



Photo: Jackson Ring and Ozzie. Supplied

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Ozzie's big backyard

Q: When is an animal on an airport not a wildlife hazard?

A: When it's Ozzie, Brisbane Airport's latest member of the airside operations team.

Ozzie, a two-year old German shepherd, began his career with the Queensland Police Service. However, according to his handler, wildlife and planning coordinator in Brisbane's airside operations team, Jackson Ring, he wasn't aggressive enough for a life fighting crime. On the other hand, his love of balls and hatred of birds, along with his social temperament, make him perfect for a life dispersing birds.

Jackson is working with ex-army dog trainer, Tom Brown, now the principal of The Stoic Dog and Origin K9, to hone Ozzie's skills. *Plane Wild* spoke to them about the benefits of using dogs for bird dispersal, and the training required to ensure such dogs work safely and efficiently. 'The idea for the trial program,' Ring says, 'was the work overseas airports in the US, Canada and Europe, as well as South Africa, are doing

with working dogs.’ Brisbane wanted to measure the effectiveness of using a dog on airport, so began the trial in late 2019. ‘There are a lot of airports around Australia interested in seeing how the program goes,’ Ring says.



Photo: Ozzie and trainer, Tom Brown. Supplied

‘We had Brisbane’s new runway coming online, and we thought it would be a good way to cover the area with a single resource.’ He says ‘the new runway area adds another 360 hectares to Brisbane, giving us 2000 ha airside to manage. The new runway itself is the same size as most regional airports.’

According to Brown, Ozzie’s ‘social temperament, ball drive, and the fact that German shepherds are generally easy to train, makes him good for airport work’. The training is rewards-based, and for his important role on the wildlife team, is designed to ensure that Ozzie responds appropriately and reliably. Sending birds in the wrong direction, or not responding to commands could have dire consequences. The method of training, Brown says, is ‘designed to safeguard directional commands, and lead to consistent off-lead behaviour’.

A typical operational day for Ozzie and Ring starts with some early morning exercise at home and a run, before the pair come into work. To build trust, and to create a bond, Ozzie is part of Ring’s family.

Then, Ring says, ‘it’s a case of looking at what’s happening operationally, and recent wildlife activity. We find Ozzie the best choice for dispersing birds, so if we find a flock, we will send him in that direction.’



Photo: Ozzie and handler, Jackson Ring. Supplied.

Ring believes that regional airports would find dogs such as Ozzie very useful for dispersal; they are a tool that airports can take on themselves. The only challenge for the program has been getting a suitable, experienced trainer to get the program up and running. That was solved by having Brown on board. Ring says having Ozzie on the team has also brought some side benefits. In these tough times, ‘Ozzie has been an excellent morale booster for the ops team, and more broadly for the Brisbane Airport community—he’s a member of the airport family.’

His recommendation after the trial ends is to continue, and expand, the program long-term. ‘Ozzie is producing excellent results,’ he says. ‘I would like to see a full-time program at Brisbane with multiple dogs. The more I use Ozzie, the more effective I see it is to use canines. The birds are pretty relentless.’

In closing, *Plane Wild* asked Ring whether there was one bird Ozzie disliked in particular. ‘He treats them all with equal contempt,’ Ring says, ‘but if I had to pick one, it would be the ibis.’

Icon of Australian ornithology

Australia's ornithological community, including airport wildlife management personnel, was saddened to hear of the death of renowned Australian bird expert, Peter Slater. Creator of the widely-used field guides to Australian birds, Peter Slater (1932-2020), passed away on 28 May 2020.

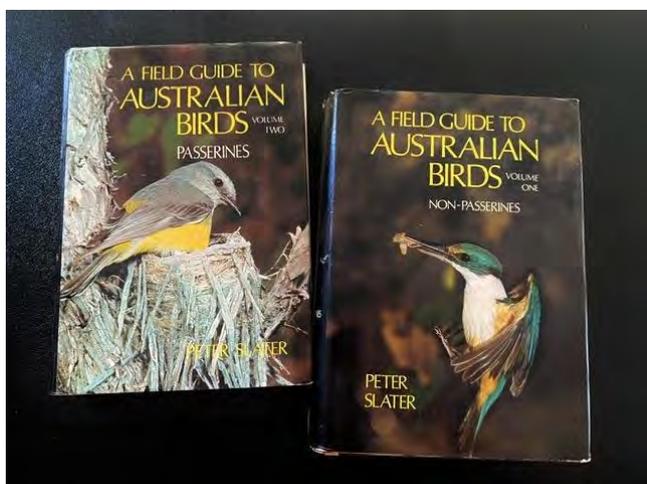


Photo: Well-thumbed copies of Slater's books. Margo Marchbank.

