



**Rescue, Rehab,
Release**
THE GOOLAH STORY

Adopt a Wild Koala
**WE NEED
YOUR HELP**

**Gum Leaf
Chemistry**
IT'S INTOXICATING!

RESCUE, REHAB, RELEASE – THE CROWDY BAY NATIONAL PARK GOOLAH STORY



Towels help to protect sore, burnt feet when climbing.

Rescued koalas are normally returned to the home range in which they are found.

The bushfires of 2019/2020 season will be seared into the souls of Australians forever. The Black Summer fires followed the worst drought in living memory, and the words ‘unprecedented bushfires’ was bandied around to describe events that no one had ever experienced nor wished to again.

As many of our readers know, the Port Macquarie Koala Hospital was right in the thick of it with burns and drought patients being continuously admitted over the many months.

Crowdy Bay National Park, located approximately 100 kms south of Port Macquarie, was just one of the areas our search and rescue teams operated in during the fires, bringing many burnt and dehydrated koalas into the Koala Hospital.

Late one afternoon, a National Parks and Wildlife Service Field Officer named Chris, was checking for fire activity down one of the burnt-out tracks. He came across a small koala curled up on the ground. Chris gathered the joey up and called the Port Macquarie Koala Hospital. He named the joey ‘Goolah’ after his uncle. Notably, ‘Guula’ means koala in the local indigenous language.

Crowdy Bay National Park Goolah had burns on both hind feet and over his rump. The joey was extremely dehydrated, ravenously hungry and severely underweight. Goolah’s needs were met immediately with the five-star service provided by the Koala Hospital. Staff and volunteers treated the little koala’s burns and Goolah went into the Intensive Care Unit for observation and care.

Goolah responded well to treatment and a couple of weeks later was transferred ‘off-site’ to one of two additional enclosures specially built to house the many additional koalas admitted during the fires - koalas that did not require further therapy, just

somewhere safe to shelter and quality leaf to eat. Goolah was kept in a small enclosure until reaching maturity and three kilograms in weight. He was then moved into a larger enclosure with several other young males.

Unfortunately, some months later Goolah developed symptoms of wet bottom - urogenital chlamydia. He was brought back into the Hospital for treatment. It is likely this disease had been transferred to him from his mother early in his development. Chlamydia commonly presents when koalas are placed under great pressure. For Goolah, suffering the long-term effects of drought, followed by a fierce bushfire, then losing his mother, and finally, being brought into captivity, was more



Chlamydia aka ‘wet bottom’ visible on Goolah’s rump.

than enough to cause distress to a young koala.

Goolah appeared to respond well to his chlamydia treatment, with the post treatment screen (under anaesthesia) indicating that everything had improved. Nonetheless some time later, the disease began to re-appear and a second round of medication commenced.

Once the second round of treatment completed, staff decided to simply leave Goolah be, no more intervention. He was allocated a quiet area at the back of the Koala Hospital, providing him with 'space' and lots of prime quality nutrition, to monitor his recovery.

Good news! Twelve months on and Goolah had remained disease free. The Koala Hospital does not normally keep koalas in care for so long, so staff felt it was time to consider release.

Rescued koalas are normally returned to the home range in

which they are found. However, Goolah's original rescue location still did not have a sufficient return of vegetation after such high intensity fires. So, the decision was made to release him, along with four other Crowdy Bay National Park koalas, just south of the National Park itself on private land, in prime quality koala habitat.

It was an emotional farewell to Goolah, as he was the last of the bushfire affected koalas to recover at the Koala Hospital enough to be returned to the wild. Sue Ashton, the President of the Port Macquarie Koala Hospital, who nursed him back to health at her property for four months, is delighted. "It is heart-warming to have watched this little koala go from being rescued, through months of treatment and to finally be released. He tells the Port Macquarie Koala Hospital story so well. Our goal is to rescue, rehabilitate and release every wild koala we can."



Release day has arrived!



Sue farewells our last bushfire patient.

CONTENTS

Rescue, Rehab, Release – The Goolah Story2	Hospital Happenings 11
Report by Clinical Director, Cheyne Flanagan.....4	Gum Leaf Chemistry – It's Intoxicating 12-13
Report by President, Sue Ashton5	The Power of Two 14-15
Koala Habitat Restoration on your Property6	News from the Yards 16
Adopt a Wild Koala7-10	

GUM TIPS is the official newsletter of Koala Conservation Australia Inc. and is published quarterly.

