

to Rider Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines* and Jeannie Gunn's *We of the Never Never* and many others. The three ribs of the book support the depth of argument that the author has forwarded.

It is a book of sixteen solid chapters well divided into apposite subheadings. It is not too long at about 78,000 words (estimated). It has extensive referencing and notes given as endnotes and is indexed. There are a small number of black and white figures, which are appropriate and aid the text. A short series of colour plates in the centre add a layer of colour to the history and help recreate a lost age. The audience addressed is a scholarly one, though the book is open to anyone interested in Australian history and geography.

The text could be used in undergraduate teaching of history and geography; to a large extent it will also inform Australian literature studies at a tertiary level. In particular it will inform the overlap area between each discipline. It clearly meets its objective in describing how a county, its people and its ethos have been formed by a dry continent. It will also be a useful read for post-graduate researchers. I have found references in it to follow for my research on the history of the Macleay Museum.

The organization of the narrative from past to present makes travelling with the Water Dreamers easy. The text flows logically with a myriad of little stories that accumulate seamlessly into the thesis. Michael Cathcart's *silence*, which parallels exploration, is ironically loudest in the driest heart or hearts of Australia. The Australian literature is beautifully used in juxtaposition with Cathcart's own hand to add colour to the text. A. G. Stevens, a sub-editor of the *Bulletin* scales down the bushman to a simple figure in the vast *silence*, humanity is "puny"—"where the

bush joins hands with her terrible sister the Desert". Cathcart shows us he has been there in the same passage, "when the night stars burn so brightly that you might touch them". The *silence* in the author's hands helps account the Australia's fixation with venerating failure and in highlighting that the mores of Australians are connected to their landscape and history. Something often alluded to through the narrative is the possession of *country*, silent or otherwise, by Aboriginal Australians. We are frequently given the precise name of a language group from particular provenances. Aborigines led the explorers on their expeditions, and they were living in the deserts when the explorers died, but they are never drawn in detail nor is their relationship with the water explained. They may have been omitted because they understood the water and the deserts. This may be why the author only touches on them but does not draw them out. They did not fit his thesis. I would like to see another thesis that tells the Aboriginal story and how Europeans missed learning how to manage their rivers as they conquered the country.

The level of research and references are appropriate to a scholarly treatise. The writing is unusually entertaining for such a thesis. I was never bored while reading, in fact I was excited by the story and looked forward to the parts that I was more familiar with such as Prof. Griffith Taylor's theses on water and populating Australia. My only criticism is that my favourite parts were too short. I would recommend this book to readers of history and geography and those interested in understanding how Australia's water or lack of it helped shaped a nation. Anyone reading this will gain considerable foundation knowledge into how Australia's water is used and why so much of it is mismanaged.

## Wildlife Search and Rescue: A Guide for First Responders

Dmytryk, Rebecca (2012)  
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**W**ILDLIFE rescue has become part of Australian urban society. Injured and sick animals are common in all cities and their surrounding suburbs. The majority of these are common human commensals that have been dogs, cats, and cars, or have struck overhead wires or windows. Near coasts, it is common to find birds entangled in fishing line (with or without hooks) or fouled by other rubbish that is the jetsam of human society. Rescuing these animals, whether or not there is any conservation value or not, makes people feel good. Since the 1980s, organizations, such as Wildlife Information Rescue and Education Service (WIRES) in New South Wales,

have proliferated and process tens of thousands of distressed animals annually. WIRES, for example, processed 56 500 animals in 2009/10. Many of these were threatened fauna, with the WIRES' web site stating they handle 130 species on average each month. Birds are the most common group processed. There are 2000 WIRES volunteers, all of whom have been required to undertake training in the handling of wild animals. Although oiled birds, whales entangled in shark nets or stranded on beaches are often in the headlines, rescuing them requires professional skills and logistical support outside the scope of "wildlife rescuers" and are normally handled by nature conservation agencies.

"Wildlife Search and Rescue" is "*intended solely as a guide to appropriate procedures for response to emergencies involving wild animals based on the most current recommendations*". It is written primarily for wildlife carers in the United States and includes advice for many animals that Australian carers are unlikely to encounter, such as hummingbirds,

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porcupines, and skunks. Regardless of taxonomic differences between American and Australian wildlife, most of the advice given and the procedures and equipment described in "Wildlife Search and Rescue" will be useful in processing Australian fauna and of interest to Australian wildlife carers. Some of the advice is common sense, such as the need in North America for anyone handling wild mammals to be vaccinated against rabies. Techniques for capturing and restraining wild animals are described, as is the equipment used for capture, holding, and transporting of native animals. Although these may be useful for handling Australian fauna, most will require special permits and training. Australian wildlife carers therefore need to be aware that the laws and regulations governing the handling of native fauna in the United States may differ significantly from those in Australia.

In addition to detailed descriptions of traps, capture, and handling techniques, "Wildlife Search and Rescue" discusses procedures for wildlife "first aid" and diagnosis. There is a section on euthanasia and ethics and one on rehabilitation and release. Rescuing baby birds and mammals is given its own page as spring sees a flood of calls from people

finding "baby birds that have fallen from their nests or baby mammals that are lost". The advice that, unless obviously injured, these are best left in the wild to the care of their parents is sound, but I would have liked to see a bit more explanation as to why. For example, it is normal for young birds to fledge and leave the nest for the ground before they can fly. The nest is a dangerous place attracting predators and breeding parasites. By leaving the nest and dispersing young birds reduce the risk of the entire clutch being lost and their parents have no difficulty in finding and feeding them.

Apart from the caveat on rules and regulations, I think wildlife carers in Australia can learn from "Wildlife Search and Rescue". The text is clear, informative, and to the point. How to handle skunks and coyotes may not be particularly relevant to Australians, but it is interesting. The discussions of euthanasia, public relations, and working with authorities should provoke thought, while advice on first aid can only be helpful. I don't think this is a book every wildlife carer in Australia needs in their home, but it should be in all major libraries where carers can access it.

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