

Tuesday, 1 June 2021

**The Independent Expert Advisory Panel
Appointed by Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change**

Dear Panel Chairperson and Members

Re: Submission – The Independent Review of Victoria’s Wildlife Act 1975

Following careful deliberations, I provide this submission to you on the reform of the Wildlife Act of Victoria in my personal capacity. Thank you for your consideration.

1. Introduction

The protection, conservation, sustainable management and use of wildlife demands an imposed regulatory solution. A regulatory regime cannot be agreed through consensus because many of the issues to be resolved stem from entirely opposed and deeply believed personal truths about the proper management of living creatures. There is also a nationalistic dimension related to the native heritage of wildlife with attribution of special protection to native wildlife even though it may threaten the ecology in which it occurs.

Advances in ecological sciences and their application to the Australian environment can provide a strong, measurable, and manageable framework for objectively managing the environment. Managing the environment from an ecological perspective can inform the Wildlife protection process transparently by providing measurable and objective criteria for ecosystem management.

Indeed, an ecological approach to environmental protection necessarily requires wildlife management which may involve changing the number and mix of wildlife. Population imbalances, protection of ecosystems, responsible land practices all require intervention as part of an active management system.

However, it must be acknowledged that increasingly there are pressures to treat all animals as if they were human, and to treat each individual animal and its circumstances as if it existed in isolation – without impact or reliance on an any ecosystem – in a human like world.

It is much easier to generate income on social media (hits) by hosting videos of cute and usually defenceless animals, than it is to generate hits with a video showing an intact

ecosystem and describing the rich variability of the species which live within. From the promotion of pet foods displaying animals with human like qualities to the vast array of testimonials about wild beast turned '*pet*' the attribution of human like characteristics to individual animals has become big business and likely contributed to the disconnection between the ecological reality of the Australian environment and the genius of entirely concocted characters such as Skippy the Bush Kangaroo and Bambi.

Even the words used by '*professionals*' in public disputes relating to wildlife to describe animal activities such as procreation are often chosen to invoke human values, behavioural norms and even accountability. An example being the use of the word *rape* to describe procreation between a dominant male kangaroo and a female kangaroo by a '*professional*' involved in a matter I appeared last month. The wilful blurring of the distinction between human motivation and behaviours and those of animals is unhelpful. It is entirely appropriate to consider the interconnectedness of all living things in an ecological sense – but a dangerous error to attribute human moral accountability and ethics to animals and their behaviour. Kangaroos become rapists, Tasmanian Tigers, Dingers and Goannas murderers for the prey they eat.

The science of ecology, the importance of biodiversity, the protection and sustainable management of our environment all demand a steady regulatory hand to ensure Victoria achieves sustainable ecological management of its wildlife and their environment coupled with secure food production and safe lawful use of the environment for ourselves and all other living things.

From a scientific perspective an ecosystem wide framework for wildlife control has great merit, yet on a personal level, ethical, religious, and moral drivers, promote extreme and often mutually exclusive proposals and behaviours that are contrary to an ecological approach being adopted. The current system of wildlife controls major weakness is its lack of transparency and a linkage to an ecological outcome. On this basis I advocate a regulatory arrangement for the protection of ecological systems through the management of wildlife (native or otherwise).

2. Summary of Submission

I urge and propose that:

- I. Ecological protection of our environments inform wildlife protection and control.
- II. A set of prioritised ecological management objectives be articulated to direct the sustainable management and use wildlife.
- III. Harvesting, culling, and killing, each have a logical place in the range of measures that are made available for protecting and advancing our ecology in urban, rural, and native bushland contexts.
- IV. Hunting wildlife be recognised as a legitimate use of wildlife so long as it sustainable and not cruel.
- V. Human mental wellbeing be included as a factor to be considered when using wildlife (as humans are often part of the ecosystem) and in particular, that the

human sense of purpose and the importance of compassion towards animals be acknowledged especially for those who choose to provide assistance to injured wildlife so long as such human endeavours do not cause cruelty to the animals protected.

- VI. A formalisation of what is considered cruelty be formulated. A better definition of cruelty is required than currently exists that applies where animals are kept alive or harboured, captured, or relocated contrary to the needs of the species despite bringing pleasure to the humans that perform the tasks.

3. A Scientific Approach

The sustainable management, conservation and protection of wildlife demands scientific rigor. It is only through ecological analysis (fact finding) that a range of competing wildlife uses can be responsibly managed and measured.

