



KOALAS IN CARE Newsletter

Servicing the Greater Taree, Great Lakes & Gloucester Areas

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24 Hr Koala Rescue Service

March 2006

02 6552 2183

Volume 2

SHIRE-WIDE KOALA PLAN OF MANAGEMENT IS IT A MYTH?

In March 1995, Greater Taree City Council set-up a 'Koala Plan of Management Steering Committee'. The Committee's role was to oversee the formulation of a Shire-wide Koala Plan of Management. The makeup of this Committee included representatives from Greater Taree City Council, National Parks & Wildlife, Koala Preservation Society - Manning Branch represented by Paul and Christeen McLeod (now KOALAS IN CARE Inc.), Forest NSW, Consultants and Community Members.

A Draft Project Brief to guide the making of the Plan had, as its introduction, "**Council recognises the special importance of the Koala and wishes to implement a Plan for the Management of Koalas throughout the Council area**".

The Committee engaged the 'Australian Koala Foundation' (AKF) (experts in this field) to undertake the work needed to compile the Plan. This project would also benefit from the AKF providing extra time and resources along the way to benefit the outcome for the Koalas of our area. The Committee guided and assisted the AKF during their work with the consensus on the presentation of the draft Plan that

it was a very credible document.

Despite the Committee investing nearly eight years guiding this process and believing the end product would provide koala habitat, and ultimately koalas, with a high level of protection, the draft Plan is still in limbo. Considerable funding was spent on vegetation mapping, associated field studies, data collection, analysis and research only to have the draft Shire-wide Koala Plan of Management rejected by the majority of Greater Taree City Council Councillors.

When formally presented to Council in October 2002, peripheral issues clouded the overall Plan and it was consequently shelved. The issues raised revolved around people and their opinions with no relevance to actual **koala preservation**.

Did Council really intend to protect koala habitat and koalas? Do they have any concern for the rapidly declining habitat, the effects of motor vehicle hits and the savage dog attacks that our koalas are facing on a daily basis?

Eleven years have now passed since the first Steering Committee meeting and the draft Plan has still not been implemented, koala habitat is still being decimated, koalas are still dying, koala numbers (compared to previous years re-

corded data) are considerably down and effects of disease increasing.

A recent development was the presentation to the GTCC Environmental Advisory Committee (KIC represented by Paul McLeod) of the **GTCC Koala Programs Review & Discussion Paper** with 45 recommendations.

It is our opinion that this document is a far cry from the draft Koala Plan of Management and has little hope, in its present form, of adequately addressing declining koala habitat and koala numbers.

KOALAS IN CARE is currently pursuing koala issues with Greater Taree City Council on several levels in hope that the '*powers that be*' will be convinced that if koalas are to survive in the Council area, higher and stronger levels of protection need to be implemented now and not in another eleven years time.

Presidents Report	2
FACILITY REPORT	2
FUNDRAISING REPORT	3
BRINYAH'S STORY	3
HABITAT ISSUES	3
READER'S COMMENTS	4
KOALA ADMISSIONS	5
SPRING BULB FUNDRAISER	6

President Paul's Report



The Team has survived our first 'koala breeding season' as an independent group with very few problems. It is great to have our small Team reliable and supporting each other, with koalas as our priority. Well done everybody.

Koala admission numbers were down this season (we hoped that was a good thing) but put that together with a huge drop in reported koala sightings and the lack of reported joeys being sighted around

the area along with a reduced rate of releases, we fear that this is not a good trend and has not been isolated to this year.

Our coffers have been boosted by generous donations from the public but we cannot rest on our laurels as caring for our koala patients is a costly business.

Several fundraising events are being planned for the coming year and you can read about some of them in this newsletter.

We have received good media coverage across the area in the local newspapers and Prime TV, highlighting problems our area's koalas are facing.

Several Council Planning Documents are currently on display but appear to do little to adequately protect Koala Habitat. (See Habitat Report)

Several issues are currently in discussion with Council and we will endeavour to report on these in coming editions.

It was pleasing to receive some feedback regarding the first edition of our newsletter from our colleagues which was all positive. We thank you all for your support.

Please contact us if you would like to discuss any of the issues being raised in this newsletter.

