

How to spot an ill or injured koala

Apart from habitat loss, three of the biggest threats facing urban koalas are being hit by a car, attacked by a dog or disease. If you suspect a koala is unwell, keep an eye on it and contact Redlands 24hr Wildlife Rescue Service on 3833 4031. You should also do a quick check to see if the koala is ill or injured if it is safe for you to do so. An ill or injured koala has a better chance of surviving if we can get to it quickly. Often, we don't get the call until a koala is in obvious distress and it may be too late to help them.

Signs of illness or injury include

Dirty/wet bottom



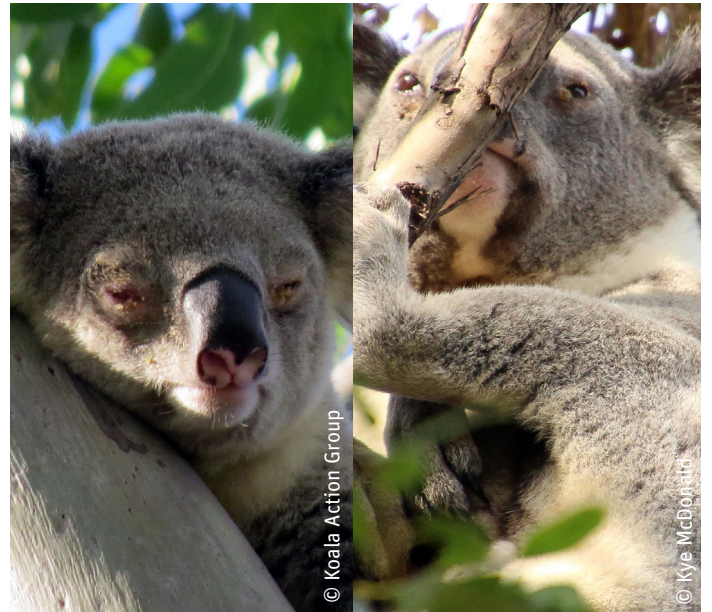
Dirty/wet bottoms can be a sign of disease that needs to be treated quickly

Dirty and wet, matted fur on a koala's bottom can be a sign of a urinary tract infection from Chlamydia.

In serious cases you may notice dripping urine. If left untreated, the koala may waste away and die within a few weeks. It is contagious and will spread quickly through a local population. If caught early, this disease can be treated and the koala may hopefully be returned home, happy and healthy.

Note: A healthy koala may still have a slightly dirty bottom from sitting on the ground, or even have a slight yellow stain. This is normal.

Sore eyes



Swollen or crusty eyes need to be treated quickly

Red, inflamed, swollen or crusty eyes are often a sign of conjunctivitis or an injury. If caught early, it has a better chance of being treated successfully. If not, it can cause blindness. A white covering over their eyes can indicate blindness. A koala can survive if it has vision in at least one eye.

Skinny or wasted

Koalas should appear soft and cuddly. If you can see their ribs or they appear skinny and wasted, they need help.

It can be hard to see if a koala is skinny, particularly if they are curled up. Often, a lack of muscle tone on their upper leg or shoulder is a good indication.



Sitting at base of tree

Koalas don't usually stay on the ground for long periods. They often travel from tree to tree and may detour to investigate something, but avoid being on the ground for too long. Koalas that are curled up at the base of a tree without climbing it, or are sitting for a very long period low down in a tree without good reason (for example, keeping out of the sun), they may be ill and having trouble climbing.

Cuts or infections

Koalas move quite slowly and are usually very placid, this makes them vulnerable to attack from dogs. Thick fur can make injuries hard to spot. They can also easily suffer from internal injuries from crushing bites that have left no mark. If untreated, wounds can become infected and internal injuries can be fatal.

If you have witnessed a koala being attacked by a dog, even if it seems unharmed, please keep an eye on it if possible and seek help (see below).

When to call Redlands 24hr Wildlife Rescue Service

If you think a koala may be ill or injured, please call the Redlands 24hr Wildlife Rescue Service on 3833 4031 immediately and let them know the location of the koala. Don't just record it on the survey as we don't check the data daily and we may not get the koala help in time.

Please be aware that koalas are not relocated just because they are in an inconvenient location or walking on the ground. Capturing and relocating a healthy koala can cause significant stress and this can lead to disease and infertility. It is best to leave them to their travels, as long as they are not in immediate danger, and lock up any pets in the area.