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Fairy Godmother nominated for Pride of Australia medal for giving critters a second chance at life

ELISSA DOHERTY HERALD SUN JULY 10, 2014 8:00PM

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SAVE THIS STORY



Michele Phillip with Daisy, a rescued possum. Picture: Jason Edwards

HELLO, possums!

Meet the Fairy Godmother to Melbourne's injured and orphaned wildlife, who single-handedly runs a shelter from her home.

Michele Phillips, 58, is a saviour to urban critters who have been hit by cars, attacked by cats or become severely dehydrated in the summer heat.

Without her, thousands of possums, birds, joeys and other wildlife would be put down.

At any one time she may have 30 baby possums requiring three-hourly feeds, 24 hours a day.

That's not to mention the 17 aviaries fluttering with rainbow lorikeets to flying foxes and magpies.

"We get a lot of animals that people don't realise are in suburbia like turtles, flying foxes, and baby water dragons," she says.

"It started when I found an injured bird, and took it to the vet, and they put it down as soon as I walked out.

"There weren't enough people to look after them. Now the vets in suburbia know me and call me straight away."

In 22 years she has helped about 10,000 animals, and regularly works from 5.30am and until midnight or later.

The South Oakleigh Wildlife Shelter runs on donations and council grants with a couple of volunteers, with wildlife rehabilitated then released back into their own habitat.

Ms Phillips has been nominated for a Pride of Australia medal.