



Vet honoured for work with koalas

Posted Wed Nov 30, 2011 7:20am AEDT

A Port Stephens vet who regularly treats injured koalas and is working on a ground-breaking vaccine to protect them from chlamydia is being recognised for his work.

The International Fund for Animal Welfare will present Don Hudson from Nelson Bay with its Outstanding Contribution from a Vet Award at a ceremony in Sydney today.

Sue Swain from the Hunter Koala Preservation Society says as well as his work on the vaccine, Doctor Hudson boasts an impressive record of successfully releasing injured koalas.

"We have a release rate of about 60 per cent, I'd say it's about the highest in Australia and the only reason we achieve that is because of Don's expertise," she said.

"He's done some incredible things with animals with fractures, right down to pouch joeys with 2 broken limbs, that are now released.

"All the experts recommend euthanasia for little ones, but Don just says, I'd don't think so, we can fix that."

Doctor Hudson says he is honoured to be recognised for his work as part of the Australian team working to develop a chlamydia vaccine for koalas.

He says it is rewarding work, but a workable vaccine is still a long way off.

"There can be risks associated with vaccinating any animal, and with a population that's endangered to start with, and certainly the low numbers, you don't want to do any damage to the population," he said.

"So it's a long timeframe, it's a difficult disease, and we'd want to be sure we're not going to do any harm, so it's years down the track."

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