

# Taking the whaling fight to The Hague

## EDITORIAL

By CARL GEARING

AUSTRALIA, with its love of the sea and emphasis on justice, has taken Japan to the International High Court of Justice at The Hague in The Netherlands, over Japan's hunting of whales for supposed "scientific" purposes. Proceedings are expected to finish in early 2014.

Australia has proposed that Japan has breached its international responsibility to preserve marine life as well as breaching the international moratorium on commercial whaling that has been in place since 1986.

Australia regards the Japanese research to be an unwarranted, cruel cull of often endangered whale species and as a disguised commercial whaling operation.

Japan says the whaling is necessary for scientific study and management, and states that the sale of the left over whale is to fund further research.

Although most members of the International Whaling Commission (IWC) oppose this, it is currently allowed under the rules.

Australia however, believes that this research can be done without killing the whales and destroying or altering Japan's ecosystems.

This issue is more complicated than it first appears.

The International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (ICRW) was designed originally in 1946 to promote whaling, but in 1985 it issued a moratorium on all commercial whaling in the Southern Ocean. Japan argues that what they are doing is within the guidelines set by the ICRW.

Many Japanese believe Westerners have romanticised the whale and think of it as a human of the oceans, whereas to others, the whale is just a fish.

The pursued, exhausted, hunted whale is shot with an exploding harpoon. One shot is rarely lethal and secondary harpoons and rifles are also used on the whale.

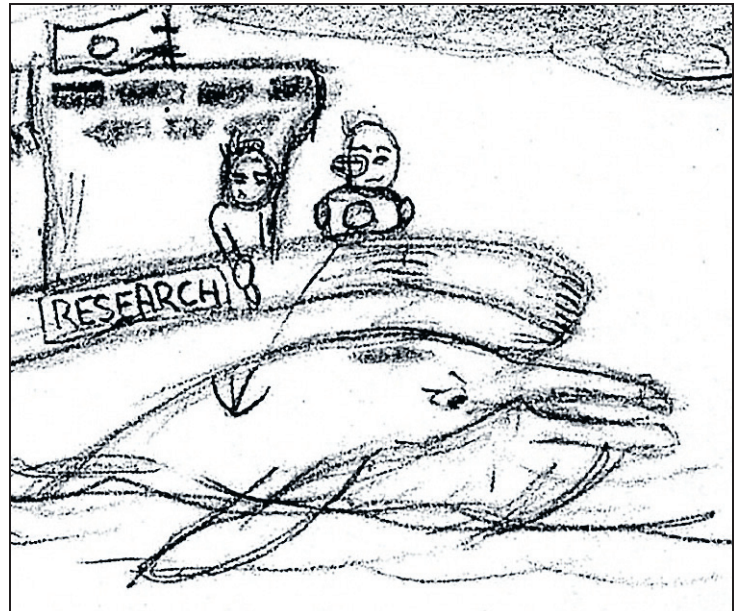
While whalers claim death occurs in two minutes, the World Society for the Protection of Animals says the whale can die an agonising death lasting up to an hour.

The decision in The Hague is likely to involve a compromise for both parties.

This is likely because if Japan doesn't think that the decision is fair, it says it will consider abandoning the treaty altogether.

Increased whaling without controls would certainly have dire consequences for whale populations and the biodiversity of ocean ecosystems for future generations.

Australia is to be applauded for its bravery to take on the fight.



Cartoon: Zoe Lis



COMMITTED: Under-15s players Carl Gearing and Noah Davies at the Warners Bay clubhouse. Picture: Noah Davies

## AFL club hits big milestone

By NOAH DAVIES

ON August 16, 2014 Warners Bay AFL club will celebrate its 40th birthday at its home ground in Lake Macquarie.

This organisation is one of the Hunter Valley's AFL foundation clubs with a reputation for high member involvement and sportsmanship.

The Warners Bay Bulldogs AFL club started in 1974 when local personality John McKeown founded the association. He created the club by enrolling an under-17s team in a competition in the Newcastle-Lake Macquarie area.

Since then, the club has evolved into an Auskick team with five junior and four senior teams.

The club is largely staffed by passionate volunteers and has become successful because of its loyal players and the fervent families who support the club through fundraisers and other social activities.

A long-term member of the club, Carl Gearing, joined in 2009.

"The club offers a safe and enjoyable AFL experience," said Carl. "It has also given me a lot of new friendships that I will ensure I keep."