Paul McLeod

Koala Care Facility Report

December koala admissions were down on last year but unfortunately the first week of January saw 4 koalas admitted within days of each other.

Again motor vehicle hits (MVA's) have remained our biggest concern along with conjunctivitis.

Our koalas are suffering horrendous injuries due to MVA's and we are often fighting a losing battle despite giving them immediate veterinary treatment.

One koala lucky to survive an MVA is Benny (see his story below).

Admissions have come from all over the area including Booral, Koorainghat, Tinonee, Taree Bypass, Forster & Coolongolook. It has been frustrating and disappointing to have only released 12 of the 28 live koalas admitted for treatment in 2005.

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ADMITTED...**

The high activity area of Tinonee/Hillville has seen more diseased koalas being admitted for treatment over the past season.

This has included 'wet bottom' and conjunctivitis - both Chlamydia related diseases.

Leaf quality has been excellent this season with an abundance of new growth which the koalas receiving treatment have enjoyed. Christmas beetle invasion in the Forest Red Gums was very minor compared to previous years.

Christeen McLeod



Benny - A MVA Survivor!



Photo by C & P McLeod

How lucky can a koala be? Benny, an adult male weighing 8.25kg was found injured in the middle of the highway, south of Taree, early one Sunday morning. A passing motorist stopped and picked up the disoriented and badly injured Benny and took him to Port Macquarie where he contacted the Koala Hospital for help.

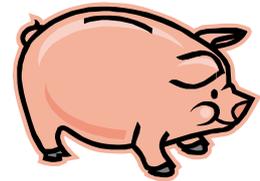
Being from the Taree area Benny was transferred back to us where our Vet examined him and started immediate treatment. Benny had suffered multi-

ple injuries. He was sore, bruised and in pain. Even with pain relief he cried when we had to treat and move him. He spent the first week of recovery in his basket, too sore to want to do anything but sleep and eat.

Five weeks in care saw him make a good recovery. His ordeal left him with a slight limp but on release climbed up his tree probably thinking how good it was to be home again.



Fundraising Report



Our first fundraising event for this year will be **'Hot Cross Buns for Easter'**. Orders will be taken over two weeks starting 17 March with delivery on 7 April.

Our second event will be **'Spring Bulbs'**. We will be selling boxes of Spring Bulbs for planting in your garden. These boxed bulbs, of many varieties, will be on sale for the month of April for as little as \$3.00 per box. The bulbs are from 'Garden Express', at Monbulk in Victoria and are some of the best available.

Please support us in these fundraisers and if you would like to place an order please contact KOALAS IN CARE or myself for more information.

Our next event is still in the planning stage for later in the year. This will be a **'Premier Film Night'**. Look out for further details in the June edition of the newsletter.

Fundraising and donations are the basis for providing for the koalas in our care!

We will also be in attendance at the annual event of the **'Envirofair'**. This is held at Taree Showground on the June long weekend. We will be having a stall in conjunction with Manning Area National Parks and Wildlife. We will have a display, koala information and a raffle. Our volunteers will be there to answer

any questions you may have and to generally talk to the public about koala issues, so look out for us as we are happy to provide you with information on koalas.

We look forward to meeting you at these events and hope you will support our group in caring for our area's koalas.

Barbara Witham

Ph: 6559 8656

Psst! Don't forget to order your 'Hot Cross Buns for Easter!'

Brinyah - Successfully treated for conjunctivitis

Brinyah, a adult female weighing 7.25kg was found on the ground on a property at Bunyah with badly infected eyes. Her overall body condition was good. The owner of the property was able to capture her and then rang KIC to seek help for her.

She underwent surgery to remove the excess tissue from her eyes which went smoothly and Brinyah made an excellent re-

covery. She responded well to the daily treatment on her eyes over the next few weeks and soon let us know that she was ready to go home.

We returned her to the property where the owner was very pleased to hear that we were able to successfully treat Brinyah and ultimately save her eyesight.

Getting the koala into care and starting treatment early is the key to a successful outcome.



Photo by C & P McLeod

Habitat Issues affecting our Koalas!

There is currently three Council documents under scrutiny which are to guide future decisions made in the context of addressing the area's often very fragile environment.