Editor: Elyane Byers (acting)

Contributors: Cheyne Flanagan, Sue Ashton, Elyane Byers, Pip Beale, Macleay Landcare Network, Rita Saunders, Jackie Salisbury, Sheila Bailey, Anne Ditton, Barbara Barratt

Photography (unless individually credited): Carole Grant AFIP FAPS, Scott Castle, Becky Harrington, Elyane Byers, Kelly Abley, Anne Ditton

Disclaimer Koala Conservation Australia Inc. and the Management Committee do not accept any liability for the results of any actions taken or not taken, on the basis of information given or discussed with groups or other organised events, meetings and/or for information provided by speakers or for any information published for or on behalf of the organisation, its organs and officers.



REPORT BY CLINICAL DIRECTOR, CHEYNE FLANAGAN

Well, we've faced many challenges since late 2019, particularly here on the Mid North Coast – drought, bushfires, 'pestilence' (Covid19), plague (mice) and more recently, flooding rains. Now the Autumn weather is beautiful, there is excellent foliage growth on the eucalypts and the koalas are happy.

Koala admissions into the Port Macquarie Koala Hospital have remained steady with the majority of patients coming from within the urban and coastal areas nearby, and some from west of the Great Dividing Range. As usual the main cause of admission is due to the disease Chlamydia which remains a frustratingly difficult area of koala veterinary care to achieve successful outcomes.

Beyond the veterinary and koala care focus of the Koala Hospital is the newer project for Koala Conservation Australia (KCA) and that is a Wild Koala Breeding Programme. The development

work involved is enormous, as this type of programme has never been attempted before in Australia, and we intend for it to meet rigorous scientific principles, and set the standard for others who wish to breed wild koalas in the future. Our main partner, Taronga Conservation Society, is working closely with us and we could not put this together without their advice, hard work and support. Other key partners, including Wildlife Genomics (Australian Museum) and the Koala Health Hub (University of Sydney), are also contributing to the research design of the project as the Wild Koala Breeding Programme will be, in fact, a very large research project in itself.

With the scientific side of the project underway, there have also been many other collaborations to do with the actual design of the buildings, yards and other infrastructure specific to the Wild Koala Breeding installation. We

are very confident this entire facility will be nothing short of spectacular.

In addition to the Wild Koala Breeding Programme there are a number of critical research projects being developed, that are particularly focussed on koala health. The details of these projects are still in the early stages so shall be revealed at a later date. However, all in all, a very busy and exciting time for us here at Koala Conservation Australia and our many partners.

Whilst all these projects are underway, our wonderful volunteers continue to work hard in yard duties, rescues, guiding, administration, retail, educating, home care, maintenance, tree planting and the many other jobs that need doing on a daily basis. Without this team of volunteers, the Koala Hospital simply would not 'be'.

Stay safe everyone.

Sad news from our Vet clinic...

As readers of March 2021 Gum Tips will know, koalas Lismore Rose and Lismore Myrtle were carrying pouched young, earlier this year. Sadly, each koala experienced ill health and their pouched young died.

Here at the Koala Hospital we always work toward returning koalas in our care to full health, and the koalas seemed to be improving after their loss.

However, just prior to the print of this newsletter, in the space of a few days both Rose and Myrtle died. The two koalas have been sent to the University of Sydney for post mortem and histology investigations. Results so far show Rose had lymphosarcoma and we are yet to hear news on Myrtle.

It is terribly sad to have to farewell these two beautiful female koalas. They will be missed greatly by their many carers and adopters. Rest in peace Lismore Rose and Lismore Myrtle.



REPORT BY PRESIDENT, SUE ASHTON

While caring for wild koalas remains the Port Macquarie Koala Hospital's main focus, we are also busy working on the designs for two major projects – the redevelopment of the Koala Hospital itself, and the development of a new facility for wild koala breeding.

The architects engaged to work on both projects, Allan, Jack and Cottier, have run numerous workshops to gain input into the designs from Project Planning Teams (PPT), with representatives from every part of Koala Conservation Australia's business and volunteers. Input has been gained from the local council, the local first nations people; the Birpai, business partners – Taronga Conservation, Forestry Corporation of NSW, National Parks and Wildlife Service and face to face briefings have been held with volunteers. The feedback has been incorporated into the concepts for a final review.

It's been a long process but one aimed at including all stakeholders and achieving the best outcomes for koalas in our care and for Koala Conservation Australia.

