



Brumby Bridges

The quarterly newsletter of the ABA

SPRING 2020, ISSUE 20-2

The Australian

Brumby Alliance

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Robertson

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*Dedicated to the
recognition,
management,
preservation and welfare*

A WORD FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the Spring edition of the ABA newsletter!

The ups outweigh the downs. Many Brumby folk are busy as ever right now due to trapping/removal programs, ongoing long term and emergency fundraising, battling media propaganda and much more many of us don't come across but from afar to me it looks promising!

There will be downs but I am so chuffed to know that there are so many great people working tirelessly to help the Brumbies. Thanks everyone!

Patricia Hoelmer, ABA Secretary

Photo credit:
Carol Hancock
at Australian
Brumby
Photography





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PRESIDENT CHAT

Great to feel warmer, spring weather, especially in lockdown Melbourne where restrictions are the tightest. Covid-19 has caused many problems, but let's hope we can soon return to near 'normal'.

Covid-19 limitations have, severe travel restrictions, has curtailed Brumby rehoming activities such as collecting trapped Brumbies, cancelled open days and Brumby handling clinics and limiting people wanting a gentled Brumby from visiting and choosing their forever Brumby.

Rehomers, like others, have had to adapt to these challenges, such as the trainers currently working with the VBA "Australian Brumby Challenge" Brumbies.

The ABA has continued with a run of submissions to Parliamentary Inquiries in NSW and Victoria. Recently we completed;

- A submission to the Parliament of Victoria Integrity and Oversight Committee
- A submission to the Parliament of Victoria Legislative Council Environment and Planning Committee investigating Victoria's continuing ecosystem decline.

Frustration at Parks resistance to an urgent post-fire Brumby counts is palpable. The ABA recently wrote an open letter to Parks Victoria co-signed by 11 Brumby groups, to request a post-fire Brumby count be conducted as a priority. With the high rate of species lost in the 19/20 wild fires, and PV push to ground shoot an unknown number of east Alpine Brumbies, the stakes are high. PV refused stating their intention is to wait for the 2024 Australian Alpine Brumby Count.

Fortunately, the NSW Environment Minister has now agreed to conduct a new Kosciuszko Brumby count after months of lobbying from NSW Brumby supporters.

We understand that local counts will occur in the NSW Wild Horse Heritage Act management plan, and hope the next count is carried out in conjunction with both the NSW Community & Scientific advisory panels to aid transparency.

A new look ABA website is under construction to enable readers to directly access the vast range of information on our site. The revamp will also include more articles to assist public



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Cont'd... PRESIDENT CHAT

understanding of the value of retaining sustainable, managed Brumby populations

where they have lived and adapted over 150 to 200 years or more. Brumby heritage values will also be a key focus on the new website.

The University of Southern Queensland (USQ) and ABA East Alpine Brumby impacts (positive and negative) continue; and we anticipate the initial report will be published by the end of 2020.

PV remain intent on exterminating **all** Bogong High Plains Brumbies, **all** Barmah Brumbies and as many as possible from the EastAlps. **This must not happen;** sustainable numbers must be genuinely researched NOW - before our irreplaceable, iconic Brumby's social heritage is lost forever.

Confirmation of the flaws in Parks Bogong High Plains study, was finally highlighted in the recent ABA-v-Parks Victoria court case. Parks resisted, but in the end had to admit it. The disbelief that a Parks Victoria report changed data stating deer only impacts to become horse only impacts is a serious miscarriage of Justice.

Victorian Brumbies are now a critically endangered species facing immediate
www.australianbrumbyalliance.org.au

extinction because of flawed environmental studies that Parks Victoria continue to promote. Keep urging your states and federal Parliamentary members to intervene - Act now to save these valued Brumbies.

Jill Pickering, ABA President



At a protest in Melbourne



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UPDATE FROM SAVE THE BRUMBIES

Welcome to the winter chills and the joys of COVID19!!!! We cancelled our Gala Day last November due to bush fires, cancelled our social day at Bellingen Sanctuary due to floods and finally cancelled our Easter celebrations due to this terrible virus. We hope for better luck later this year. Fingers and hooves crossed!!!

Sanctuary Report - NEBS is once again, a paradise of green after all the rain earlier in the year. Our Brumbies are knee deep in rich grass and in great condition with thick shaggy winter coats. Manager Lucy Hicks has been busy; STB Nelson has now been Adopted by a wonderful family and Lucy is currently preparing him for the saddle.

We still have several quality horses available however they are not advertised until basic handling has been done.

Due to lockdowns people have been unable to visit to inspect.

All horses displayed on our website Adoption page have now been placed. Keep in touch for updates.



Jan Carter, President STB Inc.