The draft Conservation & Development Strategy proposes future areas where development will occur. This unfortunately appears to be a case of again shifting the boundaries over the top of koala and other Threatened Flora &

Fauna habitat. Most noticeable though is the lack of any credible 'conservation' as the draft name suggests.

The draft Environmental Management Plan is high on 'Targets & Performance Indicators' but low on how these are to be resourced adequately. It certainly would be great to see many of the stated actions come to fruition but at the end of the day they are only 'Policy' and subject to competing with other ex-

pectations of the Community.

Koala Programs Review Discussion Paper, as mentioned on our front page story, we believe this to be a far cry from the draft Shire-wide Koala Plan of Management. We will be working to achieve the best possible outcomes for our area's koalas.

On a positive note, leaf quality is excellent due to good rainfall & our koala patients have been thoroughly enjoying it.

Hot Cross Bun Fundraiser



Order your 'Hot Cross Buns' for Easter from us and help us raise money to provide for the koalas of our area.

Choose from Traditional, Choc Chip or Fruitless.

\$5.00 per 1/2 dozen

Or

\$10.00 per dozen

Orders will be taken from 17/3/06 to 31/3/06

(Pop some in your freezer!)

Delivery date will be 7/4/06 just in time for Easter. If you, your family or your friends would like to place an order please phone

Barbara - 6559 8656

Christeen - 6552 2183

Thanks for your support!

Buns made by 'Bakers Delight'

They are very yummy!

Australian Koala Foundation

The AKF currently have a proposal before the Minister, Ian Campbell, for consideration to list the Koala as a nationally vulnerable species across the species' natural range. AKF CEO, Deborah Tabart, said 'the listing would prompt a national recovery plan that could benefit countless other species along with the koala'. We wholeheartedly support their initiative and hard work in this area and wish them every success for a positive outcome. We believe a determination from the Minister, Ian Campbell, is expected by May 2006. Good Luck AKF!



An Australia Day Release for an Aussie Icon

What better way to celebrate Australia Day or so we thought.

'Stoney', an adult male weighing 8.15kg was admitted for treatment from the Coolongolook area. He was suffering bilateral conjunctivitis but did not require surgery. He was started on our usual regime of treatment which his eyes responded to well.

After almost 3 weeks in care he was ready to be returned to Coolongolook for release and, as the Australia Day holiday was approaching, we thought this would be the perfect day.

We set off to Coolongolook

with 'Stoney', who was excited about his impending freedom, only to be met with a stumbling block.

In order to get 'Stoney' back into his habitat area we needed to access it via private land. We approached the first landowner to ask permission only to be denied access and were told to 'take the koala back where he came from' (we thought that was what we were trying to do). So we made our way to another property surrounded by beautiful habitat (Stoney was wanting to get out now).

The landowner met us and after the introductions, in-

formed us he wasn't interested in what we were trying to do as it was a public holiday and he was trying to enjoy it. We were abruptly instructed to leave.

Being left with no option we were forced to take 'Stoney' to a nearby forest area and release him in order for him to gain access to his territory area.

One would ask why was this landowner having a public holiday? Were we not celebrating being Australian? This surely is not what being Australian is all about.

It is truly sad when our Aussie Icon is denied being returned to his home on our National Day!

IT IS TRULY SAD WHEN OUR AUSSIE ICON IS DENIED BEING RETURNED TO HIS HOME ON OUR NATIONAL DAY!

Readers Comments on our First Edition

Dear Christeen & Paul
Congratulations on your first newsletter. I enjoyed reading it. 'Koalas In Care' is really up & running.

Congratulations,
Jill Taylor, President
Hunter Koala Preservation Society Inc.

Dear Christeen & Paul
Congratulations on your new newsletter.
Deborah Tabart,
Executive Director,
Australian Koala Foundation.

