

# Marapana Wildlife Park

A Hands on Experience that is Totally Wild

## Fact Sheet



### Koala

(Phasuolarcos cinereus)



#### STATUS:

Vulnerable as a result of habitat destruction by humans and, due to colonisation, are also subject to dog attacks and being hit by cars. Bushfires are also a threat.

#### DESCRIPTION:

The koala is a marsupial with a backwards-opening pouch. They are divided into a northern and a southern species.

The southern species has longer browner fur and is quite large in size reaching weights of up to 15kg. The northern species is half the size and has a short, grey fur coat.

Koalas have very sharp claws on their feet. The front paws have 2 thumbs and 3 digits. The back feet have the 2nd and 3rd digits fused together to create a grooming claw.

#### DIET:

Koalas eat about 20 different species of eucalyptus leaves. They prefer the young leaves at the top of the tree known as 'tip'. On average they eat 1kg of leaf a day.

#### Breeding:

The koala usually mates from August to April and the female gives birth to a single young. The joey is born about the size of a jellybean after approx. a 35 day gestation period. Once in the pouch it attaches itself to a teat and stays there until it is 6 ½ to 7 months old. After venturing out it stays with the mother until it is weaned around 12 months of age.

#### LIFESPAN:

In the wild koalas live for 8 –10 years, but in captivity can live for 13 – 15 years.

#### INTERESTING FACT:

The koala sleeps for up to 20 hours everyday to conserve energy.