



Animal Defenders
Office

Using the law to protect animals

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June

ADO Newsletter

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Speaking up for Kangaroos!



After a COVID-19 mandated break in 2020, Team ADO was back in full flight at this year's Canberra Times Marathon Festival. Read more over the page...

The ACT Labor-Greens Government has continued its controversial kangaroo killing program by authorising the shooting of 1,586 kangaroos in 6 local nature reserves across Canberra this winter. The ADO joins with other animal protection organisations to condemn the decision to continue killing these local native animals. In May 2021 ADO volunteers joined other animal advocates from around the country in a rally outside

the ACT Legislative Assembly to demand a moratorium on the 'cull'. Rally attendees were reminded that kangaroos are animals who are recognised in ACT law as 'able to objectively feel and perceive the world around them' and as having 'intrinsic value' and deserving 'to be treated with compassion' (s4A(1) *Animal Welfare Act 1992* (ACT)). The ADO commends all who continue to speak up for kangaroos and all native wildlife.

More action for kangaroos

ADO meets with ACT Greens' spokesperson for animal welfare

In May ADO volunteer lawyers joined representatives from other animal protection organisations to meet with Jo Clay MLA - newly elected Member of the ACT Legislative Assembly and ACT Greens' spokesperson for animal welfare, to discuss the significant animal welfare concerns inherent in the ACT Government's annual kangaroo cull. We had hopes that the recent election of 6 ACT Greens members to the ACT Legislative Assembly would herald the end of the annual shooting of kangaroos on public land in Canberra. Sadly those hopes were dashed when the ACT Labor-Greens Government announced that 1,586 kangaroos would be shot in Canberra nature reserves between May-July 2021.

ADO lawyers give evidence at NSW kangaroo inquiry

In early June ADO lawyers caught the train from Canberra to Sydney to give evidence at the NSW Parliamentary inquiry hearing into the health and wellbeing of kangaroos in NSW. It was amazing to be part of a process dedicated entirely to establishing the facts about how these animals are treated. We were on a panel with advocates from the organisation Kangaroos Alive.



Team ADO at the 2021 Canberra Times Marathon Festival

After a COVID-19 mandated break in 2020, Team ADO was back in full force at this year's Canberra Times Marathon Festival! Starting in the early hours of the morning on 11 April 2021, the ADO team joined 1000s of others in getting around the various courses. From walking to running, we had all paces covered! It was great to get out and about with compassionate athletes, and we were particularly chuffed to welcome meat-free athletes Klara and Stevie Zecevic who came all the way from Sydney and completed the 5.4km and 50km ultra-marathon events respectively!



ADO in the media



ETHOS article on animal rights street activism

Is footage of animal slaughterhouse practices too offensive to be shown in public? This was the question before a Queensland Court in a case involving an animal activist. Police had charged the activist with the offence of 'public nuisance' because he was displaying in public footage of standard slaughter practices in Australian abattoirs. The activist had been engaging in a common form of animal rights protest called a 'cube of truth' in a public square in Cairns when he was arrested by police. The Court ultimately held that showing such footage was offensive conduct, and found the activist guilty. The ADO assisted the activist during the case. The ACT Law Society's journal ETHOS has published an ADO article looking at the implications of this case for animal rights protests and the freedom of political communication in general. You can read the article here: <https://tinyurl.com/4kfnhdc3>

ADO joins national Kangaroo panel

In April ADO Principal Lawyer Tara Ward joined leading kangaroo protection experts during a live online panel discussion exposing the ACT Government's annual killing of kangaroos on public land. The webinar was hosted by Kangaroos Alive and watched by a global audience. Tara spoke about how ACT laws have been changed to facilitate the killing, including declaring the native species of Eastern Grey Kangaroos to be a 'controlled native species' (or pest). You can view the webinar by visiting <https://tinyurl.com/4n8zzzrn>



ETHOS. Law Society of the ACT Journal. Issue 259. Autumn 2021.



ADO speaks up for death-row dogs

Early in the year the ADO spoke up for impounded dogs on death row. ACT laws give significant power to pound registrars to decide to put dogs down without giving them (and their keepers) a second chance. Our Executive Director spoke about the need for law reform in this area in an article in Canberra Times weekend edition and to Canberra local radio stations.

ADO in Court



Trial of the Lakesland Hen Rescuers

The quest to improve the law for animals continues! In March 2021 ADO lawyers filed a summons seeking leave to appeal in the Court of Appeal of NSW on behalf of one of the rescuers in the Lakesland Hens case. The appeal focuses on the legal issue of whether the criminal defence of necessity can be used in the context of rescuing animals, whom the law regards as property. The case involves the 'citizen rescue' of thousands of starving layer hens left for dead by a farmer and law enforcement authorities in NSW. Several of the citizen rescuers were arrested and later convicted of trespass in the Local Court. In our appeal to the Court of Appeal we will argue that the rescuers should be acquitted because it was **necessary** to commit trespass in order to rescue the hens and stop their suffering.

Postscript. All 4,000+ hens were euthanased days after the attempted rescue.

Trial of the dog rescuer

In January this year, many months of behind-the-scenes work paid off when ADO volunteer lawyers represented a foster dog carer in Goulburn Court. One of this caring person's little foster dogs had escaped during the terrible bushfires of 2019-2020. Nearby sheep farmers eventually found and shot the dog, then together with the local police pursued the foster carer through the criminal justice system claiming the dog was responsible for all their sheep losses amounting to several thousand dollars. The ADO was generously assisted by NSW Bar Association barristers Anthony Strik and Jeremy Holt, whose negotiation resulted in the Court dismissing the charges!



ADO's animal law outreach

ANU O'WEEK - FEBRUARY

In February, we attended ANU's O'Week Market Day. We spoke to many new students and signed up lots of new members. It was great getting out in the community to raise awareness about animals and the law.



ANU LAW FAIR - MARCH

We attended the ANU Law Careers Fair and spoke to the next generation of lawyers about animal law and how they can use their skills and careers to help protect animals.



Meet our editor
HUGH

Hugh began volunteering with the ADO in 2021. Hugh has degrees in social sciences and communications, and is passionate about animal protection.