



**Koala Health**  
**TICK**  
**INFESTATION**

**Hospital History,**  
**Part 3**  
**STILL THE ONLY**  
**HOSPITAL JUST**  
**FOR KOALAS**

**Find out more**  
**DO KOALAS**  
**DRINK?**

Our cover photo shows joey, Tasha, healthy and alert after treatment and home care. Just a few weeks earlier, Tasha was admitted to the Koala Hospital, sick from tick infestation.

---

One afternoon in late December members of the public were out walking in a reserve in Port Macquarie, and noticed a small joey curled up next to a tree. The joey was bleeding from around the neck region, so the Hospital was called to come and pick up “a joey attacked by a dog”.

Once the koala was admitted, Kooloonbung Tasha was found to be infested with ticks, not attacked by a dog. She was also anaemic,

# KOOLONBUNG TASHA

---

listless and very unwell.

Young joeys can be separated from their mothers ending up on the ground in a weakened state, placing them at risk of tick infestation apart from all the other risks they face (see later article *Do Ticks Cause Problems for Koalas?*).

There is a great likelihood that, as a result of the current drought in NSW and along the coast, the mother may not have been able to sustain the care of this joey and abandoned Tasha.

Interestingly we have had three more admissions of young joey koalas around the same time;

two were also tick infested, had anaemia and were also very unwell. The other joey was suffering from a chlamydia infection likely passed down from her mother.

Two joeys are still in home care and are doing extremely well, whilst one is now in the pre-release rehabilitation yard along with Kooloonbung Tasha.

Once Kooloonbung Tasha and the other three joeys gain a bit more weight, and are fully rehabilitated for life in the wild, they will be released in the next few months into one of our excellent sites to begin life as part of a new koala population.

## FREE KOALA FOOD TREE DISTRIBUTION IS ON AGAIN

---

The Koala Hospital in Port Macquarie will be distributing free koala food trees again this year. The successful program last year saw 10,000 trees distributed in only 10 days to interested people and organisations.

The program this year is expanded with more trees - 25,000 in all - and also four different species to suit different soil and habitat locations: Tallowwood, Grey Gum, Forest

Red Gum, Swamp Mahogany. A tree planting guide is also available for your advice to improve tree survival.

Contact the Koala Hospital on (02) 6584 1522, or email [info@koalahospital.org.au](mailto:info@koalahospital.org.au) if you are interested in larger plantings, or just call in to pick up smaller numbers.

Starting early March 2019 and into April or until all the trees are gone.



*Hospital Habitat Coordinator, Steve Withnall, displays one of the thousands of koala food tree seedlings.*

# REPORT BY PRESIDENT, JANE DUXBERRY

## The Hospital has been very busy over the major holiday season.

Another year is well underway and we have been experiencing very high temperatures, giving us more concern about fires. There was a fire in the coastal area south of the Port Macquarie Golf Course in early January, which was deliberately started when a car was set alight on a bush track. The fire team went in for half a day to check if any koala habitat had been affected, fortunately it was not the case. Sadly however, a number of possums and other small animals were affected.

We have had a number of rescues in December and January and three of these were young joeys, who had been separated a little too early from their mothers and were all tick affected. There are two females called Luna and Tasha and a male named Trevor. Luna was the first admitted of the three

and I was part of the rescue team of two; luckily she was in a small tree and not too high up making it a little easier to catch her. At first we thought she had a head injury due to the presence of blood and dirt, but then we found the ticks. We were called out for Tasha a week later and you can read more about Tasha in the cover story of this issue. Trevor came next and he is younger than Luna and Tasha. All three were placed in home care and Luna and Tasha are already back at the Hospital in the joeys' pre-release yard. Trevor is doing well and should be joining them shortly, along with a fourth joey who has been recovering in home care from a chlamydia infection.

