

The days are getting much shorter and it's much cooler – which makes all the little tasks around the sanctuary that more challenging. Thankfully we finally got some rain the other week – almost two inches which has refilled many of the tanks. It was the first rain in six weeks and has encouraged a little late growth in the two main sheep paddocks. This will please the sheep who are a little tired of surviving on hay, as they have been during the past couple of months. Autumn has been warmer and drier than usual, which has been a bit of a concern of which I have no control over, but on a brighter note I heard a long-term weather forecast the other night predicting above average rainfall for winter, spring and summer so maybe the last few dry years are coming to an end?

I don't actually know where the past couple of months have gone – one day it was March and now it's the end of May. I guess that's a combination of being busy at work and maintaining the routine here, as well as coping with the ever increasing number of requests to take in newcomers. As usual it's always a harrowing experience to say no to someone as I know what the likely fate will be. Thankfully I have been able to accommodate most of the requests recently.



Ninja was a single hen whose family were moving into a townhouse and thought she wouldn't be happy there and wanted her to go somewhere safe where she would not be eaten and she would have friends.

Within weeks of her arrival she had two new pals (the three of them pictured left) who needed a new home because according to their former humans “with new rescue dogs and new kids since we got them in our suburban block, it's becoming impractical to keep them space wise”.

Another change in home circumstances, following a family member passing away, forced a woman to move house and needing to find a safe place for her six older hens whom she had had since they were day-old chicks. The woman was very attached to them and wanted her bubs to go somewhere they would not be used as food and discovered A Poultry Place through Facebook and asked if I could help. I said yes

School hatching project by-products have again resulted in a number of new arrivals. Two roosters (pictured right), were among four chicks rescued from a preschool hatching program and grew up in Sydney's southern suburbs until council regulations forbidding roosters meant they had to leave their two sisters and move somewhere safe

Ducklings have also heavily featured during the past couple of months. I learnt of four duckling hatching projects in Sydney in as many weeks – in two incidents the suppliers would not allow the ducklings hatched to be passed onto a sanctuary, leaving the parents and staff who contacted me devastated. The other two projects had happier endings and now sees me playing mother duckie to cute but boisterous and a tad messy little yellowy bubs (pictured next page).





Two older ducks Nic and Jenn (pictured right) came to A Poultry Place having been purchased as ducklings at a market by a family who never really considered their needs as they grew and therefore wanted to “get rid of them” at least they are now somewhere safe where they are beginning to make friends of their own kind



Apart from the usual stuff I took a little “time-off” to go down to Edgar’s Mission for two days and work with the fab Pam and co to deliver two Kind Critter Care workshops. It is the second year we have done the workshops which are intended to help people thinking of starting an animal sanctuary work out whether or not they have thought of all the pros and cons of what is involved. It was great to meet many of the participants and it will be interesting to see how they do. And of course it was wonderful being at Edgar’s, which is an amazing place, and being able to catch up with two very special old friends Charity and Saturday – two of the sheep residents there who spent some time with me here during their trek to Edgar’s.

I also made a day trip to Sydney to take part in the Vegan Lifestyle speaking tour organised by Cruelty Free Super. I’m back in Sydney this Saturday (June 4) to be one of the speakers at the third annual March To Close All Slaughterhouses, which is being organised by Animal Liberation NSW — it kicks off at noon at Belmore Park (just opposite Central Station) so I might see some of you there. If you do attend please come and say hi..

The other news, and probably most exciting for me anyway, is that I have reduced my working week in my paid job from five to three days in order to gain some work/life balance. Having four days a week to devote full time to A Poultry Place will make life that much easier and also enjoyable.

TO VISIT A POULTRY PLACE EMAIL freechook@bigpond.com

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