



WILDLIFE TOURISM NEWS NOVEMBER 2011

In this issue:

- AGM 29th November
- Online bookings from WTA website
- National Wildlife Tourism Workshop
- Insurance for guides, tour operators and farmers
- Help for disabled tourists

AGM 29 November

We'd like as many of our members as possible to be 'present' in one way or another, physically, by skype or by proxy - the more we get to know you, the better we can, as a committee, represent you

Time: 3.00pm EST, Monday 29th November 2011

Venue: The beautiful [Cougol Park](#) 145 Lions Road, Cougal NSW - a really delightful Bed-and-Breakfast run by WTA members Elizabeth and Hugh Starkey. A chance to see this large and very scenic forested property in the mountains on the border of Queensland and NSW, with a wonderful birdlife and a lot of conservation restoration work happening. It will also be a chance to meet our vice-chair Denise Goodfellow who is flying down from Darwin to join us, and to tell us what directions you would like WTA to take in the future. If you're also interested in seeing the proposed CSG pipeline route through World Heritage forest, this is close by!



Skype: If you'd like to join us by skype, [please let us know your skype name](#) well in advance

Proxy: If you cannot attend either in person or by skype, [please respond here as a proxy](#)

Also please let us know if there is anything you would like us to add to the agenda for the AGM

Are you a member?

If you have forgotten your subscription this year, please re-join before voting

Elections

We have had no new nominations for the committee this year (there is still room for more if you would like to nominate very soon)

Please see the info on our current committee, most of whom are standing again (Ray Andrews and Barry Davies have unfortunately had to stand down this time)

Standing for office are:

chair - Ronda Green

vice chair - Denise Goodfellow

treasurer - Len Doherty

secretary - Kate Rodger

non-exec position - Amanda Porter (Amanda is also our Public Officer)

Book Now Button

WTA has now installed a facility by which you can - if you already have an online booking facility - include a book-now button on your WTA website page.

WTA then receives 5% commission for any bookings made in this way

[Please let us know](#) if you would like this facility on your WTA page

WTA's 3rd National Wildlife Tourism Workshop 2011

There is now [further detail on the website](#) and more of course will be progressively added. The [Call for Papers is now open](#). You can download either a pdf or MS Word form here.

Visits our [themes](#) page to join a discussion even now on some of the topics, whether or not you'll be attending the Workshop

Even **if you can't submit an abstract** just now, we would very much like to get an idea ASAP of how many papers will be submitted, and on what topics, to help with our draft program and planning various logistics

We have been trying to keep costs low, for an exciting but no-frills workshop, and hope to very soon be able to let you know final registration costs. At the moment we are estimating \$550 per person for the three days for non-members, \$450 for members (including all presentations and lunches for the three days plus welcoming reception on the Tuesday evening), and for students about 2/3 of the full registration. This is already great value, but **if we have sufficient numbers likely to attend we can reduce this further.**

Thus **if you are interested in attending**, please contact us and let us know:

1. if you would like to submit a paper (and a possible title)
2. if you would like to lead a discussion group (and what topic - either an existing one or one of your own choosing)
3. if you would like to attend but not submit a paper
4. what kind of accommodation you would prefer at the workshop (5-star, budget or mid-range with frequent buses conveniently stopping at the workshop venue and taking you to the accommodation, or sharing a 2- or 3- bedroom unit within 5 minutes' walk of the venue, approx. \$50 per person)
5. if you would be interested in a low-cost trade display
6. if you are in the ne-NSW or se-Qld region, would you like to offer a pre- or post-workshop tour or accommodation special? (we have deliberately made it a Wed-Friday so delegates can choose to stay on for the weekend if they wish, although some may also wish to do something special on the Mon.Tuesday just prior to it)

Despite keeping costs low, we will also be celebrating **WTA's 10th Anniversary** - more later

Disabled Wildlife Tourists

This is from a letter from Araucaria Ecotours to QTIC about a week ago:

"Last week we had a lady come with us for two birdwatching day-tours, despite having her arm in a sling and being very badly bruised in many places from a fall from a bicycle. She had been on tours with us before, and obviously liked what we do, so she braved a trip on a train from Lismore to Brisbane to ensure that she could do the tours.

She was in considerable pain, and we called at the pharmacy for her to buy pain-killers, after which she felt considerably better. I had to tie her shoe-laces and open doors and windows, as this was too painful for her.

She was worried about how she could get her bags from the taxi or bus to the checkin at the airport the following morning, to fly home to Adelaide. I was confident someone would be able to help her, but she had already phoned the airline and was told they couldn't help her, then phoned taxi and bus companies who told her they weren't allowed to leave their vehicles. The airline told her she should fly with a companion - fair enough if she had been injured before leaving home, but the accident had happened while traveling.

I phoned Tourism Qld and they also thought someone would surely be able to help, and advised me to ring the Brisbane Airport Corporation. The person I spoke to there seemed sure the airline staff would help and was surprised when I said they had told her they couldn't. They said surely the driver could help her to the door, within sight of the vehicle, and the airline staff, who may not be allowed to leave the building, could help her from there.

We would have helped her ourselves but had another birding tour to lead that morning, picking guests up from the other side of town (and well out of town)

I received an email from her today. The airline staff refused to help at the airport. The following is an excerpt from the email - no capitals, because she can only type with one finger at present:

- *i asked for help from jetstar at airport and they refused. by the time i got luggage on board, i could feel perspiration on my face due to pain. a flight attendant halted me, said my face looked pained, and debated whether to let me fly. said i would not be in pain if they had helped with my luggage..... also told that jetstar cannot afford to help the disabled and that i should have flown with dearer qantas which also would not help me.*

When she returned home to her own doctor it was found she had fractures in her shoulder and hand that weren't detected by the doctors in northern NSW, exacerbated by lack of treatment and general help, and she will have to undergo weeks of intensive physiotherapy

When I was injured and had to fly back from Paris via Singapore, I was met at the plane by a smiling Singaporean who took me in a wheelchair to get something to eat, drink and read, and returned to help me onto the plane. I would expect Australian airline staff to be equally as helpful. What kind of impression of Australia would overseas visitors have if treated like this?"

Is this typical at Australian airports?
What about other countries?

We'll be discussing this and related issues on the WTA website under '[Wildlife experiences for different kinds of tourists](#)' - please join in any time.

If anyone is heading to the Global Eco Conference in Sydney this week, I'll be there Tuesday and Wednesday (presenting a talk on Wednesday on going green without breaking the budget) and it could be a good opportunity for a chat!