

# ANIMALS OF AUSTRALIA

## Koala



*A small baby koala with its mother*

The koala comes from Australia. It is found in four Australian states: Queensland, Victoria, New South Wales and South Australia.

Koalas live most of the time in trees, where they sleep and eat. Koalas rest or sleep about 16 to 18 hours a day.

When koalas are on the ground, they walk on four legs. A young koala will ride on its mother's back when it is on the ground.

A mother koala keeps her baby in a pocket of skin on her stomach. This pocket is called a pouch. The koala baby

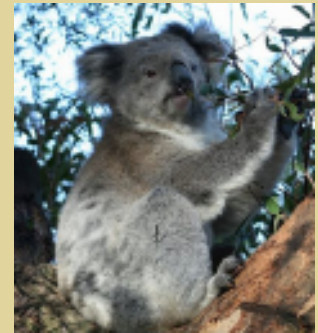
stays in the pouch for about six months, until it has grown up enough to come out and explore. It will stay with its mother until it is a year old.

It is uncertain how long wild koalas live. In zoos and animal parks, koalas can live up to 18 years.

Koalas were hunted for their fur in the early 1900s. They almost became extinct. They have recovered, however, and there are now about 100,000 wild koalas in Australia.

### Koala Facts

- Like humans, koalas have fingerprints.
- Koalas are usually silent, except when they are trying to find a mate.
- The average weight for a koala is 11 to 31 pounds.
- Koalas are sometimes called koala bears, but this is incorrect. They are not bears.



### Tell a Story



This sleeping koala had an adventure in a tree last night. He is now very tired. Write a story about the little koala's adventure.

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