

Lost German Backpacker rescued after Two-week ordeal



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PERTH, July 14— A 26-year-old German backpacker who survived nearly two weeks lost in the harsh outback of Western Australia has expressed deep gratitude after being rescued in what police described as a miraculous outcome.

Caroline Wilga was found on Friday after spending 11 cold nights alone in bushland. She survived by drinking from puddles, finding shelter in a cave, and walking barefoot over rough terrain after

a van crash left her disoriented and stranded.

In a heartfelt statement shared by Western Australia Police, Ms. Wilga said she was “simply beyond grateful” to be alive. She explained that after her vehicle lost control and rolled down a slope, she suffered a head injury that left her confused, prompting her to leave the vehicle despite having supplies inside.

More than 30 km from the crash site, Ms. Wilga was eventually spotted by motorist Tania Henley, who called emergency services. Ms. Wilga described Henley as her “saviour and angel.” At the time of her rescue, she was suffering from dehydration, insect bites, an injured foot, and extreme exhaustion.

“I want to thank the medical team, the German consulate, and everyone who searched for me,” she said. “The strength to survive came from knowing people believed in me.”

Reflecting on the experience, she added, “Western Australia has shown me what true community means kindness, courage, and solidarity.”

Police praised the community and rescue teams involved, calling the outcome “sheer luck.” Ms. Wilga was last seen on June 29 in the town of Beacon before going missing.

She is now recovering in a hospital in Perth and says the ordeal has forever changed her view of humanity and belonging in a foreign land.