The new design for the Koala Hospital gives an immersive,

visitor experience where they walk amongst the trees and view koalas in a natural, bushland setting. Leaf storage and preparation will become features that visitors can view and the clinic will have a large viewing window, enabling people to watch koala care procedures.

The designs for the Wild Koala Breeding facility to be located in the Cowarra State Forest, west of Port Macquarie, are also close to being shared with stakeholders.

Our plan is to close the existing Koala Hospital and temporarily transfer our koalas and all operations to the Cowarra breeding facility once it has been built. This will enable the Koala Hospital to continue caring for koalas and the business to continue operating. We will then demolish the Port Macquarie Koala Hospital site completely and build a new, Koala Hospital. The Cowarra facility will be ready for occupation towards the end of 2022 and the first stage of the transfer will occur then.

Next steps on these exciting projects are to finalise the two site designs and then approach builders. Final designs will be shared in the next issue of Gum Tips.

Good News - following on from the Goolah story...

Message from National Parks Ranger and property owner Andy. "I crossed paths with Goolah this morning. I heard him and his girlfriend calling last night (2am to 5am), and a brief search just before dawn found them both high up in some recovering Swamp Mahogany. Where I found them was only maybe 500m north of the release site, seems like he has staked a claim on the patch. Nice to hear koalas calling here again."

KOALA HABITAT RESTORATION ON YOUR PROPERTY

Threats, such as habitat loss, drought, and fires are placing pressure on Koala populations, increasing the importance of all remaining habitat, including on private properties. If you live in an area with known koala populations nearby then your property is likely to be used by koalas.

Finding signs of koala habitation can be difficult and landholders may not be aware that their property supports Koala habitat. You can recognise Koala habitat by Eucalypt forest with a significant proportion (approximately one-third) of preferred koala food trees.

Koalas prefer a mix of tree ages with young trees used for browsing and older trees used for resting. Shelter trees with dense foliage are also used to stay cool during hot conditions, to evade threats, or for other behaviours. So, a good habitat will have a combination of suitable food trees, be continuous and connected, have access to shelter, and be safe from threats.

Priority should be given to protecting existing Koala habitat, and then if possible, expand habitat areas and enhance the connectivity between these areas. Habitat corridors help to link larger areas. Ideally, these corridors

should be at least 20m wide to reduce 'edge effects' such as predation, weed invasion, and heat stress.

Trees growing in wetter areas such as riverbanks, creek lines, and wetlands do provide a better koala food source. However, any increase in habitat area and connectivity is of benefit, particularly when habitat areas are away from potential hazards such as roads and domestic dogs.

If done correctly, tree planting is an excellent method to restore or create Koala habitat. If koalas are present they can use new plantings in as little as 3-5 years.

Allowing vegetation to naturally regenerate is often the easiest way to increase habitat. You may need to install fences to manage livestock, control weeds, or undertake planned burning to trigger natural regeneration. When natural regeneration is insufficient, tree planting will be needed to restore habitat.

When choosing trees for Koala habitat plantings you should



Watering in newly planted seedlings.

include Koala food trees, nitrogen-fixing species, and shelter trees. For best results, preference should be given to locally occurring species.

Remember your property also provides habitat for a range of other wildlife. Maintaining all the different habitat types on your property is the best way to support this biodiversity.

More information on Koala habitat restoration is available in the publication 'Koala habitat revegetation guidelines: A practical guide to identify, connect and revegetate koala habitat in New South Wales, published by the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment. For similar guidelines for other States in Australia please contact your equivalent State Government body. For Koala Habitat Planting guides and Plant Lists please contact your local Landcare.

Thanks to Macleay Landcare Network Inc. for this contribution.

Adopt a wild koala



RESCUE AND CARE FOR SICK AND INJURED KOALAS

The uniquely Australian koala is fighting for its very survival and needs your help. Habitat clearance, disease, and injury from car impact and dog attacks are putting overwhelming pressure on their numbers and long-term survival is by no means assured.

The Port Macquarie Koala Hospital rescues and cares for sick and injured koalas from all over New South Wales, returning them to the wild, or providing sanctuary for those that would not survive without care. The welfare, education and conservation programs at the Koala Hospital plus everyday operating costs all require funds.

When you Adopt a Wild Koala, you help to keep the important work going! You, your business, a friend or family member can each make a positive contribution to the survival of these marsupials.



