

Conflict, Co-existence and Compromises: Human/wildlife interactions

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Urbanisation

- 2004: Year of the Built Environment
- 2004: Most of world's population will live in cities
- 2025: Urban pop in developed world 3 times developed
- Will be the single most significant cause of extinction

SEQ City: The Next Big Thing

- Fastest growing regions in Australia
- 1000 people per month
- 3.2 million by 2025
- Habitats: gone, edges or fragmented
- Extirpations increasing
- People are increasingly removed from contact with nature

How do we cope...?

- Seek contact at home
 - Images of nature
 - Wildlife-friendly gardens
 - Provide for wild visitors
- Escape
 - Sea-changers
 - Modern-day explorers
 - Immerse in the wilderness
 - Seek contact with 'wildness'

Wildlife Feeding: A common practice

- 25-75% of households
- 63-80 million people; \$200 million (US)
- "Conservation minded Australians don't feed"

Why do people feed wildlife?

(Howard & Jones 2004 In: *Urban Wildlife: More than Meets the Eye*
(Eds Lunney & Burgin) NSW RZS)

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| ▪ Gives pleasure | 75% |
| ▪ To atone for human damage | 39% |
| ▪ Educate about nature | 30% |
| ▪ Attract wildlife | 23% |

- Australians among most urbanised in the world
- Nature as backdrop, amenity and romantic ideal

- Wilderness/ wilderness human concepts
- Nature must conform to human expectations
- Implications for human-wildlife interactions

Most species do not adapt to us...

- Many species must have large patches
- Extinctions always more likely on islands
- Fragmentation is major threat
- Most species stay away from human disturbance

Some are thriving....

- Everywhere often unexpected species are exploding in numbers
- In urban areas: Pigeons, parrots, possums
- In wildlands: Kangaroos and kookaburras

Why do some species cope?

- Generalists and opportunists
- Large and behaviourally dominant
- Tolerant and have adapted to human the world

Escape: Back to nature

- **Fraser Island**: *generations seeking something*
- Solitude
- Un-peopled landscape
- Wild animals
- Contact with nature

Wildlife adaptations to the human world can be complex

- Wild animals may be
 - repelled
 - habituated
 - attracted
- Reactions often adaptive
- Experience important

Interactions are mutual

- Humans have expectations
- Animals have expectations
- Assessments made by both parties
- Assessments by both can be subtle and sophisticated