (Betty Weiler)
- 12.10 am *5 minute break*
- 12.15 am **How to work with Tourism Australia**
(Susana Heraud)

12.30 am	Research on wildlife tourism by the Sustainable Tourism CRC (Karen Higginbottom)
12.45 am	Birdwatching tourism in Australia (Ronda Green)
1.00 pm	Lunch at lodge
2.00 pm	Workshop sessions: (choice of 2 groups):
	1. Designing and managing wildlife tourism interactions (Ian Tranter)
	2. Using the media to promote your wildlife tourism products (Kris Madden)
3.45 pm	Afternoon tea
4.00 pm	Feedback and whole group discussion from workshop sessions (facilitated by Karen Higginbottom).
4.25 pm	Comments on the day's proceedings (Tonia Cochran)
4.30 pm	WTA AGM, followed by general meeting
6.00 pm	Pre-dinner drinks (complimentary from Binna Burra Lodge)
6.30 pm	Dinner at lodge
8.00 pm	Nocturnal walk with Binna Burra guides

Tuesday, 19 April

6.00 am	Breakfast at lodge
6.45 am (1.5 hrs)	Coach Binna Burra to O'Reilly's, with commentary from Binna Burra guide
8.00 am	Day registration at O'Reilly's
8.30 am	Bird walk around O'Reilly's and introduction to facilities (O'Reilly's guides)
9.15 am	Welcome and introduction to O'Reilly's (Matt Perry)
9:30am	Introduction to today's proceedings; introduction to new committee (Tonia Cochran)
9.40 am	Conservation through Exciting Education! (Kylie Humberstone, Australia Zoo)
10.10 am	Morning tea

10.35 am	Workshop sessions: (choice of 2 groups) 1. Creative wildlife interpretation (Nick Mooney) 2. Using volunteers and research in wildlife tourism (Claire Ellis)
12.00 am	Feedback and whole group discussion from workshop sessions (facilitated by Karen Higginbottom)
12.20 am	Lunch
1.20 pm	Case studies of marrying wildlife tourism and conservation: The growth of whale watching tourism in Australia (Mick McIntyre) Perceptions of zoos: what do the visitors want? (Andrew Tribe)
1.50 pm	Workshop sessions (choice of 2 groups): 1. A management challenge: wildlife feeding at O'Reillys Observation, information and workshop session (Daryl Jones, Ronda Green, Matt Perry, Scott Hetherington) 2. Incorporating Indigenous people and content into wildlife tourism (Denise Lawungkurr Goodfellow)
3.20 pm	Afternoon tea
3.40 pm	Wildlife tourism at O'Reilly's Rainforest Guesthouse (Matt Perry)
3.55 pm	Expressing your brand values: an advertising case study (David Luxton)
4.10pm	Tasmania's new Wildlife Tourism Strategy: marrying wildlife tourism and conservation (Fiona Adlam)
4.25 pm	Workshop evaluation and closing remarks (Karen Higginbottom, Tonia Cochran)
4.45 pm	Workshop Close
5.00 pm	Coach returns to Binna Burra OR transfers to airport
6.30 pm	Dinner at Binna Burra Lodge OR O'Reilly's (optional extra)

Note: any guided walks on Tuesday evening or Wednesday morning will need to be organised independently with the Lodges, and will be subject to availability.

Wildlife Tourism Australia
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Presentations

ABSTRACTS

A Political Vision for Marriage of Wildlife Tourism and Conservation

The Hon. Warren Entsch, MP

Rather than being a question for debate, Federal Tourism Parliamentary Secretary Warren Entsch argues that the Wildlife Tourism Workshop's statement Wildlife Tourism and Conservation: The Perfect Marriage should be a goal Australia aims to achieve.

The tourism industry has a remarkable ability to take a natural resource and build a successful business based the utilisation of that resource. But unlike extractive industries, tourism can do so in ways that protect and even enhance the natural environment upon which it is based.

It's time for government at all levels to recognise the capacity of the private sector – and of the wildlife tourism sector in particular – to invest in Australia's natural environment and support the creation of new and sustainable tourism businesses, particularly in regional and rural Australia.

