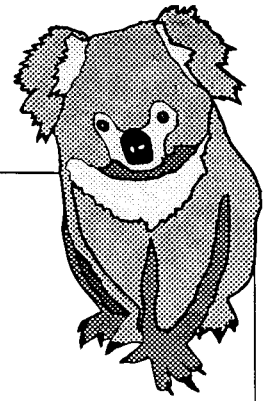


Sandy Point/Shallow Inlet Coast Action Group



KOALA SURVEY

September 1999

Sandy Point/Shallow Inlet Coast Action Group are conducting a koala survey/count throughout September/October 1999. We ask for your support by filling out the questionnaire and marking the map provided. Please place completed surveys in the box provided in the General Store.

For your information:

Koalas live 12–16 years in the wild and have few natural predators. In the past the major cause of death was by dingo predation, and young koalas may occasionally be taken by Powerful Owls and Wedge-tailed Eagles. Unfortunately, humans and dogs are now responsible for many koala deaths.

Although koalas don't have a territory of their own they do have a home range, which is an area where they find their food trees. Home ranges may overlap.

A typical day for a koala involves about 20 hours sleeping and resting; 1–3 hours feeding, which occurs in many bouts spread during the day, especially around sunset, and may last from 5 minutes to 2 hours; and 1–3 hours are spent in grooming, moving from tree to tree and, during the breeding season, searching for a mate.

Male koalas are larger than females and up to 30% heavier. Note the 'roman-type nose' of the male and the straighter nose of the females in the head profiles below. Males make a distinctive grunting sound and are also easily distinguished by their active sternal (chest) gland, which leaves a brown stain on their chests.

Koalas mainly eat eucalypt leaves, usually Gippsland Manna Gum, Swamp Gum and Blue Gum. But buds, fruit and even bark are occasionally eaten, and koalas have

been seen feeding on golden wattle, coastal teatree, swamp paperbark and Monterey pine.

Because gum leaves are not nutritious (koalas eat 600–800 grams of leaves daily, which provide as much energy as a serving of breakfast cereal does for us), koalas have developed a low energy lifestyle to compensate. So they really need that 20 hours of rest each day!

Koalas mate at a time which allows the young to emerge from the pouch when high-quality food is abundant. In southern Australia, most births of joeys are during December–February.

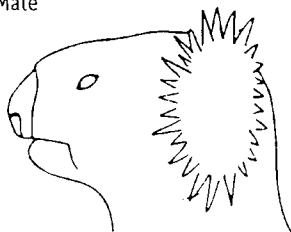
The joey remains within the pouch without emerging for the first 22 weeks after birth. At 36 weeks it weighs about 1 kg and is too big for its mother's pouch. It spends much of the time sitting on mum's back, but clings to her belly in cold, wet weather and to sleep. Koalas are weaned after about 1 year and are fully independent at 18 months.

Koalas are very solitary animals — the only relationships that form are between the mother and joey. This ends once the joey is independent. Bonds are not formed between males and females and once mating is over, the pair have no further contact.

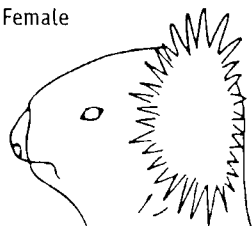
Koala problems

Habitat loss is the greatest threat to wild koalas, and is caused by bush fires and land clearing for timber, housing and roads. Many of these practices continue today. Other threats are disease (e.g. Chlamydia), road kills and dog attacks. Many wild koalas have Chlamydia and it is thought that stress due to the threats mentioned above increases the incidence of Chlamydia symptoms. As a result of these problems many individual populations are under threat.

Male



Female



A date and time for the koala count will soon be posted on the community noticeboard.

Thank you for your support!

Caring for our coast

Sandy Point / Shallow Inlet Coast Action Group Inc. Reg. No A0035949F
c/- Post Office, Sandy Point, Vic. 3959. Email: apcs@werple.net.au

Sandy Point / Shallow Inlet

Coast Action Group

Koala Survey

September 1999

This survey is being conducted by SP/SICAG as part of an assessment of the koala population in the area. Please assist us by completing the following questions.

1. Have you ever seen koalas in Sandy Point/Shallow Inlet? Yes/No
 - If 'Yes' please mark where on the map provided.
 - If 'Yes', how often have you seen koalas in the area?
(a) Often (b) Sometimes (c) Rarely
2. When was the last time you saw a koala in these areas? _____
3. Have you seen any sick koalas in the Sandy Point/Shallow Inlet area? Yes/No
If 'Yes', what signs of sickness were observed? _____

4. Have you seen any koalas with young in Sandy Point/Shallow Inlet environs? Yes/No
If 'Yes', please mark with a "B" on the map provided.
5. In your opinion, over the time you have frequented/lived in this area, has the number of koalas:
(a) increased (b) stayed the same (c) decreased

Comments: _____

Survey date: _____

PLEASE PLACE COMPLETED SURVEY IN THE BOX PROVIDED AT THE GENERAL STORE.

Thank you for your help. If you have any further information or questions regarding the survey please contact Diana Zlatic on (03) 5684 1269.

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Sandy Point / Shallow Inlet

Coast Action Group

SANDY POINT KOALA SURVEY RESULTS

DATE: JANUARY 2000

SURVEY TAKEN: OCTOBER 1999

This survey was conducted by SP/SICAG as part of an assessment of the koala population in the area. We would like to thank all those who participated and took the time to assist us by completing the following questions.

