



Brumby Bridges

The quarterly newsletter of the ABA

SUMMER 2022, ISSUE 22-1

The Australian Brumby Alliance

President- Jill Pickering

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*Dedicated to the recognition,
management, preservation and
welfare of Australian wild horses*

A WORD FROM THE EDITOR



Welcome to a new year! With bushfires, COVID, floods and even an earthquake, we hope 2022 is a lot more stable and peaceful.

The ABA had a busy year with submissions for both the Victorian and NSW Brumby populations management plans as well as campaigns to stop plans to shoot Brumbies.

It certainly is a battle which requires endurance and fortitude, but one we believe can be achieved by working together.

In this edition, we also warmly welcome new ABA member: [White Alpine Equine!](#)

[#SupportBrumbyRehoming!](#)

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PRESIDENT'S CHAT

The Australian brumby Alliance Inc. (ABA) team wishes you all a safe and enjoyable time over the Christmas festive season and good wishes for the New Year. Despite Covid's latest Omicron variant threatening to derail us, there has been more freedom to catch up with those we've missed for the last 2 years recently.

The NSW Parks and Wildlife services (NPWS) released its final management plan to retain 3,000 Brumbies in defined less sensitive Kosciuszko areas. Sadly, this major reduction will result in the death of many Brumbies as rehomers struggle to keep up with the high annual numbers being removed over a 5 year period.

However, it is vital that the NPWS Heritage plan can succeed in its goal to retain sustainable wild heritage Brumby numbers in their homelands for future generations to see, learn from and value the benefits Brumbies have, and continue to, contribute to Australia's social heritage values.

Meanwhile Victoria's three Brumby populations continue to be shot under the current Parks Victoria "management" plan. The east VicAlps is especially vulnerable where aerial and ground shooters can hide more from public view. Please continue to provide reports on the *date*, *location* and *number* of dead Brumbies, and estimated time since death to info@australianbrumbyalliance.org.au

On a more positive note, we welcome **White Alpine Equine** to our team and look forward to the benefits each new member brings to our collective knowledge and advocacy work. Search them on social media.



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The new year brings renewed energy for all Brumby supporters to lobby State and Federal politicians on the benefits of retaining sustainable Brumby populations in Victoria's Barmah, Bogong and east VicAlpine parklands.

We urge everyone to actively support efforts by rational, non-aggressive lobby groups to further the Brumby cause, by attending rallies, speaking on the news and contacting your politicians – together we can avert the real risk of Brumbies become extinct in Victoria.

Jill Pickering, ABA President

Want **Brumby Christmas present ideas?**

Jigsaw
By Donna Crebbin



Image for 500 piece & 120 piece (squirish) jigsaws

A 2022 Calendar
By Carol Hancock



Book
By Alienor le Gouvella



Stocking fillers By HOOFS2010



ABA encouraging people to support Brumby gifts for Christmas



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ABA Response to KNP Horse Management Plan - October

On Friday October 1st the NSW Government released the draft [Kosciuszko National Park Wild Horse Heritage Management Plan](#) (*draft plan*) with a community consultation period until the 2nd of November. The draft plan was prepared to meet the requirements of the [Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Act 2018](#).

Overall, the ABA acknowledges this draft plan is a change in direction from previous plans and we are grateful for the more balanced approach. Whilst there is still much work to be done to protect our Heritage Brumby for future generations, the ABA is confident that this draft plan can provide a platform for positive action to achieve our goal of sustainable populations of Brumbies in the wild.

ABA Key points for SUBMISSION to the Draft KNP Wild Horse Heritage Management Plan

POSITIVES FOR WILD HORSE MANAGEMENT IN THE PLAN

- That a number of wild horses to be retained in the KNP, a reflection of their Heritage value.
- Removes aerial shooting and brumby running as control options (both are cruel and inhumane).
- The acknowledgement of Aboriginal people as an integral part of Australia's wild horse heritage.
- Overall, the plan is much more balanced and inclusive than previous plans and provides a real opportunity for sustainable population management of Brumbies in the KNP.

NEGATIVES FOR WILD HORSE MANAGEMENT IN THE PLAN

- More information is needed on the details of removal, where, when, how many horses will be removed.
- In reference to exclusion zones, how will wild horses be managed in those areas, will they be shot or removed so they can be rehomed? Need more practical support to rehoming so they can increase their capacity of horses to take. The Draft needs to support fertility control ASAP as a control method.
- Need to take into consideration density limits of wild horse populations, which can inform if removal or population is an effective option or not. The importance of previous research for the removal of large herbivores and the impact on eco-systems as a result.



