



A voice for koalas in the Redlands

# KAG Newsletter

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**January–March 2026**

## DIARY DATE

### Thursday April 16 9am, 10am & 11am Discover Koalas in the Wild with Ranger Stacey

Guided koala spotting walks will depart from the Pt Halloran Conservation Area carpark.

All ages are welcome, children must be supervised by an adult. Please wear enclosed walking shoes, sun safe clothing and bring sunscreen, insect repellent and drinking water. Registration essential.

[Whats on at IndigiScapes | Redland City Council](#)

### Saturday May 2 9am-11am Koala Community Planting (Council) 9am-11am Hilliards Creek Park, Wellington Pt

Join the community bushcare team and help plant 1,500 native seedlings to expand vital habitat for koalas and other wildlife. A selection of gourmet gums will be included. Registration essential. Call IndigiScapes on 3824 8611 for more information and register your interest.

### IndigiScapes Native Nursery

A great variety of native plants to support wildlife, all plants \$3.00 each. Five free koala food trees available to Redlands residents.

## Ormiston Koalas in the Spotlight

The battle to stop Ormiston College from removing hundreds of koala trees continues with the campaign ramping up following a roadside protest at the end of January attended by approximately 70 community members.

People of all ages held signs and called for the College to protect koalas and their habitat and for the State Government to reject the current development masterplan.

Koalas are regularly sighted on the College campus in trees that are earmarked for removal, including a gorgeous mother and joey witnessed playing and feeding in a gum tree.



*The protest held in Delancey St, Ormiston outside the bushland where Ormiston College want to destroy koala habitat (Image: Redlands2030 Facebook)*

Coincidentally, over previous months, the State government has been asking for community feedback to help shape their new Koala Conservation Strategy that is claiming to be a 'fresh start for South East Queensland Koalas' (see P.3 for details).

A decision on whether to approve the College plan is expected to be made by Deputy Premier Jarrod Bleijie in coming weeks and will be a test case for this government to show if they are genuinely committed to changing the current trajectory of koala numbers that has seen Redlands population decline by at least 80% over the past 25 years.

A new petition has been launched, please sign if you haven't already <https://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/Work-of-the-Assembly/Petitions/petition-details/4452-26>



*A young koala relaxing in a gum tree on the College grounds (Photo: Una Sandeman)*

This newsletter is produced by  
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Carmel Rackemann

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## Koala Sightings

### November 2025 – February 2026

**Alexandra Hills:** Finucane Rd, George St, Montgomery Dr, Redland Bay Rd, William St. **Birkdale:** Birkdale Rd, Byng Rd, Carinyan Dr, Lilly Ln, Lloyd Vis, Old Cleveland Rd E, Sunnybay Dr, Uhlman Rd. **Capalaba:** Brewer St, Jones Rd, Kuranda Cl, Redland Bay Rd, Runnymede Rd. **Cleveland:** Arlington St, Channel St, Channel St S, Coburg St E, Erobin St, Fitzroy St, Gretel Pl, Island St, Julianne Ct, Long St, Longland St, Middle St, Passage St, Russel St, Shore St E, Shore St N, Shore St W, Sunshine Dr, Wellington St, Wharf St. **Mt Cotton:** German Church Rd, Heineman Rd, West Mt Cotton Rd. **NSI:** Ballow St, Basin Dr, Birch St, Brown Lake Dr, Claytons Rd, Cook St, Dickson Way, East Coast Rd, Flinders Av, Kindara St, Miles St, Mooloomba Rd, Oxley Pde, Sovereign Rd, Toompany St, Wallum Ck Dr, Yabby St. **Ormiston:** Court St, Delancey St, Dundas St W, Evergreen St, Fletcher Tce, Gloucester St, Ivory Ln, Oak St, Ormiston Gr, Rose St, Stevens Pl, Sturgeon St, Susanna Pl, Tolston Tce, Thorn St. **Redland Bay:** Cleveland Redland Bay Rd, Mill St, Scenic Rd. **Thorneside:** Beatty Rd, Frank St, Henry St, Marlin St, Mooroondu Rd. **Thornlands:** Epraph Rd, Jerrys Pl, Lorikeet Dr, Manning Esp, South St, Springsacre Rd. **Victoria Pt:** Brookvale Dr, Colburn Av, Illidge Rd, Lakefield Dr, Nottingham Dr, Orana Esp, Orana St, Prospect Cr, Pt Ohalloran Rd, School Rd, Wilson Esp. **Wellington Pt:** Belford Dr, Bibury St, Cedarview Pl, Celsa St, Jacob St, Haig Rd, Main Rd, McDonald Rd, Montgomery Dr, Nelson Rd, O'Connell Pde, Pitt Rd, Poloni Pl, Riverton Dr, Roberts St, Saranah Pl, Sawmill Dr, Starkey St, Trafalgar Vale Av.

