



# Monotreme rehabilitation

Training standards for the wildlife rehabilitation sector

Department of Climate Change,  
Energy, the Environment and Water



## Acknowledgement of Country

Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands where we work and live.

We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

This resource may contain images or names of deceased persons in photographs or historical content.

© 2025 State of NSW and Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water

With the exception of photographs, the State of NSW and Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (the department) are pleased to allow this material to be reproduced in whole or in part for educational and non-commercial use, provided the meaning is unchanged and its source, publisher and authorship are acknowledged. Specific permission is required to reproduce photographs.

Learn more about our copyright and disclaimer at [www.environment.nsw.gov.au/copyright](http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/copyright)

Artist and designer Nikita Ridgeway from Aboriginal design agency Boss Lady Creative Designs created the People and Community symbol.

Cover photo: Rescued platypus at Blaxland vet for initial assessment. WIRES

Published by:

Environment and Heritage

Department of Climate Change,

Energy, the Environment and Water

Locked Bag 5022, Parramatta NSW 2124

Phone: +61 2 9995 5000 (switchboard)

Phone: 1300 361 967 (Environment and Heritage enquiries)

TTY users: phone 133 677, then ask for 1300 361 967

Speak and listen users: phone 1300 555 727, then ask for 1300 361 967

Email [info@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:info@environment.nsw.gov.au)

Website [www.environment.nsw.gov.au](http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au)

ISBN 978-1-923516-38-0

EH 2025/0252 July 2025

Find out more at:

[environment.nsw.gov.au](http://environment.nsw.gov.au)

# Contents

Introduction	1
Prerequisites	2
Definitions	2
Monotreme rehabilitation standards: core areas of training	3
1. Foundations of monotreme rehabilitation	4
Standard 1: The framework of monotreme rehabilitation in New South Wales	4
1.1 Discuss the <i>Code of practice for injured, sick and orphaned monotremes</i> .	4
1.2 Ensure organisational policies and procedures applicable to monotreme rehabilitation are defined and understood by learners.	4
1.3 Ensure objectives of monotreme rehabilitation are understood by learners.	4
Standard 2: Work health and safety requirements of monotreme rehabilitation	5
Standard 3: Record keeping	6
Standard 4: Biology and behaviour of monotremes	7
Standard 5: Stress management in monotremes	8
2. Rescue of monotremes	9
Standard 6: Rescue of monotremes	9
Standard 7: Transport of monotremes	10
Standard 8: Assessment of monotremes	11
3. Rehabilitation of monotremes	12
Standard 9: Rehabilitation of adult monotremes	12
Standard 10: Rehabilitation of monotreme puggles	13
Standard 11: Release of monotremes	14

# Introduction

Volunteers play a critical role in the rescue and rehabilitation of sick, injured and orphaned monotremes in New South Wales. Each year about 1,300 echidnas and 8 platypuses on average are rescued, and volunteers participating in the delivery of care are trained to ensure that animals in rehabilitation are managed humanely and have the best chance of release back to the wild.

The Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (the department), has prepared these *Monotreme rehabilitation training standards* for use by trainers in the wildlife rehabilitation sector. These training standards build on the high level of expertise that already exists within the sector and have been designed as a guide to evaluate, develop and support new and existing training. The intended outcome is to ensure minimum training standards are in place for volunteers across the sector, as recommended in the *Code of practice for injured, sick and orphaned monotremes* (the code of practice). This will give greater certainty about the quality of care afforded to monotremes in rehabilitation.

These standards must be used for delivering introductory training for monotreme rehabilitation. They describe the skills and knowledge that such training must include to ensure volunteers meet the requirements of the code of practice. Any person with an authority to rescue and rehabilitate monotremes in New South Wales must be trained to these standards and be assessed as competent. This applies to both home care and facility-based models.

These training standards have been ordered into 3 suggested core areas of training. Training programs can be structured in their entirety to replicate the standards, broken down to cover individual or multiple standards, or based on certain roles within monotreme rehabilitation. Irrespective of the structure used, all training must include the standards relevant to a role and must cover the duties this role would be expected to perform upon completion of the training.

All training must be compliant with the code of practice. It must have a written assessment component, be competency-based and be accompanied by ongoing in-field support from experienced monotreme rehabilitators.

Once a person is trained to these standards they can undertake advanced refresher training and professional development opportunities as determined by their licensed wildlife rehabilitation organisation.