Dear Paul,
Congratulations & well done, to all involved, on getting the newsletter together. It makes a good read and is heartening to hear of all the good work being done.
Cheers, **Jai Cooper,**
Community Support,
Greater Taree City Council

Christeen & Paul,
Congratulations on the new group and the first newsletter.
Jean & Max Starr,
Phone call from the Founders of the Koala Preservation Society of NSW Inc. (Port Macquarie)

KOALAS IN CARE Admissions December 2005 - February 2006

Date	Name	Age	Sex	Reason for Admission	Area	Result
26/5/02	*Boobook	AY	F	Debilitated - Rump ulcer	Tinonee	Treating/In care
18/11/05	Ki	Juv	M	MVA - severe head trauma	Taree Bypass	Died 7/12/05
25/11/05	Tilkah	AM	F	Bilateral conjunctivitis	Tinonee	Released 17/12/05
27/11/05	Brinyah	AM	F	Bilateral conjunctivitis	Bunyah	Released 17/12/05
8/12/05	Warraba	AY	M	Dog Attack (Occurred several days previously)	Booral	Euthanased 8/12/05
11/12/05	Benny	AM	M	MVA - multiple injuries (eye, paws, front limbs, abrasions)	Koorainghat - (Highway)	Released 14/1/06
2/1/06	Clara	AY	F	Extremely underweight/ unwell	Tinonee	Treating/In care
3/1/06	Glenthorne	AY	F	MVA - Fractured elbow	Taree Bypass	Euthanased 3/1/06
6/1/06	Thomas	AA	M	Bilateral Conjunctivitis	Forster	Treating/In care
7/1/06	Stoney	AM	M	Bilateral Conjunctivitis	Coolonglook	Released 26/1/06
14/1/06	Jonathan	AY	M	MVA - head/chest trauma	Tinonee	Died 20/1/06
2/2/06	Darcee	AY	F	Observation - ? in same tree over a week	Tinonee	Released 7/2/06

*** These koalas were in care at the time of the establishment of KOALAS IN CARE Inc.**

MVA - motor vehicle accident

J - Joey (to 1 yr) Juv - Juvenile (1 - 2 yrs) AY - Young Adult (2 - 5 yrs)

AM - Mature Adult (5 - 10 yrs)

AA - Aged Adult (10+ yrs)

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED



Our Koala Facility has a couple of vacancies to fill on the morning shift roster (weekdays only). We require you to be reliable and be able to work as part of our small team. Activities do require bending and lifting. Volunteers must be 18 years or over. Morning shift operates from 8.30am - 10.30am. If you have a free morning and would like to know more please contact Christeen on 6552 2183 after 11am weekdays.

Instruction and training will be provided.

Further Work Needed?

Further talks have taken place with Cameron Perry from the RTA regarding koala deaths that have occurred since the vegetation removal along the Taree Bypass area. An area near the Taree South off-ramp has been identified as the possible problem. A solution to fix this problem is being investigated. We thank the RTA for their cooperation in their attempt to solve these problems affecting our koalas.

A Thank You to our Supporters!

Donald Hood, Stuart Knox, Rob Brudar & Staff at Taree Veterinary Hospital for their caring attitudes, advice & ongoing support in the treating of our special koala patients.

Kevin Carter (Manning Area Manager NPWS) - for ongoing support & guidance.

Terry Evans (Area Manager Barrington Tops NPWS) - for ongoing support & guidance.

Jenny Barham - Rocket Express Courier

Graeme Witham - for making Donation Boxes for fundraising.

Edna Rooney - for help & advice in the initial financial setting up of KIC.

Bushland Fair Newsagency - for charging for plastic bags & donating the proceeds to KIC.

Colin Mulcaster of 'Diversey' for donating washing powder & hand cleaner for our Facility.



***Please support the people who help the Koalas of our area.**

Manning River Times

Wingham Chronicle

Great Lakes Advocate

Gloucester Advocate

Prime TV

NBN TV

Wingham Public School Students, Mrs Ryan's Class - 5/6R - supplying our Facility with a constant flow of plastic bags for waste collection.

Greater Taree City Council - for allowing our Facility to dispose of our green waste at the tip free of charge.

December 2005

Bushland Fair Newsagency proprietors & supporters of KOALAS IN CARE, Gordon & Ingrid Muldoon were assaulted in their newsagency just after Christmas and suffered injuries from this attack. Their newsagency has been the subject of many break-ins over recent years. On behalf of KIC we express our best wishes to them during this stressful time. Take care Ingrid and Gordon.

