

Lifeline for brumbies

Glenis Green

PROBLEM brumbies grazing the roadsides near Tin Can Bay on the Fraser Coast could be spared the bullet by a Sunshine Coast couple who have started trapping, taming and re-homing them.

Horse enthusiasts Terry Wilson and Anne Warmbrunn have established Queensland's first brumby protection association to promote the humane management of the horses which in the past have been controversially targeted by authorities for culling.

The couple have built yards at their Cootharaba small acreage north of Noosa and joined with Forestry Plantation Queensland to capture and relocate small herds of brumbies in high-risk areas of the Tuan and Toolara State Forests.

Mr Wilson is president of their newly formed South East Queensland Brumby Association Inc and Ms Warmbrunn is secretary.

Ms Warmbrunn, who now regularly rides a brumby rounded up in the Guy Fawkes National Park in northern NSW, said they simply wanted to save both the wild horses and motorists from the danger of collisions on the roads between Tin Can Bay, Rainbow Beach and Maryborough.

"Four separate accidents recently happened within seven days resulting in extensive vehicle damage and the death of the brumbies," she said.

Ms Warmbrunn said there were an estimated 600 wild horses living in separate herds in the forestry area.

Mr Wilson said the notoriously shy animals were captured at wing traps in a foot muster and then transported to their property where they were tamed to the halter, gelded if necessary and put up for sale.

They captured their first group in October and a second lot two weeks ago, which meant they now had two mares, three foals, two fillies, one colt and two stallions on the books.

Ms Warmbrunn said at 14 to 15.5 hands high the brumbies were eligible for registration with the Australian Brumby Horse Register and were renowned as intelligent, sure-footed, good "doers" and good natured - similar to the Australian stock horse.

The couple rely on donations and membership fees to feed and care for the horses.

They are hoping a vet will come on board to perform geldings.

Anyone who wants a brumby or is able to help can visit their website www.seqbrumby.com or call 5485 3369.



ROUND-UP: Terry Wilson with some of the brumbies saved from the Tin Can Bay area and herded in yards built at Cootharaba, north of Noosa. **Picture:** Megan Slade

Save koalas speed signs

REDLAND City Council will fit six electronic speed signs to roads where koalas cross.

Mayor Melva Hobson said yesterday the signs would tell motorists their speed in an effort to convince drivers to slow down.

In the past 10 years 1875 koalas have been killed on Redlands roads.

The signs will also collect data on the number and speed of vehicles to allow better analysis of driving trends.

Boy stung by jellyfish

A 12-YEAR-OLD boy was stung by an irukandji jellyfish while swimming at Dingo Beach, southeast of Bowen, in north Queensland yesterday.

The boy was taken to Proserpine Hospital but later released.

The incident came a week after a 29-year-old man dived face-first into one of the jellyfish from his yacht moored off South Molle Island in the Whitsundays.

Kristin Shorten