Warren was first elected to Parliament in March 1996 as the Federal Member for the Far North Queensland seat of Leichhardt – Australia's 8th largest electorate. The Leichhardt electorate covers a vast area, taking in Cairns, the Cape York Peninsula, the Daintree rainforest, the upper section of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, and extends North to take in the Torres Strait Islands. Leichhardt is an important domestic and international tourism destination, and also supports thriving pastoral, sugar, fishing and mining industries.

As Parliamentary Secretary Warren Entsch has specific responsibility for Indigenous and eco-tourism policy development and manages the Government's \$3.6 million Tourism and Conservation Partnerships initiative.

Warren has had a lifelong interest in wildlife and, before entering politics, spent time as a crocodile catcher – a job which lead him to establish a large crocodile farm in the Northern Territory. Warren also worked at Wild World in Cairns as the bird curator and was responsible for establishing the crocodile exhibit and running and presenting public crocodile shows. He also assisted in the establishment of Hartley's Crocodile Adventures near Port Douglas.

Since being elected to the House of Representatives, Warren Entsch has maintained his interest in wildlife playing an active role in the development of the Mareeba Wetlands and initiating a captive breeding and wild release program for the endangered Gouldian Finch – the first such program of its kind in the world.

Warren's personal interests are just as diverse as his professional, and include horse riding, art, and aviculture – maintaining a private collection of South American Macaws on his Mareeba property.

The Taronga Foundation: Marriage of Wildlife Tourism and Conservation

Bradley Trevor Greive

The Taronga Foundation was established to assist the Zoological Parks Board of New South Wales, which operates Taronga and Western Plains Zoos, to significantly broaden the zoo's endeavours in the fields of conservation, environmental education and care of wildlife.

The vision of the Taronga Foundation is to be recognised as a world leader in the development of philanthropic support for the conservation and preservation of Australian and exotic wildlife.

This financial support will enable the conservation endeavours of the Zoos to be dramatically expanded through a combination of environmental education and research-driven breeding programmes. These are all linked to the inspirational presentation of animals in world class facilities, supported by outstanding amenities.

Bradley Trevor Greive, former paratrooper and bestselling author of The Blue Day Book and Priceless. The vanishing beauty of a fragile planet, is a Governor of the Taronga Foundation and champion of wildlife and environmental causes worldwide.

BTG began his adult life as a Paratroop Platoon Commander with the elite 3rd Battalion of the Royal Australian Regiment. At 22, he left the military, to become, in his words 'a member of Australia's impoverished creative underclass'. In 2000, he had his first book, The Blue Day Book, published. Since then, BTG has had 8 more books published, enjoyed book sales in excess of 10 million copies and been published in 27 languages, across 35 countries. His books have reached number one on bestseller lists across the world, and he has won four publishing industry awards, including the ABA Book of the Year Award for 2000. At 35, BTG is one of Australia's most successful authors and creative talents.

BTG is a passionate supporter of world-wide conservation and wildlife programs, including becoming a Governor of the Taronga Foundation. He is also a passionate champion for the arts, supporting the Australian Youth Orchestra and establishing and chairing the Taronga Foundation Poetry Prize.

Inala Nature Tours: Marrying Wildlife Tourism and Conservation

Tonia Cochran, Inala Nature Tours

The philosophy of Inala Nature Tours is underpinned by the belief that Wildlife Tourism and Conservation should be inextricably linked. This business is committed to contributing to conservation in a number of ways, including education and increasing awareness of conservation issues during tours and during interactions with the general public, fundraising for specific conservation projects and participation in a range of conservation issues. It aims to show by example that one can operate a successful Wildlife Tourism enterprise while making such contributions and that indeed these contributions should be made in return for the benefits received from utilizing wildlife in their business. This presentation will identify some of the ways in which Wildlife Tourism operators can incorporate conservation into their businesses, and the possibility that the business can become even more successful as a result.