The Hospital has been very busy over the last few weeks as it was the major holiday season. We have experienced once again an influx of holiday makers to the area and are always happy to welcome them to our Hospital and showcase the



work that we do in rescuing and treating each koala. We are also committed to increasing awareness of the plight of these wonderful animals and advising how they can be helped in any way. The generosity of our visitors over the period is to be commended, and we are very grateful for all the support the public gives us.

On Wednesday 6th February we had a visit from the District Governor of Lions, David Emanuel, and his wife and fellow Lion, Jill, as we are jointly involved in a Lions Club project. They enjoyed seeing the Koala Hospital and were extremely impressed with the work we do; we are very much looking forward to working together.

We would love to see you when you venture our way; we are open seven days a week and if you see a sick or injured koala just give us a call (02 6584 1522) and our rescue team will respond.

## CONTENTS

|  |   |   |    |
|--|---|---|----|
| Kooloonbung Tasha .....                            | 2 | Still the World's Only Hospital Just For Koalas ..... | 8  |
| Report by President, Jane Duxberry .....           | 3 | Koalas Don't Drink: Fact or Fiction? .....            | 10 |
| Report by Clinical Director, Cheyne Flanagan ..... | 4 | Koala Crazy .....                                     | 12 |
| Hospital Activity/Lucky Newcomers to Port .....    | 5 | News Stories .....                                    | 14 |
| Do Ticks Cause Problems For Koalas? .....          | 6 | Thank You Page & Thumbs Up .....                      | 15 |

Erratum: We apologise for an error in December 2018 Gum Tips. On page 5, in the article entitled *Anne's First Day At Preschool!*, the first sentence should read: *Congratulations to Anne Round, our new Education Coordinator.*

# REPORT BY CLINICAL DIRECTOR, CHEYNE FLANAGAN

---

For those that doubt that climate change is happening, they only need to see the extreme heat waves, the horrible droughts and now extreme flooding in the north of our country. So many species of wildlife are suffering. Koalas already struggling with loss of habitat are now faced with heat they cannot deal with and trees that have no moisture. The NSW and Queensland koala populations, already in serious decline, really don't need these horrific heat events and bushfires as well.

Over summer we have certainly admitted koalas with heat related issues plus a number of chlamydia patients as well. Chlamydial infection does tend to rise towards the end of the breeding season but when conditions become extremely dry this in itself precipitates infections to emerge. The answer at the moment is lots of good rain followed by voting for politicians

who are willing to do something to arrest climate change.

On a brighter note, it has been inspiring to see so many visitors here to the Hospital over the Christmas period, with a large proportion being young people and children. It's great to see they are so interested in wild koalas - our future wildlife warriors in the making.

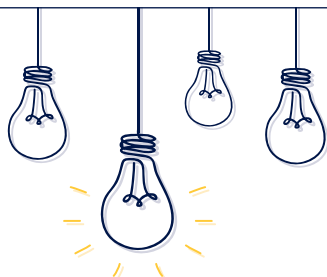
Also on another positive note, the NSW government is endeavouring to try to address some of the major issues threatening the survival of koalas. Some tracts of land have been purchased for koala habitat, plus some State Forest has been turned over and earmarked for koalas as well. In the greater scheme of things it's not a lot but it is a start! Workshops are occurring to address the lack of veterinary support and to assist in not only getting vets on board but to teach them what to look for and what to

treat. The wheels turn slowly but they are indeed moving. It is great to see.

On that very subject the Koala Hospital is teaching a koala workshop to veterinarians in western Victoria at the end of February. This has been organised and funded by IFAW (International Fund for Animal Welfare) who do amazing work in Australia to help our native fauna. All of these veterinarians are in locations where koalas are likely to be admitted to their clinics so this workshop will assist them in diagnostics and treatment options. Great one IFAW!

The exhibit yards and other infrastructure at the Hospital are about to undergo a 'facelift' to improve the visitor experience. The more the visitors know about the plight of the wild koala the more they can help us.

And finally...pray for good rain.



