

September 2017

Village Eco News

A publication of Bangalow Land and Rivercare.

Welcome to Village Eco News. For more information about how you can subscribe or contribute see page 4

BANGALOW'S KOALAS

by Linda Sparrow



Bangalow Koalas Inc. aims to educate, involve and inspire. They advocate for the protection of our koalas. Currently they are in the final stages of writing a grant application in partnership with Bangalow Land and River Care, through *National Landcare 20 Million Tree Grant* and have six landholders signed on as part of creating the Bangalow Community Wildlife Corridor on the western edge of Bangalow.

The main project goal is to create a koala wildlife corridor connecting existing sections of koala habitat and food trees in Bangalow. This involves planting along the existing koala corridor to enhance and expand current habitat creating a connection to new corridors, thereby encouraging koalas out of urban areas

away from threats of dog attacks and car strikes.

It will not only be koalas that benefit as subtropical rainforest plants will also be planted along Maori Creek offering forage and habitat for other threatened species. The outcome of this ambitious plan should be an effective koala safe haven away from residential areas.

They are also mapping sightings through the Atlas of Living Australia site so if you wish to help please contact Bangalow Koalas with any past and present sightings to help them establish a linkage with other areas including Possum Creek and Binna Burra.

They have been working closely with Byron Shire Council, Friends of Koalas and Bangalow Land and River Care to help protect our koala population. Their aim is to progressively build and protect the habitat of our local koalas (as well as other threatened species).

The focus is also on building membership in order to increase their awareness and volunteer base for working bees, fundraising and applying for grants in order to achieve their goals. Bangalow Koalas Inc. will also be part of the *ARC Linkage Project* which is running a research project into where koalas are and where people are that would like to help koalas. The project is called "Conserving and recovering the koala population on the NSW Far North Coast."

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Landcare Working Bee

Our team of friendly volunteers work every Saturday morning, weather permitting from 8.30am to 10.30am rotating through the various sites around Bangalow. All welcome.

This months Raffle winner is



Left to right, Dominic Bean, Don Osbourne, Linda Sparrow, Beth Finch, Amber and Amy Bean

The Bangalow community is one of many communities across the Far North Coast that has been chosen to participate in this important research. Our community has been chosen for Aim 2 of the project 'Assess the location - specific community sentiment and willingness to positively engage in koala conservation and recovery programs'.

The projects represents a new collaboration between the University of Queensland, Sydney University and the partner organisations. Southern Cross University already has close links with Byron, Lismore and Ballina Councils and Friends of the Koala.

The fourth Saturday of every month you can find Bangalow Koalas Inc. at the Farmers Market and are rostered for Bunnings BBQ at Byron Bay store on November 11th as well as having a stall at the Bangalow Show on Saturday November 18th. Volunteers are always welcomed at any of these events. Totally reliant on fundraising and grant applications community involvement is critical.

Bangalow Koalas Inc. is also looking for knitters as after a community member knitted some koalas for the group when they were placed on their Facebook site became an instant hit.

Currently there is a backlog of orders waiting to be filled!

A workshop with Friends of Koalas will be held in September so keep an eye out for date – this will be an educational workshop on koalas. Koalas are on the move right now with the start of the mating season so please keep an eye out for them and drive slowly in known koala areas.

If you see a sick or injured koala please call the Koala Rescue Line on 02 6622 1233 - 24 hours a day or contact Linda Sparrow, see below. If you wish to help or donate and for more information, contact Linda Sparrow on:

0411 491 991 or

twodogsmedia@optusnet.com.au



Protecting our Wildlife

Responsible pet ownership

Around 70 per cent of Australian households have one or more pets that are valued as companion animals but how do we convince the pet owners of the damage their beloved cat or dog does to our native birds and animals?

Responsible ownership is the key

Responsible pet ownership allows you to enjoy the presence of native birds and animals in your surroundings as well as your pet. However, poor management of domestic animals can impact severely the environment.

Impact of domestic pets on native wildlife

A wide variety of native animals, ranging from the more common species like possums, kangaroos, wallabies, lizards and many species of bird, to rarer or threatened species such as bandicoots, koalas and quolls are at risk from domestic pets in country towns and rural areas.

Your faithful dog left unchecked at night can form into packs and harass and even kill native animals as well as farm animals. Cats are by nature instinctive hunters and in one night can devastate the local birds and lizards. Even though their human owners carefully meet their pet's requirements for food and shelter, instinctive hunting and chasing behaviors will continue.

Domestic pets also occur in high numbers in urban areas, where native animal numbers are fewer. So even though each individual animal may only kill or injure a small number of native animals, it has a bigger effect on the already reduced population.