## Structure of the standards

There are 11 monotreme rehabilitation training standards, organised into the following structure:

- **Objective** is the aim of each training standard.
- **Learning outcomes** are the knowledge and skills a learner will have obtained and be able to demonstrate upon completion of training.
- **Sections in the code** identify sections in the code of practice that are applicable to each standard.

## Prerequisites

As per the code of practice, new wildlife rehabilitators must undertake an introductory training course. This could be covered in a generalist group's induction training or incorporated into Standard 1: The framework of monotreme rehabilitation in New South Wales.

## Definitions

**Advanced refresher training:** the code of practice requires refresher training to be completed every 3 years.

**Code of practice:** specifies the minimum standards of care needed to protect the welfare of animals in rehabilitation. There is a general code and species-specific codes. The *Code of practice for injured, sick and orphaned monotremes* is the relevant code for monotremes.

**Competency:** is defined by the Australian Skills Quality Authority as the consistent application of knowledge and skill to the standard of performance required in the workplace. It embodies the ability to transfer and apply skills and knowledge to new situations and environments.

**Prerequisites:** some training requires a learner to have completed another course before they can enrol; the earlier course would be considered a 'prerequisite' of the more advanced training.

**Professional development:** activities that develop or maintain skills or knowledge. Examples could include workshops, conferences, mentoring, independent research and courses.

**Training standards:** the skills and knowledge training programs must include to ensure rehabilitators can competently meet the requirements for standards of care, as described in the code.

## Resources

- [Code of practice for injured, sick and orphaned monotremes](#)
- [NSW Volunteer Wildlife Rehabilitation Sector Strategy](#)

# Monotreme rehabilitation standards: core areas of training

There are 11 monotreme rehabilitation standards organised into 3 core training areas.

Core training area	Relevant standard
<b>Foundations</b>	Standard 1: The framework of monotreme rehabilitation in New South Wales
	Standard 2: Work health and safety requirements of monotreme rehabilitation
	Standard 3: Record keeping
	Standard 4: Biology and behaviour of monotremes
	Standard 5: Stress management in monotremes
<b>Rescue</b>	Standard 6: Rescue of monotremes
	Standard 7: Transport of monotremes
	Standard 8: Assessment of monotremes
<b>Rehabilitation and release</b>	Standard 9: Rehabilitation of adult monotremes
	Standard 10: Rehabilitation of monotreme puggles
	Standard 11: Release of monotremes

# 1. Foundations of monotreme rehabilitation

## Standard 1: The framework of monotreme rehabilitation in New South Wales

### Objective

Familiarise learners with the relevant policies and procedures of monotreme rehabilitation and provide them with an understanding of the framework that exists to support and regulate monotreme rehabilitation in New South Wales. Learners must be aware of and understand the *Code of practice for injured, sick and orphaned monotremes*.

To comply with this standard, a rehabilitation organisation must:

- 1.1 Discuss the *Code of practice for injured, sick and orphaned monotremes*.
- 1.2 Ensure organisational policies and procedures applicable to monotreme rehabilitation are defined and understood by learners.
- 1.3 Ensure objectives of monotreme rehabilitation are understood by learners.

Learning outcomes	Sections in the code
Upon completion of Standard 1 learners will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• identify and demonstrate understanding of the <i>Code of practice for injured, sick and orphaned monotremes</i></li><li>• identify organisational policies and procedures on monotreme rehabilitation</li><li>• recognise the objectives of monotreme rehabilitation.</li></ul>	All

## Standard 2: Work health and safety requirements of monotreme rehabilitation

### Objective

Ensure learners are able to prioritise their safety and that of the people around them when undertaking monotreme rescue and rehabilitation.

To comply with this standard, a rehabilitation organisation must:

- 2.1 Explain the work health and safety (WHS) risks associated with the site, equipment or activity and how they can be minimised.
- 2.2 Explain the WHS risks associated with handling and restraining monotremes and how they can be minimised.
- 2.3 Discuss rehabilitator wellbeing and the potential mental health impacts of wildlife rehabilitation.

Learning outcomes	Sections in the code
Upon completion of Standard 2 learners will be able to:	3. Rescue
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• identify WHS risks associated with monotreme rehabilitation</li></ul>	6. Care procedures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• employ techniques to minimise the WHS risks to themselves and other people.</li></ul>	7. Rehabilitation care
	10. Release considerations



## Standard 3: Record keeping

### Objective

Explain the record-keeping requirements of monotreme rehabilitation.