Primary data sources: [https://biocache.ala.org.au/occurrences/search?q=text:koala&fq=cl959:%22Redland%20\(C\)%22&fq=occurrence+decade+i:%222020%22&page=100](https://biocache.ala.org.au/occurrences/search?q=text:koala&fq=cl959:%22Redland%20(C)%22&fq=occurrence+decade+i:%222020%22&page=100)  
[https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/76c06e811c5d4f6fb0f065e652d7f66b/page/Koala-Watch-#data\\_s=id%3AdataSource\\_19%3A0%2Cid%3Aaefc7a6599774992958fe9c49bd956cd-18de77ef673-layer-7%3A1460%2Cid%3Aaefc7a6599774992958fe9c49bd956cd-18de3432643-layer-1%3A86](https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/76c06e811c5d4f6fb0f065e652d7f66b/page/Koala-Watch-#data_s=id%3AdataSource_19%3A0%2Cid%3Aaefc7a6599774992958fe9c49bd956cd-18de77ef673-layer-7%3A1460%2Cid%3Aaefc7a6599774992958fe9c49bd956cd-18de3432643-layer-1%3A86)

## From Decline to Stability: A Koala Conservation Milestone

KAG was pleased with the recent news that the Redlands Koala population appears to have stabilised since 2019.

This came as a result of recent analysis conducted by two independent university research groups that revealed early signs of koala population stabilisation following two decades of documented decline.

This catastrophic decline since the late 1990's has been in excess of 80% and koalas numbers that were once more than 4,000 are now in the hundreds, 500 at most.

KAG acknowledges the significant financial investment that Redlands Council has put towards koala conservation initiatives and fully supports the science-led approach to conservation. Community awareness and early reporting and detection of disease appears to have been successful with higher numbers of koalas being returned from the wildlife hospital for release after treatment.

However, the fact cannot be ignored that habitat loss is the key driver of their decline and the remaining population are in critical danger of sliding into extinction if the current rate of development does not significantly slow. An increase of habitat must become the main focus.

## Thorneside Koalas Get a Helping Hand

A report of a koala sighting in the Beatty Rd Reserve, Thorneside last month led to a welfare check by the Koala Rescue Redlands and Surrounds team. Whilst in attendance, a second koala (Merlin) was discovered nearby but unfortunately he appeared to have conjunctivitis and a trap was set so he could be taken for treatment.

The original koala (Jenni) was also captured and taken to the RSPCA wildlife facility for a health check as it was likely she had come into contact with the male. Fortunately Jenni was given the all clear and released back into the reserve immediately and Merlin was treated and released back early in March (photo at right).

This is an example of the importance of reporting koala sightings, resulting in early detection of disease that often can be treated successfully and minimise time for the koala to be kept in care.

Thank you to everyone who donates funds through the 'Containers for Change' recycling program.

KAG's account ID code is C10146563.

You will need to quote this code when you deposit cans and bottles at a Centre near you.

<https://www.containersforchange.com.au/qld/where-to-return>



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## New South East Qld Koala Conservation Strategy 2026-2036

The State Government has released a new South East Queensland Koala Conservation Strategy with the Minister for Environment and Tourism claiming it as 'a fresh start for Koalas'.

KAG sent a detailed submission to the State Government that can be viewed in full at:

<https://koalagroup.asn.au/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/Submission-to-the-South-East-Queensland-Koala-Conservation-Strategy-March-2026-Final.pdf>

Below is an excerpt of the recommendations KAG made:

- 1. Mapping** The protection of koala habitat is only as good as the mapping. As shown in the examples above, the current mapping is not fit for purpose as it does not protect many areas of essential habitat. Previously mapped areas of koala habitat should be reinstated and new areas added that align more with the definition of koala habitat given in the Nature Conservation (Koala) Conservation Plan 2017.
- 2. Movement corridors are essential for healthy koala populations** Links with mapping between areas of habitat must be protected. To survive in the longer term koalas need to be able to move for nutrition and exchange of genetic material.
- 3. Habitat target should be to protect existing habitat as top priority.** Protection of remaining habitat remains the most cost-effective conservation action and should be prioritised wherever possible. There is also the opportunity to revegetate linking areas.
- 4. Regulations need to be strengthened, not weakened** • Increasing area of exemptions to 800 metres in properties of more than one hectare is not supported. • Closing loopholes such as stacking exemptions is supported. • Notification, even when clearing is perceived to be exempt, is essential to monitor clearing. It can be simplified to make it less onerous for landowners.
- 5. Ensure that PDAs and MIDs are not seen as ways to avoid regulation.** Exemptions to clearing prohibitions must be limited to essential development, not to benefit private developers or private schools.
- 6. Partnerships should be strengthened as suggested in the strategy.** LGAs and Universities should be funded to support koala conservation through vital studies such as the population monitoring and genetic studies that have been done in RCC and Scenic Rim Regional Council. There are good examples of working with First Nations people to integrate cultural knowledge and increase engagement and participation in koala conservation activities in Minjerribah. DETSI should play a central coordinating role in public awareness campaigns that clearly communicate the major threats to koalas, such as habitat loss, vehicle strike, dog attacks, and disease.
- 7. Offset strategy must be helpful to the local koala populations** We support limiting the use of offsets as described in the Qld Government fact sheet. We also support the unlocking of funds as described by the Minister's opening message in the strategy.