Weighing in at the Koala Hospital.

eAdoption

Certificate sent by email as a printable file - \$40

Adoption package

sent by post and includes a Certificate, your chosen koala's story, a koala reference book, a Koala Hospital bookmark and the latest edition of our Gum Tips Newsletter - \$60 within Australia or \$70 for international.

Each adoption is a one-off payment valid for 12 months.



What happened to the funds raised during the fires?

During the bushfires that ravaged the east coast of Australia in the summer of 2019/20 a Go Fund Me account was set up to raise funds aimed at rebuilding wild koala numbers in NSW. People from all over the globe responded to the plight of the koalas and monies donated have been put aside (as Crowd-Sourced Funding legislation stipulates) for the development and build of this facility. The Wild Koala Breeding facility will be at Cowarra State Forest, Port Macquarie. Design concepts are currently being developed and we aim to start construction in 2022.

How can you help?

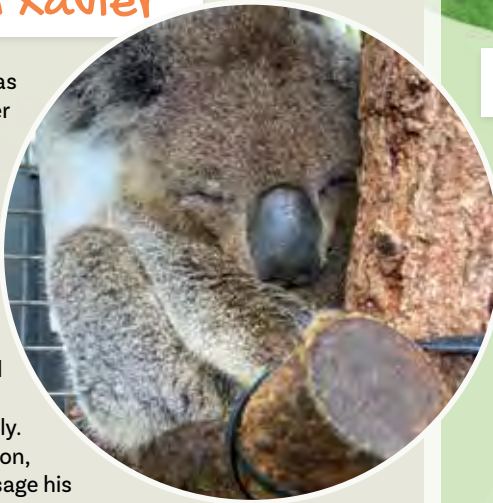
Turn over the page to view the exhibit koalas who reside permanently at the Koala Hospital. Choose the one (or more) you wish to adopt. Either use the QR code to direct you or go to 'Adopt' on our website www.koalahospital.org.au and follow the links.



Adopt and help save koalas

Barrington Xavier

(such a regal name) has been quite a character since he first arrived in 2013. Now of mature age he has become the messiest of eaters with advanced tooth wear causing him to drool and dribble! So, like a toddler we need to clean his mouth, chin and arms regularly. He enjoys this attention, especially if you massage his jawline with a warm wet flannel, softly talking to him. He relaxes so much he sometimes falls asleep, making cleaning so much easier! No snoring but, he does occasionally gurgle. If you stop, he'll soon let you know he wants more!



Byabarra Jones

Found by farmers wandering in their garden in 2017, Byabarra Jones or 'Jonesy', had suffered traumatic eye injuries as a young koala, leaving him with limited vision and minimal chance of survival in the wild. Jonesy had severe glaucoma requiring the removal of his right eye to relieve pressure and pain. Despite this challenge he often comes down from his gnyah to supervise the volunteer cleaning his yard - it has to be perfect. 'Jonesy' is now a chilled-out dude who especially loves Swamp Mahogany gum leaves for breakfast.



Evans Head CW

Let us introduce Evans Head Cangleska Wakan, known to his friends as CW. Originally found walking in circles by a member of the public - CW has received 5-star treatment and care for injuries consistent with being hit by a car. Brain damage, a distinct head tilt and an unsteady gait, will prevent him from returning to the wild but he will continue to have a good life here at the Koala Hospital. CW has been selected to take part in the koala's in captivity breeding program here at the Koala Hospital and has recently fathered a joey with another resident koala Lismore Rose.



Guyra Allan

Guyra Allan was found with severe bilateral kerato-conjunctivitis caused by the Chlamydia virus. Due to the severity and advanced state of the disease the hospital staff were unable to restore his vision, so to release him back to his home range was unrealistic. Although a little grumpy at times, Allan seems content with his life in captivity, especially with the daily yard service (plenty of fresh leaf within easy reach) and peace and quiet. He has become a popular and senior member of the Koala Hospital family.





Emerald Downs Mary

Emerald Downs Mary was admitted to the Koala Hospital in June 2016 after a golfer found her sitting on the ground and not moving. Mary had lost the sight of one eye through a prior injury and, with an infection in her remaining eye, it was discovered that she had become totally blind. Being only a juvenile koala Mary is now in permanent care as she would not survive in the wild.

Despite her vision issues Mary still loves to climb and can usually be spotted high in the tree in her enclosure.