To comply with this standard, rehabilitation organisations must:

- 3.1 Explain the department's reporting requirements.
- 3.2 Explain organisational reporting requirements.

Learning outcomes	Sections in the code
Upon completion of Standard 3 learners will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• keep records in accordance with the department and organisational requirements.</li></ul>	12. Record keeping

## Standard 4: Biology and behaviour of monotremes

### Objective

Ensure detailed knowledge of the monotreme is taught to learners. This is done by providing learners with the foundational tools to understand monotreme biology and behaviour and how these aspects inform interactions with monotremes undergoing rehabilitation.

To comply with this standard, a rehabilitation organisation must:

- 4.1 Explain features of monotreme biology including anatomy, physiology, social structure and habitat and relate them to monotreme rehabilitation.
- 4.2 Provide the tools and understanding required to identify normal behaviours in monotremes.
- 4.3 Provide the tools and understanding required to recognise signs of abnormal behaviour in monotremes.

Learning outcomes	Sections in the code
Upon completion of Standard 4, learners will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• relate monotreme biology and behaviour to monotreme rehabilitation</li><li>• recognise signs of normal behaviour in monotremes</li><li>• recognise signs of abnormal behaviour in monotremes.</li></ul>	All

## Standard 5: Stress management in monotremes

### Objective

Communicate the importance of managing stress in monotremes and to provide mechanisms for minimising this stress.

To comply with this standard, rehabilitation organisations must:

- 5.1 Explain the effects of stress on a monotreme at various stages of rescue and rehabilitation.
- 5.2 Provide the tools and understanding required to recognise signs of stress in a monotreme.
- 5.3 Discuss methods for minimising stress on a monotreme at various stages of rescue and rehabilitation.

Learning outcomes	Sections in the code
Upon completion of Standard 5, learners will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• recognise signs of stress in monotremes and its impact</li><li>• apply methods for minimising stress in a monotreme.</li></ul>	3. Rescue 4. Transport 5. Euthanasia 6. Care procedures 7. Rehabilitation care 8. Housing 10. Release considerations

## 2. Rescue of monotremes

### Standard 6: Rescue of monotremes

#### Objective

Ensure learners have the skills to safely, efficiently and humanely rescue a monotreme.

To comply with this standard, a rehabilitation organisation must:

- 6.1 Outline common reasons for monotreme rescue.
- 6.2 Detail how to plan a rescue, including the use of the decision tree in the *Code of practice for injured, sick and orphaned monotremes*, to establish the appropriate course of action.
- 6.3 Detail the correct method and equipment required to handle and rescue a monotreme, as suitable to common rescue situations, conditions and age of a monotreme.
- 6.4 Demonstrate how to rescue a monotreme to humanely minimise pain, stress and potential injury.

Learning outcomes	Sections in the code
Upon completion of Standard 6, learners will be able to:	2. Case assessment
• list the common reasons monotremes require rescue	3. Rescue
• assess a rescue situation and plan the rescue of a monotreme	4. Transport
• safely rescue a monotreme using correct equipment	5. Euthanasia
• determine the type of intervention required at a rescue site.	

## Standard 7: Transport of monotremes

### Objective

Ensure learners have the skills to transport a monotreme safely, efficiently and humanely.

To comply with this standard, a rehabilitation organisation must:

- 7.1 Demonstrate how to appropriately contain a monotreme for transport based on different sizes, stages of development and conditions.
- 7.2 Outline how to secure the transport container to prevent escape and further injury.
- 7.3 Discuss the most suitable person or location to which a monotreme should be transported, based on different ages, conditions and organisational policies.

Learning outcomes	Sections in the code
Upon completion of Standard 7, learners will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• prepare a carrier for transport of a monotreme</li><li>• understand the appropriate person or location to which to transport a monotreme based on different ages, conditions and organisational policies.</li></ul>	2. Case assessment 3. Rescue 4. Transport 5. Euthanasia

## Standard 8: Assessment of monotremes

### Objective

Equip learners with the skills necessary to assess the health status of a monotreme.