**Got a snappy idea?  
We'll help bring it to life!**

**Snap Port Macquarie**

110 William Street Port Macquarie P: 02 6583 7544

E: portmacquarie@snap.com.au [www.snap.com.au](http://www.snap.com.au)

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





# LUCKY NEWCOMERS TO PORT



'You know there are koalas in this area!' said the owner on arrival at our new home...

Last April, Irene and I relocated from Sydney. Keen travellers and animal lovers, we have been so fortunate to see some incredible wild animals and plant life on our trips. Koalas in their natural state, however, would be a first for us.

My first sighting of a koala came in September. On a morning walk, a feisty koala ran across my path on The Ruins Way. Other sightings came thick and fast... Dixie Park, Pacific Drive at Flynn's Beach, Lake Innes Nature Reserve: the latter, a male whose aggressive advances were roundly rejected by a female.

Then, one December evening, little scat torpedoes were littered all over our driveway. Looking up into the tree, we spotted our first 'resident' koala, sheltering from an impending thunderstorm in our front yard. On examination, our camera revealed that it was a mother nursing a healthy little joey.

Mother and joey have visited us on several more occasions, sometimes in the neighbouring reserve, but also visiting our front yard again.

Our multiple sightings all over Port now remind us to drive slowly, and keep watch for these beautiful but vulnerable animals whose habitat we are so lucky to share.

*Story and images courtesy of Colin Campbell*

## HOSPITAL ACTIVITY

(NOVEMBER 2018 – JANUARY 2019)

### REASON FOR ADMITTANCE TO KOALA HOSPITAL

|                        |     |
|------------------------|-----|
| Chlamydia              | 19  |
| Motor Vehicle Accident | 6   |
| Dog Attack             | 4   |
| In dangerous location  | 15  |
| Other                  | 23* |

### OUTCOMES

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Released following health checks and if needed, treatment | 22 |
| Continuing to undergo treatment or in homecare            | 13 |
| Euthanased or dead on arrival of rescuer                  | 32 |

*\*Unusual admissions this quarter included a koala who was attacked by cattle, a train fatality and a koala injured in a territory dispute.*

# DO TICKS CAUSE PROBLEMS FOR KOALAS?

---



*A joey admitted to the Hospital, infested with ticks.*

As the climate changed on the Australian continent, eucalypt trees began to appear and evolved to cope with the drier climate. Koalas have existed in various forms for the last 5 million or so years. Koalas also have evolved to occupy the eucalypt forests and live on a diet of its foliage. Koalas to this day cannot survive without eucalypt trees.

There are a large number of tick species in Australia who have found many niches to occupy and even though it's hard to imagine, they too have a place in the wider Australian ecosystem.

Koalas have lived alongside ticks for millions of years and have certainly adapted to cope with their presence. The vast majority of koalas are completely unaffected by small amounts of ticks feeding on their blood.

The paralysis tick (*Ixodes holocyclus*) commonly found in Queensland and NSW has a justified reputation for causing illness in humans and can be fatal to dogs, cats and even young cattle.

The paralysis tick is commonly found attached to many adult koalas with no ill effects evident. It is not unusual for staff at the Koala Hospital to find two or three paralysis tick females (it's only the female tick that feeds on blood) embedded normally into the neck skin of an adult koala – the koala remains bright, alert and not bothered at all.

The other commonly found tick on koalas is called 'the marsupial tick' - (*Ixodes tasmanii*). Again 6-10 engorged ticks on a koala is not unusual, with the ticks eventually dropping off to the ground to continue their various cycles.

Koalas along with all marsupials have these amazing "syndactyl" claws which are two digits on each back foot that have a skin covering that turns them into "one" digit. These claws are used for grooming their fur and also to pull out ticks. A very clever tool indeed.

Very old emaciated koalas or adults who are extremely sick for another reason, end up sitting on the ground in a weakened state. These koalas can become infested with ticks – some with as many as a hundred ticks feeding on them at once and being so weak they are unable to groom themselves. These koalas become very anaemic and have oedema (swelling of the face) and more often than not they die.

