

# **MYALL KOALA & ENVIRONMENTAL SUPPORT GROUP**

## **2009 ANNUAL KOALA REPORT**



**Lilly, Bowral Street, September 2007**

(Photo: Bianca Bishop)

### **New Koalas in Town**

In Spring there were three mothers with new babies in the “Magic Square”. A mother and back baby were seen frequenting the Bennett Street/Kikarra Crescent area of Hawks Nest. Another mother with her baby mostly in the pouch, was seen in the Jimmy’s Beach/Coorilla Street area. A third pair were regularly seen in Russell Street. In early summer, a mother with a baby on her back was seen several times crossing Kingfisher Avenue from the Jean Shaw Koala Reserve to the Brancourt land. And then around Christmas time a mother and her baby were frequently seen in the Dolphin Avenue, Albatross Avenue and Kurrawong Avenue area. Often the baby was separate from its mother. Finally, in autumn, a mother and baby were seen at the top of Yacaaba.

Six new babies in town in one year is an encouraging sign of the ongoing viability of our koala population.

### **But we did Lose One**

Last October, we received a rescue call to two koalas that had fallen 10 metres from a tree in Bowral Street Hawks Nest. Local icon Louis had been pursuing Lilly along a branch when it broke and they both plunged to the ground. By the time we arrived, both koalas were back in trees and we decided that no rescue was needed.

However, a month later Lilly was brought to us for care. She had been on the ground, distressed and appeared to have severe vision problems. We took her to a Native Animal Trust Fund (NATF) carer in Medowie. A visit to a vet found she had cataracts in both eyes and her left eye had permanent retina damage. In mid-December we drove Lilly to Sydney for an ophthalmic surgeon to examine her right eye but sadly the retinoscopy showed she was completely blind in both eyes. This meant that she could not be released back into the wild and NPWS regulations prevent her being kept in permanent care and, in fact, she should be

euthenaised. Despite this, over the next couple of weeks, efforts were made to place Lilly into a breeding or education program. Before this could be resolved, on Christmas Eve, Lilly started to fit and sadly, she died in the early hours of Christmas morning. She was only 3 years and nine months old.

### **Habitat Restoration**

This year has been a great one for habitat restoration, particularly in Hawks Nest. More than ten hectares of bushland was cleared of weeds, mostly Bitou Bush and nearly 4,000 trees were planted or given away.

We have had two separate professional bush regeneration teams, Greencorp and Conservation Volunteers Australia, working on weed removal and tree planting during the year. Year 10 students from Barker College again visited town and under the guidance of Christian Patteson, carried out a three day community weeding program. A local Bush Care group (Bitou Bee) has formed and this group meets on the third Saturday each month. We planted 100 trees donated by the Red Cross Junior Support Group from Tea Gardens Public School. 200 trees and native plants were given away at the Myall River Festival. Finally, at Easter, 50 trees were planted on private property in Winda Woppa.

### **Donations**

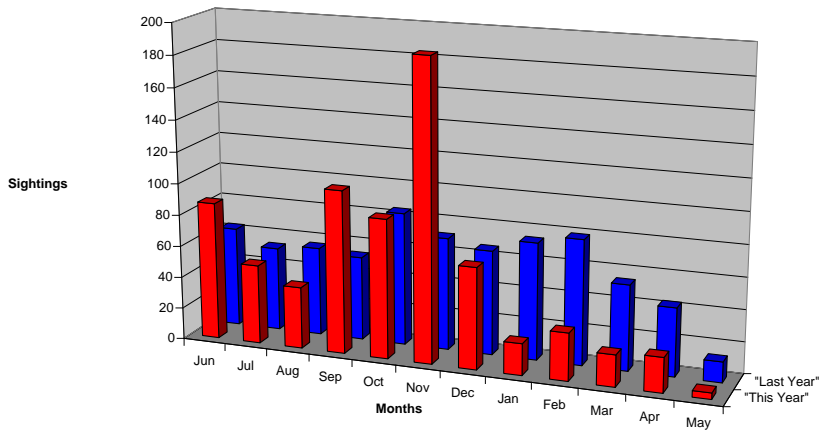
Due to the generosity of the community with our fundraising, we have been able to make three significant donations this year: \$500 to Native Animal Trust Fund to help with koala veterinary expenses, \$250 to Port Stephens ECONetwork to help with the cost of a global warming event and \$500 to Help for Wildlife to help wildlife injured in the Victorian bush fires.

### **Finally, a win for the Koalas**

We were very pleased to hear the Land and Environment Court decision that rejected the housing development on the southern side of Kingfisher Avenue Hawks Nest. This decision means that the koala movement corridor between Great Lakes National Park and the township has been secured. We hope that Great Lakes Council will now proceed with its proposal to rezone the eastern half of the land for Environmental Protection.

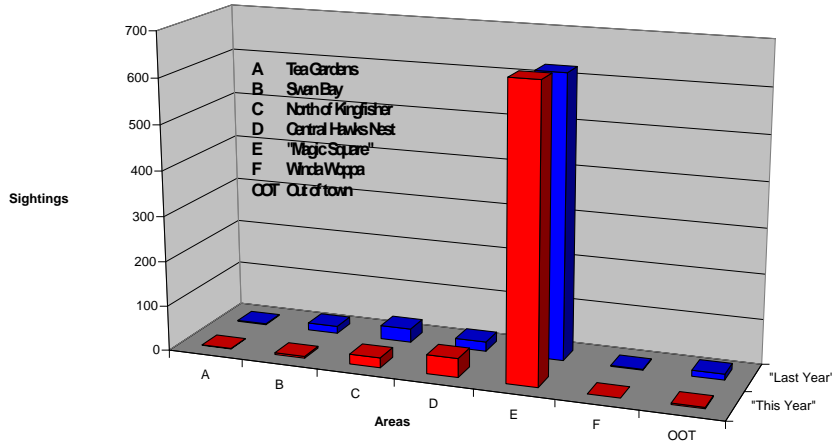
Gail & Ian Morphet (Koala Coordinators) 4997 1550

Hawks Nest / Tea Gardens Koala Sightings 2009 (by Month)



	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
"This Year"	87	50	39	103	88	189	64	20	30	20	22	4
"Last Year"	63	53	56	53	84	71	66	74	79	54	43	13

Hawks Nest / Tea Gardens Koala Sightings 2009 (by Area)



	A	B	C	D	E	F	OOT
"This Year"	1	4	22	42	644	0	3
"Last Year"	2	16	30	21	625	2	13

**Koala Sightings Summary 2008/2009**

Area	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	2008/9	2007/8
A	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2
B	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	4	16
C	1	1	2	1	3	9	1	2	2	0	0	0	22	30
D	0	0	0	0	14	18	5	1	1	1	2	0	42	21
E	85	49	37	102	71	160	58	17	27	17	19	2	644	625
F	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
OOT	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	3	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>716</b>	<b>709</b>
Hotline	0	3	3	2	5	8	6	6	3	5	5	3	49	66

- A Tea Gardens
- B Swan Bay
- C North of Kingfisher
- D Central Hawks Nest
- E "Magic Square"
- F Winda Woppa
- OOT Out of town