



national science week 2011

Greg Irons, Bonorong Wildlife Sanctuary *Native creatures great and small!*



Greg is not your typical scientist! He was lucky enough to know exactly what he wanted to do from a young age, and that was to work towards saving Tasmanian wildlife and eventually own Bonorong Wildlife Sanctuary. Greg started out volunteering at Bonorong and learning as much as he could from helping others with jobs around the park. Having worked hard to achieve his goals, Greg became the director of Bonorong Wildlife Sanctuary at just 25 years of age!

At Bonorong, Greg works with a team to care for a whole range of native Tasmanian animals. Many of the animals have been bought to the sanctuary after being injured or orphaned; and after some care and rest most of these animals are then released back into the wild. Seeing animals returning to their natural home is a particularly rewarding aspect of the job.

One of Greg's biggest projects has been founding of the FOC Wildlife Program; Tasmania's first 24-hour wildlife rescue service. Standing for Friends of Carers, Friends of Critters and Free of Charge, FOC is a community run volunteer initiative. Since its commencement in April 2010 the FOC has trained more than 300 community volunteers on how to rescue, transport and care for injured and orphaned wildlife. Using an electronic database, Greg can contact these volunteers directly and the injured or orphaned animal can be rescued and transported safely and efficiently to where it needs to go. The FOC program has taken over 1500 wildlife calls in its first 15 months of operation.

Greg's motto is 'prevention rather than cure' and he believes that education is the key to this. He is passionate about grass roots education to bring about social, cultural and environmental change. Greg is an important contributor to community awareness about the plight of Tasmanian devils by providing detailed information about Devil Facial Tumour Disease (DFTD) to visitors to the Sanctuary and on local school visits. One of a range of wildlife parks around Tasmania, facilities like Bonorong housing Tasmanian devils make it possible for the public to see and appreciate the value of Tasmanian devils to our environment. Greg also networks with other organisations such as the Save the Tasmanian Devil Program, the RSCPA and the Parks and Wildlife Service.





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This year Greg was awarded the 2011 Southern Cross Tasmanian Young Achiever Award in the environment category. His future plans are to set up a wildlife education centre, mobile wildlife education unit and a wildlife veterinary clinic.

Greg enjoys spending his spare hours with friends and family, and is a true sports fanatic, always following the AFL football!

To find out more about Bonorong Wildlife Sanctuary visit www.bonorong.com.au
www.youngtassiescientists.com