

Koalas in Campbelltown

• *Injured Koalas* - If you see an injured koala please call the UWS Koala Hotline immediately on 9962 9996, or contact your local Vet.

• *Join a local Streamcare Group* - Council has a number of Streamcare Groups working in areas of koala habitat. These groups undertake activities such as bush regeneration and water testing. For further information contact Council on 4645 4601.

• *Fencing* - If building or replacing a fence in areas of koala habitat, consider using one that does not act as a barrier to koalas such as wooden, weldmesh or wire fences, or consider placing overlapping trees on either side of the fence.

• *Swimming Pools* - Koalas are reasonably strong swimmers, but once in a pool they rarely survive without assistance. If you have a pool and koalas occur on your property consider tying a sturdy rope to a tree or post, and place the other end in the pool.

• *Informal Access Tracks* - Informal tracks through reserves and bushland areas can damage koala habitat and decrease the quality of vegetation for koalas and other native animals. If visiting local bushland, please stay on defined tracks and do not create, or cut new tracks.

UWS Tracking program/sightings

The University of Western Sydney has an ongoing Koala tracking program. The information that is collected is used to gain a better understanding of the local koala population. By gaining a better understanding of the habits of local koalas, Council and the local community can be more effective in their efforts to protect them. If you see a koala in the local area, please report it to the UWS Koala Hotline on 9962 9996.



For further information contact:

**Planning and Environment Division
Campbelltown City Council
Cnr Broughton & Queen Streets
Campbelltown 2560**

PO Box 57, Campbelltown NSW 2560

Tel: (02) 4645 4601 Fax: (02) 4645 4111

Email: council@campbelltown.nsw.gov.au



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The koala is listed as a Vulnerable Species under the New South Wales Threatened Species Conservation Act (1995). This means that they have been officially recognized as being at risk of becoming extinct. If the threats to their survival are not addressed, they could disappear from our local bushland. Koalas were first recorded in the Campbelltown area in the 1890s. However, it wasn't until 1986 that they became widely known, when a population in the Wedderburn area was discovered. Now, it is estimated that there are between 90 and 200 koalas in the Campbelltown area, however, due to the small size of the local koala population, it is critical that any threats it may face are addressed.

Threats To Koalas

There are a number of threats to koalas, the majority of which result from human impacts on local bushland, although some do occur naturally.

Human threats to Koalas

- **Habitat loss and degradation** - Habitat loss is one of the main threats to koalas and can occur through land clearing for urban development, broad scale clearing in rural areas, the removal of habitat trees and the reduction in the size of habitat patches. Koalas in the Campbelltown area are heavily dependent upon the vegetation within the Georges River Regional Open Space Corridor. This includes bushland at Long Point, Minto Heights, Kentlyn, Ruse, Airds, St Helens Park and Wedderburn. The protection of habitat in this area is critical for the long-term survival of koalas within the region.

- **Motor vehicles** - Injuries caused by motor vehicles are a major cause of koala deaths in both urban and near-urban koala populations.

- **Dogs** - There are currently over 18,000 registered dogs within Campbelltown. Irresponsible dog ownership can result in a large number of uncontrolled, roaming domestic dogs which are a major threat to koalas and other animals that occupy nearby bushland.

- **Weeds** - The proliferation of both noxious and environmental weeds can have a significant impact on the quality of koala habitat. Weeds can not only inhibit the growth of koala food trees, but can also increase the risk of bush fires when they establish as a dense understorey.



Natural threats to Koalas

- **Bushfire** - Koalas readily survive many fires, particularly when the fire is a low level ground fire. In contrast, when a major fire burns through the tree tops and moves quickly, most koalas have little chance of survival. Bushfires can also have a significant impact on koala habitat and hence the local koala population.

- **Disease** - Koala colonies are prone to naturally occurring diseases, such as chlamydia, which can cause conjunctivitis, pneumonia, urinary tract infections and reproductive tract infections. Luckily, koalas in Campbelltown are generally healthy, disease free animals.

- **Predators** - There are several natural predators of the koala. Young koalas are most at risk to predation by large owls and pythons. Introduced foxes and domestic dogs are also major threats to koalas.



How can you help look after Campbelltown's koalas?

- **Protect Habitat** - Don't destroy eucalypts (gum trees) or other native vegetation and retain as much native vegetation on your property as possible.

- **Plant local trees** - If your property is large enough, plant koala food trees. In Campbelltown, koalas prefer to eat the Grey Gum and Blue Leaved Stringybark. Refer to Council's tree planting guide for further information on whether koala food trees are suitable for your property.

- **Dog Management** - Restrain or confine your dog(s) when you are aware of koalas on or near your property. If you spot a koala, keep your dog restrained or confined until the koala has moved on. Also, advise your neighbours that there is a koala in the area, so that they can do the same. If your dog is barking continuously at night, investigate what it is barking at, as it could be a koala.

In the event that your dog has attacked a koala, please call the University of Western Sydney (UWS) Koala hotline immediately on 9962 9996, or contact your local Vet.