One of Australia's best ornithologists, Peter wrote and illustrated the field guides, first releasing volume one in 1970, and volume two, covering Australian passerines (broadly, songbirds) in 1974. They were the very first modern Australian bird field guides, and have been reprinted and revised many times since.

(Robert) Bob Calaby, aerodrome safety and standards manager at NT Airports, threw some light on the J. Calaby mentioned in the credits for Slater's first book. The interest in wildlife obviously runs in the family, because it is John Calaby, Bob's dad, who was a biologist and naturalist. According to the citation for the Canberra street named after him, 'John Calaby made a significant contribution to science in Australia, particularly in the fields of zoology and ecology and to Australian mammalogy.

John Calaby commenced his scientific career in 1945 as an Experimental Officer at the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (later the CSIRO) where he developed a particular interest in mammals and birds. He was a Research Scientist in the Wildlife Survey Section from 1950, and Assistant Chief Officer in the Wildlife and Ecology Division from 1985-87. Calaby was a specialist member of the Alligator Rivers Region environmental fact-finding study in the Northern Territory in the early 1970s, which assisted the formation and development of Kakadu National Park.

His extensive survey and collection work has provided material for the 'Australian National Wildlife Collection'. Calaby was a foundation member, Fellow and Honorary Life Member of the Australian Mammal Society and the recipient of awards from the scientific community, including the Troughton Medal in 1983. He published over 130 papers and articles and received an Honorary Doctorate from the Australian National University in 1977. A number of species are named for him including the Kakadu Pebble-Mound Mouse, 'Pseudomys calabyi'.



Photo: Bob Calaby and the Canberra suburb street sign honouring his father's research career in mammals and birds. Supplied.

Did you know?

The second half of 2020 marks the anniversary of two bird-strike accidents.

The first, which took place on 15 August, 2019, near Moscow's Zhukovsky International Airport, led President Putin to award the Ural Airlines flight 178 pilots the title of 'Heroes of Russia'. The A321, with Damir Yusupov as pilot-in-command, and Georgy Murzin, as co-pilot, took off from Moscow, and only a few kilometres from the airport, hit a flock of seagulls, disabling both engines. The aircraft, with 233 people on board, and a load of fuel, made a forced landing in

a cornfield about a kilometre from the end of the runway. Miraculously, there were no fatalities.



Photo: Ural Airlines flight 178 in the cornfield near Zhukovsky Airport - Reuters

Some media reports at the time suggested that the birds were attracted to Zhukovsky by nearby rubbish dumps, including an illegal facility. The Russian newspaper, *Novaya Gazeta*, on 17 August 2019, reported that 'In 2012, the management of one of the waste sites had been sued in Zhukovsky district court, alleging that "the waste sorting facilities attract massive numbers of birds due to significant content of edible refuse, and with the site located at the distance of 2 km from the airport runway this could lead to collisions between birds and aircraft, threatening human life and limb".' The formal report has yet to be released, but the Russian civil aviation agency, Rosaviatsiya, according to a September 2019 article by *Flight Global*, was 'proposing to work with law enforcement authorities to check the legality of waste dumps near airports, and would also examine the frequency of scheduled and unscheduled inspections of airports for the presence of birds.'

On 22 September, it will be 25 years since the 1995 crash of a US Air Force Boeing E-3 Sentry aircraft with the loss of all 24 people on board. The accident happened just after take-off from Elemendorf Air Force Base in Alaska.