Zenani



What a special member of the Koala Hospital family Zenani is. She has been with us since 2013 after being severely burned in a bushfire near Newcastle as a tiny joey. Zenani has permanent damage to her claws and feet which prevent her from climbing trees effectively, however she gets around in her yard with ease. With a mind of her own she can be 'precious', especially in the afternoon by refusing to eat her formula if she doesn't feel like it. She does however seem to enjoy the attention bestowed upon her by visitors to the Koala Hospital.



Wauchope Jade

In September 2020, the Koala Hospital was surprised to receive a call about a koala in Wauchope. Spotted sitting on a tree stump in the middle of town, Jade's appearance was a puzzle because records show that koalas have not been seen in Wauchope township for over 80 years. In fact, there are only a handful of koala food trees nearby, and certainly not enough to sustain a koala, suggesting Jade must have travelled a great distance. Until we can determine her point of origin she is unable to be released so she'll remain here at the Hospital.



Ocean Summer



Ocean Summer lost her mum in a motor vehicle strike as a joey. Although there was no obvious head trauma, she has minimal vision. She has grown into a healthy and confident koala who loves sitting on the roof of her gunyah making sure everyone can see her. A beautiful koala with the fluffiest ears and delicate face, she knows how to pose for the camera. Her model temperament shows through if you're slow getting her fresh leaf 'breakfast' ready, pacing around her gunyah roof. And if her yard-mate gets to it first, she can be quite vocal. She's such a diva!



Maria River Road Jan



Found abandoned, Maria River Road Jan had lots of gut issues in his young life. It was touch and go for quite a while, but he has certainly made himself at home and he loves supervising when the yard staff enter his enclosure. He checks to see if we've cleaned his gunyah, placed tasty fresh leaf in the containers and follows us around making sure we do a good job raking. Sometimes he tries to help by

trying to take the rake or upturning the bucket. He's a cheeky koala with a lovely soft round belly that loves attention.



Murwillumbah Bobby

Murwillumbah Bobby is a young male who has recovered well after a nasty dog bite to the lower spine. The treatment was long and complex, including physiotherapy, acupuncture even laser therapy, however even with intense work and healed wounds, Bobby has been left with a weak right hindlimb. Without good climbing and jumping abilities, it is unlikely he would survive in the wild. Here at the Koala Hospital he will receive all the care and attention needed to thrive.

Ruins Way Baz

Saved by National Parks and Wildlife Service Personnel as a very young koala Ruins Way Baz or 'Baz' was found with severe burns to his hands, feet and nose, his fur so singed he resembled a little dark brown ball. Baz's fur has since regrown but the extent of the burns has left his claws severely disfigured, with scar tissue on digits and his chin. Baz is considered non-releasable however, with lots of special care and smaller trees to climb, he has now become a beautiful permanent addition to the Koala Hospital.



Port Macquarie Koala Hospital is a not-for-profit charity funded through donations, bequests, the Adopt a Wild Koala and Tree Planting programs, and our souvenir shop sales. Further information about our Adopt a Wild Koala program and Frequently Asked Questions can be found on the koalahospital.org.au website. Alternatively email adoptions@koalahospital.org.au and our volunteers will respond to your queries.

HOSPITAL HAPPENINGS

KOALA FOOD TREE GIVEAWAY



The annual Koala Food Tree Giveaway took place in April, here at the Koala Hospital. Thanks to Forestry Corporation of NSW who supplied 25,000 seedlings made available to local landholders, schools, organisations and businesses for planting. The Tallowood, Swamp Mahogany, Grey and Red gum trees will help provide food and shelter for koalas in the Macleay Hasting area into the future.

RETURN AND EARN

Fundraising for the Koala Hospital at the six local Port Macquarie Hastings area Reverse Vending Machines (RVMs) kicked off in February 2021 and the support has been very welcome. Soon recyclers all over NSW, through more than 340+ RVMs, will be able to donate to the Port Macquarie Koala Hospital. Simply download the myTOMRA app from your preferred app store, create a personal profile, and select Koala Hospital as your preferred Charity each time you drop off your bottles and cans. Happy recycling!



MORIPO TREE PLANTING DAY

On a sunny Saturday in May, thirty people gathered at Koala Conservation Australia's Moripo Research Plantation to plant 400 trees. A big thank you to volunteers from Koala Conservation Australia, Conservation Volunteers Australia, Landcare, Tacking Point Lions Club and all the families who joined us to help feed future koalas. The Moripo Plantation will be the source of leaf for koalas at the Wild Koala Breeding facility.