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ABA RESPONSE TO PV Announcement to Shoot - November

In March 2021, Parks Victoria (PV) released their [DRAFT Feral Horse Action Plan 2021](#) outlining how they intend to manage the Brumby populations on Victorian land. There was a community consultation period which allowed the general public to provide feedback on the plan. The ABA provided a submission as did a number of our members and other stakeholders asking PV to immediately conduct a new population count, to invest in fertility control, work closely with rehoming organisations and support rehoming organisations to increase their capacity to take more Brumbies.

In November, PV released their final plan, they also simultaneously announced via email that they will commence the shooting of horses in the Alpine National Park. They gave no details of the shoot, the method, how many, what the evidence was, nor was there any community consultation period.

Standard Operating Procedure for Shooting of Feral Horses states:

[\(Aerial shooting\)](#) *To minimise the animal welfare implications of leaving dependent foals to die a slow death from starvation, it is preferable not to run aerial shooting programs when mares have dependent young at foot.*

[\(Ground Shooting\)](#) *The optimal period for ground shooting is during dry seasons or droughts, when many groups of horses are forced to congregate around areas with limited access to water and feed.*

Parks Victoria was planning to shoot during Spring time when mares have foals at foot in direct contravention of the Standard Operating Procedures.

Parks Victoria have routinely operated under a code of secrecy and flawed information to justify their killing campaigns. [The CSIRO states:](#) *Contemporary horse management requires full public transparency.*



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Parks Victoria rely on information to justify their reasons for killing wild horses, however, the result of FOI requests by the ABA have proven that these documents do not exist. The ABA made 3 FOI requests of specific documents that PV referenced to justify their shooting of Brumby populations, yet all three times PV replied to the FOI request that 'no documents were found as requested.'

Parks Victoria is a state funded agency who uses tax payer money to conduct these killings. Ministerial oversight is needed to justify the expenditure of tax-payer dollars, yet PV continue to evade scrutiny and transparency and operate as a state funded killing entity

The ABA wrote to PV and encouraged our supporters to also, we did radio interviews and engaged the public via social media to educate re the proposed plan to shoot and why it was unnecessary and cruel.



774 ABC (Melbourne)
774 AM



**Australian
Brumby
Alliance Inc.**

Listen to ABA President Ms Jill Pickering this morning on 774 ABC Radio, around 11.30am

#StopTheShoot



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HOW TO MEASURE IF AN ANIMAL IS NOW NATIVE

In December, Peter Banks, Professor of Conservation Biology, School of Life and Environmental Sciences, University of Sydney wrote an article for the Conversation called **‘Why dingoes should be considered native to mainland Australia – even though humans introduced them’**.

Below is an excerpt from the article, or you can [click here](#) to read the article in full.

“Researchers often distinguish between alien and native using the year the species was introduced. There are obvious problems with this, given the dates used can be arbitrary and the fact perceptions of nativeness can be based on how much humans like the species, rather than its ecological impact.

Native status is, of course, a human construct. Past definitions of nativeness have not directly considered the ecological reasons for concern about alien species.

This is what Peter Bank’s [new research](#) seeks to address. An ecological definition of nativeness.

What I propose are three staged criteria to determine when an introduced species becomes native:

- 1. Has the introduced species evolved in its new environment?*
- 2. Do native species recognise and respond to the introduced species as they do other local species?*
- 3. Are the interactions between introduced and established native species similar to interactions between native species (that is, their impacts on local species are not negative and exaggerated)?*



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For dingoes on mainland Australia, the answer is yes for all three criteria. We should consider them native.

Dingoes on mainland Australia meet the criteria for native status. Peter Banks, Author provided

This idea challenges the dogma alien species remain alien forever. This is an unsettling concept for ecologists dealing with the major and ongoing damage done by newer arrivals.

Some argue we should never embrace alien species into natural ecosystems.

This makes no sense for long-established introduced species, which might now be playing a positive role in ecosystems.”

You can [click here](#) to read the article in full.

As a Brumby supporter, the question is can we also apply this criteria to the Heritage Brumby to prove they too need to be re-classified as native?

The answer is yes, the Brumby (according to this supporter) easily fits all of Professor Peter Banks’s criteria to determine when an introduced species has now become native.



Image taken from the article



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UPDATE FROM BLUE WATER BRUMBIES

Rehomed! Daisy and Duke have a new home ❤️ It seems baby Duke has found his human and Mum Daisy happily eating without being harassed.



To contact Bluewater Brumbies

Ph 0402 703 951

W bluewaterbrumbies.com.au/





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UPDATE FROM SAVE THE BRUMBIES

2021 has been the busiest and most successful year yet for STB regarding our Adoption rehoming program. We are delighted to report that all our Brumbies, apart from our permanent old 'residents', have now found new homes to approved people and we currently don't have any available. We have a waiting list !!! We will take new mobs for rehoming early in 2022.

New England Brumby Sanctuary (NEBS) Our older 'residents', the horses who live out their lives in peace and safety, are all in great condition due to the abundance of spring grass and plentiful rain. All STB horses are cared for regardless of their circumstances and horses that are aged on arrival, not suitable for rehoming, stay with us.