What you can do

The responsibility for managing domestic animals rests with their owners. By encouraging responsible pet ownership in your family and neighbourhood you can ensure the welfare of all animals. You can:

Keep cats inside overnight and particularly at dawn and dusk. Find them a happy new home, or take them to the RSPCA. Report suspected cruelty of uncontrolled animals. Even well fed cats roaming at night hunt and kill small native mammals while birds are often targets at dawn and dusk when they are most active. It will also protect the cat from fights and the subsequent

infection and disease, and reduces the risk of your cat being run over.

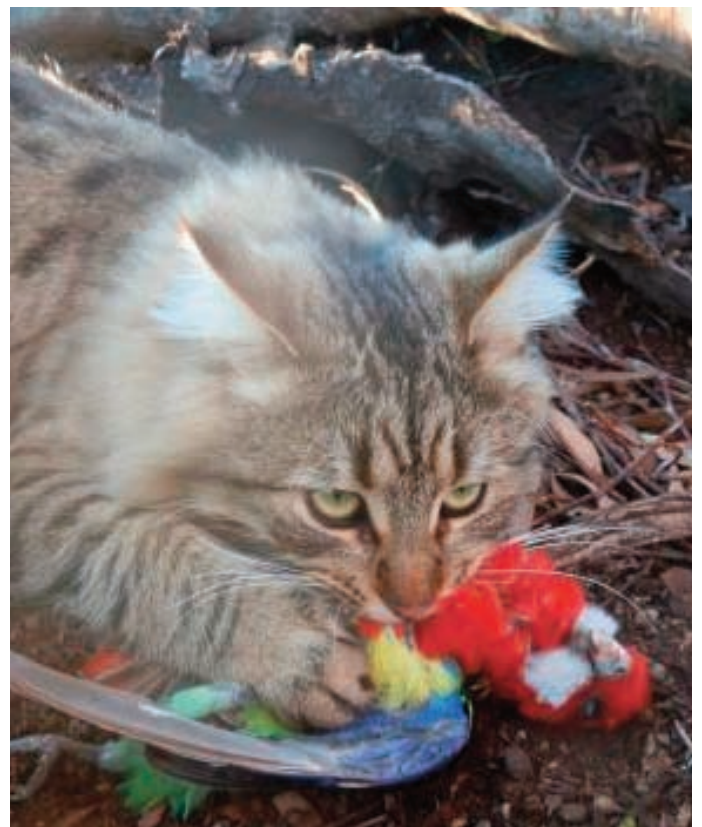
Ensure that dogs are kept under control. Put dogs on leashes in nature reserves or bushland where native animals are likely to be vulnerable. Keep your dog confined in the backyard, particularly when you are not there.

Help reduce unwanted animals, if you can no longer look after your pet, take time to find them a happy new home, or take them to the RSPCA. Report suspected cruelty of uncontrolled animals.

Don't release animals into the bush. Besides the impact they have on native animals and their habitat if they become feral, animals dumped in the bush may not survive and will suffer needlessly. Goldfish or other fish species flushed down the toilet or released into local waterways can upset the natural balance and impact on native fish species.

Alternatively, you could encourage native species to visit or live in your garden by planting suitable food and shelter species and having water available. You may find you get even more pleasure from that relationship.

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Our Environmental Pioneer



Edie Franks, pictured left at the 2017 All Souls Community Planting, has always been an environmental activist. Whether campaigning against inappropriate development at Byron Bay where she has lived most of her life or traveling to the Northern Territory to demonstrate against uranium mining.

In 1989 Edie moved to Burrawan Place in Bangalow. Upon learning that the subtropical rainforest that once covered hundreds of hectares of land in the northern rivers had been reduced to small, fragmented pockets battling to survive, Edie decided to leave a living legacy in the form of a rainforest along the adjacent Paddy's Creek.

Numerous visits to local native nurseries, some help from Byron Shire Council and employing her family to propagate seeds from the existing plants Edie's dream began to take shape.

Edie worked for 10 years planting and weeding for approximately 1km along both sides of Paddy's Creek creating a wonderful native plant corridor. The original trees have now seeded and this area has become a haven for a wide variety of wildlife.

Edie, now in her 90's, no longer lives in Bangalow but she still works potting up plants for future Landcare plantings while her 'living legacy' is maintained by our regular Saturday working bee and nearby neighbours.



Village Eco News

Our aim is to inform, interest, amuse and educate our readers on all things environmental. We welcome you to submit your contributions or to subscribe to this free Newsletter send your name and email address to:

bangalowlandcare@gmail.com

Please pass this publication on to your family and friends. Receiving our Newsletter online will help to save the environment we work to preserve.

Photos: Landcare members

Layout & Design: Dawn Lotty

Printed by: DiGi PRINT PRO, Bangalow

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