RECYCLED KOALA ART



Assembled from a disassembled original artwork, copied and reproduced in MDF, vinyl, ceramic, fabric, and machine cut plastic from end-of-life recycled containers and paint, this incredible artwork is just part of a range of pieces by Artur Bordalo II, a reinvention artist based in Portugal. Monies raised from the sale of this artwork and its many replicas has resulted in donations of over \$45k to the care of koalas. Many thanks to Artur Bordalo II. www.bordaloii.com

GUM LEAF CHEMISTRY – IT'S INTOXICATING



Koalas famously eat eucalyptus leaves, and they are one of the very few mammals that can. Eucalyptus leaves contain a veritable cocktail of toxins that koalas have evolved the special ability to manage in their diet. It is the blend and concentration of these toxins, called 'plant secondary metabolites' (PSMs) that largely determine which leaves koalas choose to avoid, which ones they choose to eat, and in what quantities they can safely consume them.

Naturally, the mixture and concentration of these metabolites will vary between different species of eucalypt tree. Interestingly though, PSMs can also differ

between individual trees of the same species. So, you can have two trees of the same species standing side by side and one may be completely inedible to koalas (due to its high PSM concentration) and the other may be totally irresistible due to its low PSM concentration!

'Koalas are experts at detecting the chemicals in a gum leaf'

So, a koala sitting in a eucalypt forest has a literal buffet of leaves, but the trees all have varying amounts and mixtures of PSMs.

It is the koala's job to determine which leaves to eat and how much they need, in order to meet their nutritional needs without intoxicating themselves. Of course, Koalas are experts at detecting the chemicals in the leaf and choosing accordingly.

To give an example, in the Port Macquarie Koala Hospital (PMKH), the koalas are often provided with Tallowwood (*Eucalyptus microcorys*) as this tree is on the list of preferred koala food trees. Tallowwood always has a very high protein content, making it appealing nutritionally, but the concentration of a group of PSM toxins called unsubstituted B-ring flavones (UBFs) varies wildly.



Swamp Mahogany at Maria River plantation.



Goolah with a mouthful!



Young eucalypts at Maria River plantation.

UBFs deter koala feeding above a certain concentration. Below this concentration the koalas will eat a lot of Tallowwood to access all that protein. Above this concentration they will eat less and less, as the concentrations of UBF's become too much, the koala will not be able to eat it at all. That is one reason why, on some days when we offer the koalas Tallowwood, they eat lots of it, but on other days they might not eat it at all.

Unlike koalas, humans can't tell what the concentration of PSMs will be, unless we do laboratory testing. That's why when koalas are in the Hospital's care, it is

important to always offer a choice of leaf, so that they have the option to eat something else at the buffet if a particular offering is too toxic.

Koala Conservation Australia (KCA) currently has two young eucalypt plantations from which browse (leaf) will be harvested for koalas (residing at the Koala Hospital) in the future. It will be important to properly manage the plantations from a nutrient and PSM perspective to ensure that the leaf harvested from the plantations will be palatable and nutritious to aid the koalas in their recovery.

The Koala Hospital team is assembling research projects to help develop best practice management of the plantations as well as to understand how the koalas in the Hospital respond to leaf with different compositions. This knowledge means decision making about what leaf to offer the koalas is evidence based. Plus, leaf waste can be minimised while we aid the koalas in making a timely recovery from their illnesses!

Thanks to Dr Phillipa Beale for this article.



BOOST YOUR BUSINESS WITH OUR SERVICES

Snap Port Macquarie 1/106 Horton St (02) 6583 7544 portmacquarie@snap.com.au

Snap Port Macquarie are proud print sponsors of Gum Tips Quarterly Magazine

THE POWER OF TWO

There are lots of clichés – ‘it takes two’, ‘twice as nice’, ‘two heads are better than one’, ‘none of us is as smart as all of us’ and many other phrases, all alluding to the benefits of working with others to achieve your goals.

As a Not-for-Profit, with limited resources, this is proving true for Koala Conservation Australia (KCA). The organisation, trading as Port Macquarie Koala Hospital, has only five paid positions and 170 volunteers. Our staff and volunteers are the backbone of the organisation and all we’ve achieved, and continue to do, could not have been done without their wonderful support.