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BRUMBIES IN THE MEDIA

Equestrian Life Magazine

THE JOY OF GROWING UP WITH A BRUMBY

Written by Amanda Young

An excerpt from the story in Equestrian Life Magazine.

“(Brumbies) have just got a certain nature about them, they look after the kids and they’re not flighty. Once they’re broken in, they’re there for the child. And they’re not worried about what’s running around them or what’s going on, they’re just concentrating on what they are doing. You can send the kids down the paddock and you don’t have to have any worries out in the bush. They’re good companions for kids,” Suzzie testifies.



Alena Duncan at Pony Club with Brumby Coolie when she was younger.

As Brumbies are generally in the 13hh to 14.2hh size range, they’re a great height for most children and seem to settle in to Pony Club very quickly once broken in. “

They’re broken in, you get them back, and then you just take them to Pony Club!” Suzzie explains. “And they’re low maintenance, particularly with their feet.”

For more of this story, go to the magazine: www.eqlifemag.com.au



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CELEBRITY SUPPORT FOR THE BRUMBY



Russell Crowe @russellcrowe · 1h
I love horses. I appreciate and have personal experience of the deep spiritual connection humans and horses can have. I've ridden horses for pleasure, for work, I own horses.
These brumbies are wild animals who live without restraint in complete freedom... and I love that too.



Russell Crowe @russellcrowe · 1h
and some argue that the presence of horses adjusts the environment, these animals and their lineage have lived in the snowy mountains for close on 200 years. Their forbears traversed this vast continent, connected people, fought in wars and drove Australia's rural economy

3 11 119



Russell Crowe @russellcrowe · 1h
Our literary culture from Banjo Patterson to Eileen Mitchell glorify the Brumby as a symbol of freedom.
A balance needs to be found here between the environments needs, commercial farming interests and the survival of these noble beasts and the cultural history they represent.

4 10 138



Russell Crowe @russellcrowe · 1h
The callous destruction of 4000 of these animals is not the way forward.
Respect need be paid to the intention of the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Bill and a broader, more detailed plan for now and the future needs to be formulated.

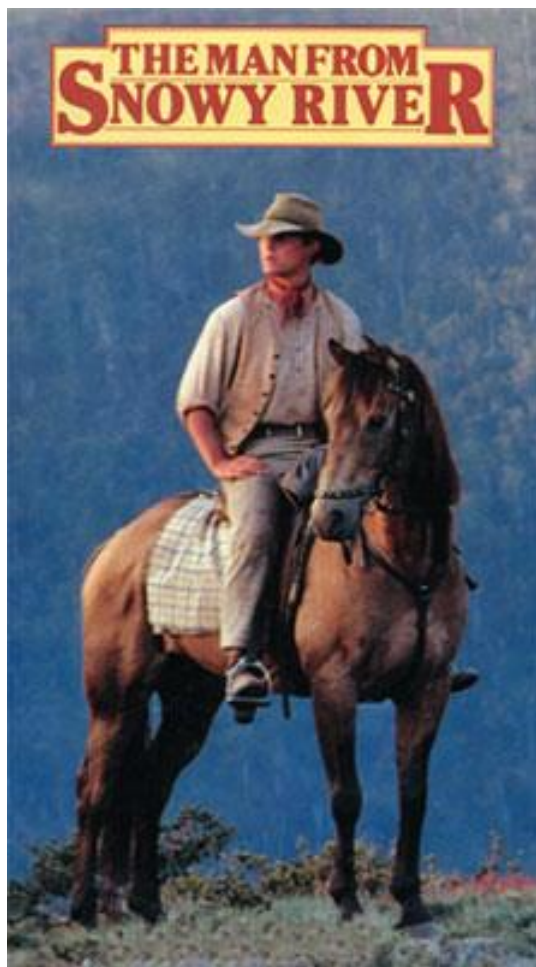


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CELEBRITY SUPPORT FOR THE BRUMBY



Tom Burlinson

May 18 · 🌐



This Facebook page is a professional one and I don't usually respond to personal messages from people I don't know. I am not engaged in public life at this time due to personal circumstances and the current collapsed state of the industry in which I have been professionally involved for more than 43 years. However, as a private person I support the positions of the Australian Brumby Alliance and the Mountain Cattlemen's Association of Victoria who have pledged their support to retaining sustainable brumby numbers in the Alpine National Park.



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UPDATE FROM VICTORIAN BRUMBY ASSOCIATION

THIS IS RESCUE

A personal account from Colleen at the Victorian Brumby Association

(Extracts from Colleen's original post permitted.)

