

Dawn accepts fresh bilby hope

AUSSIE swim legend Dawn Fraser never minded swimming against the popular tide but she hopes to turn it as far as saving the bilby is concerned.

The Save the Bilby Fund patron was at Good Shepherd Lutheran College on Monday morning at Noosaville to accept a \$33,458 cheque from Pink Lady chocolates on behalf of the conservation group.

Dawn said the bilby was a "very special native animal" that desperately needed saving.

"We used to have quite a few of them spread throughout Australia," she said.

For three years Pink Lady has raised funds through sales of their chocolate Easter bilbies and its everyday bilby range to help save this desert creature from extinction.

Noosaville's Good Shepherd Lutheran College students met with one of the

HOW TO HELP

■ For more information regarding Save the Bilby Fund, or to offer a donation, visit: www.savethebilbyfund.org.

conservation-breeding program's ambassadors to learn why it was important to protect one of the country's endangered marsupials.

The funds will help with conservation efforts, including support for a population of captive bred bilbies, academic research and an expansion of their recovery program to include additional release sites.

Save The Bilby's Frank Manthey said the bilby was a flagship animal for our threatened species and he had named one of the Aussie answers to the Easter bunny after Australia's greatest female swimmer. Now Dawn

said the main hope for these creatures was with the young people at schools such as Good Shepherd.

Dawn has joined the fight against extinction, as has solo world sailor Jessica Watson.

"We've got some real good allies. We have the world's worst record now for extinctions, 31 of them in just 200 years," Frank said.

"They've discovered fossilised bones out at Mt Isa which date back 15 millions years. And look what we've done in 200 years."

Frank said after three years of lobbying, the Federal Government had named the second Sunday in September national bilby day, when all monies raised would go towards threatened species.

Australian-owned Fyna Foods, which makes Pink Lady, believes supporting heritage and local wildlife is important.



SPECIAL CAUSE: Ella Reddaway, Finn Vanska, Kevin Bradley with bilby Dawn and Jackson Fraser at Good Shepherd Lutheran College.

PHOTO: PETER GARDINER