However, some of our goals are beyond these hard working teams and individuals. One goal is, ‘educating the public about wild koalas’. We do this by providing free entry to the Port Macquarie Koala Hospital where visitors can experience seeing koalas up close and learn about the key threats, diet, breeding, habitat and other important facts.



Spreading the word to the wider community has been greatly assisted by a KCA partnership with NRMA Insurance, who are spreading the word that ‘Every Home Is Worth Protecting’ with their current campaign featuring the Koala Arlo and Ranger Sammy.



More locally, the KCA has partnered with the Tacking Point Lions Club to roll out ‘Koala Smart’, a project aimed at inspiring, motivating and educating primary and secondary school students, and the local community, to participate and embrace change to slow the decline in koala populations. This free educational program can be reached via the Port Macquarie Koala Hospital’s website at <https://www.koalahospital.org.au/page/koala-smart/>

Many other supportive organisations are partnering with the Koala Conservation Australia to achieve its longer term, breeding, and conservation goals. In a world first in December 2020, the Port Macquarie Koala Hospital announced it will partner with several leading research institutions to breed koalas for release to the wild.



Taronga Conservation Society Australia is partnering with the KCA to design and implement the breeding program. Taronga already plays a major role in the conservation of native species, with active involvement in breed and release programs, protecting and sustaining wildlife in their natural habitats, and providing support for work in the field through national and international conservation partnerships.



The Australian Museum will assist the breeding programme with its expertise in wildlife genomics and ecology to further develop effective koala conservation strategies. The Museum has collections and a vast DNA library they can draw upon. By applying a range of DNA-based tools they can provide a greater understanding of the unique history and habitat requirements of specific threatened populations. This will allow us to develop more targeted management strategies to protect the iconic Australian marsupial, the koala.



Koala Health Hub at the University of Sydney are long time collaborators of the Port Macquarie Koala Hospital, providing expertise in koala diseases and collaboration on projects ranging from chlamydia to joey ill-thrift (delayed development). The Koala Health Hub also host a forum for koala veterinarians which has proven an especially useful resource for sharing of knowledge with other koala clinicians.



The Koala Recovery Partnership is a three-year project overseen by the Mid North Coast Joint Organisation (MNCJO). They conduct a variety of educational, scientific and on-ground projects that will contribute to protecting koalas and their habitat in the Hastings-Macleay Region.

The MNCJO is co-funded by the NSW Government Saving Our Species Iconic Koala Program, the Port Macquarie Koala Hospital and the Port Macquarie-Hastings and Kempsey Shire Councils. A full

time Koala Ecologist has been employed by the MNCJO to lead the project to ensure its objectives are achieved.

The Koala Recovery Partnership project seeks to improve koala conservation across the Hastings-Macleay Region by engaging with landholders, the community, research groups and government sectors to achieve better on-ground outcomes and on-going viability and sustainability for this iconic and important Australian species.



Forestry Corporation of NSW (FCNSW) has put aside land for the KCA breeding facility in the Cowarra State Forest. This forms part of FCNSW's program for wildlife recovery and education. The Cowarra development will showcase modern forest management and traditional cultural land management practices to the wider community.

Koala Conservation Australia has set some ambitious goals, some of which we cannot achieve by ourselves.

Enter our many partners, each of which brings together different and important skills, experience and knowledge to the projects we are working on. Together we aim to achieve great things for the future of our precious, wild marsupial, the koala.

Koala Emergency Rescue Line - Phone (02) 6584 1522

If you sight a koala in distress - call our
Rescue Line 24 hours a day / 7 days a week

E: info@koalahospital.org.au    

General Enquiries: 02 6584 1522

www.koalahospital.org.au

NEWS FROM THE YARDS

Inverell Megan was rescued late in 2020. Dehydrated, emaciated with maggots on her rump, it took many months of care for her to recover. Her recent trip home for release, took over five hours, but Megan contentedly snoozed in her travel (laundry) basket. Once the basket was opened, Megan didn't pause long before a climb, a backward glance to the team and then up, up, up to browse.



Tree Tops Elizabeth and joey have recently been spotted by volunteer Kelly, out in the wild after release last September. Elizabeth and joey seemed healthy and well.

During the flooding rains in March, this photo of a very wet Lismore Rose was taken by a yard volunteer. Good to know that Koala fur is all-weather.

Joey faces spotted peering out of the browse (leaf) in the Koala Hospital (de-humanising) yards recently. Youngsters out learning the ropes and preparing for life in the wild.

