

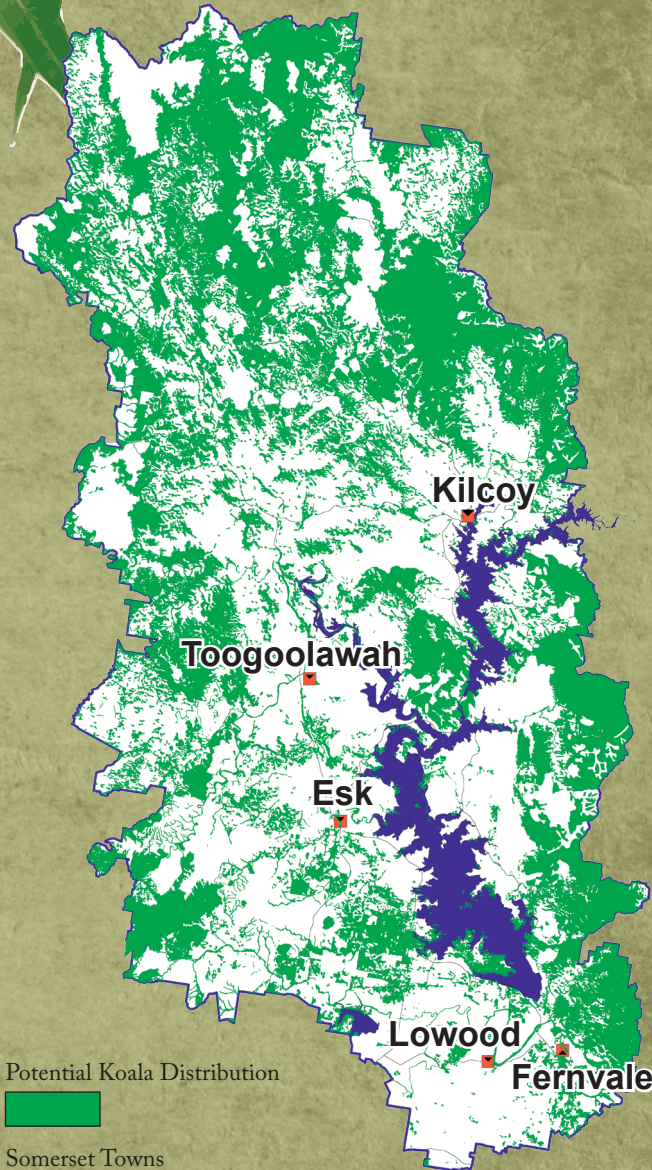


Land for Wildlife

Land for Wildlife is a program for landholders who seek to include nature conservation on their properties. Council is very supportive of this program and encourages landholders of all types to join this important voluntary program.

Koala Rescue

If you do come across a koala that has been injured, or is sick or even if it is dead, ring 1300 ANIMAL who will refer it to local wildlife rescuers. If possible stay near the animal until help arrives.



For more information on koalas please phone Somerset Regional Council on 5424 4000

The Koala in Somerset



About the koala

Koalas are widely distributed across Somerset region. Populations are determined by available good quality food trees. Throughout SE Queensland the koala is under threat by urban development. Local extinction is likely where habitat is lost. In Qld, NSW and ACT the koala has been listed as endangered.

Koalas are strictly leaf eaters using a variety of eucalyptus as well as other species. In Somerset their favourites are *E. tereticornis* (blue gum) and *E. molucana* (grey box).

Koalas will often visit many other trees for shelter and dietary needs. During hot periods koalas will rest in dense shade and in some areas koalas have been seen visiting aerial termite mounds for nutrients/minerals.



Koalas can live to about 12 years of age. Females are mature at 2 years, males at 3-4 years of age. Breeding occurs from September to March with females usually producing a single joey each year.

The joey is less than 0.5gm (about the size of a jelly bean) at birth. It then crawls to the pouch and remains there drinking its mother's milk. At about 7 months it leaves the pouch and travels on the mother's back. It then eats a diet of leaves and milk.

Males make a deep grunting call to attract mates or protect their territory. Females call in high pitched wails.



Threats to the koala in Somerset

The big threats that koalas face are loss of habitat and food trees, crossing roads, dog attack and disease.

What can you do for Koalas?

Plant a Tree

Plant a koala food tree or three on your own land. If you've got a farm, allow some of the young trees to grow up to replace the ones that naturally die. Plant native trees to create stepping stones across your property to larger areas of bush.

Control your dog

Any medium or large sized dog can kill a koala. Even minor attacks by dogs can result in fatal internal injuries. Most dog attacks occur in backyards and occur between July to November when koalas are more mobile. Keep your dog restrained or in a kennel at night.

Reduce speed at Dusk/Dawn

Koalas are most active around dusk and dawn. Be alert for animals at these times and watch your speed.



Help out a carer

Koalas in foster care need a lot of attention. You could help carers by holding fundraisers for carers in your area. If you've got a larger property, why not plant out an area of koala food trees and then let local carers know they are welcome to collect eucalypt leaves from your property. **Please phone Council to find out more 5424 4000**

What Council is doing

New Developments

Council's new planning scheme will inform conditions of approval and inform where future development may be appropriate whilst preserving koala habitat.

Conservation Precinct

Council has nominated a large area (700km²) as a koala conservation precinct. This area already has a large population of koalas and few threats. Council will work in partnership with landholders in this area to ensure that koalas will always be there for future generations. In time it is hoped that other areas can be similarly recognised.

More Trees

Council supports planting of koala food trees and other native trees through annual free tree programs, free advice to landholders and promotions.

Education

Council is trying to increase public awareness of the plight of the koala in Somerset through a variety of displays, presentations, signs, school visits and local media.