This phenomenon occurs in other species of native wildlife as well.

## Ticks are opportunistic and feed while they can.

---

A tick infested snake, blue tongue lizard and possum for example is usually very sick for another reason. Ticks are clever and very opportunistic and jump on board an animal they know will not be able to remove them and they feed while they can. Nature in action.

Young joeys particularly during the summer months can be admitted to the Hospital suffering tick infestation. Usually this results from joeys being separated from their mothers (lots of reasons here) and in their weakened state, they end up sitting on the ground. Again ticks grab the opportunity and begin feeding on the joeys whose immature immune system and weakened state render them helpless. The joeys who are already unwell, more often than not, will die in the wild.

If they are admitted to the Hospital, they usually present as very anaemic, listless and flat. Many continually ooze blood as their ability to clot at the bite site is reduced.

Thankfully we appear to have reasonable success with treating these joeys with the majority ultimately being released fit and healthy.



*Kooloonbung Tasha, who has recovered well from tick infestation after several weeks of treatment and home care.*

# STILL THE WORLD'S ONLY HOSPITAL JUST FOR KOALAS

---

In celebration of 45 years of koala care and protection, Gum Tips is taking readers through the history of Port Macquarie Koala Hospital in three parts.

---



*Clinical Director, Cheyne Flanagan, addresses the annual WIRES Koala Rehabilitation Workshop. This event also welcomes attendees from other wildlife groups across the country. (Note koala is a taxidermied exhibit)*

## Part 3

This final part of the history of Port Macquarie Koala Hospital covers the last 20 years, and its transition to a research, training and education facility. 2005 marked further major growth in the size and facilities of the Hospital. A substantial bequest from a German benefactor enabled the current Hospital to be built, with a large treatment room (including public viewing window) and a souvenir kiosk. More intensive care units were added, and the outside yards were also redesigned, significantly increasing the holding capacity for sick, injured and orphaned koalas.

Port Macquarie locals, Jean and Max Starr, who opened the Hospital back in 1973, were not qualified scientists or veterinarians, but they were extraordinary 'ordinary' people who cared deeply about wildlife and the environment. Over the 70s and 80s through practical, pioneering work the Koala Hospital became a respected source of information on treatments for sick and injured koalas. At that time, there was still little research or knowledge elsewhere about rehabilitation of wild koalas.

## Hospital provides national and international koala advisory services

---

Over the last 20 years scientific research, and collaboration with research institutions has increasingly become an important aspect of the Koala Hospital's work. Staff and volunteers collect data and samples for numerous research projects for universities and museums, also government agencies and other wildlife organisations. The Hospital also conducts its own research projects. The Hospital has worked since the 1980s with the University of Sydney, and with other institutions such as Queensland University of Technology, University of the Sunshine Coast, Murdoch University in WA, Federation University in Victoria, and since the early 2000s with Bristol University in the UK. We commenced collaborative works with the Australian Museum's Centre for Wildlife Genomics in early 2012.

The Koala Hospital is a co-author on 12 published academic papers, including studies on koala diseases, drug efficacy, population dynamics,



distribution and behaviour. In 2019 the hospital aims to publish papers on its research into burns injuries and radio tracking projects. The Hospital sits on a number of expert panels for both the NSW government, for local government and for state agencies. The Hospital provides comment and submissions to other expert panels working for both state and federal government - on wildlife recovery, biodiversity, and fire management of habitat.

In 2013, the Hospital hosted the ground-breaking first National Koala Conference in Port Macquarie attended by academics, government agencies, vets and koala rehabilitators. This was followed by the second conference in 2017, with conferences now planned for every three years.

Today we are a recognised training facility for wildlife organisations, vets, zoologists and ecologists. The Hospital provides a national and international koala advisory service, and produces a Koala

Rehabilitation Manual which is now in its fifth edition and is sold throughout Australia and to zoos in Europe.

Port Macquarie Hastings Council and the Hospital have developed a Koala Application (not available to the public) which they use to capture and store data on koala activity, threats and disease statistics.

