

KOALA

Phascolarctos cinereus



FACTS AT A GLANCE

TYPE OF ANIMAL

Marsupial

OTHER NAMES

A young koala is called a Joey

FOUND WHERE

Along the East Coast of Australia

HEIGHT

Around 60 - 85cm

WEIGHT

Up to 14kg

CONSERVATION STATUS

Endangered

LIFE SPAN

10-12 years in the wild and up to 20 years in captivity

Koalas can be separated into two groups – Northern and Southern. Northern Koalas are smaller and lighter in colour than their southern cousins. This has come about due to adaption to the warmer climate in the north. Because Eucalyptus produces very low doses of nutrition and energy, Koalas sleep up to 20 hours a day to conserve their energy.

DIET

Although there are 700 different species of Eucalyptus trees in Australia, Koalas only eat about 60 of them. As fussy eaters, an individual may only have up to 5 or 6 of these as their staple diet. They tend to only eat the tips (young shoots at the end of the branches) which contain more nutrients and less toxins.

A Joey (baby koala) does not have the bacteria required to break down the toxins from these leaves, so to start the process they eat their mother's 'pap' (her poo).

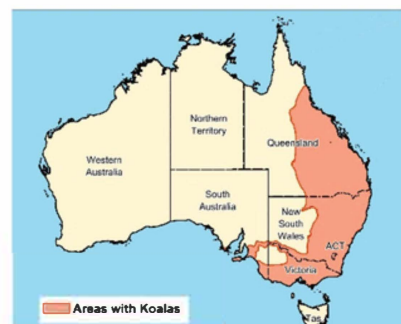
FUN FACTS

Koalas don't need to drink much water, due to gum leaves containing 80% water!

Koalas have small brains which helps them conserve energy!

REPRODUCTION

Being marsupials, Koalas give birth to live young, about the size of a jellybean. It climbs up into the mother's pouch where it connects itself to a teat and stays there for around 6 months. At around this time it will come out and climb onto its mother's back where she will carry it until it reaches approximately 12 months old. Chlamydia, a sexually transmitted disease, is a big threat to Koalas, causing ailments such as blindness and infertility.



Source: <https://www.savethekoala.com/about-koalas/distribution/>