Tonia Cochran is a PhD graduate from the University of Melbourne and has worked in a number of fields ranging from marine biology, to conservation management and tourism. Tonia owns and operates her own eco-tourism business, Inala Nature Tours, which is comprised of both an eco-tour operation and a licensed travel agency. She also consults on conservation management and ecotourism issues and is current Chair of Wildlife Tourism Australia.

Fostering sustainable behaviour through interpretation: a case study of Zoos Victoria

Betty Weiler and Sue Broad, Monash University

Zoos are under increasing scrutiny regarding the value they bring to ratepayers, the community and the environment, and need evidence to demonstrate that they are achieving conservation outcomes. One particularly ambitious conservation outcome is to influence the behaviour of visitors. There is a lack of evidence that a Zoo visit, and in particular the on-site interpretation experienced by a Zoo visitor, impacts their knowledge and their attitudes, let alone their behaviour.

For research to provide such evidence, careful selection, definition and operationalisation of the phenomena of interest is essential. What visitor behaviours is the Zoo trying to influence? Which of these behaviours can realistically be impacted by a short-term visit to the zoo? What exactly is being “delivered” in an attempt to influence these behaviours? And which if any of these behaviours can be measured and demonstrated to be a consequence of the interpretive experience?

After a brief look at some outcomes reported by visitors to three interpretive programs/exhibits, the presentation outlines the next steps for the research project. Visitor belief data will be collected and used to design a communication “intervention” which aims to achieve a very specific and measurable behavioural outcome.

Betty is Professor of Tourism and Director of the Monash University Tourism Research Unit. She undertakes and supervises a wide range of tourism research, particularly in strategic communication. Betty is known for her applied research focus and for collaboration with protected area and industry partners including Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service, Parks Victoria, Zoos Victoria and Phillip Island Nature Park. She currently manages a number of Sustainable Tourism CRC and other multi-partner research projects within Australia.

Sue is employed as a postdoctoral research fellow to oversee a research project entitled Achieving Conservation Outcomes through Environmental Interpretation at Zoos Victoria. This joint university-zoo project builds on Sue’s research background in interpretation in captive wildlife settings in Australia and her research on wildlife tourism in Thailand, where she completed a PhD study looking at the impacts of the Gibbon Rehabilitation Project on the volunteers working on the project.

How to Work with Tourism Australia

Susana Heraud, Tourism Australia

The presentation will briefly introduce Tourism Australia and the new Niche Market Unit. An explanation of Tourism Australia's services and resources will follow, giving some insights and ideas for operators on how to attract international and domestic visitors. Detailed information will be supplied on co-operative opportunities and access to the various resources that Tourism Australia can provide to industry, such as market research studies, image, film and video library, etc.

Susana is the Niche Market Consultant responsible for Nature-based and Eco tourism. She has over 18 years experience in marketing and market research. She was Marketing Manager for PromPeru (Peruvian Tourism Board) and Market Research Manager at Tourism New South Wales. She has also worked as a marketing consultant for several years conducting a wide variety of studies.

Research on wildlife tourism by the Sustainable Tourism CRC

Karen Higginbottom, Wildlife Tourism International

Over the last seven years, The CRC for Sustainable Tourism (now the Sustainable Tourism CRC) has conducted a major research program on wildlife tourism in Australia. The aim of this program was to facilitate enhanced economic, social and environmental sustainability of wildlife tourism, and to help identify and realise opportunities for wildlife tourism development. The program has generated more than 30 reports, a comprehensive reference book on wildlife tourism, numerous academic publications, extension materials, training for postgraduate students, regional workshops and a national conference. It has also contributed to development of wildlife tourism products. Recommendations for a strategic direction for development of wildlife tourism in Australia have been made, providing a sound basis for future planning. Although Wildlife Tourism Australia was a bottom-up initiative by tourism operators and other wildlife tourism stakeholders, the CRC has played a facilitating role in its formation. It is providing certain outputs free of charge to members, including a set of wildlife tourism extension materials for operators that are soon to be uploaded onto the WTA website. It is hoped that WTA will use the materials generated by the CRC, along with other ideas and information provided by members, to further the agenda of sustainable development of wildlife tourism in Australia.