Spring Bulb Fundraiser



Purchase your beautiful 'Spring Bulbs' from KOALAS IN CARE during the month of April. These bulbs come from 'Garden Express' at Monbulk, Victoria. A variety of bulbs will be available for as little as \$3.00 per box. Contact us for more details and arrange delivery to brighten up your garden!



Donation Boxes

Many thanks for the generosity & talents of Graeme Witham who has volunteered his time to make several donation boxes to be used in fundraising for KOALAS IN CARE Inc. We are very lucky to have people willing to donate their time to help our group provide for the koalas of our area. Thanks Graeme, your involvement is greatly appreciated!!

Donations

Thank you to following:

Bushland Fair Newsagency

Mr & Mrs Orr

Mr & Mrs Webb

You can make donations to KOALAS IN CARE Inc. by sending a money order/cheque to PO Box 1249, Taree 2430

Greeting Cards

Remember we have lovely handmade cards for sale made by Di Wells who donates her time & talent to support the koalas. So if you need a card for a special occasion contact us. Help our Koalas and purchase a card today!

NSW WILDLIFE COUNCIL

A new wildlife group has been formed called 'NSW Wildlife Council' and is made up of a number of Wildlife Carer Groups in NSW. Christeen and myself are the KIC representatives for this group. I attended the inaugural meeting in Sydney held over 2 days in October 2005. This meeting was to organise the new group and to conduct the election of Office Bearers. The second meeting was held in February 2006 in which I took part via a phone link-up. A lot of work has gone into all the legal requirements needed to set up the Council and everything is looking positive at this stage. It is hoped that as time goes on the Council will be able to make a huge difference in helping carers, wildlife and habitat. Next meeting will be in Sydney in May 2006. The Council's Mission Statement is: **'Achieving optimal outcomes for Australian Wildlife'**.

By Barbara Witham



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KOALAS IN CARE Inc.

Servicing Greater Taree, Great Lakes & Gloucester Areas

Management Committee 2005 - 2006

Office Bearers:

Paul McLeod - President

Christeen McLeod - Vice President/Secretary

Joan Rolls - Treasurer

Committee:

Barbara Witham - Fundraising Coordinator

Terry Rolls - Tree Coordinator

Marie Smith - Committee Member

Other Positions:

Aimee McLeod - Newsletter Coordinator/Editor

Christeen McLeod - Public Officer

Ken Stanmore - Auditor

KOALAS IN CARE INC. relies on the generosity of the public for donations and support to enable us to care for and rehabilitate koalas for release back to the wild. We cannot achieve this without your kind donations, so please make a donation or become a Supporting Member today. Why not tell your family and friends about how they can help save the koalas in our area.

CALENDAR

Management Meeting - 6 May 2006

Fundraising Events as listed:

- Hot Cross Buns - 17-31 March 2006 (Orders taken)
- Spring Bulbs - 1-30 April 2006
- Envirofair Stall - Saturday, 10 June 2006 from 10am - 5pm
- Film night - details in next edition

Contact 6552 2183 if you would like to support us in any of the Fundraising events listed.

IN OUR JUNE EDITION

- Membership Renewal Forms.
- Koala Data Analysis - Increase or Decline?
- More stories of our Koala patients plus lots more.

Readers Comments



In the coming editions readers will be able to have their comments published in our Reader's Comments section. Comments can be pertaining to our Newsletter, the KOALAS IN CARE Inc. group, our work within the community, habitat issues or koalas in general. Suggestions for improvements to the Newsletter, fundraising ideas or events we should attend, will also be welcome. Let us know what you think! Phone, fax or email us.

If you didn't receive this newsletter by email but would like to in the future, please contact us by email to arrange this.

STOP PRESS

Effective as of 13 March 2006 the lemma Government has given the go ahead for hunting in 31 State Forests (412,530ha). On the Mid North Coast this will include Bulga, Doyles River, Mount Boss & Orara East & in the Upper Hunter, Nundle & Riamukka. This will allow hunting of feral species but will it stop there? This has been given the go ahead with little or no consultation with the public. It is understood that the Game Council will be able to hunt with dogs, guns, bows and arrows and other hunting implements. Regular visitors will discover yellow signs at the entrance of their favourite State Forests warning them that hunters could be in the area.