**Conclusion** - The single most critically important action to give koalas in SEQ a fresh start is to amend the way koala habitat is assessed to more truly represent where koalas live. The current Regional Ecosystems protocol is only the first step and is most appropriate for large scale assessment. In a rapidly changing landscape where SEQ is becoming more urbanised there must be more flexibility in determining what habitat is critical to koalas if we are to have any hope of saving them. Above all, the scientific research and the real-life examples given above have demonstrated the necessity of linking areas of habitat. A new protocol of koala habitat assessment, based on the three aspects of the definition of koala habitat in the Nature Conservation (Koala) Conservation Plan 2017 must be developed. This strategy is not insurmountable as this information has already been collected by the many reports and koala population databases available to the State Government. All that is needed is the political will to make it happen. The voters of Queensland have proven time and time again that they do not want to see koalas become extinct in the state as was made clear by the minister's introduction to the Developing a new South East Queensland Koala Conservation Strategy 2026–2036 Discussion paper.

**FOOTNOTE:** There was a very disappointing outcome from Wednesday's Council general meeting with the majority of Redland councillors voting for a heavily amended submission to be sent to the State government's SEQ Koala Conservation Strategy.

The original draft submission was comprehensive, based on science and authored by officers with expertise in koala conservation. [https://redland.infocouncil.biz/.../CO\\_20260318\\_AGN\\_2423...](https://redland.infocouncil.biz/.../CO_20260318_AGN_2423...) (view full submission here on page 56)

However, councillors Rowanne McKenzie, Julie Talty, Tracey Huges, Peter Mitchell, Jason Colley, Paul Golle and Shane Rendalls supported a significantly modified version of the submission that removed key points about habitat protection and resulted in leaving vital parts of the Strategy's questionnaire blank.

To their credit, Mayor Jos Mitchell and councillors Wendy Boglary, Paul Bishop and Lance Hewlett voted against the amendments.

The discussion can be viewed here beginning at 1:01:00 (1 hour and 1 minute)

[Council meeting livestreaming and video recordings | Redland City Council](#)

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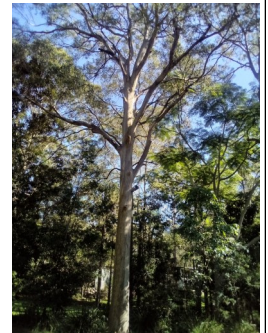
## Trees Have a Hidden Climate Superpower

- New research from **Southern Cross University** and **Monash University** has uncovered trillions of microbes living in tree bark.
- Up to **6 trillion microbes per square metre** are quietly “eating” gases from air.
- These microbes consume:
- **Methane** (a major greenhouse gas)
- **Carbon monoxide** (a toxic air pollutant)
- **Hydrogen** (which can amplify methane’s warming effect)
- Globally, bark microbes may remove **up to 55 million tonnes of hydrogen each year**, potentially offsetting **15% of human-caused methane emissions**.

**Bottom line:** Trees don’t just absorb carbon dioxide — their “barkosphere” helps clean the atmosphere in ways we’re only just beginning to understand. *Source:* <https://theconversation.com/we-discovered-microbes-in-bark-eat-climate-gases-this-will-change-the-way-we-think-about-trees-269612>

### **WE NEED YOUR INPUT - TELL US ABOUT A TREE (OR STAND OF TREES) THAT YOU TREASURE**

Please email KAG your photos (two high resolution, one including yourself) and answers to the following questions: Note - information and photos may be used for future press releases with local media and your favourite tree can be any species



*Where is this tree?*

*Why is this tree (or stand of trees) important to you?*

*How does this tree add value to your neighbourhood?*

*What would you like to see happen in relation to tree preservation?*

To report a sick or injured koala contact  
Koala Rescue Redlands and Surrounds 0435 504 222 (24 hrs)  
For all other wildlife call Redlands Wildlife Rescue Service on  
3833 4031 (24 hrs)

**Report koala sightings to -**  
**Redlands Koala Watch [www.redland.qld.gov.au/info/](http://www.redland.qld.gov.au/info/)**

**KAG Membership:Application/Renewal** Please complete the following and forward to: KAG: PO Box 660, Capalaba Qld 4157 or email [admin@koalagroup.asn.au](mailto:admin@koalagroup.asn.au)  
Fees can now be made via direct debit to: Koala Action Group Qld Inc. Suncorp Bank BSB: 484-799 Account No. 001748631 and include your name in the ref. line.  
(Please note: Suncorp no longer accept cheques or money orders)

Name -----

Address -----

Phone/email -----

Please specify membership type. Annual membership rates:  
Single:\$15; Family:\$25; Pensioner:\$10; Under 18:\$10 Donation(optional)

Please indicate if you are interested in any of the following.  
Tree planting { } Help with displays { } Letterbox drops { } Wildlife Rescue { }  
I apply for membership of the Koala Action Group Qld Inc and enclose my membership fee.

Signature: .....Date:.....

**All membership renewals are due in June unless otherwise stated on newsletter envelope’s address label. Email recipients will receive an email renewal advice.**

Note: KAG has a Public Liability Policy with a limit for any one occurrence of \$ 30,000,000