



**HUMANE SOCIETY  
INTERNATIONAL**



– Bat Advocacy  –

**Media Release Tuesday, 22 June 2010**

## **Botanic Gardens flying-foxes safe. For now.**

Sydney, 22<sup>nd</sup> June

Humane Society International, Bat Advocacy and WIRES have welcomed the decision to call a halt to the eviction of grey-headed flying-foxes from Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney.

Prior to the approval of the project, conservation and welfare groups were concerned that the proposal, by the Botanic Gardens Trust, ignored the possibility of a widespread food shortage and the impact that would have on the flying-foxes health. These concerns have now become a reality.

*“It is clear from the unusual behaviour of flying-foxes this year that something very significant has occurred that has affected the flying-foxes normal food sources”* said HSI’s Alexia Wellbelove.

*“Significant numbers of flying-foxes have appeared well outside of their normal range in places including Orange, Bathurst, Bendigo, Adelaide and even as far south as Tasmania and we believe that this is because their normal food supplies along the east coast have suffered as a consequence of heavy rain earlier in the year”.*

A much higher than normal number of flying-foxes have come into the care of wildlife rehabilitation groups such as WIRES and many of the animals are well below their expected weight range. *“The condition of the animals coming into care has been very poor”* said WIRES Chair Stan Wood *“and we believe that it is highly likely that the dispersal from the Botanic Gardens, had it gone ahead, would have had very serious implications for those animals impacted by the action”.*

With the project now on hold until next year, conservation groups hope that there will be a review of the approvals already granted to Botanic Gardens Trust so that there are more effective controls in place should the Trust decide to go ahead with the dispersal next year.

*“We still oppose the action and will continue to lobby for the approvals granted to the Botanic Gardens Trust to be revoked”* said Bat Advocacy’s Nick Edards. *“But in the event that the dispersal is allowed to go ahead next year, we hope that the conditions of approval will be significantly tightened so that they will be more effective in protecting the flying-foxes”.*