To comply with this standard, a rehabilitation organisation must:

- 8.1 Explain how to conduct an initial assessment of a monotreme.
- 8.2 Explain the requirements of a thorough assessment of a monotreme.
- 8.3 Emphasise the need to seek prompt advice and assistance for a monotreme from coordinator(s) or other relevant personnel, as appropriate to its condition.
- 8.4 Distinguish signs of and ways to determine common diseases and injuries affecting monotremes.
- 8.5 Explain how to manage an injured or diseased monotreme based on the severity of its condition.
- 8.6 Outline criteria and approved methods for humane euthanasia.

Learning outcomes	Sections in the code
Upon completion of Standard 8, learners will be able to:	5. Euthanasia
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>conduct an initial assessment of a monotreme</li></ul>	6. Care procedures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>assess the health status of a monotreme and recognise stages, symptoms and severity of common diseases and injuries</li></ul>	7. Rehabilitation care
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>determine the appropriate course of action for a monotreme based on its condition</li></ul>	8. Housing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>outline criteria for and approved methods of euthanasia.</li></ul>	



### 3. Rehabilitation of monotremes

#### Standard 9: Rehabilitation of adult monotremes

##### Objective

Equip learners with the skills to provide high-quality rehabilitative care of adult monotremes at the relevant stage(s) of housing.

Note: This standard can be applied to a single stage of care (i.e. intensive care, intermediate care or pre-release care) depending on the role the learner will be expected to perform upon successful completion of the training.

To comply with this standard, a rehabilitation organisation must:

- 9.1 Explain the importance of and process for quarantining individual monotremes entering rehabilitation.
- 9.2 Specify stages of housing (intensive, intermediate and pre-release).
- 9.3 State the housing requirements and considerations relevant to stages of housing.
- 9.4 Describe appropriate equipment and furniture for stages of housing.
- 9.5 Explain how to appropriately provide food and water based on the condition of a monotreme.
- 9.6 Discuss how to monitor a monotreme in accordance with stages of housing and condition.
- 9.7 Demonstrate how to complete a rehabilitation care plan.
- 9.8 Illustrate disease control and hygiene practices appropriate to stages of housing.

Learning outcomes	Sections in the code
Upon completion of Standard 9, learners will be able to:	5. Euthanasia
• explain the requirements of housing for monotremes	6. Care procedures
• demonstrate correct set-up for housing monotremes	7. Rehabilitation care
• provide food and water appropriate to age and condition of a monotreme	8. Housing
• monitor a monotreme undergoing rehabilitation	
• complete a rehabilitation care plan for an adult monotreme.	

## Standard 10: Rehabilitation of monotreme puggles

### Objective

Provide learners with the specialised knowledge required to rehabilitate a monotreme puggle.

To comply with this standard, a rehabilitation organisation must:

- 10.1 Specify key stages of puggle development.
- 10.2 Describe appropriate housing for a monotreme puggle based on stage of development.
- 10.3 Discuss appropriate food and feeding methods for a puggle based on its stage of development.
- 10.4 Examine common conditions and diseases that affect monotreme puggles.
- 10.5 Illustrate disease control and hygiene practices appropriate to stages of housing.
- 10.6 Demonstrate how to complete a rehabilitation care plan for a monotreme puggle.
- 10.7 Describe mechanisms to reduce stress and encourage natural behaviours in monotreme puggles.
- 10.8 Prepare a hand-raised monotreme for release.

Learning outcomes	Sections in the code
Upon completion of Standard 10, learners will be able to:	2. Case assessment
• outline the requirements for monotreme puggle rehabilitation	5. Euthanasia
• identify stages of development for monotreme puggles and relate these to rehabilitation	6. Care procedures
• apply hygiene and disease control processes to monotreme puggle rehabilitation	7. Rehabilitation care
• reduce stress and encourage natural behaviours in monotreme puggles	8. Housing
• complete a rehabilitation care plan for a monotreme puggle.	

## Standard 11: Release of monotremes

### Objective

Ensure learners understand suitability for release and criteria for releasing a monotreme.

To comply with this standard, a rehabilitation organisation must:

- 12.1 Assess release considerations for monotremes including timing and site selection.
- 12.2 Explain how to determine a monotreme's suitability for release.
- 12.3 Detail the correct techniques and equipment for releasing a monotreme.

Learning outcomes	Sections in the code
Upon completion of Standard 11, learners will be able to:	9. Suitability for release
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• assess a monotreme for release suitability</li><li>• competently release a monotreme</li></ul>	10. Release considerations