



Koala

Fast Facts



Scientific Name: *Phascolarctos cinereus*

Conservation Status: Vulnerable

Extinct

Threatened

Least Concern



Body Length: 70–80 cm

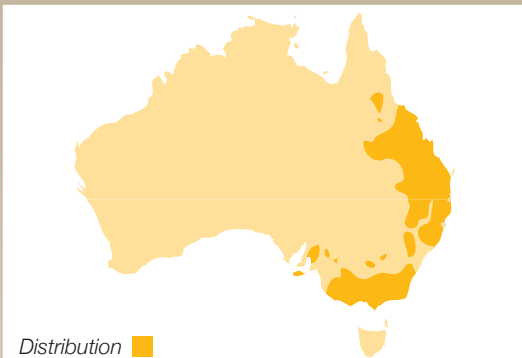
Weight: 4–14 kg

Gestation: 30–35 days

Number of young: 1

Habitat: Eucalypt forest and woodland

Distribution: Eastern Australia



Distribution ■

Description

Koalas have grey and white fur. Their feet are adapted for tree-climbing with thumbs on all four feet and sharp claws. Females have a backward-facing pouch.

Diet

Koalas are herbivores and only eat eucalypt leaves. Koalas are only found in areas with suitable eucalyptus leaves.

Behaviour

They are mainly active at night, making loud grunts or squeals to communicate with one another and they spend most of the day sleeping or resting.

Threats

Many years ago, large numbers were killed for their fur. Now they are protected and habitat destruction and bushfires are their biggest threats. Koalas in some areas suffer from the disease chlamydia which is passed on usually through mating and affects the reproductive system and the eyes. In other areas, overpopulation of koalas is a real threat as areas of habitat are often not joined and they can eat out the food supply and starve.

Koalas are safe when in trees, however, when moving along the ground they can be easily attacked by ground predators such as dingos. To escape, they will climb trees or scratch with their sharp claws. Young koalas are sometimes struck by cars when crossing roads at night.

At Perth Zoo

Perth Zoo's koalas can be seen in the Australian Bushwalk.

DID YOU KNOW?

Each koala eats gum tips from 1,000 trees every year.

Koalas are excellent swimmers and are able to cross rivers in order to escape floods or bushfires.