"The strengths of the club are how many numbers they get in all its teams, and how the players consistently have fun and enjoy each game."

After winning the flag in 1974, the Bulldogs have won seven premierships (in senior grades), and many in junior grades.

## Filling our planet at a speedy rate

By ZOE LIS

OVER-POPULATION has become an increasing problem for the world today. With the global population being 7.1 billion and increasing, this could mean fewer resources for our next generations.

With all these people to keep alive and only so many resources to do so, we should be seeing some drastic changes in our behaviour.

"If we don't start thinking logically about this, we are going to have massive problems," said Mr Williams, geography teacher at Macquarie College.

"We are going to have no food or water security and prominent migration issues, not to mention the damage this is going to do to our environment."

When asked how we can prevent these problems from happening Mr Williams said: "Developed countries can share their knowledge and technology with developing countries. We have so many resources we can share but we aren't doing anything. We should also be educating [people] in safe sex and birth control to help limit the number of kids they have."

Unfortunately, many people are unaware of this problem.

"Even the smallest things can help. Recycling and thinking about your food and water usage can mean a lot," he said.

## Rescuing our native wildlife a close save

By SARAH OTTON

THE Hunter Wildlife Rescue (HWR) is an important organisation for our Newcastle community.

The members of the HWR will come and rescue injured or sick animals that have been found by local residents.

They take care of a variety of animals, from possums to turtles, and even a yellow-nosed albatross.

Many animals have been saved and are living today because of the HWR, however, because they are

a charitable organisation, donations of towels, blankets, pillow cases and money are always a help.

Lydia Coutts from the HWR shared some details about the organisation and the animals she has been able to look after.

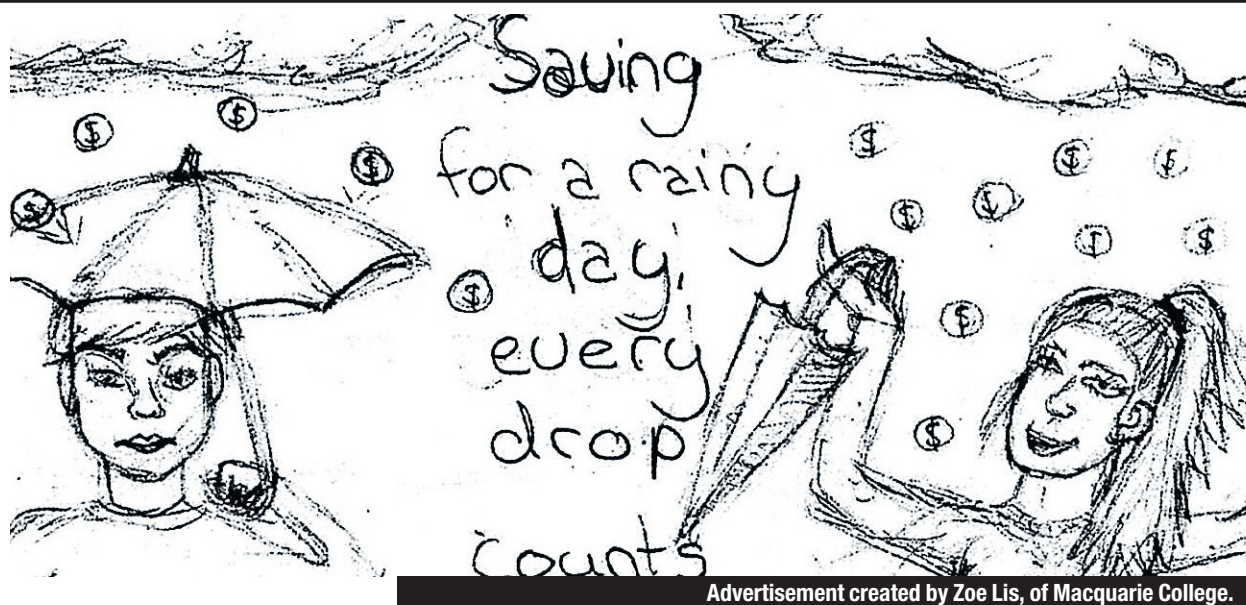
"There was a lovely story we put out in our newsletter about a tiny little wombat," she said.

"It is very rewarding, watching the young, injured wombat slowly regain his health and return to where he belongs."



BORN TO BE WILD: A bird sings for his next meal, in the habitat where it belongs. Picture: Sarah Otton

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