3.1. Language

It is essential that the sense of the English language that I use in this submission be understood because this subject inevitably generates language that is not usually understood by all – indeed the language itself becomes a symbol and is often used as evidence of conflict. I will deal with each of the key words I use and the sense that I use them in sequence. I am guided by the definitions in the shorter Oxford English Dictionary.

When I use the word '*harvest*' I am using it in the sense described as follows:

- *Harvest: The product of any action or effort, to gather or lay up in store*

This sense of the word '*harvest*' requires a positive decision, an action to be taken, a product to be produced which is gathered and stored. When used in the context of wildlife it can be distinguished from actions which do not result in a product. Using the term '*harvest*' in the context of a decision to reduce the numbers of a species in an ecosystem does not necessarily mean that they are killed, but it does mean they are gathered as a product for another purpose. Examples of harvesting wildlife would include the collection of deer, pigs, kangaroos, etc., for relocation to environments in need of more animals (e.g., farms) and would also include killing them and transporting them to an abattoir for meat. In all cases the term harvest is used to describe a lawful process based upon ecological principles to collect and use for another purpose selected animals. Killing animals and burying their bodies is not harvesting.

When I use the term '*ecology*' I use it in the following sense:

- *Ecology: the science of the economy of animals and plants: that branch of biology which deals with the relations of living organisms to their surroundings, their habits, and modes of life etc*

The use of the word '*ecology*' in this sense captures the scientific understanding of the interdependencies between animals and plants as living organisms, their relationship to each other and their surroundings including how they behave, live, and reproduce. In this sense I couple scientific analysis of the ecological characteristics of land to regulated wildlife

under the State legislation (from time to time). In this way the varying conditions of land, in so many states of alteration and land use can be linked to optimisation of the environment generally via management of wildlife through an informed, transparent, and measurable process. A decision to reduce the number of deer, horses, kangaroos, etc., being linked to the ecological management of the subject environment to optimise its lawful use. The ecology of a farm adjoining a national park would necessarily involve consideration of the interdependence of the two lawful uses of land and how wildlife would be best managed to achieve that optimised result. The term '*ecology*' does not favour any one species of animal or plant – it involves consideration of the ecological system in its entirety.

When I use the term '*cull*' I do so in the following sense:

- *Cull: to subject to the process of selection*

The use of the word '*cull*' in this sense involves choice about which of a selected animal species is selected. The animal may be selected for a range of purposes including capture, tagging, relocation, or killing. To '*cull*' requires choice and a purpose. Killing only male deer or male kangaroos as part of a considered management plan is an example of culling.

When I use the term '*kill*' I do so in the following sense:

- *Kill: to put to death, to deprive of life*

The use of the word '*kill*' in this sense means that the primary purpose of a positive act is to deprive an animal of life. Killing does not infer any selection or criteria for being killed, nor does it infer a purpose for that which is killed. Killing is simply an end state for something which was previously process of culling and harvesting may or may not involve intentional or unintentional killing.

When I use the term '*cruelty*' I do so in the following sense:

- *Cruelty: disposition to inflict suffering*

The *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986*, Part 2 Section 9 defines Cruelty. In this submission I am urging a more extensive definition of cruelty that includes the special needs of wildlife in an ecological sense – more than and to be distinguished from physically harming an animal. I am also suggesting that acts of culling, harvesting and killing not be deemed cruel just because they result in the death of wildlife.

The use of the word '*cruelty*' in this context is used to describe the effect of an act (or omission) that causes suffering of wildlife. The cruelty is not in the intention of the person taking the act (or omission) but in the impact of such conduct has upon the wildlife. For example, keeping a wild animal that has suffered an injury after a car accident in a small cage might be considered cruel if that animal is not accustomed or well adjusted to being held in such a cage.

I am also using the word '*cruel*' to describe an impact on the wildlife in an area. It is cruel to release dominant male kangaroos into an area with an existing and well established

hierarchy of kangaroos that are existing in balance in that environment. This is because it is inevitable the released kangaroos and the existing kangaroos will fight (probably to death).

Example 1: Lawfully killing the mother of a kangaroo without taking appropriate account of its dependent young could be cruel to the dependent young. Relocating male kangaroos into an existing social structure may be cruel to the kangaroos, however relocating kangaroos to an area devastated by fire might not be cruel if there is no existing kangaroo hierarchy and there is a method for kangaroo relocation which is not cruel in its own right.

