

News



Michelle Thomas says prepares to release the now healthy pelican. Picture: PAUL HACKETT

Tackling a problem

Fiona Sexton

ANIMAL rescuers have begged fishermen not to abandon their tackle after a pelican nearly died when a fish-hook and line became embedded in its jaw in Mordialloc Creek.

Michelle Thomas from wildlife rescue group AWARE said when the pelican was found in the creek it was unable to eat and had lost up to a quarter of its body weight. "When he was found he was really dehydrated and had been ingesting duckweed because he couldn't catch fish," Ms Thomas said.

"He couldn't even open his mouth without extreme pain."

Vets surgically removed the hook and Ms

Thomas nursed the bird back to health, before releasing it in Patterson Lakes last week.

She said dumped lines and hooks were a chronic problem along the creek.

"People just leave line hanging around everywhere, hanging off trees," she said. "It's not the first time we've had a bird with a hook-and-line entanglement."

Ms Thomas is confident the injured pelican will make a speedy recovery and gain weight fast.

"There's an abundance of fish in Patterson Lakes right now, so he can fish to his heart's content," she said.

AWARE needs volunteers to help rescue and care for injured wildlife. Details: 0439 463 279.