The Hospital is a co-investigator working with the Department of Primary Industries and Forestry Corporation NSW, looking at how wild koala populations utilize both logged and unlogged habitat within the NSW State Forests. This involves capturing and health screening koalas, fitting them with a radio collar and tracking their movements over a 12 month period. Information collected from these projects will assist in the management of wild koalas within the NSW State Forest system.

As an educational facility, we offer inspiring school programs

and resources. Talks by koala educationalists, information resources and the 'Koalaseum', a small koala museum, all provide in-depth, hands-on experiential learning. The Hospital also hosts international volunteers who travel from as far away as North and South America and Europe, to come and give their time freely in exchange for the experience of working closely with koalas.

## Now a research, training and education facility

As we progress into our 46th year, public support for the work of the Hospital has never been stronger and every year more than 100,000 Australian and international visitors bear witness to how much we all value the humble, iconic koala. With the help of all our wonderful donors and supporters, the Port Macquarie Koala Hospital pledges here and now to continue its commitment to improving the lives of koalas everywhere.



*Assistant Clinical Director, Scott Castle, releases a koala back to local bushland.*



*Clinical Director Cheyne Flanagan, and Assistant Clinical Director Scott Castle sedate a koala prior to screening.*

# KOALAS DON'T DRINK: FACT OR FICTION?

---

Koalas have evolved over millennia to live in Australia, today a predominantly arid continent, susceptible to the extremes of drought and floods. Indigenous people wove into their dreamtime stories, explanations for the koala's ability to survive on little drinking water; the word koala derives from an aboriginal word meaning 'little drink'. The koala's digestive system evolved over time to enable it to survive almost entirely on eucalyptus leaves, which are toxic to many other species. However, despite drinking not being a regular habit, the koala does need to obtain moisture from the leaves it eats. Koalas have very selective feeding patterns, not only because they need to select the least toxic leaves, but also because they need to find leaves with good moisture content.

Fast forward to the present day, and we now have strong evidence that climate change and increased intensity and duration of drought conditions in many areas of the koala's range, are unfortunately causing significant challenges - on top of other issues such as deforestation and habitat destruction. Recent research is now indicating declines in important koala populations owing to drought, decreasing water levels



*A thirsty koala laps water from a garden hose. Photo courtesy of Madz Piper.*

## The koala was licking bore water *Paul Sirovica*

---

in rivers and dams, and the lower moisture content in food leaves. There is evidence that drought will, in addition, increase the toxic compounds of certain species of eucalypt.

Increasing incidence and intensity of bushfires is another consequence of the continent's dry conditions, and puts further stress on the hydration of our koalas and their habitat, quite apart from causing injury and death.

Whilst all wildlife (and humans) suffer during drought, koalas are particularly susceptible, as they

can survive only in specific areas of the country. Much of their coastal habitat coincides with where we humans prefer to live, hence the issues with land clearing and development. Our inland koala populations particularly are suffering badly during prolonged and intense drought periods.

Enter universities and wildlife action groups in NSW and Queensland, who are recognising the issues, and are seeking to find ways to better support koalas in arid areas and during drought. One excellent example is in Gunnedah, NSW, where researchers from the University of Sydney have been working with local landowners to trial 'Blinky Drinkers', automatic-

## Help thirsty koalas by putting a water container in the fork of a tree

*Assistant Clinical Director, Scott Castle*

---

refilling water dispensers for wildlife. These water stations are positioned in trees so animals and birds can drink safely. During dry conditions, koalas have been among the regular visitors to these drinking stations, and recent fundraising by the university is enabling more 'Blinky Drinkers' to be rolled out in other areas.

Meanwhile here in Port Macquarie, the lack of rain over summer has generated interesting, close encounters for some locals.