Example 2: Giving an animal a lethal injection may be cruel compared with a single fatal gunshot wound to the head. Failing to shoot a fatally injured animal may in some circumstances also be cruel.

There is no place for the emotion of people involved in the culling, harvesting, and killing, of animals in the definition of cruelty. The test is the impact on the animals the subject of the activity, not whether the person who is performing the act is experiencing any particular emotion. For the purposes of the *Wildlife Act* of Victoria, it is whether the action on the animal is cruel, not the intent of the actor.

3.2. The Ecological Test e.g., Bats, deer, pigs, cats, dogs, wombats, camels, donkeys, pigeons, kangaroos, etc (all species) as Vermin

Using an ecological test to establish what is required to responsibly protect, conserve, and sustainably manage ecologically our environment will necessarily identify a range of animals that adversely impact the environments we seek to protect. Prudent management requires unequivocal authority to deal with vermin. Any animal should be capable of characterisation as vermin if the environment we are seeking to sustainably protect is threatened by them.

There should be a mechanism that allows animals in certain areas to be declared vermin independently of whether they are indigenous to Australia or not. Such a mechanism should provide certainty about their removal and a mechanism for measuring the process. It is not helpful to artificially distinguish vermin based on whether they are indigenous or not. The test must be ecological and the multiple objectives of protection, conservation, and sustainable management of our ecosystems the objective.

3.3. Use and Control Methods

3.3.1. Hunting

Hunting is a legitimate use of wildlife so long as it is demonstrated to form part of a management strategy that results in the protection, conservation and sustainable management of the animals that are hunted and the ecosystem of which they form part.

Hunting, that harvests, is preferable to hunting and burying the corpse of dead animals. In most traditional cultures the use of a hunted animal is central to the acceptance that it be killed. This should be a core *objective* when wildlife is killed – that it be used and not just

discarded. It should be acknowledged that in some circumstances ecological protection will require killing with no harvesting. This is appropriate where ecological protection is achieved and harvesting options are unrealistic. The current push to ban wildlife meats for pets and the domestic use of pelts could result in less harvesting despite the need for culling. Using hunted wildlife is the longstanding tradition of all ancient cultures and should be a measure of a modern culture too.

3.3.2. Caring for Wildlife

Caring for wildlife (e.g., wildlife shelters) is a legitimate use of wildlife so long as it is demonstrated to form part of a management strategy that results in the protection, conservation and sustainable management of the animals that are cared for and the ecosystem of which they form part.

3.3.3. Farming of Wildlife

Farming of wildlife is a legitimate use of wildlife so long as it is demonstrated to form part of a management strategy that results in the protection, conservation and sustainable management of the animals that are farmed and the ecosystem of which they form part.

Culling is a legitimate control measures for of wildlife so long as it is demonstrated to form part of a management strategy that results in the protection, conservation and sustainable management of the animals that are culled and the ecosystem of which they form part.

3.3.4. Farming with Wildlife

Farming is a lawful activity and farmers should be empowered to optimise their production. Wildlife numbers are often artificially increased by eating food generated by farmers. Raised wildlife numbers can threaten adjoining ecosystems by causing imbalance due to artificially increased numbers of specific species. An ecological approach to wildlife management that allows numbers of wildlife to be managed on farming land to an appropriate ecological level (not zero) is appropriate, transparent, and protects agricultural production and the ecology of adjoining bushland.

3.4. Health Risk

There are a range of known and unknown health risks to humans from animals including indigenous wildlife. As Australia's nonindigenous population increases so too does the exposure of the non-indigenous population to local health risks. The increased incidence of Q-Fever in golf course workers who are involved in curating the golf courses is an example of a health risk from kangaroo faeces which was until recently unknown. Anecdotal evidence suggests that indigenous Australians are not as susceptible to Q-Fever as non-indigenous Australians. Abattoir workers processing kangaroos, and those responsible for cutting grass on golf greens, have been found particularly vulnerable.

It is reasonable to consider the risk to non-indigenous human health as a factor to be considered in changing access to indigenous wildlife for non-indigenous Australians. This may warrant a mechanism within any new administrative framework.

4. Discussion

4.1. Scope of Protection

The scope of what is protected under the current legislation is substantially driven by the definition of *'wildlife'*.