Bellingen Sanctuary: Recovery from the floods is now complete and the paddocks are green and lush, so much so that several of the Sponsored horses are on restricted diets, snorts of disgust are frequent!!!



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NEW MEMBER – WHITE ALPINE EQUINE

White Alpine Equine - We work with wild caught Brumbies and horses needing rehabilitation. We apply the 'Trust Technique', which is based on the theory that deepening the bond between people and animals can transform the lives of both. The technique uses mindfulness and focused presence techniques as a basis for resolving problems and enhancing communication.

Update from White Alpine Equine FB page [@WhiteAlpineEquine](https://www.facebook.com/WhiteAlpineEquine)

“I love the difference a couple of days of ‘consistent persistence’ can achieve with brumbies 😊 Sharga is one of 3, I am prepping for gelding. He has had a shocking start, thanks to humans, and very little faith that he will be treated well.

We have big conversations in the mornings on his feeding habits - rude and pushy - where I’m not his favourite person as I won’t feed him till he points his bum away and won’t let him eat from his bucket until he gives me respectful space.

Then in the evenings I do ‘hang out’ time. He is getting softer day by day and today came up and put his head over my shoulder while I was in his yard looking at the cows....and promptly fell asleep bless him ❤️ “



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PROOF - WILD HORSES HAVE COMPLEX SOCIAL GROUPS

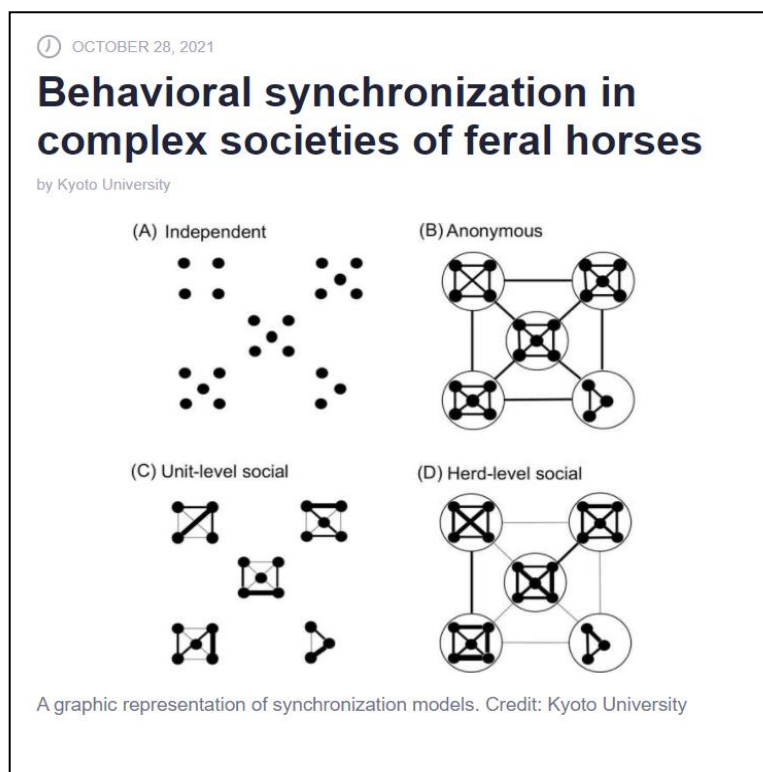
A scientific study published in October 2021 proves that wild horses form complex social groups, the following is an excerpt from the study, [Click here](#) to read the full study.

"Much like human societies, horses have a much more complex society than most birds or fish, for which there are many successful studies in making behavioral models," explains research leader Tamao Maeda.

In the social structure of feral horses, small stable unit groups aggregate into a larger social organization called a "herd." This is analogous to human families gathering to form a local community, which further combine to form higher social units from cities to countries.

The simulation and empirical data clearly support the last hypothesis, suggesting that the feral horses coordinate with other individuals not only within a unit group but also at an inter-unit-group level. Surprisingly, inter-individual interactions occur among spatially-separated horses as well."

[Click here](#) to read the full study.





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NEW YEAR : NEW LOVE



Photo credit: Michelle Brown

Snowy Brumby Photography Adventures with Michelle and Ian Brown - "Last year (xmas day 2020) we sat with him. He was a bachelor looking for love and 12 months later he has a beautiful mob and little filly."



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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 (QLD)
- ❖ Victorian Brumby Association (VIC)
- ❖ Heritage Brumby Advocates Australia inc. (VIC)
- ❖ HOOFS2010! (NSW)
- ❖ BlueWater Brumbies (QLD)
- ❖ White Alpine Equine (NSW)

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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All donations over \$2 are tax deductible

END NEWSLETTER