One hot January afternoon, Port Macquarie resident, Madz Piper, and her young daughters were driving home from the shops, when they noticed a koala on a neighbour's lawn. Madz stopped the car and she and her girls watched the koala for a while, realising that it was drinking water from around a sprinkler. Although the sprinkler was turned off, it was still leaking some water over the surrounding grass, which the koala was lapping up. 'The koala must have been very thirsty because we watched it drink for between 5 and 10 minutes. It seemed like a long time.'

Early one morning, Paul Sirovica (one of the greenkeepers at Port Macquarie Golf Club) noticed a koala at the 6th green. Whilst koalas can be seen in the trees on the golf course, this was unusual because the koala was on the ground and close to the sprinklers watering the greens. Paul realised how thirsty the koala must be, because it was licking salty bore water from its arms and chest.

Alerting fellow staff to give the animal some space, Paul fetched a divot bucket full of fresh water. He gently placed the bucket close to the koala and moved away, and the koala began to drink. Some 15 minutes later, the koala had drunk its fill, and climbed back up into a nearby tree and slept for most of the day.

Scott Castle, the Koala Hospital's Assistant Clinical Director, agreed that koalas do suffer heat stress and explained that, 'Older koalas who aren't at the top of their game, can be severely affected'. Scott said, 'In dry conditions, it is a good idea to put water out for koalas, birds and other wildlife. For koalas it's best to position a water container in the fork of a tree, so the koala is less susceptible to predation'. Scott also advised people to, 'Place a rock or stick inside the container so smaller creatures who might fall in can escape the water'.



*A divot bucket of fresh water provides a welcome drink. Photo courtesy of Paul Sirovica.*



# KOALA KRAZY

---

It's true – everyone at the Koala Hospital is 'koala crazy', and proud of it too!

Passionate volunteers who love what they do, that's a big part of what makes the Koala Hospital such a special place.

Although a handful of paid staff are employed, including a Clinical Director, Assistant Clinical Director and an Administration Manager, the hospital remains highly dependent on an army of motivated volunteers. Literally all ages, they come from all walks of life. They hold voluntary positions of all kinds and become involved in a myriad of tasks.

Membership Coordinator, Rita Saunders, explains how varied the voluntary roles are. 'There are a number of areas open to volunteers including the Koala Hospital shop, yard work with the koalas, education, tour guides, rescues, administration roles, fundraising and even helping at our North Shore plantation. The Koala Hospital also provides opportunities for Duke of Edinburgh students as well as for international volunteers.'

Two of our longest-serving volunteers are Judy Stace and Marjorie Wholohan. They still enjoy working on koala care in the yards after 30 years' service each to the hospital!

Barbara Barrett has been volunteering for 18 years and became a home carer for koalas

two years in, after a local bushfire. These days, Barbara mostly home cares for orphaned joeys. It's a demanding commitment, with regular feeds required throughout the night over many months, and constant worry about the wellbeing of a tiny, vulnerable animal. But for Barbara the rewards are beyond measure, especially the 'satisfaction of rearing something so small, and then seeing them released.'

One of our newest volunteers is Sara Crane, a lawyer by profession. Sara became a volunteer at the Koala Hospital to learn and understand about koalas, something which she doesn't think she would be able to do anywhere else. Sara also enjoys working outside with her hands, so different to her day job. She says 'It is a great chance to be involved in Port Macquarie, get out in the community and meet local people.'

Although just 17 years old, Kjell Knable has already tried his hand at many voluntary roles at the hospital. Koala care, shop sales, tour guide, rescuer – Kjell enjoys them all, with his natural ability to work with both animals and people. Now in his final year at high school, Kjell plans to pursue a career in Australian wildlife. But wherever life takes him, Kjell knows the experience of working closely with koalas here is unforgettable.