Firstly, the scope is primarily limited to indigenous vertebrate – yet deer, quail, pheasants are included. This intriguing definition highlights a major limitation of the existing legislation. In my view, the definition of *'wildlife'* should be broadened within the context of *'protection, conservation, sustainable management and use'* including all animals so that in practice endangered ecosystems can also be protected.

In my submission the new regulatory regime should specifically anticipate protection for ecosystems.

4.2. Use

The use of animals is a proper subject for regulation. The spectrum of uses often drives conflict between people with different values.

In Finland, each citizen is entitled to hunt and kill native animals. When hunting the Finnish adopt a highly developed sense of fairness and respect for the animals they are killing. A moose will be shot humanely, its pelt used for clothing and furniture and its meats prized. In Japan I have observed an animal will be killed in a highly ritualised way that accords with their honourable society practices. In Australia I have observed a mixed culture of *'killing'* for the sake of killing but more commonly *'killing'* as part of land management coupled with food production and/or habitat protection.

This leads me to the view that it is legitimate to *'use'* wildlife for a range of seemingly inconsistent purposes so long as the overarching ecological objectives of protection, conservation and sustainable use are achieved.

It is legitimate that injured wildlife be *'used'* by people who gain great personal satisfaction from nurturing sick animals so long as the *'nurturing'* is not cruel, and it does not detract from achieving the objective of protection, conservation, and sustainable management of ecosystems.

It is a legitimate *'use'* of wildlife that it be culled or harvested if it can be scientifically demonstrated that the numbers of that species are more than what the land (in the context of other lawful uses) can sustainably carry. A farmer's lawful right to produce food should be recognised as part of the overall context of sustainable management, conservation, and ecological protection of wildlife.

It is a legitimate *'use'* of wildlife that it be culled or harvested if it can be scientifically demonstrated that the numbers of the species are a threat to the overall ecology of an area.

Our ecosystems are severely disturbed, and it is incumbent upon us to manage them for the benefit of the entire system and not just one specie or group of species. The absence of apex predators in many ecosystems following their extinction or substantial decline in numbers (e.g., dingoes) means that culling and harvesting has a place in sustainable management and conservation of our various environments.

4.3. Priorities

Victoria's environment is highly disturbed. In this disturbed context it is to be expected that ecosystem protection will require intervention including removing wildlife that is threatening the ecology of an area. Such wildlife may be native or introduced.

In farming areas lawful production may artificially increase wildlife numbers threatening farm production and the ecology of surrounding bushland. Farming production should be protected as it is a lawful and essential land use for our species.

In bushland areas the ecology may be threatened by introduced species or native species and the ecology must be protected for the good of the ecosystem in its entirety.

In urban areas predators such as cats, foxes, Indian Minors (birds) and dogs may threaten remnant native species. And native species themselves may breed to large numbers due to ecological imbalances.

In all cases the priority for wildlife control should be ensuring populations are managed to protect and enhance the local ecology.

In my view the following options should be considered when determining the most appropriate management action to be taken:

- a. Birth control (stopping a wildlife number increase occurring)
- b. Relocation (segregation of the wildlife from the environment under threat (e.g., a fence, or physical distancing)
- c. Harvesting or culling (to reduce numbers)
- d. Killing (with no use of killed animals)

(Hunting can form part of measures b, c and d.)

In determining which action to take a range of factors should be considered including:

- a. The urgency of the intervention (to protect the ecology)
- b. The cost of the proposed action
- c. The scale of the proposed action
- d. The ecological value of the land use or habitat to be protected

Where wildlife is farmed or managed to allow sustainable hunting the same principles can be used to determine when, over what area and what limitations are placed on the hunting activity.

4.4. The Reality of Cruelty

The concept of cruelty is deeply felt but poorly shared. Putting down (killing) a terminally ill animal by a single gunshot to the head is mostly considered humane by people familiar with the proper use of firearms and yet at the same time considered entirely barbaric, cruel, and unacceptable by those unfamiliar with the sight of blood.

Those unfamiliar with the sight of blood often prefer '*putting an animal to sleep*' via lethal injection. Yet, those familiar with lethal injection consider it often cruel because they have watched as animals suffocate in a comparatively slow lethal injection induced death.

In both instances neither party wants to be cruel – each is convinced the other is cruel - and ultimately an animal dies.

In my view, an objective test for cruelty needs to be developed in an Australian cultural context and it needs to form part of the machinery which delivers protection, conservation, sustainable management and use of wildlife.