Karen is currently Secretary of WTA. She was the coordinator of the Wildlife Tourism Subprogram of the CRC for Sustainable Tourism, and is now Program Leader of the Sustainable Resources Program for the same organisation. She is also principal of 'Wildlife Tourism International', a consultancy business specialising in planning and management of wildlife tourism. She has a PhD in wildlife ecology and is an Adjunct Senior Lecturer at Griffith University.

Bird-watching tourists in Australia

Ronda Green, Araucaria Ecotours

This presentation begins by briefly reviewing what is known of the market for bird-watching tourism in Australia, and then describes a recent study providing detailed information. A nationwide survey of bird-watching tourism in Australia was conducted primarily by use of questionnaires to tourists and guides of birdwalks. The 256 bird-watching tourists who responded were mostly well-educated and middle-age to elderly. Slightly less than half kept life-lists of birds seen, and most were interested in also seeing other wildlife. The most commonly-preferred bird features were endemism to Australia or the part of Australia visited, followed by rarity and vulnerability. There was no apparent difference between Australian and visiting bird-watchers in desire to see birds endemic to Australia. The most common preferences on bird-walks were identifying birds and social contact. Most were against disturbing birds while identifying them, especially if nesting, and observations by tour guides suggest that serious disturbance is a rare event. Travel agents and travel books were the least-used sources of information on where to go bird-watching. 'Dedicated birders' (bird-watching named as favourite activity, often record what is seen etc) and 'thrill-seekers' (wanting to see big and colourful birds etc) were more likely than others to join commercial tours. 'Dedicated birders' were more likely than others to choose camping or lodges over hotels, but frequency of camping declined after the age of 65. The most common suggestions for improving enjoyment of bird-watching in Australia were to conserve bird habitat and provide better information on where to see birds. The project was funded by the Sustainable Tourism CRC. Ideas for WTA's involvement in the future of bird-watching tourism in Australia are discussed.

Ronda holds a PhD in zoology, and has had 30 years' experience as a research ecologist and over 35 years' experience in Australian nature interpretation for all ages. Her research has included human effects on wildlife and their habitats and bird-watching tourism. For past 8 years she has run her own business Araucaria Ecotours focussing on helping guests enjoy learning about Australia's wildlife. She has been vice-president of WTA since its inception and is currently coordinating the production of the Southern Queensland Wildlife Trail.

From Whalers to Whale Watchers: The growth of whale watching tourism in Australia

Mick McIntyre (International Fund for Animal Welfare)

Australia was once a proud, whaling nation. Commercial whaling had been a key feature of Australia's economy and society. The whales were hunted for their oil and blubber. Due largely to community pressure and rapidly falling populations (almost every species of whale had been hunted to the brink of extinction) the need for a change in policy was clear. In 1979 the Australian Government banned whaling in favour of whale protection.

In the 26 years since, there has been a sea change in our attitudes to whales—so much so that an industry taking people out to see live whales in their natural environment has blossomed. As the numbers of whales swimming along our coastlines has increased slowly, the numbers of people wanting to watch and protect them has also increased.

The whale watching industry is proving that whales are worth more alive than dead. A report commissioned by IFAW has shown that whale watching in Australia is worth \$270 million to the Australian economy every year. Unfortunately the populations of whales the whale watch industry rely on are under increasing threats, from international whaling to pollution and loss of habitat.

Mick became Director of IFAW Asia Pacific in 2000. Previously he enjoyed a successful career as an independent filmmaker and professional photographer. His love of the ocean and respect for marine life led him to jointly found Whales Alive in 1992—an environmental organisation dedicated to the protection and celebration of whales. IFAW is represented in 15 countries and has been involved in whale protection since 1969, including assisting in the development of responsible whale watching industries in several countries.

Perceptions of Australian zoos: what do visitors want?

Andrew Tribe, School of Animal Studies, University of Queensland

It is apparent that the major contribution of zoos to conservation has traditionally come from their ex situ actions, including education programmes, and their captive management and display of wildlife. However, recently, zoos have also become more involved with in situ conservation work. In Australia, this is predominantly through local species recovery programmes for endangered species in cooperation with state and local government authorities.

