

Wildlife-Friendly Netting and Fencing

Barry Lees

Organisations like Sydney Wildlife, Wires and RSPCA say that lots of native birds and animals are killed or injured each year because of netting on fruit trees. Flying foxes, possums, microbats, birds, snakes and lizards can easily get caught in netting. They often panic and the net cuts deeply into their bodies, cutting off blood supply and causing severe pain. They cannot free themselves and often starve to death. When a flying fox mother does not return to the nest, the baby will also starve.



The solution is to use **wildlife-friendly netting** over fruit trees and vines. Do not use bird netting. It should be white and have holes too small for a finger to poke through. It should preferably be fixed to a frame that holds the netting away from the tree. Failing this, it should be hung over the tree, gathered at the bottom and tied to the tree trunk. Check your nets each day to see if animals have been caught. Do not leave old netting hanging up or lying on the ground where they can still entangle wildlife.

Fencing can also be dangerous for wildlife. Barbed wire is a major hazard. Many animals face cruel injury or death from getting tangled in the barbs. Often they don't see the wire – particularly bats, gliders and owls flying at night. Water birds taking off from a dam sometimes run into an adjacent fence because they cannot clear it. Remedial options include replacing barbed with plain wire, covering with polypipe, or increasing its visibility by adding white tape or metal tags.

If you find injured wildlife, it's best to get help from a wildlife rescue service, since a stressed animal is likely to bite and will require specialist care. Contact Sydney Metropolitan Wildlife Service (02 9413 4300) or Wires (1300 094 737).

A message from Still Creek Landcare (www.stillcreeklandcare.com.au) or Facebook.

Hornsby Council Staff Walking for Oxfam

They help the community every day while working at Fagan Park, but now a team of Hornsby Shire Council staff are set to make a difference on a global level.

Hornsby Shire Council employees Scott Forbes, Tanya Mein, Ryan Stewart and Tim Armstrong have signed up to participate in Sydney's Oxfam Trailwalker charity event.

The team, who have called themselves Lady and the Trampers, are aiming to raise \$3000 for Oxfam and have already passed the \$1000 mark.

Although Scott and his colleagues are excited to challenge themselves with the walk, their main purpose is to raise funds that will help the disadvantaged.

"To be doing something that makes a difference to the lives of people around the world, it's really motivating," Scott said.

"We just thought, instead of spending money on ourselves, wouldn't it be nice this year to make an effort to raise money for people who really need it."

The Oxfam Trailwalker will be held on Friday 22 August, with participants required to walk 100km from Brooklyn to Mosman within 48 hours.

After training for months, the Hornsby Council team hope to complete the walk within 32 hours and plan to only take short 20 minute breaks during the event.

Money raised will go towards Oxfam's projects, including providing water and supplies to communities in Africa.

To donate to the team, visit: <http://bit.ly/1oil5SN>



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