With a huge number of Brumbies looking to be removed from public lands in Victoria and New South Wales in coming years, rescue is more important than ever. But what IS Rescue? As a long time Brumby Rescuer, we wanted to share a few thoughts with you all.

To us, rescue is a commitment, to ALL Brumby we rescue and those already rescued and still in care. Sadly, Rescue is as much about being able to say 'No' as 'Yes' to new arrivals.

We have Brumbies being gentled for their forever home and some who are here forever.

We are able us to accept many pregnant mares who can safely be turned out into our well sheltered, grassy paddocks, to give birth and raise their foals in the only way they know how. We have learnt that Brumby mares are likely to spontaneously miscarry unborn foals when kept in yards and or stressful situations. We feel that these pregnant mares have every right to birth and raise their foals safely. *That, to us, is Rescue.*

Rescue is also:

- ensuring no colt or stallion leaves us until gelded and adapted to living as a gelding in a domestic situation;
- sitting up nights with Brumby sick foals doing all we can and still losing them;
- hearing updates how lives have been changed by their rehomed Brumby friend;
- receiving calls from people who see rehomed Brumbies, and being blown away by their attitude to life and wanting to experience that Human/Brumby bond for themselves;
- doing office paperwork on a sunny day, when you'd rather be outside;
- dealing with good/bad aspects of social media aspects, including by those who fail to understand the complexities of Brumby rescue; and
- making lifelong friends with many wonderful people you encounter.



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Cont'd.. UPDATE FROM VICTORIAN BRUMBY ASSOCIATION

In fact, rescue is a chosen lifestyle of daily routine and never ending rollercoaster swings that for us started in 2007. We have rescued over 600 Brumbies, each touched our life in different ways. Most have gone to wonderful homes to enjoy life, some are still with us.

Rescue brings so much joy, but it requires empathy, knowledge and a great support group, especially for the times I felt completely overwhelmed and not up to the task. Fortunately, as a founding member of the Australian Brumby Alliance (ABA) in 2008 we instantly gained a network of knowledgeable, support people also working with Wild Horses. Sometimes, just being able to call someone who understands and 'vent' is all that's needed!

So, if you're thinking of jumping in and starting your own Rescue, do your research, give some supportive contacts a call and get started! We would love to chat with anyone who is thinking of Rescuing Brumbies and we know that our ABA network is similarly supportive.

Collen O'Brien, original post author

https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=2583512565227473&id=1754979781414093C



For more information go to: the Victorian Brumby Association website.

victorianbrumbyassociation.org

Photo of a rescued Brumby receiving medical treatment at the VBA.



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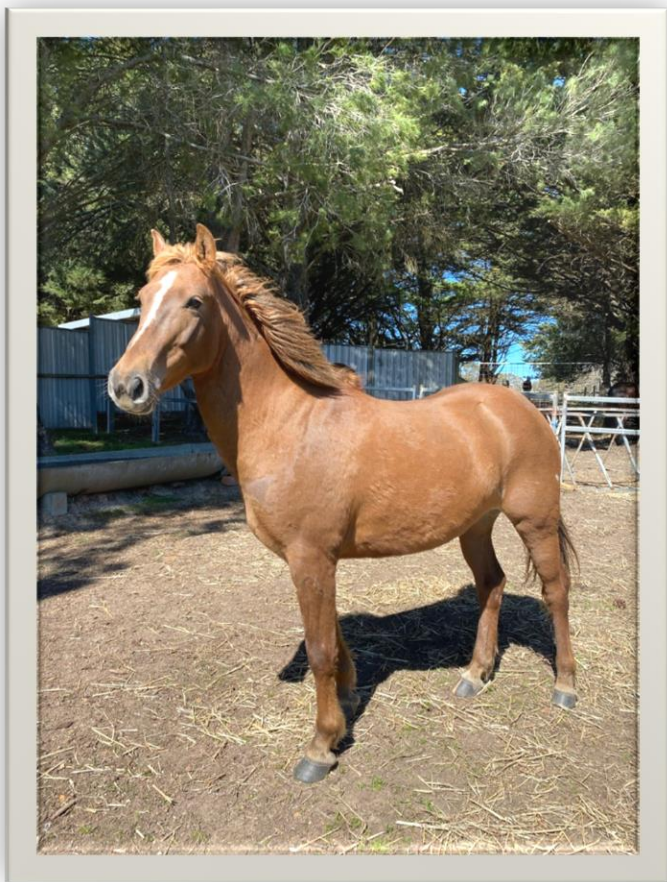
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PROMISE THE BRUMBY

Promise is a Brumby from Long Plain Kosciuszko National Park New South Wales Australia.

She now lives in South Australia now and is loving her new life in a small herd on around 10 acres of hilly bushland.



