

## Jen Mattingley – Victorian Representative

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I have been a wildlife carer in West Gippsland Victoria for over thirty years. When I first started caring for wombats it was thought that mange couldn't be cured. Back then we tried bringing wombats with mange in to care but soon found they died from the stress of being contained, spending what little strength they had, pacing back and forth. We tried using 'Revolution' medication for dogs, but as a mange treatment program hadn't been developed and no one at the time really knew anything about curing mange we had no success.

In 2011, I attended the WPSA Wombat Conference in Albury where I learnt about the "burrow flap" method of treating mange in free living wombats. I thought this is something that was needed in Victoria. So, along with my husband and a small group of volunteers we set about developing Mange Management Inc. This wasn't an easy task. First, we had three years of meeting Victorian Wildlife Authorities regulations which required research and evidence that wombats could be treated without handling or interference. Records had to be presented annually to show our progress. We were also required to obtain Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicine Authority (APVMA) approval to use Cydectin the product recommended to treat wombats with mange. This was the first time any medication had been approved to treat wildlife.

Even at this early stage it was evident that a stronger (more appropriate) dose of Cydectin was required to obtain best results. As Mange Management's trials had not been done under veterinary supervision the APVMA were not prepared to approve a higher dose. The fact that adult wombats with mange are treated "in field" as they do not cope well in captivity, has made it difficult to conduct this type of trial.

The trial I have undertaken here is proof that wombats do recover quicker with a higher dose. This trial however has been undertaken on juvenile wombats in care and does not take into consideration the weather conditions of hot dry summers and cold wet winters. These harsh elements and the lack of nourishing food are added challenges wombats face in the wild and is evidence that a quicker recovery is needed.