



Hi Everyone,

Collaboration and Future Partnership

On the 1st of December, alongside Dr. Stefanie Fishel (previous Secretary and current President of QKC), we met with Dr. Celine Frere and Romane Cristecu from the Detection Dogs for Conservation Team at University of the Sunshine Coast (USC). Rod Smith from the Noosa Biosphere Reserve Foundation was also present, and discussions were had regarding future Sanctuary Plans for Koala Crusaders and the Incorporation of an Innovative and Creative Educational Hub to coincide with Sanctuary Planning at a selected site in the region. I was also able to meet with Dalia Mikhail on the 12th December to further discuss this model and she confirmed that the Noosa Environmental Education Hub are keen to be a collaborative force in this project as well. Through connected community and collaborative efforts, a thriving collective of skills can be established to create a "new" model in environmental education, incorporating science, technology and digital solutions to environmental problems which would benefit koalas and the many species living under their umbrella. This will be an exciting possibility as we enter 2021 and further develop our strategic plan and business case for our sanctuary project.

As Ambassador, I have been asked to present to the Noosa Biosphere Reserve Foundation in February 2021 to contribute to their "Bring Back the Koala" symposium solutions which will be a great start to 2021 planning in koala conservation measures in our region.

Caring for the Carer

December has brought a flurry of activity and it began for the QKC volunteers at a "working bee" on the 5th December at the home of QKC Co-Founder, Policy Advisor and koala carer, Vanda Grabowski. Many thanks to Carolyn Roy who organised the day and alongside husband Nathan, provided a great morning tea to cap off the morning in the Glasshouse Mountains! We were able to weed, trim, mulch and clean the indoor koala enclosure as well as plant a few more natives alongside the outdoor enclosure and alongside the edges of the koala food tree plantation on the property. Sammy remained calm and unperturbed by the activity and great fun was had by all in the heat.

We are hopeful that more days such as this can be organised for local carers and rescuers to share the load and to support each other moving forward.

In terms of great initiatives available, check out this project created by a carer I know.
<https://twogreenthreads.org>

Founder, Suzy Nethercott-Watson is a carer who recognized the greater need for support and care amongst wildlife rescuers and carers and this resource is a very valuable tool. Two Green Threads will be offering workshops that will be of great benefit to this community and current registration for online Wildlife and Nature Sketch Journaling for Wildlife Volunteers is open through this link:

<https://twogreenthreads.org/online-wildlife-and-nature-sketch-journaling-course/>

Rescue and Road Mitigation

The Noosa Region Koala Rescue Team/Wildcare have been very busy over the past 6 months. Over 70 koalas have been responded to since July 2020 in the wider Noosa Region. Throughout SEQ, increasing pressure from development, essential infrastructure and disease require an increasing vigilance from rescuers and carers. Thank you to all of you who have responded, assisted, photographed or transported koalas in need. You are greatly appreciated.

Advocacy

We contributed to a collective response alongside multiple conservation groups across Australia to call on Federal Environment Minister Susan Ley to protect habitat after her announcement of "counting koalas". Janine Duffy has been a leading charge in this effort from the Koala Clancy Foundation in Victoria.

Deforestation is the leading cause of koala decline and although counting koalas for census may be a useful baseline, this token band-aid will not secure and save koala populations across their natural range.

<https://independentaustralia.net/life/life-display/sussan-leys-latest-koala-plan-is-a-national-disaster,14556>

You can read the collective letter here:

<https://documentcloud.adobe.com/link/review?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:95362461-4591-477c-a29e-87bc2946de51#pageNum=1>

Sanctuary

With completed Business Plan and Strategic Business Case for Sanctuary, the next steps will involve working collaboratively with community and philanthropy, establishing a network of partners to make this dream come to fruition. I have been asked to present a plan to the Noosa Biosphere Reserve Foundation (NBRF) Board after meeting with potential partners in the coming week and we look forward to the New Year with hope and eyes open for successful commencement of this very exciting project for 2021.

Thanks for your ongoing support,
2020 is nearly at our backs.

<3 Meghan

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