However, such activities are expensive, and a major obstacle for zoos has always been to strike a balance between commercial success and conservation credibility. Unfortunately there is a lack of knowledge of how zoo participation in conservation affects levels of visitation, and about the expectation, interest or satisfaction of visitors with the role of zoos in conservation.

The results of this project confirm that for while people visit zoos for a number of different reasons, paramount amongst them seems to be recreation. Conservation does not appear to be a major motivation, although most visitors believe that zoos do have a key role to play in conservation and education.

Thus zoos seem to be faced with a contradictory situation: people visit them mainly for recreation, but believe that their role is actually in conservation. This dilemma has important implications for zoo management in their search for more revenue: can conservation attract visitors? The results of this project suggest that for a significant proportion of visitors, conservation may provide a justification for visiting a zoo, and therefore does influence attendance levels. In addition, many visitors are interested in the conservation information provided and would like to find out more. Clearly there is a great deal still to be understood about the nature of zoos as tourist attractions, the characteristics of their visitors and visitor satisfaction. For an industry committed to supporting conservation, more information is needed about the role of conservation in supporting the industry.

Andrew Tribe is a Senior Lecturer in Wildlife Health, Management and Behaviour in the School of Animal Studies at the University of Queensland. Previously he was Director of the University's Veterinary Science Farm and prior to this was the Senior Veterinarian at the Royal Melbourne Zoological Gardens. He is currently completing a research project to investigate the role of zoos in wildlife conservation, to evaluate the effectiveness of their present policies and actions, and to consider their opportunities and challenges for the future. This project has been co-funded by the Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) for Sustainable Tourism and the Hermon Slade Foundation.

Expressing your brand values - an advertising case study

David Luxton, Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary

Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary faces many of the challenges faced by zoos and wildlife sanctuaries. Potential visitors are no longer interested in being passive viewers of wildlife collections – they want to be immersed into the experience.

In many cases, the staff and local community can clearly articulate the deeply held values and the experiences offered by a wildlife tourism enterprise. The challenge is to translate this effectively to broader advertising campaigns.

As Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary enters a major phase in rejuvenating the product, the brand and the values it is based on have become increasingly important.

The Sanctuary's latest campaign is a return to these core values, but also an evolution in the way they are delivered.

David is Communications Manager for Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary on the Gold Coast. Following a career as a journalist and sub-editor, David took on a local government role in public relations. Since then, he has more than a decade's experience in tourism marketing, communications and advertising in both domestic and international roles.

Tasmanian Wildlife Tourism Strategy

Fiona Adlam, Tourism Tasmania

Tasmania has unique wildlife tourism advantages. Investigations reveal that there are untapped opportunities to connect and convert visitors to wildlife tourism experiences that will benefit the tourism industry.

Work on Tourism Tasmania's Tasmanian Wildlife Tourism Strategy began in April 2004. As part of the strategy development process, consumer research was undertaken in focus groups conducted by Quantum Market Research in December 2004. The results of this research have helped Tourism Tasmania to produce the Tasmanian Wildlife Tourism Strategy, which is to be launched in May 2005. The strategy aims to maximize Tasmania's competitive advantage in wildlife tourism.

This presentation will explain the reasons for creating the strategy, identify the main consumer research findings, and outline the six key strategies for sustainable wildlife tourism in Tasmania.

Fiona has a Bachelor of Tourism and a Graduate Diploma of Environmental Studies with Honours from the University of Tasmania. Her Honours thesis topic was: Opportunities for Wildlife Tourism in Tasmania. She is currently working as a Graduate Officer at Tourism Tasmania.

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Workshop-style Sessions

ABSTRACTS

Designing and Managing Wildlife Tourism Interactions

Facilitator: Ian Tranter, Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources

Ian is the manager of Sustainable and Indigenous Tourism in the Australia Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources. He is responsible for implementing the Government's Tourism and Conservation Initiative.

Nature based tourism is a large segment of the Australian tourism industry. Even non-nature tourism significantly relies on the natural backdrop of the local environment. The \$4.6m Tourism and Conservation Initiative seeks to overcome the structural, regulatory and attitudinal constraints to expanding this sector.