The Victorian Brumby Association saved her during a trapping program and she was clearly looked after and trained well while at their Sanctuary. I am a nervous older rider and was in need of a quiet horse to trail ride into my even older age.

Promise has certainly turned out to be that horse as we are riding out into the forest regularly and she really has not put a hoof wrong. My local trainer Teach Train Trim trained Promise to saddle and all that goes prior and Richard was impressed with the ease of it saying Brumbies have not been messed up by humans.

Promise is enjoying life on acreage I rent with her bestie Choppa an Arab cross, Lainie our Appaloosa mare and Joey our ex trotter.



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AUSTRALIAN STUDY FOUND

“Management of free-ranging horses is a complex socio-ecological issue in Australia... The difficulty of horse management is attributed to social intricacies rather than biological/ ecological gaps of knowledge.”

CSIRO Publishing May 2020

For more information: <https://www.publish.csiro.au/RJ/RJ19019>



Thank you to Ian and Michelle Brown for the use of their photo.



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UPDATE FROM HERITAGE BRUMBY ADV AUST INC.

It's been a very busy couple of months in terms of advocacy for our Heritage Brumby. There has been opportunity to make submissions to multiple government inquiries across different States in which we have been able to highlight the benefits of nomadic herbivores to their environment.

Our article was also published by Sentient Media and widely shared across social media.

Australian Officials Use Bushfire Recovery Effort to Cover Up Mass Killing of Wild Horses

July 23, 2020

SHARE: [f](#) [t](#) [in](#) [p](#) [✉](#) [🌐](#)

Environmental officials in Australia are manipulating population data and using COVID-19 scare campaigns to eradicate the Heritage Brumby population. Can they be stopped?

Reading Time: 6 minutes



Ian and Michelle Brown

www.sentimedia.org

www.australianbrumbyalliance.org.au

COVID has presented a new challenge to how we all go about our business, however, it has also allowed for innovative and new ways to do this. Online meeting platforms such as ZOOM and SKYPE has meant we are able to meet more often, share documents and interact with our fellow committee members who are interstate, isolated or unable to travel.

Consequently, we look for the positives in the situation and what opportunities emerge.

Justine Curatolo

HBAAinc President



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HYPOCRISY IN APPROACH TO INTRODUCED SPECIES

The broad ranging conflicting approaches to kill, or retain, introduced species across Australia, vary from total extermination - sustainable numbers to breeding to re-introduce.

The National Parks Act 1975 which guides Parks Victoria (PV) states s17(2)(a) to 'ensure that each national park is controlled and managedin a manner that will (iii) "*exterminate or control exotic fauna in the park*".

Yet Parks Victoria's view of control or exterminate is far from consistent when managing non-native species, examples include;

EXTERMINATE CATEGORY
**INTRODUCED BRUMBIES ARE 'BAD',
REMOVE ALL**

Brumbies will be *exterminated* in Bogong High Plains & Barmah and decimated in the East Victorian Alps (current Parks Victoria management plans for these three areas). PV announced plans in May to ground shoot Brumbies.



Photo credit: Donna Crebbin

SUSTAINABLE CATEGORY
**INTRODUCED DEER ARE 'GOOD' IN
SUSTAINABLE NUMBERS**

Parks Victoria's aim to "control" or lower deer numbers to, keeping numbers in the



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Cont'd.. HYPOCRISY IN APPROACH TO INTRODUCED SPECIES

thousands in all areas where horses currently live.

<https://engage.vic.gov.au/draft-victorian-deer-management-strategy>



Photo credit: Aust Deer Association

KEEP HIGH CATEGORY

INTRODUCED TROUT ARE 'VERY GOOD'

KEEP NUMBERS HIGH

Since 1960, tens of millions of trout have been released by the Authority in numerous lakes, rivers and streams across the state.

Trout have been so successfully and so pervasively introduced into Australian freshwater systems that most people now think that they are native.

<https://vfa.vic.gov.au/recreational-fishing/fish-stocking>



Photo credit: PinInterest

Again, we ask why the rush to just exterminate Brumbies?

Jill Pickering



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ABA MEMBER GROUPS

- ❖ Australian Brumby Horse Register
- ❖ Coffin Bay Brumby Preservation Society Inc. (SA)
- ❖ Kaimanawa Heritage Horses (NZ)
- ❖ Save the Brumbies Inc. (NSW)
- ❖ South East Queensland Brumby Association
- ❖ Victorian Brumby Association
- ❖ Heritage Brumby Advocates Australia inc.

To find out more, or to join, please contact Jill Pickering on pickjill@hotmail.com

NEWSLETTER

To contribute to the ABA newsletter, please contact Pat on hoelmerp@hotmail.com

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END NEWSLETTER