

OAKLEIGH SOUTH

## Spring in to help wildlife

WITH spring on the way, South Oakleigh Wildlife Shelter's Michele Phillips is overrun with injured animals and needs help.

Her shelter has more than 50 animals, including ducklings, lizards, lorikeets and possums.

Ms Phillips said mother ducks and their broods often ran into trouble after leaving safe areas like backyards to take their ducklings to water.

"People will see them walking and think they are helping, but end up chasing them and the mother flies away and leaves the ducklings," she said.

She urged people to leave them to their own devices wherever possible, or alert wildlife volunteers like her if they were in unsafe environments like busy roads.

Ms Phillips urged residents who found injured possums to keep them warm and not feed them.

"Their mothers' pouches are 32 degrees so the babies need to be kept as close to that temperature as possible if they have any hope of survival," she said.

Ms Phillips rescues animals across Melbourne's southeast, taking emergency calls 24 hours a day.

"Right now we really need more volunteers to help care for the animals we have because as it comes into spring, we're going to get a lot more," she said.

"We also need funds for things like possum boxes and the general cost of caring for injured animals."

Ms Phillips said volunteers could choose to be trained to care for animals, or they could pick up injured animals from vets and bring them to her shelter.

**Anyone able to volunteer or donate funds to the South Oakleigh Wildlife Shelter can phone Ms Phillips on Details: 0411 600 591**