Liz McConnachie worked most of her life as a Registered Nurse in busy hospitals, and loves the



*Sara Crane gives Elparra David his supplemental feed.*



*Kjell Knable freshens up the afternoon leaf.*



*Long serving volunteers, Judy Stace and Marjorie Wholohan.*



*Barbara Barrett and homecare joey, Long Flat Joy.*



*Liz McConnachie welcomes visitors at the souvenir shop.*



*Graham Hargreaves, North Shore Plantation Manager.*

## *So wonderful....the passion these volunteers have for the koalas in their care Facebook*

---

contrast of volunteering at a specialist hospital for koalas. Liz adores koala care but also enjoys her sales role in the souvenir shop. The shop is the first point of contact for visitors and Liz never tires of answering questions and talking to people from all over the world who come to experience the Koala Hospital.

Three years ago, Graham Hargreaves took on a very different voluntary role for the Koala Hospital, as manager of the North Shore Plantation. To date

approximately 4,000 koala food trees have been planted, destined to be a future larder for hospital patients, and the plantation is set to double in size in the next couple of years. Particularly through our long summers, Graham works very hard keeping the trees watered and healthy. It's a huge task and as the plantation grows, Graham is looking for more energetic volunteers to regularly help him!

So maybe you don't **have** to be 'koala crazy' to volunteer at the Koala Hospital, but it definitely

helps! Volunteers here are united by their care for the animals and the knowledge that together they are making a difference not only to local koalas, but to the survival of the species nation-wide.

Are you interested in joining the passionate and varied ranks of Koala Hospital volunteers? We regularly need enthusiastic new volunteers. Contact Rita Saunders, our Membership Coordinator at [membership@koalahospital.org.au](mailto:membership@koalahospital.org.au) to find out more.

## CHINESE TRAVEL TRADE VISIT

A Chinese travel delegation visited the Koala Hospital in late 2018, as part of a familiarisation tour of Port Macquarie and other tourist centres on the Mid North Coast. The Koala Hospital is recognised as a major tourist attraction in the area and regularly welcomes visitors from around the world. Hosted by Destination NSW, the group's itinerary will encourage more Chinese visitors to our amazing, beautiful region.

*Hospital tour guide, Mick Feeney (3rd from left, back row), pictured with the Chinese travel trade partners. Image courtesy of Port News.*



## KOALA HAS CT SCAN

In this photograph, Clinical Director, Cheyne Flanagan, carefully checks Oxley Highway Greenie, who was well sedated prior to her brain scan. This female koala was rescued when a driver called the Hospital after watching her walking in circles close to the highway. The results of the scan showed the koala had suffered a brain lesion which unfortunately was not treatable.

The Koala Hospital is grateful for the support from Port Macquarie X-Ray, a diagnostic imaging business who allow us to take koalas in for much needed scans.

*Image courtesy of Daniela Osiander*



## IN A GUM TREE NEAR YOU...

...there IS a koala! How lucky are we to share this beautiful area with wild koalas?

Pictured here is an older female, Gore Robin, resting in one of her favourite food trees growing right between a busy road and the multi-storey car park at Settlement City. Robin has lived all her 18 years in and around the town, and has survived a number of scrapes involving motor vehicles and a dog. A very successful Mum, she has raised multiple joeys. Robin is a timely reminder that we live in koala territory NOT koalas live in ours!

PLEASE drive slowly. PLEASE control your dog. PLEASE help reduce the death and injury toll.



## KOALA HOSPITAL'S 45TH ANNIVERSARY MORNING TEA

A morning tea was held to celebrate the Koala Hospital's 45th anniversary in early December. Port Macquarie MP, Leslie Williams, Port Macquarie Mayor, Peta Pinson and three generations of president joined former and current volunteers to celebrate 45 years of koala care and protection. Delicious refreshments were available to all, and a banner featuring the new Koala Hospital logo was unveiled in the Hospital's entry.

*Serious cake-cutting by (L - R) former president Bob Sharpham, Mayor Peta Pinson, current president Jane Duxberry, MP Leslie Williams, former president Eunice Moran. Image courtesy of Port News.*



## CHRISTMAS TREATS, KOALA STYLE

Koala Hospital patients were treated to some special fare in December, when Port Macquarie resident, Roger, alerted the Hospital to the *Eucalyptus nicholii* tree which a storm had felled on his property. Roger knew that *nicholii* just happens to be a favourite food for koalas, and he kindly telephoned the Hospital. He cut just enough leaf for the Hospital each day, and kept the rest watered and in shade, to keep it fresh over several days.