One of Australia's key potential tourism drawcards is its unique wildlife. Visitors wish to get 'up close and personal' with kangaroos, koalas, crocodiles and other charismatic fauna. For the visitor, interaction with wildlife often becomes a highlight of their tour, and improving wildlife interactions is likely to be the key to developing profitable enterprises that can support conservation.

However, many wildlife businesses have faced an uncertain and inconsistent regulatory environment. This is especially true for private land and unprotected public land where interaction with wildlife is often tightly controlled but destruction of the same individuals or their habitat is relatively straightforward. Feeding, petting or managing wildlife for show is not allowed in protected areas, and is not encouraged by animal rights groups. Should the same apply to all not-at-risk species, or on private land?

We wish to develop appropriate principles that should underpin regulation of wildlife interaction on private lands and on public unprotected lands. The aim is to establish an agreed social and regulatory framework which will provide the certainty for investment in wildlife tourism. WTA has already started to develop guidelines for industry operators. What elements should be left to operators, what should be regulated, and what existing regulations need to change?

Growth of the sector also requires better and more sophisticated products. To simply 'see' most animals provides limited customer engagement, understanding or repeat business. This is exacerbated by the difficulty of seeing many marsupial species, which have been selected to be small, cryptic, afraid of humans, and in many cases nocturnal. Feeding and petting improves the close observation of the animals and a few of their behaviours, but may not increase the customer engagement or understanding beyond a generic warm fuzzy feeling. How can we identify opportunities for more effective and enjoyable interactions with Australian wildlife?

Questions

- What principles are appropriate for interaction with wildlife on private land (or unprotected public land)?
- What regulations are needed to create the certainty to allow investment in wildlife tourism?
- What existing regulations need to change or be removed?
- How can we design wildlife interactions that better match tourist demand?

Using the media to promote your wildlife tourism products

Facilitator: Kristine Madden, Eco Media Group

Kris is Managing Director of Eco Media Group, and is a journalist and tourism consultant specialising in ecotourism. he consults to Tourism Australia on sustainable tourism; and work with a number of other organisations on responsible tourism policy. She has previously held marketing and public relations positions with Melbourne Zoo and the Tourist Attractions Association (NSW). For the last few months she has been acting vice-chair of WTA, and has managed all promotional activities for the Southern Queensland Wildlife Trail and for the WTA annual workshop.

A lecture-style presentation will be given covering ideas on how wildlife tourism operators might considering using the media to assist in promotion. Using one or more operators in the group an example, a draft strategy for use of the media for a particular wildlife tourism product will be developed.

Creative Wildlife Interpretation

Facilitator: Nick Mooney, Department of Primary Industry, Water and Environment, Tasmania

Nick Mooney has been a wildlife biologist for Tasmania's Nature Conservation Branch for almost 30 years. Much of his work has essentially been conflict resolution and when dealing with schools, clubs and the general public he quickly discovered the value of cunning plans including good interpretation. In a sceptical, sometimes aggressive environment, empathy had to be created and that meant developing personal styles to suit. Nick has consolidated his views on the value of tailored interpretation in conservation and for some years has made it a mission to use wildlife tourism to reach the target audience and change attitudes.

To me, wildlife interpretation is about making people feel wildlife is a valuable part of their life, easing people into a familiarity without contempt.

Creativity is needed to compete with increasingly sophisticated modern entertainment and a public fashion of instant gratification, sometimes made worse by science marketing what are essentially homo-centric exercises as conservation (eg attempting to clone Thylacines). This atmosphere continually ups the ante and with wildlife you are not in control of that. Reality has to be made good enough otherwise wildlife interpretation will fail.

After all, whether you are undertaking wildlife interpretation primarily for reasons of \$, personal or social gratification, work placement or nature conservation the goal is the same – to succeed in getting and keeping people's interest and leaving them feeling good about the experience, whatever it was; just like sex.

Like any other creativity, that which engages people is intensely personal, depending at least on confidence, experience and technical knowledge. Enthusiasm, A curiosity about people and the ability to absorb, process and produce is what allows you to tailor to an audience.

