

# Shock as dangerous dog attacks woman

BY ALEX JOHNSON

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DEBBIE Wedlock's love for animals has left her nursing deep wounds after a stray dog she was trying to feed mauled her face.

The Warrnambool mother of two had returned to her Iona Avenue home early on Saturday when she noticed the "skinny" bull mastiff- Rhodesian ridgeback cross on her front lawn.

"Because I'm an animal lover I thought, 'well, I'd give it a feed,'" an emotional Ms Wedlock told The Standard yesterday.

"I came inside and put on some food for it and went back outside, bent down to pat it and it mauled me."

She urged others who felt the need to help stray dogs not to touch them.

Ms Wedlock's former partner and father of her two teenage children, Chris McPherson, was in the house at the time and rushed outside when he heard her screams.

"I had to kick it off her face," he said.

"If it was a little kid, who knows what could've happened?"

"If it had got her face or her nose it could have torn her whole face off.

"The first thing (to do) was get the ambulance, there was that much blood."

Ms Wedlock underwent surgery on Saturday afternoon and was waiting to hear from her surgeon as to what could be done to heal the scars. Ms Wedlock, who used to breed pitbull terriers with Mr McPherson, had seen the dog earlier that day.

She said it she noticed it was malnourished and had a lump on the back of its head.

"It's not his (dog's) fault. He's just neglected, poor thing."

Warrnambool City Council ranger Peter McArdle said he was called to the home at 2am on Saturday.

Police were on the scene and Mr McArdle impounded the dog.

"The dog's owners are believed to be out of town so the dog will be held at the pound for eight days to give the owners the chance to come forward," she said.

"If the owner cannot be found within eight days the dog may be destroyed."

If claimed the animal would be declared a dangerous dog and, under Government guidelines, have to be permanently housed in an enclosure.



Debbie Wedlock underwent surgery after a dog attack. 081110DW43 Pictures: DAMIAN WHITE Debbie Wedlock, who was attacked by dog on Friday night. Chris McPherson helped her escape. 081110DW40 "I had to kick it off her face. If it was a little kid, who knows what could've happened?" Chris McPherson



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