The aircraft was waiting for take-off on runway 06 at the air force base, and the crew were unaware that the departing Hercules had disturbed a flock of Canada geese. As it began its take-off roll, the Sentry ingested multiple birds in the number 1 and 2 engines. The crew attempted to dump the fuel, and turn left to return to the base, but with both engines

gone on the same wing, could not maintain altitude. The aircraft began to descend from a height of 250 feet, crashed into a heavily wooded area, and burst into flames.



Photo: US Air Force Boeing E-3 Sentry. Val Gempis, USAF

The report into the accident said causal factors were:

'The base's lack of an aggressive program to detect and deter geese; and the preparations for the migration season of the bird hazard reduction working group (BHRWG) were insufficient. An earlier safety agency staff assistance visit (SAV) had misled base personnel in believing that they were prepared. The second contributing factor was the tower controller's failure to notify the Sentry's crew or airfield management that geese were present on the infield.'

Civil aviation agencies release COVID-19 advice

Two civil aviation agencies have issued recent advice for industry highlighting the need for ongoing vigilance during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In June, the Indian civil aviation directorate issued a circular to all airport operators expressing concern over the impact of the pandemic. According to the director general, the pandemic created a double-whammy:

- 'With less traffic, and stay-at-home orders, there has been a reduction in personnel deployed on the airfields for various duties and functions, including wildlife management.
- Given the current environment of reduced aviation activity, birds/wildlife are expected to expand their territory.'

The circular further reminded airport operators of their obligations to manage wildlife hazards, and advised them 'not to cease bird/wildlife control measures, and to continue bird/wildlife monitoring', paying 'particular attention to the increase of bird/wildlife activities as a result of reduced air traffic'.

In August, the European Civil Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), warned of contaminated pitot tube issues in aircraft returning to service after Covid-19.



'The European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) warns maintenance organisations to be aware of possible pitot obstructions after COVID-19-storage.

EASA has noticed what it calls "an alarming trend" in the number of reports of unreliable speed and altitude indications during the first flight(s) following the aircraft leaving storage, caused by contaminated air data systems. This has led to a number of rejected take-offs (RTO) and in-flight turn backs (IFTB). Most of the reported events concerned the accumulation of foreign objects, such as insect nests, in the pitot static system. This contamination caused obstruction of pitot probe and static port orifices, in some cases on multiple systems, even when covers were installed.

The risk of such contamination was increased, if the aircraft storage/de-storage procedures were not completely applied, or were applied improperly, at the beginning, during, or at the end of the storage period.' EASA recommends maintenance organisations follow the maintenance instructions for cleaning and inspecting the pitot static system carefully during the return to service of aircraft. See also: [EASA Safety Information Bulletin 2020-14](#) and the [AAWHG's information sheet #2](#)

Don't forget! AAWHG now has a [Linked In page](#)

Join the growing number of industry personnel who are following the AAWHG on LinkedIn.

Click on the link above, or search for 'AAWHG' on the LinkedIn page to find it, and please like and follow us to keep up to date with the latest wildlife hazard management news and innovations.

AAWHG forum now 2021

15-16 September 2021



The AAWHG committee is now planning a stimulating and valuable biennial forum to be held on 15 and 16 September, 2021.

The forum will be held at the Rydges Hotel in Adelaide, South Australia. Rydges Adelaide is located at 1 South Terrace in Adelaide's CBD. The hotel is positioned next to the Southern Parklands, Greenhill Road, Gouger Street restaurant precinct and the Central Markers. The hotel has a range of room types to suit individual needs, and boasts spectacular views of the city, surrounding parklands and the Adelaide Hills.

We will announce further details about the 2021 event later this year, with a call for papers early in 2021. If your organisation has implemented some innovative wildlife management strategies, and heaven knows, the current pandemic is likely to require these in spades, record them, and submit your paper proposal for consideration, to info@aawhg.org

We hope by the latter end of 2021, the aviation industry will be well on its way to recovery. We are still hoping for a truly international attendance, such as our colleagues across the Tasman, as well as wildlife hazard management practitioners in Asia, the United States and Europe.

International visitors will enjoy not only a stimulating forum program, but can discover the best of what spring in the state of South Australia has to offer; wine from the state's famous wine-growing regions, the regional cuisine with its German pioneer influence, not to mention stunning beaches and scenery, such as Kangaroo Island and the Flinders Ranges.

