

# NiE

**Noosa Bridge Club trumps four decades**  
**Scatty koala survey findings**  
 Animal droppings will help map surviving pockets

## Wordy news

**Scat**  
 - faeces, droppings or poo; the digested wastes left behind by animals.



## Did you know?

KOALAS themselves are protected by law, but there is currently no legislation that protects koala habitats in Australia.



# Koalas in crisis

THERE'S a crisis in our backyard that could see one of Australia's most famous creatures wiped from existence. A recent report by RSPCA and WWF-Australia highlights the worsening impact of tree-clearing across the East Coast that is putting koala populations under pressure. It has been found that in Queensland, koalas have declined by 53% over the past and future three koala generations. In New South Wales, koalas have declined by 26%. The koala was listed as "vulnerable" under the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act in 2012 with the Australian Koala

Foundation estimating there are fewer than 80,000 in Australia today. Habitat loss is the greatest threat to koalas. The main reasons for this are land clearing, bushfires and diseases of the koala's food source of eucalypts – the main koala food tree species are declining in number as a result of 'dieback'. The Australian Koala Foundation says because of the loss of habitat, about 4000 koalas are killed each year by dogs and cars. Roads, cars, domestic pets, lights and noise all result in unbearable stress, injury and often death of our iconic Australian animal – the koala.

### FURRY FACTS

- Koalas are marsupials – their young are born immature and develop further in a pouch.
- Baby koalas, known as joeys, are about 2cm long when born.
- Joeys live in their mother's pouch for about six months and remain with them for a further six months.
- Koalas are mostly nocturnal – awake at night and asleep during the day. They often sleep for up to 18–20 hours a day.
- Koalas in the southern parts of Australia are larger and have thicker fur than those in the north.
- Queensland, NSW, Victoria and South Australia are the only states where koalas are found naturally in the wild.
- Koalas live in tall eucalypt forests and low eucalypt woodlands.
- An adult koala eats about 500g–1kg of leaves each day.
- They get their name from an Aboriginal term meaning 'no drink' because koalas get almost all their moisture from the leaves they eat and rarely drink water.

### IN THE NEWS

**Lucky escape**  
 HITCH was out looking for a lady and a good time on the town on Saturday night when he was hit by a car. The four-year-old koala, appropriately named after his late-night hitch-hiking antics, was making his way across the Cunningham Hwy at Amberley when traffic was stopped to help the love-sick and injured animal to safety. Harvey's Towing driver Mick Watkins saw Hitch and stopped highway traffic in both directions so he could make it to safety. "We shoed him off the road, he didn't know what he was doing or where he was going," he said. Ipswich Koala Protection Society president Ruth Lewis said if Mr Watkins hadn't stopped the traffic, Hitch would likely have been hit and killed. "He was lucky he didn't get clobbered. "If someone had not stopped, he would more than likely be dead by the time the rescuer got there." Ms Lewis said the koala breeding season, a dry winter and land clearing were pushing koalas out of trees and onto the ground where they were in danger. "We've been called to 28 rescues in the last five weeks."

### CHECK IT OUT

**Kimby call out**  
 TO RAISE awareness of the koala crisis in south-east Queensland and NSW, Invisible Artists worked with WWF Australia on the KIMBY – which stands for Koala In My BackYard – campaign. Check out this video. [www.youtube.com/watch?v=TFiPAaXLDzk](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TFiPAaXLDzk)

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