

Submission  
No 247

**INQUIRY INTO KOALA POPULATIONS AND HABITAT IN  
NEW SOUTH WALES**

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A submission for the,

## Inquiry into koala populations and habitat in New South Wales

### Introduction.

I am a sixty nine year old science graduate from Macquarie University (1969-72). I live on a forested 27 ha rural property in the northern rivers NSW. There is a small Koala population on this property that seems to be heard less each year. I am a member of the Lismore Koala conservation group called, "Friends of the Koala".

Terms of reference, 1(a) the status of koala populations and koala habitat in New South Wales, including trends, key threats, and areas for further research,

### Trends

The literature suggests that the Koala population's numbers peaked, throughout its range (SE QLD, NSW, VIC, and SA) by the mid to late 1800's. The Koala was common throughout its range; it was seen regularly and in large numbers. The Koala fur trade commenced in the 1890's, and the skins were exported. Although records may have been kept, they are difficult to source, however some data is available, for example, "In 1908, 57,933 Koala pelts passed through the markets of Sydney alone, and in 1924, 2,000,000 skins were exported from the eastern states". After this slaughter Ellis Troughton is quoted in W.D.L.Ride's book as saying "the Koala had been practically banished from Victoria and New South Wales". We could infer from this small sample of data that when the population peaked in the mid to late 1800's, the Koala population in NSW could have been in the hundreds of thousands.

In W.D.L Ride's book published in 1970, he states "In New South Wales there are a number of thriving colonies particularly in the north east." This is where I live, and it is now 2019 and the common held belief is that the Koala population is in steep decline. Why is this population decline happening?

I purchased a forested 27 ha rural property at 100 Durrumbul Road, Mullumbimby in 1981. There is a population of Koalas here that have a home range covering several properties. In recent years some breeding seasons have gone by without hearing any males calling at all. One gets the impression that the population here is in decline. The reason for this may be due (a) the population is genetically isolated, (b) the habitat is marginal for Koalas, and(c) the ever present mortality and reduced fecundity from DISEASES as Chlamydia and Retro virus.

### Key Threats,

(1) The removal of any Koala habitat even individual food trees, (2) The diseases Chlamydia and Retro virus, (3) Genetically isolating populations.

### Areas for further research,

Investigate the preventing and linking of genetically isolated populations eg using and creating new wildlife corridors.

The implementation of research and development into disease control and management,

The implementation of research and development of vaccines for Koala Chlamydia and Retro virus, and this is very important!

The implementation of research to work out the best methods of capturing and vaccinating individuals in the least stressful way,

Thank You .

John M Lindsay

Main Arm. Mullumbimby.....2/08/2019

### References.

1. Australian Wildlife, D.F.McMichael, 1972.
2. Black August, QLD's Open Season on Koalas 1927. G. Fowler, Hons Thesis ANU, 1993.
3. Native Mammals of Australia, W.D.L Ride,1970.
4. The Mammals of South Australia, F. Wood Jones, 1923/25.

I would finance research to provide/encourage the urgent delivery of an effective Chlamydia vaccine for the koala. This could be very effective in achieving population increases

I would encourage the state to finance the offering of this vaccine to private owners of Koala habitat, to vaccinate koala populations on their private property.