

Living with Koalas

How to improve your property for Koalas



Food and water

Plant and preserve trees, and provide water



Movement

Use Koala-friendly fencing and create corridors



Safety

Secure and monitor pets and help prevent drowning

Food and water

Plant and preserve existing trees

Koalas primarily utilise eucalyptus trees for food and shelter but will utilise any native tree species, particularly paperbarks (melaleuca). Identify and protect any mature eucalyptus trees or other native trees on your property. These trees provide essential resources for Koalas. If your property lacks native vegetation such as this, consider planting some eucalyptus species. Koalas require a diverse range of tree species for their diet and shelter, and regularly utilise trees in residential backyards.

Provide water sources

Install water sources like small ponds or shallow dishes in areas close to trees for Koalas to access for drinking during our hot summer months.

Movement

Koala-friendly fencing

Koala-friendly fencing and structures can greatly assist with safe Koala movement and dispersal through backyards and residential areas. Koala-friendly fencing includes:

- Planting or retaining trees or sturdy shrubs near your existing fence.

- Rural style fencing: open post and rail or post and wire. If a barbed wire fence is required to contain livestock there should not be barbed wire on the bottom strand, it must be plain wire and be a minimum of 200mm above the ground.
- Installation of timber posts or logs able to support 10kg and securely attached.
- Installation of Koala bridges over non-climbable fences – timber logs at least 125mm diameter on either side of the fence, connected between the two at the top.
- Adding a continuous series of flat boards at the top of the fence to allow a Koala to walk along the fence without needing to come to the ground.
- Fences made from materials that Koalas can easily grip and climb, such as round timber posts or chain wire mesh.
- If your fencing is a solid material that a Koala is unable to climb, allow a minimum 300mm gap between the ground and the bottom of the fence for Koalas to pass under or affix wooden lattices to your existing non-climbable fences.

Creative connectivity

Collaborate with neighboring landowners to create wildlife corridors. These corridors will allow Koalas and other wildlife to move freely between habitats.

Safety

Pools and water hazards

Koalas cannot climb out of a pool if they fall in (unless it is very shallow at the edges) and they don't recognise steps as an escape route. If you have a swimming pool or any other potential drowning hazard on your property, please consider:

- trailing a length of stout rope (minimum diameter 50mm) or a floating device, which is secured to a stable poolside fixture
- designing the pool in such a way that Koalas can easily escape
- enclosing the pool with a fence that keeps Koalas out.

This last option should include locating the fence away from any trees which Koalas could use to cross the fence. Koalas can climb tubular steel fencing and spear tops may cause injury. Glass panels are not climbable.




Dogs and domestic pets

Did you know that the majority of dog attacks on Koalas occur in residential backyards at night time? To reduce this risk keep dogs and other pets securely fenced and supervised to prevent injury to Koalas. Dogs without supervision are a significant threat to Koalas. Just one puncture wound leaving no visible mark, may cause internal injuries or introduce bacteria, later causing Koala death from shock or infection. If you see a Koala on your property, put your dog inside your house or garage until the Koala has left.

How to protect Koalas from dogs:

- Keep dogs on leads in public areas where there may be Koalas.
- Secure your dog in a fenced area, garage or on a verandah at night when Koalas might enter your yard.
- Follow signs/warnings for designated wildlife and on-leash areas.
- Check trees on your property before allowing your dog to roam.
- Notify your neighbours and other dog walkers of Koala sightings in your area.
- Be mindful that Koalas spend more time on the ground moving between trees during mating season (September to February) and during night hours (dusk to dawn).
- Make fences Koala-friendly, or consider means of escape for Koalas or other wildlife which might become trapped.
- If you have no other option, and need to exclude Koalas from entering your yard, use metal sheeting such as smooth Colorbond steel or Perspex sheeting that does not provide grip for a Koala to climb. It is vital to ensure that the fence is at least 3m away from trees or sturdy shrubs from which a Koala could jump to the fence top. Remember, you only want to apply the exclusion features to the outside of the fence, whilst ensuring a Koala could easily climb out of the yard.



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