

KOALA

HABITAT

The Koala lives in eucalyptus forests in the drier regions of Eastern Australia, across New South Wales, South Australia, Queensland, and Victoria.^[1] They spend most of their time in eucalyptus trees,^[2] where they sleep for up to 20 hours a day.^[3]

DIET

They are one of few animals able to eat eucalyptus plants due to the toxins in the leaves that most animals cannot digest safely.^[4]

REPRODUCTION

The males begin mating around 3 to 4 years old, and the females start around 2 years old. The joey is born after just 35 days but spends around 6 months in its mother's pouch before spending up to 1 year riding on its mother's back.^[5]

THREATS

The clearing of trees leads to the separation of populations, which causes isolation and breeding within the same family.^[6] Higher temperatures and long-term drought conditions from climate change cause eucalyptus leaves to hold fewer nutrients, forcing them to travel on the ground between trees more often, making them more at risk of being hit by a car or attacked by predators, such as dingoes, carpet pythons, and domestic dogs.^[7]

CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT

It is illegal to take or interfere with them in the Australian Capital Territory,^[8] New South Wales,^[9] Queensland,^[10] South Australia,^[11] and Victoria without a permit.^[12]



"I Love My Moms" by Silverish Lily is licenced under [CC BY-SA 4.0](#)

DESCRIPTION

They are grey-brown with white undersides and large black noses. Females weigh 5 to 8kg, and males weigh 6 to 12kg.^[13]

SCIENTIFIC NAME

Phascolarctos cinereus^[14]

CONSERVATION STATUS

Endangered^[15]

CLASS

Mammal^[16]

LIFESPAN

Between 13 and 17 years^[17]

POPULATION SIZE

Around 287,830 and 628,010^[18]

FUN FACT

When Koalas are born, they must eat their mother's faeces, referred to as "pap", to gain the essential bacteria to break down eucalyptus leaves! They only do this once so that the beneficial bacteria will stay in their stomach for a lifetime.^[19]

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- [3] DES, 'Koala facts', Behaviour.
- [4] DES, 'Koala facts', Diet.
- [5] DES, 'Koala facts', Reproduction and lifecycle.
- [6] DES, 'Koala facts', Habitat and disruption.
- [7] World Wide Fund For Nature Australia (WWF-Australia), 'Koalas', *WWF-Australia* (2018), Threats, <https://www.wwf.org.au/what-we-do/species/koala#gs.u0m05s>, accessed 6 Apr. 2023.
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- [14] DES, 'Koala facts', Scientific name.
- [15] DES, 'Koala facts', Conservation status.
- [16] DES, 'Koala facts', Classification.
- [17] DES, 'Koala facts', Reproduction and lifecycle.
- [18] Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW), 'National Koala Monitoring Program', *Australian Government* (19 May 2023), 2023 Koala population estimate, <https://www.dcceew.gov.au/environment/biodiversity/threatened/species/koalas/national-koala-monitoring-program>, accessed 21 May 2023.
- [19] DES, 'Koala Facts', Diet.