The Hospital thanks Roger for his thoughtful action, and the perfect Christmas present for the koalas!



Many local residents are happy for their koala food trees to be harvested twice a year by the Hospital's experienced leaf collectors, but we are always in need of more trees. If you have eucalyptus trees on your property and would like to have them assessed as potential food trees, please telephone the Koala Hospital on 02 6584 1522 during business hours.

### THANK YOU, HASTINGS SERVICES

A huge thank you to Hastings Services, who have donated their time and excellent services throughout 2018 to the Koala Hospital. Roof cleaning and gutter guard installation has all made a huge difference.

Already in 2019, Hastings Services have been back to help us out again, clearing large amounts of leaf, bark and timber debris, which have built up during recent high winds and storms. We all agree with Scott Castle, Assistant Clinical Director: 'Great work, by a bunch of great blokes – AGAIN!'

**GUM TIPS** is the official newsletter of the Koala Preservation Society Australia Inc. and is published quarterly.

Editor: Becky Harrington

Contributors: Cheyne Flanagan, Jane Duxberry, Becky Harrington, Sue Ashton

Photography (unless individually credited): Alison Robinson, Gaby Rivett, Becky Harrington, Sue Ashton

## THUMBS UP



### Thumbs Up

To the gentleman in Lighthouse Beach area who awoke one morning to the sound of a serious fight between two male koalas. Stepping outside and seeing fur all over the road, the gentleman rescued the injured party, wrapped him carefully in a towel and kept him safe in a duffle bag until Hospital volunteers arrived. Kennedy Clawed already had an ear tag and was known to the Hospital. He enjoyed a couple of weeks' rest and recuperation before being released.



### Thumbs Up

To Port Macquarie High School students who spent several days in December, working at the Hospital's North Shore plantation. These Year 9 and Year 10 students had finished their assessments for the academic year and were one of several volunteer groups from the school who worked at different locations in the community. Plantation Manager, Graham Hargreaves, was delighted by the work these energetic and enthusiastic young people put in.



### Thumbs Up

Across the miles to a young koala-lover in Belgium! Budding biologist, 9 year old Wolf, and his mother, wrote to the Hospital to request more information about koalas for a school project he is preparing. Wolf already knows a surprising amount about koalas, and is planning to work in Australia with his favourite animals in the future. We can only agree with Wolf, koalas are indeed a unique and amazing species! Good luck with your project and we hope your dream comes true, Wolf!

### Did you know...?

Koalas have 2 thumbs on each hand!

**Disclaimer** The Koala Preservation Society Australia Incorporated 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.



## 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](mailto:info@koalahospital.org.au)  koalahospital

General Enquiries: 02 6584 1522

[www.koalahospital.org.au](http://www.koalahospital.org.au)



*We invite you to our*



at the

# KOALA HOSPITAL

**Easter Saturday 20 April 2019**

**9am – 2pm**

Raising Funds For The Hospital's Koala Saving Work

**FREE ENTRY**

- Educational Displays
- Music
- Entertainment
- Barbecue Breakfasts and Lunches
- Talks by informative guides
- Gifts and Souvenirs
- Face Painting
- Raffle
- Devonshire Teas
- Market Stalls

If you or your business would like to donate towards the Open Day,  
or help in any other way, please contact the Hospital on 02 6584 1522

The Koala Hospital is located at the corner of Lord Street and  
Roto Place, Port Macquarie, NSW.

Parking at Roto House or on Lord Street.

**Koala Preservation Society Australia Inc.**

ABN 74 060 854 479 | PO Box 236, Port Macquarie NSW 2444

Licensed to rehabilitate and release sick, injured and  
orphaned native fauna under Licence No. 10044