This process is fuelled by enthusiasm and a desire to achieve something in particular with your efforts. Generally technical knowledge is secondary but your audience has invested a lot in the experience, especially if they are that especially valuable audience – the unconverted. People love to be hosted by an expert, as important as fame. Funnily enough, even if its nothing to do with the subject it can leave people feeling quietly superior. So what, as long as they feel some ownership of the subject. A good aim is to have some later say "You wouldn't believe who was leading our trip...".

Creativity can be an event, gadget or style. It can be one off or dynamic. Creativity can be exhausting; there is a constant arm-wrestle between adrenalin and burn-out. So, efficiencies have to be found. One successful style is to create your own luck by being wide awake to opportunities. It takes energy and you have to be observant.

Having a mission greatly helps. The workshop will talk of how creative wildlife interpretation through tourism can be used to solve particular wildlife conservation issues. Reducing negative attitudes to raptors and Tasmanian devils for instance and the fine balance between ethics and principals, reality and pragmatism and conflicting needs will be discussed.

Volunteers and research in wildlife tourism

Facilitator: Claire Ellis, University of Tasmania

Claire currently lectures at the University of Tasmania in the Tourism Program. This workshop is based on her PhD (within the School for Environmental Studies and Geography) that examined volunteer tourism programs where tourists pay to join environmental field research trips. Specific areas of interest were episodic volunteering, environmental volunteering, measuring outcomes and the management and integration of these programs into the wider field of tourism and volunteering. Claire comes from an industry background having worked in various environmental fields as well as tourism over the last 12 years mostly in Asia, Australia and the USA.

How well can we marry tourism and conservation? This workshop will focus on a type of wildlife tourism where people join a trip to volunteer in field research while on holiday and is relevant to operators, policy makers and natural resource managers. While this type of tourism is still small, it is growing and there are benefits for operators, as well as natural resource managers and participants. The potential to grow strong repeat business, create a differentiated image in the marketplace, strengthen relationships with researchers, create further philanthropic flows and continually build a stronger educational interpretive component into existing ecotourism trips are just some of the potential benefits. For natural resource managers the chance to achieve specific research goals and wider educational goals are important.

This workshop will start by discussing some of the results of a PhD that analysed short term volunteer tourism in environmental field research and will summarise various models in Australia and internationally that combine volunteering with wildlife tourism. Variations in models and styles of operating impact the resulting costs and benefits for operators. Changes within the volunteering sphere and within tourism have contributed to the growth in demand for these trips and the motivations of participants joining demonstrate factors from each area are relevant.

Questions:

- Why would you want to operate trips in this area? What are the benefits to your operation? What are your goals?
This is a critical area to understand clearly as not only do goals need to be realistic but different modes of operating can deliver different benefits. It is also common to integrate these types of trips into existing non-volunteer programs and combining several styles of trips can achieve significant benefits.
- What would help you get involved in this? What has stopped you from pursuing this area so far?
Volunteers have always been working in field research and many types of volunteers exist within tourism. Why haven't more organisations explored options in this area already? Are there issues or problems we can identify?
- What needs to occur to allow us to move forward and expand in this area?
- What is needed to help support the growth of this area and strengthen the overlay between wildlife tourism, research/ conservation and volunteering?
- What can WTA do to assist? realistically!!
Identify the key areas where WTA can work to support the growth of this area in the short and medium term.

A Management Challenge: Wildlife Feeding at O'Reilly's

Facilitator: Daryl Jones, Griffith University

With: Matt Perry, O'Reilly's Rainforest Guesthouse and Scott Hetherington, Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service

Darryl Jones is Senior Lecturer in ecology in the Australian School of Environmental Studies, Griffith University. Having trained and researched in the fields of wildlife management and behavioural ecology, he currently combines these approaches in attempting to understand the ecology, behaviour and management of wildlife living in urban areas.