A prohibition on cruelty to animals which places acts that cause death into a context which includes protection, conservation, sustainable management, and legitimate use of animals is required. Management of vermin (e.g., plague mice, kangaroos, deer, cockatoos, or any other animal), where it is demonstrated that their numbers exceed the sustainable carrying capacity of the land in the context of the lands lawful use (e.g., a national park, a reserve, or a farm) should not on its face be considered cruel. However, if a method of management is delivered without regard to the animals' pathway to death or ineffectively prolonging the pathway to death, that could be an element of cruelty.

Furthermore, in considering whether the act is cruel the utility of the dead animal should also be considered. For example, if the use of a poison prohibits using the animal for food an alternative method such as shooting with clean head shots should be preferred and deemed not cruel.

It is not surprising that no simple definition of '*cruelty*' exists. Our species is yet to resolve at what point medicine for our own illnesses is cruel because it prolongs life for no reason, other than life itself despite the pain of the patient. Given animals are increasingly considered by some to be entitled to treatment as if they were human and our confusion of what constitutes cruelty for our own species, conflict is inevitable.

4.5. Wildlife as Pets

The market for wildlife as pets is enormous. In the Middle East I observed many Australian vertebrates routinely for illegal sale in animal markets (2012 to 2018). In particular, birds, possums, kangaroos, emu, lizards, snakes, and turtles were especially popular and expensive. Relaxing the domestic keeping of native animals as pets will likely make the route to lucrative overseas markets more simple. Exit checks from Australia are far less strenuous than when entering the country. Inadvertently increasing access to foreign markets for our wildlife by normalising native animals as pets should be avoided.

No matter how cute native animals, my experience suggests that they more readily degrade in behaviour and become more dangerous to humans than domestic animals. I have raised many domestic and native animals. In my experience native Australian animals are less predictable around humans than animals such as dogs, cats, donkeys – which are far more reliable. I accept that this is a generalisation, but it is my experience. I also acknowledge that this is often not a popular view.

If the reader is in any doubt about the potential hazard of human reared native animals', they are invited to interrogate 'carers' about troublesome individuals who bond well to individuals but routinely threaten strangers. While it may be an unpopular view, and speaking as a person who identifies as indigenous, it is entirely inappropriate to burden our native wildlife with the manners and social etiquette expected of an introduced dog or cat. There is no history of widespread domestication of native wildlife, and it is for good reason, after 60,000 years if they were suited to such use, it would have been traditional practice. This can be contrasted with the European experience over the same 60,000 years where dogs and cats seem to fit right in with human domestication.

4.6. Farming Native Animals

So long as the protection, conservation and sustainable management of a native animal is not jeopardised by farming it, I see no distinction between so farming or farming other non-native animals.

Native animals have well adapted to our environment and in the absence of apex predators often do extremely well. I see no reason farming and harvesting native animals should not form part of Victoria's farming capability. There are only two caveats to this. Firstly, the animals should be farmed responsibly and not be subjected to cruelty.

Secondly, where the animals occur naturally on the farmland their numbers should not be reduced below the level determined to be sustainable for the legal land use conducted there. That is, in the case of say grey kangaroos, a minimum number of kangaroos should be maintained as a 'base' sustainability number in order to mitigate against the risk of large scale disasters, such as bushfires and floods, on regionally significant native animal populations. In determining what that number is the farmers' lawful use of the land must be considered.

4.7. Movement of Wildlife

The Australian environment is extremely disturbed. In Victoria, some classes of environment have almost entirely disappeared. For example, the once extensive grasslands are all but gone.

In their place is a highly altered environment which has not established a new ecological equilibrium. A common example of the imbalance this causes can be found around golf clubs that abut or are connected to forests. The result is almost always very large populations of kangaroos feeding on the golf courses and then travelling into the forests.

Ecologically this creates a significant threat to the adjoining forests because of the artificially high numbers of kangaroos being generated by the golf courses.

This scenario is why an ecological assessment is required to determine the most appropriate approach to sustainably manage, conserve, and protect not just the kangaroos but the entire ecosystem they impact. Having regard scientifically to the ecological basis for managing indigenous wildlife must therefore have regard to multiple species simultaneously and not just a single species (such as kangaroos).

4.8. Need for Special Wildlife Police

Establishing an ecological basis for the protection, conservation, sustainable management, and lawful use of wildlife means that certain acts will be permitted, and others will be restricted. There will therefore be a need for enforcement.