1. Have you ever seen koalas in Sandy Point/Shallow Inlet?

• 'Yes' - 49 • 'No' - 1

(a) Often - 23 (b) Sometimes - 28

(c) Rarely - 6

2. When was the last time you saw a koala in these areas?

Dec. '98 - 3; Jan. '99 - 4; Feb. - 2; Mar. - 3; Apr. - 1; May - 0; June - 4; July - 5; Aug - 5; Sept - 15; Oct/Nov - 11; Autumn - 1.

Others: at holiday periods, reflecting when people had last visited.

3. Have you seen any sick koalas in the Sandy Point/Shallow Inlet area?

1 - dog attack; 1 - pusy eyes; 7 - patchy fur; 1 small one dead with no visible signs of cause (found March, 12 Acacia Ave); 1 - death from old age (26/12/98, Sunshine Rise); 1 - adult male dead (approx. March 99, Acacia Ave); 1 - small one (Ash Ave, no date given); 1 - adult male (approx. Dec 94/Jan 95, Park Ave); 5 reportings of a sick koala, possibly all the same one in Anderson Ave; later mother and baby both died (possible dog trauma?)

4. Have you seen any koalas with young in Sandy Point/Shallow Inlet environs?

Yes - 27. Also 11 reportings of 1 young mainly in Ryans Rise, Trelawny Cres/Graeme Gve area. Probably the same one. Other reports from Ash Ave, Telopea and Banksia.

5. In your opinion, over the time you have frequented/lived in this area, has the number of koalas:

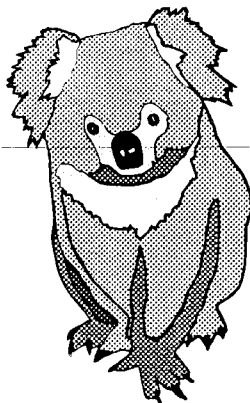
(a) increased - 9 (b) stayed the same - 24

(c) decreased - 26

Comments: 'believe an increase since '81 then a decrease in last 5 years. No young sighted in 2 years'; 'more in last 5 years than previous 30 years'; 'over 40 years only sighted in last 20 years'; 'lack of trees and dying trees ... relocation to Jamieson?'; 'more people and fewer trees'; 'request for sale of suitable and/or cheap trees to plant for koalas'; 'request for phone number to report and get advice about sick koalas'.

Decrease in Ash Ave mentioned by several people. Sightings covered most of Sandy Point and many were apparently of the same koala.

Sightings: Beach Crt, Beach Pde west - 6; Ash Ave Reserve - 4; Ash Ave - 5 ('decreased in 12 years', 'decreased by several'); Sandy Point Rd near Shallow Inlet - 2; Ennisvale Ave north - 6; The Boulevard - 5 (Fourth Ave not since '95); Banksia Ave 3; Wattle Crt - 3; Sunshine Rise - 4; Telopea Dve - 4; Fir Crt, Oak St, Park Ave - 6; Harbour View - 1; Popular Crt - 2; Acacia - 2; Anderson Ave, near old tip, Sandy Point Rd near Eric's.



Thank you for your help. If you have any further information or questions regarding the survey please contact Diana Zlatic on (03) 5684 1269.

Caring for our coast

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c. Koala survey report. As of this meeting, 50 survey forms were returned out of the 200 distributed (more still are coming in). In general, people felt the numbers had decreased in recent years due to a lack of habitat, food/trees die, and disturbance from dogs. Diana has collated the figures and it is proposed that the results are placed on the notice board with a thank you to those who participated. Members will receive this with their minutes from this meeting (see page 4). It is also proposed that we write an article for the local newspaper. The motion is put by Andrew, seconded by Diana and passed. The sub-committee agree to take this type of survey bi-annually and this will be mentioned with survey results.

Jane Thompson from the The Koala Foundation and some visitors from American Zoos met with Trevor, Margaret and Diana. They took great interest and were impressed with the survey work. They were also visiting the koala habitat in the Tarra Bulga area. A copy of the results needs to be sent to Jane as well. An official count of koalas in Sandy Point will be taken in September. Maybe we can hand out some Cadbury's chocolate koalas to promote the work being done.

(c) FSC report. Coast Action members have been informed that there may be some changes in the structure of committees of management. The election of a new committee has been postponed indefinitely due to the delay in the state election results and possibly a new system of appointing committees. It is understood that the past government proposed to form committees of management through ministerial appointments rather than publically elected. This proposed system would appoint

committees on a 'skills based management' basis. It is felt by the meeting that we need more information and that we would not favour the new system as understood. Motion put by Howard that we write the local minister regarding this matter and state we do not agree with this proposal as members of a volunteer group working for the DNRE. Seconded by Andrew. Passed.

d. Coast Action Community Groups Forum 20 November. Andrew and Carmella joined a group of 27 people from 10 community groups from areas spanning from Inverloch to Yanakie. The group viewed major projects completed by volunteers in the Corner Inlet area, Sandy Point, Waratah Bay and Walkerville. The group was able to enjoy a new viewing platform and walking track at Corner Inlet, admire the notice board, new picnic area and Surf Life Saving Club house at Sandy Point, survey the revegetation project and beach access track in Waratah Bay, and learn about the reclamation of the beach shoreline at Walkerville. We were all congratulated and thanked with a barbecue lunch and presented certificates of appreciation by Michelle Lauder, Coast Action/ Coastcare State Program Manager and Thierry Rolland.

It has been suggested that there will be two forum group meetings a year, one in winter and one in summer.

Meeting closed: 6:11pm.

Next meeting: **AGM, 11 March 2000** at 4:00 pm
at T. P. Taylor Reserve Hall.