Follow the forum updates in *Plane Wild*, and on the website: aawhg.org

Did you know?

Bird strikes concern NASA, too

A bird strike on a shuttle in 2005 led NASA to review its wildlife hazard management activities. During the July 2005 launch of *Discovery*, on mission STS-114, a turkey vulture soaring around the launch pad hit the shuttle's external tank just after lift-off. With a vulture's average weight ranging from 1.4–2.3 kgs (3–5 pounds), a strike at a critical point on the shuttle, such as the nose or wing leading thermal protection panels, could cause catastrophic damage to the aircraft. (The foam chunk that struck *Columbia*'s wing in 2003 weighed less than a kilo.)

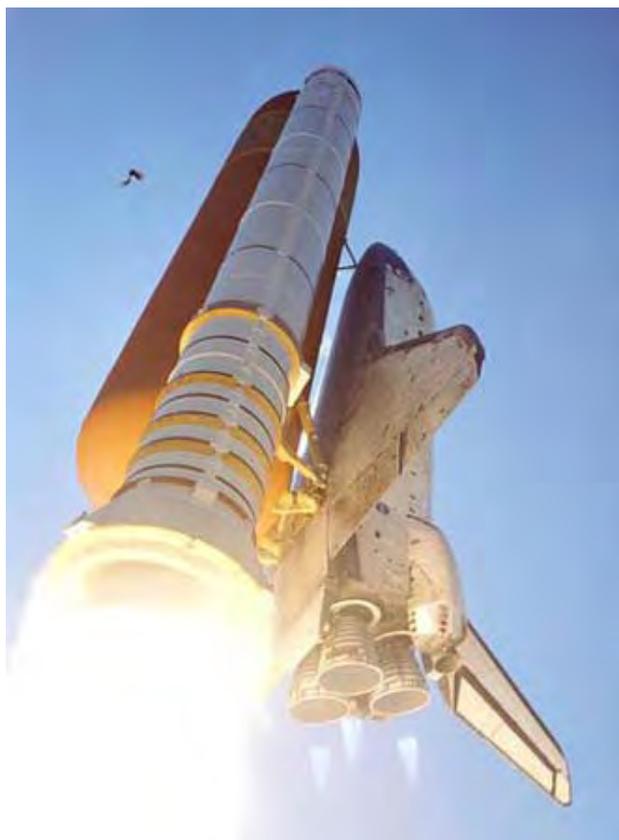


Photo: The vulture can be seen in the top left, falling after it hit the shuttle's external tank. Credit: NASA

Nearby to NASA's Cape Kennedy Space Centre is the national wildlife refuge on Merritt Island, home to 310 species of birds. Since that launch strike, NASA has successfully used avian radar systems to track bird activity before launches. (Credit to www.nasa.gov)



Photo: Turkey vulture. Image by skeeze from Pixabay

New aerodrome rules in effect

The new CASR Part 139 rules are now in effect.

You can find a [summary of the changes on CASA's website](#), as well as a listing of support documents, including advisory circulars which are being revised following industry consultation.

Of interest for AAWHG followers is the release of a new advisory circular [Aerodrome personnel](#), (AC 139.C-02v1.0) in July 2020, which outlines wildlife hazard management requirements for aerodrome personnel. The other relevant advisory circular, AC 139-26 (0) [Wildlife Hazard Management at Aerodromes](#) dates from July 2011, and is due to be revised as part of the transition to the new Part 139.

However, don't forget that the AAWHG has a number of existing (and proposed) recommended practices (RPs), covering the full range of wildlife hazard management activities. You can find them on the AAWHG website under the 'resources' tab. Finalised RPs include '[Training and competency of aerodrome safety personnel](#)' and '[Training and competency of flight crew](#)', as well as RPs looking at '[Firearms Safety](#)' and '[Lasers: use and general safety](#)'. We welcome feedback on the existing and proposed documents—the RPs are living documents—the AAWHG will be reviewing and updating them following feedback.

PS: If you have a wildlife management story you would like to share, please email Margo Marchbank, Plane Wild editor via wordflyer@outlook.com