Insofar as criminal offences are created for cruelty to animals there should be no distinction between indigenous animals and imported animals. The act of cruelty is to another living animal, not to an animal of particular heritage.

For these reasons I do not see a special need for Wildlife Police – I do see a need for regulatory intervention as part of the management of wildlife.

5. Conclusions

Wildlife Protection is best delivered via a regulatory approach that relies upon the sciences of ecology to drive bushland, farm, and urban wildlife management. No distinction should be drawn between native and non-native species in terms of population management – the objective being sustainable management of our residual and disturbed native ecosystems – not any one species of animal in isolation. It is the native environment protection which is to be prioritised – the threats may be from any species.

On this basis I propose that:

- I. Ecological assessment of lawful land use be at the heart of wildlife control.
- II. Wildlife to be controlled not be limited to native wildlife.
- III. A set of prioritised management objectives be articulated to help sustainably manage and use wildlife.
- IV. Harvesting, culling, and killing, each have a logical place in the range of measures that should be made available for protecting and advancing our ecology in urban, rural and native bushland contexts.
- V. A prioritised set of wildlife management options be developed that recognise the legitimate needs of land users and the primary importance of ecological sustainability of whatever practice is used.
- VI. That hunting wildlife be recognised as a legitimate use of wildlife so long as it sustainable and not cruel.
- VII. Human mental wellbeing be included as a factor to be considered when using wildlife (as humans are often part of the ecosystem) and in particular, that the

human sense of purpose and the importance of compassion towards animals be acknowledged especially for those who choose to provide assistance to injured wildlife so long as such human endeavours do not cause cruelty to the animals protected.

- VIII. A formalisation of what is considered cruelty for culling, harvesting, relocating, caring, and killing. In this context and more particularly the better definition of cruelty where animals are kept alive or harboured cruelly or contrary to the needs of the local ecology.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a horizontal line that curves upwards at the right end, followed by the letters 'ix'.

6. Schedule 1 – About the author

My perspectives are diverse because of my longstanding interest in the environment, legal and technical qualifications, international experience, and indigenous heritage.

As a lawyer I have been involved in wildlife '*disputes*' for decades – from defending wildlife carers from charges of using prescribed substances unlawfully, to seeking Orders to have animals destroyed and pursuing matters involving death threats to people from all spectrums of the wildlife '*rights*' groups. I was one of the founders of the Environment Defenders Office and am a member of the Victorian Bar.

As a scientist I have a keen interest in the universe and all living things. I am an acknowledged technical reviewer of, '*The Earth as a Cradle for Life – the origin, evolution and future of the environment*'¹ and I am also active and publish in human health protection², as well as being a Visiting Professor of Engineering at Tokyo City University.

As a farmer for almost 30 years, I have held a Wildlife Licence since 1992, which in the most part has allowed me to keep and breed emus at a small scale. I am part of the Friends of the Helmeted Honey Eater Program and am currently involved in deer and fox eradication and bushland improvement on my farm as part of habitat reestablishment for the Helmeted Honey Eater³. In addition, I hold a shooters licence and the necessary chemical licences to bait feral animals.

In my professional capacity I have lived overseas for almost a decade during which time I became intimately familiar with how different cultures regulate their wildlife. In particular, in Finland, I have experienced how native animals such as deer and moose are hunted as part of their local culture; in the Middle East (Qatar and Saudi Arabia) experienced the ritualised use of camels, goats and sheep; and in Japan I have long standing experience of the live preparation for eating of indigenous animals.

As an Australian, I feel a deep connection with my country, I identify as indigenous, but I do not feel able to speak on behalf of any first nation people. However, I can say that different first nation groups treat the same indigenous animals differently – and that there is a sense of interconnectedness between all living and non-living things.

In the tens of thousands of years of co-habitation with Victorian wildlife recognition of the interdependence of all aspects evolved – and a central part of those traditions was respect for wildlife and functional (often ritualised) wildlife management practices. As best I can tell, keeping wildlife as pets is a phenomenon new to Australian Wildlife.

¹ The Earth as a Cradle for Life - The Origin, Evolution and Future of the Environment; ISBN: 978-981-4508-32-2 <https://doi.org/10.1142/8807> | July 2013

² Air Cleaning Technologies for Tunnels - Honesty is the Best Policy for Protecting Human Health, International Journal of Civil Engineering and Technology (IJCIET), Volume 11, Issue 01, (January 2020)

³ <https://www.helmetedhoneyeater.org.au>