



WWW Volunteer Safety Policy

Wetlands Conservation Society (WCS) Walliabup Wildlife Warriors (WWW) Work Health & Safety (WHS) Policy for Volunteer Activities

1. Purpose

WCS and WWW are committed to providing a safe, inclusive and supportive environment for all volunteers participating in conservation, fieldwork, community events and advocacy activities. This policy outlines the responsibilities, expectations and safety procedures that apply to all WCS/WWW activities.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all volunteers engaged in WCS/WWW activities, including but not limited to:

- Turtle Trackers and wildlife monitoring
- Field surveys and data collection
- Tree planting, weeding and landcare activities
- Site visits and excursions
- Community events and education stalls
- Clean-up activities
- Meetings, workshops and training sessions
- Advocacy and public-facing engagements

WCS will provide insurance coverage for WCS members undertaking approved volunteer activities.

3. Responsibilities

Volunteer Responsibilities

All volunteers must:

- Take reasonable care for their own safety and the safety of others.
- Follow instructions, training and guidance provided by coordinators.
- Use personal protective equipment (PPE) as required.
- Carry out tasks in a safe and responsible manner.
- Report all hazards, incidents, injuries or near misses to a coordinator immediately.
- Notify coordinators of any medical conditions that may affect participation.
- Work within their physical limits and request assistance when needed.

WCS/WWW Responsibilities

WCS and WWW will:

- Provide a safe working environment for volunteers.
- Offer adequate training, induction and supervision for all activities.
- Provide appropriate PPE or advise volunteers on required equipment.
- Ensure risk assessments are completed for relevant activities.
- Maintain clear communication regarding safety expectations and procedures.
- Support volunteers following incidents, including referral to wellbeing services if needed.
- Provide insurance for WCS members undertaking approved activities.

4. Conduct, Respect & Inclusion

WCS/WWW uphold a zero-tolerance approach to:

- Bullying, harassment or discrimination
- Violence, aggression or unsafe behaviour
- Sexual harassment
- Intimidation or inappropriate conduct

5. Mandatory Safety Requirements

General Requirements

Volunteers must:

- Obey all safety signage and instructions at sites.
- Avoid entering restricted or unsafe areas.
- Not attend activities under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Wear appropriate clothing and footwear for outdoor work.
- Carry water and sun protection during field activities.

Working Outdoors

To reduce risks associated with heat, UV exposure and environmental hazards:

- Wear long sleeves, long pants, closed shoes and a hat.
- Apply SPF 30+ sunscreen every two hours.
- Take regular hydration breaks.
- Avoid peak UV periods where possible (10am–2pm).
- Seek shade when stationary or conducting briefings.
- Wear eye protection when carrying out fieldwork, landcare, weeding or activities involving vegetation.

6. Manual Handling & Physical Safety

Volunteers should:

- Avoid lifting heavy objects alone — use team lifting.
- Reduce bending, twisting and awkward movements.
- Use mechanical aids (trolleys, buckets, carts) where available.
- Be aware of uneven ground, slippery surfaces and lakebed hazards.
- Take breaks to prevent fatigue, especially during long shifts.

7. Wildlife Safety

Volunteers must:

- Use caution around snakes, bees, wasps and territorial birds.
- Report sightings of injured wildlife to coordinators.
- Take injured wildlife to the nearest wildlife hospital.
- Call the Wildcare helpline on 9474 9055 if they need further help.

8. Emergency & Incident Procedures

In an emergency:

- Ensure your own safety first.
- Assist others only if safe to do so.
- Call **000** for life-threatening emergencies.
- Notify the coordinator immediately.
- Follow instructions from emergency services or site wardens.
- Move to the designated assembly point if evacuation is required.

Incident Reporting

All incidents, injuries, hazards or near misses must be reported to the coordinator as soon as possible. Coordinators will document the incident and escalate if required.

9. Equipment & PPE

Volunteers may be required to use:

- Gloves
- High-visibility vests
- Sunscreen
- Snake Gaiters (WCS may provide)
- Mobile phone or radio for communication
- Carry First Aid Snake Bite Kit (WCS may provide)
- Eye protection for fieldwork and landcare activities

Any faulty or damaged equipment must be reported immediately.

10. Wellbeing & Support

Volunteers are encouraged to seek support if they experience distress, fatigue or emotional impacts from fieldwork (e.g., encountering deceased wildlife).

Support options include:

- WildTalk - 1300 945 382 [WildTalk – Providing assistance to all rescuers, carers, veterinary professionals and researchers through times of illness, injury, or crisis that has an impact on mental health](#)
- GP or mental health professional
- Lifeline (13 11 14)
- Beyond Blue (1300 22 4636)

In exceptional circumstances, WCS may facilitate access to additional support services.

11. Activity-Specific Risk Assessments

For higher-risk activities (e.g., night patrols, lakebed surveys), coordinators will provide:

- Site-specific risk assessments
- Safe Work Method Statements (SWMS)
- Briefings on hazards and mitigation strategies

Volunteers must follow all instructions provided.

12. Non-Compliance

Volunteers who do not adhere to safety requirements may be:

- Redirected to alternative duties
- Asked to leave the activity
- Suspended from future participation (in serious cases)

Safety is everyone's responsibility, and WCS/WWW are committed to ensuring all volunteers feel safe, supported and confident in their roles.

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