The issue of feeding wildlife is one of the most important yet controversial challenges facing tourism operators, natural resource agencies, and reserve managers. People everywhere enjoy feeding wild animals and many operators and locations provide opportunities to do so. Recently however, a wide variety of concerns associated with wildlife feeding have emerged, including the spread of disease, dependency on anthropogenic foods, inadequate nutrition, aggressive interactions and others. Despite these problems, numerous benefits of feeding are also evident. Unfortunately, inadequate scientific information, poorly defined policies and a lack of guidelines have prevented progress in understanding this important issue and its management. This workshop is designed to provide a useful background to the debate over wildlife feeding by summarising recent research findings, introducing the latest agency guidelines and hearing how one of Australia's most well-known ecotourism locations will be managing its famous wildlife-feeding events.

Incorporating Indigenous people and content into wildlife tourism

Facilitator: Denise Lawungkurr Goodfellow

Denise has been a birding/natural history guide for over twenty years, is also the author/co-author of four fauna books (three on birds), and a member of an Aboriginal clan based in Arnhem Land.

Indigenous people, particularly those who still live on their own country should play an integral role in wildlife tourism. They often have excellent knowledge of wildlife which other guides may lack. Also, visitors want to meet them. And reasons why visitors seek encounters with wildlife and indigenous people, may be broadly commensurate with the values held by indigenous people, and can be used to generate common understanding and acceptance.

Wildlife knowledge

Bininj (Aboriginal people of western Arnhem Land) consider wildlife to be an integral part of their lives. They still learn as children to hunt, gather and track, and to take care of their dreaming animals. By comparison few guides in Kakadu have existing knowledge of flora and fauna when they are recruited, and may have as little as a week's training before going out with visitors. Consequently these guides rely on a few easy-to-identify birds and other fauna, and plants.

Ill treatment of wildlife

Ignorance, need to stand out in a competitive market constructed on a narrow knowledge base and "thrill-seeking", and "desire" to please, lead guides to indulge in ill treatment of wildlife. For instance many guides catch pythons and other reptiles. A few years ago it was "common practice" for guides on boats to ram crocodiles to "give visitors a thrill". This and other behaviour so horrified the Mirrar people of Kakadu that elders said it was better to make "the tourists go and the crocodiles stay". Guides in some Top End areas feed crocodiles, and birds of prey and goannas. This has resulted in crocodiles and goannas being removed or in the case of crocodiles, shot.

Safety and looking after others

Neither do all guides have the knowledge to keep visitors safe. And in some cases the desire to compete, or to please has led guides to put their clients at risk. For instance, under pressure from visitors feeling the tropical heat, some guides gave permission for groups to swim in areas frequented by crocodiles. Yet Bininj (Aboriginal people) are taught as children to look after others. For example my son Rowan was made a "little daddy" before he was four, and expected to help raise his newborn "son". If a visitor is hurt, lost or dies on one's country then gossip occurs, possibly the most feared punishment of all. There is no such culture in western society.

Values re conservation

Whereas western conservation often consists of creating national parks and making wildlife sacrosanct, Bininj take a different approach. For instance the relationship is much more intimate and in a way, mutualistic. The Bininj approach highlights the importance of the environment and animals as a group. Conservation is considered to be the role of everyone.

Indigenous vs. traditional tourism

Yet the approach of bodies such as the NT Tourist Commission has been to attempt to force semi-traditional people into a tourism structure mainly constructed for mass/sightseeing tourism. To enter such a market is difficult for many Aboriginal people, given they already feel a loss of control, they dislike and distrust strangers, and they have little funding for big project. There are more suitable markets, ie self-drive birdwatchers/natural history enthusiasts.

Questions

- Could WTA help involve indigenous people in appropriate wildlife tourism, and if so, how?
- Even those with wildlife expertise may find entry to the existing tourism structure daunting and very expensive. Can the structure be changed to allow easier admittance to indigenous people, given it also works against those seeking a well-informed guide.
- There is a culture of "fitting" indigenous people in to the existing structure of tourism. It often doesn't work. Could WTA act as advocate for Aboriginal groups involved in tourism?
- Could WTA facilitate relationships between indigenous people and wildlife tour operators? If so, how?
- How could operators work with communities to the benefit of all?